PUNISHMENTS IN EDUCATION.

BY

W. F. COLLIER.

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PREFACE.

THIS PAPER was read at the Social Science Congress, 1872. It was written in the hope of attracting attention to the customary method of punishing children, and it succeeded in exciting a great deal of discussion at the time it was read, and since. It is now published in accordance with the wish expressed by many who felt an interest in the question, and with an earnest desire, on my part, to promote the welfare and happiness of our large population of children. If I succeed, by calling attention to the principles on which punishments are inflicted, in mitigating the penalties to which children are exposed, it will be the source of extreme gratification to me.

In the word children I wish particularly that boys may be included, as they seem to be exceptionally subject to harsh punishments. I have referred to them separately in the latter part of the paper, and hope that they will forgive me for including

them with children in the first part. I feel anxious to cause them to be spared the infliction of that sort of punishment which I consider a very great indignity indeed.

This paper was written before the occurrence at Winchester that has excited so much attention. 'Tunding'—I use the slang word with reluctance and disgust—seems to me to be little more than the natural result of the example set by the Authorities of Public Schools of a system of government through fear of the penalty of corporal punishment, with the exaggeration to be expected from enthusiastic, excitable, impetuous, youth. It happened fortunately in this instance to fall on a boy of 17, who has proved himself able to take care of himself. How often it has fallen with equal severity on helpless little boys is left to conjecture. It is to be hoped that the victim in this case will prove to have been, like other illustrious victims, a sacrifice that will have the effect of shaking the belief in such a system, and of inaugurating more gentle, and more gentleman-like, methods of government in the Public Schools generally.

W. F. COLLIER.

December 10, 1872.

PUNISHMENTS IN EDUCATION.

IT will be conceded that when we use the word 'education' we mean the education of the mind only. We do not apply the word in any sense to the body; and although drill and gymnastics are taught with the greatest advantage at schools, they would be more properly described as the training of the body than as a part of education. Education, also, as the term is generally used, implies the education of the young. Men and women are said to have finished their education when they leave the teacher, and take the duty of learning upon themselves. It might be supposed that if education, as the term is always used, means the education of the youthful mind, some study of the nature of the mind itself, and of the youthful mind in particular, would be absolutely necessary before any attempt to teach were made. But do teachers generally so prepare themselves for this task? Are they students of psychology? Have they studied the works of Locke

and his successors, and informed themselves of the nature of our minds as far as it has been discovered by the great psychologists? I believe this study is wholly neglected as a necessary preparation for a teacher; and although the art of teaching, pedagogy, is taught at the training colleges, it is taught empirically, by precept and example, and not as a science. I think that training colleges are of the greatest value. But it seems to me that an essential part of the training of teachers is usually omitted; that is, the study, not of the matter which they have to teach—not of reading, writing, arithmetic, &c.—but of the mind that has to be taught, especially the young mind. Even psychologists themselves, it appears to me—though it seems rather a bold assertion for me to make—have not sufficiently studied the mind in its youth, the mind from infancy upwards; and it is this study in particular that seems to me to be of such essential importance to the attainment of any great success in education. There are advocates of the rights of men, and advocates of the rights of women, but who ever heard of the rights of children? It is assumed rather too hastily that there is an intuitive and instinctive love of the parent for the offspring, that is all sufficient for the protection of the child from

evil; and the law rarely interferes, except in extreme cases. A child is regarded as the parent's own property, and practically parents may do as they like with children. Until the Elementary Education Act, 1870, was passed, a child might have been brought up uneducated and neglected. Even now compulsory education is considered by many to be a violation of the rights of parents, rather than an assertion of the rights of children. It is considered a hardship to the parent because he loses the little that his child can earn; which is as much as to say that the parent has a right to compel his child to work for him—at the sacrifice of the child's own prospects throughout life—to help him to maintain the family that he has brought into the world. The fact is overlooked that an injury is thus inflicted on the labour market, by bringing into competition with free labour a compulsory child labour that is cheaper even than slave labour, the sacrifice of the life of the child (a very common result) not entailing an economical loss, but probably a gain. Philanthropists have agitated the world on the question of slavery, but this has been the slavery of the man and woman. Practically the slavery of the child remains, a horrible blot upon our civilisation. The reports of the commissioners appointed to inquire

into the condition of children in the manufacturing districts, and in the districts where agricultural gangs are employed, rival in horrors the vivid descriptions of negro slavery pictured by the anti-slavery agitators.

The law is very stringent, though I think not stringent enough, as to offences against the person. A blow, or even the threat of a blow, is an offence punishable by law. But this is in the case of adult persons. There has been a violent agitation amongst philanthropists against flogging in the navy and army, but it has been against the flogging of men. It has succeeded; and the practice of flogging men has been reduced to a minimum, or nearly so, but the flogging of boys is specially and exceptionally retained. There has been lately the re-introduction of the punishment of flogging in the case of crimes attended with violence committed by men, but it can only be awarded by a judge on the verdict of a jury in certain extreme cases; whereas the flogging of boys is, and always has been, a very common punishment ordered by magistrates at petty sessions for most trifling offences. Men and women in civilised life seem to have given up by common consent all acts of violence against the person as utterly incompatible with a refined social condition;

but this is in the case of the adult person. The child is subject to personal violence whenever it is supposed to have transgressed; and although the infliction of bodily pain has been abandoned as a punishment for children in many families and in some schools, and is by no means so common as it used to be, it may still be considered as a practice universally resorted to. I believe it to be a cruel, mischievous, demoralising, and worse than useless exercise of power.

The education of the mind may be divided into two important divisions, the object of one being the formation of character, of the other the acquisition of knowledge; the first of which, I venture to say, is the most important of the two, though generally the least considered. In the earlier life of a child its conduct, which is the result of its character, and its learning to talk, read, &c., which are its first steps in the acquisition of knowledge, are attended to by its parents. What advantage can be derived in this stage of life, either by the child or by the parent, by the infliction of bodily pain? I presume that if it can be of no advantage to the child, no one will defend it as an advantage to the parent on the plea of its saving trouble or time. But if it is an evil both to parent and child, it will of course

be wholly indefensible. A child is the most helpless and dependent of living creatures, and the most sensitive of beings bodily and mentally. There is no more miserable creature than a suffering child, nor is there a being more subject to fear or to the painful feelings aroused by anger, harshness, and injustice. The child is completely in the power of another person. It has not the command of language to defend itself against accusation, any more than it has the physical force to protect itself against a blow. It must experience abject submission to the will of another person, vested with absolute authority, without appeal. Mr. Stuart Mill has written one of the finest pieces of composition in our language on the subjection of women. The subjection of children is far more complete than the subjection of women, and I venture to say the abuses of power are greater also in due proportion.

What is the object sought to be attained by the infliction of bodily pain on a child? The answer can only be, to compel it to do, or not to do, certain things for fear of a repetition of the punishment. Therefore every blow is the promise of a future blow under similar circumstances, or it is nothing. The only theory of punishment is the prevention of wrong doing by fear of consequences. You cannot

punish a child rationally for what it has done; you punish it for the purpose of controlling what it will do. Is this always borne in mind when punishments are inflicted? Is there no anger for what is passed, no feeling of retaliation for what you call naughtiness, no feeling whatever in your breast except the future results of the castigation? I believe few parents—or even others in authority over children, who are capable of sympathising with them—would have the heart to strike the shrinking, cowering little sensitive being, if they stopped to reflect that this was really the only object to be attained. You cannot punish for the past, you can only punish for the future. I use the word punishment in this paper only in the sense of corporal punishments. I have my views also on the punishment of children in general. 'But sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'

The first result of this description of punishment is to excite the emotion of fear; fear of the repetition of the violence, and fear of the person who inflicts it. It is the fear of bodily pain, an impulsive fear rather than a rational apprehension of consequences—the most disagreeable of all our emotions. What is the effect on the mind—on the mind that is to be educated, on the character that is to be formed? One

of the effects is to supply a wrong motive for action, at a period of life when it is most essential that right motives should be introduced as the only motives that ought to influence a human being. Punishments are commenced at a very early age, just at the age when a child first begins to act by motive, and to follow the dictates of its emotions and its will. Perhaps it is impossible for a grown-up person to realize the severity of a punishment on such a sensitive being. It is certainly impossible to estimate accurately the justice of it.

If the object sought to be attained is to compel the child to do or not to do certain things, is this object attained by punishment? If it be attained, is it attained so easily and so completely as it would be by other methods? And what is the effect on the character?

The formation of the character being the most important part of education, the last question ought to be answered first. The effect on the character is to accustom the child to be influenced by the motive of fear, which is a motive that never ought to influence any one; and by making a child subject to fear early in life—even insisting on its obeying the dictates of fear—a fearful, timid, disposition is induced. By exercising a child in fear you develop

its fears, as by exercising a child in the contempt of fear, by stimulating its courage, you strengthen its courage. It may be here said that many children, who have been brought up under a severe discipline, have turned out bold and courageous men, and *vice versâ*. One of the great obstacles to the progress of social science is the impossibility of estimating the value of the many and various forces that go to make up a result. But reliance can be placed in the psychological as well as physical fact, that if we exercise our faculties they increase in power. If we exercise our memory, it gains strength. If we exercise our affections, they become deeper. If we exercise our courage, we lose our fears; and if we give way to our fears, they increase upon us until we become the slaves of timidity. Is this not true of all our faculties? How careful ought we, therefore, to be as to what faculties we exercise, as to what forces we bring into play, when we are doing that which is destined to mould a character for life?

But fear is not the only faculty of the mind that you foster by these punishments. The promptings of fear engender deceit. It is asking too much of a child to expect it to tell you all that it has done if a punishment may follow. If you punish a child, instead of leading it not into temptation, you lead it

into the strongest temptation to deceive; and of all baneful lessons the first lesson in deceit is the worst. The disposition to deceive, like all our mental tendencies, will grow with use; and a successful piece of deceit early in life may lay the foundation for the insincere, dishonest, lying scoundrel, who, though he may not commit a crime, is the pest of society. You tempt the child to deceive through its fear, and with deceit and fear no mutual confidence can exist. You cannot discover the secret disposition of your own child if you cut from under you all grounds for its confidence.

We are all great imitators, and we catch habits and customs, manners and expressions, from one another, as we catch diseases. They are highly infectious, and the younger we are the more subject we are to the infection. The child is a great imitator; and if the character of a child were closely studied, we should perhaps be surprised to find how much of it was made up of copies of the characteristics that it has observed in its parents, its teachers, its nurses, and in servants. Example to a child is everything, precept is nothing. By these punishments you teach it fear and deceit for its own protection, and by the force of example you teach it cruelty and violence. Is it possible to invent a worse pre-

paration than this for the formation of a character? And yet the punishment of children, even in refined society, so called, is a very common thing. By example—the most efficient means of instilling a principle into a child—you teach it that which it must unlearn in after life, when society will not allow it to commit acts of violence on those who offend it. So great is the effect—so great must be the effect—of a blow on a child, perhaps from the hands of its chief protector and friend, that it cannot be forgotten, and must of necessity form one of the most vivid associations in its train of ideas. You may be associated in the child's memory with acts of kindness, but you must be associated with acts of violence. Cruelty cannot be effaced by kindness. You may attempt to persuade a child that the punishment is for its good; but there is danger in that, too; the child will associate the good with the disagreeable, and then as a consequence the evil with the pleasant—one of the most fatal results of unwise teaching to the happiness of the average man. It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of duly considering the power that the association of ideas exercises in educating a child. We are hardly ourselves aware how much we are each under this influence, and how many of our weaknesses, not to say

prejudices, are due to this mental power. To cause a child, at a very susceptible age, to associate parental authority with its most disagreeable and painful experiences, is a very dangerous course to pursue.

Sympathy appears to me to be one of the most noble attributes of our nature. We are very unequally endowed with it; but it is one of those faculties that may be developed by cultivation, or suppressed almost to obliteration by neglect. We all like to experience the sympathy that others give us in a great variety of forms, but we do not all care to bestow it as freely as we like to receive it. It does not seem to be developed fully until the mind is mature. The child feels the pleasure of receiving sympathy intensely, but does not itself readily sympathise with others. I am inclined to think that there is hardly anything of more importance than to teach a child sympathy. To bring it early, first to feel the pleasure of experiencing it from others, and then to exercise its sympathies upon others. The lesson is easily learned if properly taught, but by errors in teaching it may be never learned at all. To sympathise with a child without attempting to develop its own feelings of sympathy, is to produce what used to be called a spoilt child—a being happily fast disappearing. To subdue our own natural sym-

pathies, and to govern by strict rule and law enforced by punishment, is to produce the hard, harsh, unsympathetic man. It seems to me that these punishments are evil lessons in sympathy. It is easy to check the early feelings of sympathy that may arise in a child, but it requires some attention to awaken them and encourage their growth.

The object of punishment is to enforce obedience. Not only to compel the child to do or not to do certain things, but to do or not to do according to the orders of another. To do a thing, or to leave that same thing undone, as the authority may order, without any reference to right or wrong. Now, although it may be very convenient that a child should be obedient, it is very questionable whether the attempt to make a child obedient is the best way to form a character. In the first place to desire a child to be obedient, and then to give it the very worst of motives for obedience, seems to me to be a very common, but a wretchedly bad commencement in the way of shaping a character for the social duties of life. If it is essential that the child should be obedient, it is much more essential that it should be obedient for a motive that should constitute a good permanent habit fit to be established as part of

its character. Is this to be effected by enforcing a blind mechanical obedience through fear of punishment? And if you obtain obedience by means of the fear of punishment, does it not practically exclude any better motive? Further, is it possible to obtain true obedience at all by such means? It is an experiment the history of which is a continuous series of failures. Those who obey the law for no better motive than fear of the penalty of breaking it, are not to be trusted in any walk in life. On any occasion when the penalty may be avoided, they will fail in their obedience. How much more likely this is to be true of children even than of adults, anyone can judge. Punishments, threats, and scoldings, do not conduce to that sort of obedience in children that makes you confident that under no circumstances will you be disobeyed. It is naturally painful to us, as it is to all animals, not to follow the dictates of our desires. Although we easily perceive the necessity of restraint upon our desires, it is always a pleasure to us to indulge our desires; and the love of freedom, which is the theme of poets, is no more than this. We do not like to submit to the will of others, though by the force of habit we may fall into an idle submission to the will of those who exercise authority over us. When it is con-

sidered what an all-powerful influence habit has on us—how almost impossible it is to shake off a habit of mind—it is of the utmost importance that habits should not be engrafted on children that may in after life have most injurious effects on their character. It seems to me, therefore, that if obedience be necessary, which I grant, it is in the highest degree important that it should be obtained with due regard to its effect on the formation of character. The proper formation of the child's character is surely of more importance even than obedience. It is certainly of more importance to the child, and if so it is to be hoped it will be deemed of more importance to the parent. But if true obedience can be obtained only by means that are of the greatest possible advantage in the formation of character, there can be no reason for resorting to violence or to injurious measures. In the formation of a child's character it is highly important that strength of character should be imparted. It is of the first importance that the character which you are forming should not yield to the influences to which it may be exposed for no better reason than the fear of unpleasant consequences. If you succeed in teaching your child implicit obedience to yourself, you may be teaching it the habit of implicit obedience,

and it may become submissive to any influence that may be brought to bear on it without distinction of good or evil. If it is submissive to you for fear of punishments, will it not be submissive in after life for fear of punishments, though those punishments may assume the shape of ridicule, slander, or any other form of annoyance, and a criminal weakness of disposition be the result? Obedience on principle in a man as a necessity in social science is an undoubted good; implicit, senseless obedience, in any rational creature, is an evil, and ought to be most carefully avoided in controlling children. It has been granted that obedience in a child is necessary, but is it putting it too strong to say that it is a necessary evil? Is it not always a greater pleasure to see a child do what is required of its own free will, following the dictates of its own inclinations or reasoning powers, than in obedience to the will and dictation of another? Obedience is required, not for obedience sake, but for the sake of the result to be obtained. But how many, like misers who have learnt to love money for money's sake rather than for its power of purchase, learn to value obedience as the end to be obtained, rather than the means only to an end! If you teach the child to obey its own will, to put its inclinations and emotions under the dominion of its

will, you lay the foundation of a strong moral character, you teach it to control itself, its impulses, and its passions. But if you teach it to obey the will of another, to have no will of its own, to stop and reflect before taking any step in its little life, not whether it is right or wrong, not whether it will cause others pain or sorrow, but whether it will result in punishment to itself or not, you supply the materials of a weak, selfish disposition. The natural and inevitable effect of punishments is to teach the child the highly erroneous moral principle that the most important object to be attained in life is to avoid punishment. The child is taught the habit of considering the consequence to itself of all its actions, whereas the only proper subject for consideration is the consequence to others. Obedience, however, cannot be obtained in this manner. A child is far too impulsive a creature to obey on all occasions for fear of consequences. If it is maintained that punishments are not the only means to that end, but are employed as an aid, an adjunct, a last resort when other means have failed, I reply, that if you use them at all, in the case of a young child, you destroy the effect of all the other and better methods that you have been practising. It is difficult to realise the effect of a punishment on a child. I

believe few adults have any conception of the effect that an act of violence from the hands of its chief friend and protector has upon the finest feelings of a child, nor how completely it tends to destroy those fine feelings altogether. Why do we not judge children more by ourselves? If the person whom we loved best in the world, if we were helpless with a sole protector to whom we were deeply attached, if we were weak and highly emotional, not always able to control ourselves according to reason and judgment by means of our wills, if, in short, we found ourselves in the condition of children, what effect would blows and acts of violence have upon us? Society has proclaimed that the effect would be intolerable. Men and women suffer intensely in married life from the bad behaviour of one to the other, but a blow is considered the climax of outrage never to be resorted to on any consideration whatever, nor to be excused on any plea. Why should a rule so entirely different be applicable to children? Are children so very different from ourselves that directly opposite methods must be used with them to those that are necessary with us? Are we so very different from children as all this great difference in our social relations implies? I am inclined to think that a blow is a greater violence to a child, and has a worse

effect, than it would have in the case of the adult married couple; and it is only custom, habit, and use that blind us to the fact. It is true that children differ from us materially, but they differ in degree rather than in kind, and they differ especially in those particulars that cause punishments to be more injurious to their characters than they would be to the characters of adults. They are more impulsive, and are less able to understand and account for the motives of others. It appears to me, therefore, that it would be true to affirm that if violence is an evil to adults, it is *à fortiori* a greater evil to children.

If obedience in a child is necessary, and if it cannot be obtained by means of punishments, nor by more refined means with a reserve of punishment in the background, how can it be obtained? Nothing seems to me easier than to answer that inevitable question in a perfectly satisfactory manner. That persuasion is better than force is so old a maxim that to quote it seems like repeating a trite truism. The experience of the world affirms the principle that persuasion is better than force, and yet the world uses force. Why should this be? Because from childhood the world has been accustomed to force. The social world has been reared

in an atmosphere of force. It has been early taught the lesson that punishment is the principal, if not the only, check to evil. It has acquired the habit, is used to the moral sentiment, that force is the principal power of control over others, and it cannot abandon what habit and custom have engrafted into it. How could it otherwise so disregard experience in the management of children? To assert that the mature intellect has not power over the immature intellect, and to govern it must abandon the use of moral force and resort to physical force, seems to me to be a paradox. The object to be obtained is to govern the child's mind. The child's mind is weaker in every respect than the mind of the adult, and therefore can be governed by it. Of two forces acting upon one another, the greater prevails over the less as a matter of course. Children could not be punished if their physical force was equal to that of the adult. Punishments are abandoned when the boy becomes strong enough to resist, and for no better reason that I could ever guess. It seems to me that if punishments are of any use at all they would do less harm, and therefore be of more use, at the age of eighteen than of eight; but the physical force developed at eighteen renders them dangerous, and they are then aban-

doned, after they have done all the mischief possible in the more yielding and more impressive stages of the character. There are mental forces corresponding in their effect on one another with physical forces. The stronger and better trained mind will always govern the weaker and less trained. We are all under the influence of others, and we succumb to the influence of others in proportion as our minds are weaker or stronger than those of others. What else does influence mean? How is it, therefore, having such a force, so superior in power and quality to that of children, we throw it aside and employ physical force in preference? It is one of the relics of barbarism. Social science seems to advance by very slow degrees, footstep by footstep, as if pondering and hesitating as to the direction it should follow, and the philanthropist feels impatient when he sees what very little progress is made in that which lies at the basis of the good of mankind. Surely one reason for this tardy movement is that we do not attach sufficient importance to the social education of our children. We violate first principles in their earliest education by teaching them that which is a radical error in social science, to attempt to govern mind by physical force. My argument is, that you cannot obtain that kind of

obedience that you require in children by physical force, but that you can obtain it by mental force, because physical force and mental force are entirely distinct and different powers, and being so cannot act on one another. We can obtain mechanical obedience by physical force, but we can only obtain mental obedience by mental force. It is true that in nearly all cases you attempt to obtain your object by both means; but I contend that, so opposite are they in character, in proportion as you gain power by the one do you lose power by the other. In other words, in proportion as you gain influence by fear of your physical power do you lose the influence of your mental power. Anyone can test the truth of this assertion by means of his own experience. Does he not readily yield himself to the influence of the stronger mind; and if the superiority in strength be manifested without the least semblance of compulsion, does he not yield to the impulse to submit with alacrity and pleasure? What greater pleasure is there than to subject our minds to the influence of the great writer and the great orator? We flock in crowds to experience those sublime influences. But who submits himself willingly to physical force? Where can you find the human being who will not resist control by physical force

with all his might, who does not feel it to be a detestable thing, and who only succumbs to it with loathing and hatred? The history of civilisation is only the history of the substitution of mental force for physical force in the government of mankind; it seems to me that it can be summed up in these words; and when mental force will have entirely superseded physical force civilisation will be complete. If this is a truth in social science, a fundamental truth, which I believe it to be, feebly as I may have expressed it, how important is it that first principles should not be violated at the threshold of life, when our characters are so plastic that the impressions then received are deep, and will probably become permanent! If we are conscious that mental force is the power to which we ourselves willingly and joyfully submit, by which we are not only practically governed to a great extent, but by which we are governed with complete satisfaction to ourselves, why should we attempt to govern our children by means that are so opposite to those that we ourselves decidedly prefer, and are those that we ourselves detest? It appears to me that this question cannot be answered, and that in fact there is no reason whatever why we should attempt to rule our children by methods that would be not

only unsuccessful but hateful in our own case. The obedience that we desire to obtain from our children is not mere submission to our will. I contend that submission, as distinguished from the kind of obedience that we wish to obtain, is an evil. But that a real, well-established desire to do, at all times and under all circumstances, in our absence as well as in our presence, whether we know it or can never know it, what we should wish the child to do, is the kind of obedience that we want, and the only kind worth the paper that I am writing upon. This kind of obedience can be obtained only by the moral force of mind over mind, and can never be obtained at all if the aid of physical force is called in. This is in effect the social problem that I am so desirous to prove in the interests of the most sensitive, the most attractive, the most loveable, and the most suffering beings in the world. It seems to me that there is no object on which the enthusiasm of philanthropists can be expended, that offers so great a reward in the shape of success in return for their labour of love, as the children of our species. If we consider the condition of the mass of children of all classes, the wretched homes of so many, the squalor, the dirt, the hunger, the sickness, the really hard work forced upon such tender little beings,

without reward, with blows, threats, anger, and the want of the solace of sympathy, it seems to me that the amount of suffering in modern civilised life, as we are pleased to call it, is such that to attempt to form an estimate of it would drive us into a state of hopeless despondency. I do not wish to over-draw the picture. Any exaggeration would tend to defeat my purpose. But the bare truth, if our sympathies are fully awakened to it, would set the power of philanthropy to work in a direction that would be most fruitful of welfare and happiness to the human race.

I have hitherto treated chiefly of the child, and it is now necessary to consider the case of the boy or the older child, not referring to girls in the hope that punishments have long been condemned as a part of their education after they have passed early childhood. The first question that strikes us is, in what respect do boys so much differ from girls that punishments should be good for one and bad for the other? It seems to me that this is the earliest stage of the question, now occupying so much attention, of the relative social position of men and women, and I will leave that portion of the subject with that remark. I do not myself see why the education of boys and

girls should differ so much as it now does. Boys appear to be selected from all other animals as the objects for these punishments. I have already referred to the humane laws which have abolished adult punishment, but boys are always excepted from the protection of those laws. A gentleman's coachman was summoned before a magistrate not long ago in London, and fined, for flogging his master's well fed, well cared for horses. I am glad that our laws protect animals. But that coachman might have flogged his son with the most extreme cruelty with impunity, and I do not doubt that within a mile from the spot where these horses were flogged hundreds of boys might be suffering worse floggings. What possible pretence can there be for this system of cruelty? I suppose it will be said, 'May not a man flog his own boy?' as it was said, 'May not a man flog his own nigger?' I cannot conceive why boys should be the exceptional objects of this brutish violence. The same arguments that were applied in the case of children are equally applicable in the case of boys. I believe the character of the average boy is ruined by this detestable method of government, and he is made cruel, heartless, and unsympathetic. Possibly the harshness of the character of the man, as compared to that of the woman, may be traced to this.

I have been told that this punishment is an excellent thing for boys in the case of lying. I presume the same would be said in the case of thieving, and as there seems to be a great similarity between these two faults I will place them together in considering this subject. In the first place I would ask, if this is so, where is the great difference between boys and men that makes it a monstrous punishment not to be contemplated for a moment in the case of a man, but to be inflicted on boys, to any degree of severity that a parent or schoolmaster may choose, on his simple authority, without check or restraint? I cannot see this immense difference between the boy and the man. But let us more particularly examine the effect of flogging in the case of a lie or a theft. I suppose it will be granted that no lie would be told, or theft committed, if the liar or thief knew that detection was certain, and the object of the lie or the theft could never be gained. Absolute certainty of detection would render lying and thieving out of the question. In such a case the liar or thief would be an idiot and not a criminal. Lying is merely another word for deceiving. If there is no deception there is no lie. But punishment can only follow detection, it can only be the consequence of the unsuccessful lie, whilst the successful liar cannot

by any possibility be punished at all. The punishment therefore for lying is limited to unsuccessful lying, to lying incompletely performed, to want of skill. It seems to me that it cannot be regarded from a moral point of view in any other light than this. It can have no better effect on the moral character than to teach the boy that he has not lied well enough, and that by the practice of more deceit all punishment could have been avoided. It is true that the world is governed by punishments, though not in the case of adults by these sort of punishments, and of course punishments can only follow detection. But in education the moral effect on the character is the only question for consideration, and the moral effect of punishment for lying and thieving is to point out that it follows on detection only, that the punishment is inflicted for being found out. In society lies are rarely punished at all, even when told on oath. Theft is punished because it is easily detected, but fraud, which is precisely the same crime—there can be no moral difference—is universal, and prevails in all our social relations, because it is not easily detected. The fear of detection no doubt deters crime, but the moral result of punishment in improving the character is nil. I have the most profound and fervid hope that the absolute moral

condition of the human mind in the aggregate makes rapid advances, that there is a growing quantity of true moral force pervading the mass of mankind, and enjoying an existence wholly independent of the arts of detection and punishment. Granted that detection and punishment are necessary in society, it does not follow that moral lessons can be taught by their means. You can deter from crime by detection and punishment, but you cannot add to the sum of the moral sense of mankind by such agents. If so, and there is nothing that I believe so fully, how useless must these worst of all punishments be in the moral training of boys! How can it be possible to eradicate a tendency to lying in a boy by flogging when he is detected? If the boy is detected he is flogged, and of course he sees that he is flogged because he is detected. If his object in telling a lie had been gained, if he had succeeded in deceiving, he could not have been punished. The inevitable moral lesson is that there can be no punishment at all for successful lying. It appears to be very unjust that a child or a boy should be severely punished for lying, and that adults should indulge in that vice to the extent that they do in society without any punishment whatever. The child is early taught to lie by example. It is a very common thing to tell a young child a number

of untruths merely for the sake of amusement. I have particularly observed how careless people in general are in telling young children untruths. If a child has had the misfortune to acquire the detestable habit of lying, it is absolutely necessary that a cure should be effected. There are no greater pests to society than the liars who infest it. It appears to me that not only children but all liars could be cured by a very simple and very effective method. In the case of children, however, it should be done in a very mild, gentle, and kind manner, otherwise it would amount to a severe moral punishment. It is, in the case of detection, which is sure to follow in the early practice of the vice, to cast discredit and doubt on everything that the child said until a cure is effected. It would soon find the consequences of lying so intolerable, and so salutary a lesson would be taught, that a horror of a lie would be engendered. If adult liars were treated in the same way, society might relieve itself of their odious influence, but they find encouragement in the credulity that is so prevalent amongst us. It is true that to cure a child or a boy of lying in the way that I have suggested would involve a great deal more trouble than flogging, but education involves infinite trouble, and no great

results in education can be attained without unceasing labour, care, and attention.

In that branch of education that consists in the acquisition of knowledge these punishments are still much resorted to as a means of driving boys to their work, as you used to drive slaves, and as you now drive animals. You place your boys on the same footing as you used to place your slaves, before slavery was abolished amidst the applause of mankind, and on the same footing as you now place your horses. The question is, how can these punishments be any aid in that division of education the object of which is the acquisition of knowledge? This part of education is little else than a matter of memory in various forms, and is accomplished by industry and attention, attention being the all-important power of concentrating the mind on one object for a particular purpose. I need not repeat the argument before so fully urged that these punishments supply a positively wrong motive for doing anything that is done under their influence. Memory, psychologists tell us, is the effect of the association of ideas. One idea is associated with another in our minds, an endless train of ideas follow one another, and this is memory. Our minds are so variously constituted that there will be a tendency in one

mind to associate one train of ideas together, and in another mind another train of ideas perhaps totally different. The task of the teacher is to control the train of ideas in the mind that he has to teach. It seems to me to be a monstrous absurdity to suppose that this can be done by flogging. Is it possible that a boy's memory can be improved by flogging? And does not every teacher know that a boy's memory—that every boy's memory, in fact—can be, and always is, improved by other means? Like all our other faculties, memory is developed, strengthened, and in every respect improved by exercise. But flogging is not an exercise of the memory. It is perfectly true that a single word, a false quantity corrected, a sentence, or perhaps even a whole lesson, may be so strongly associated in the mind with a punishment as to be remembered, the one with the other, for life, and I can conceive no other reason than this why flogging was ever resorted to as an engine for teaching. But that would not be an instance of the improvement of the faculty of memory. It would be an instance of the very strong association of the idea of pain with the words that were coupled with the pain at the time, the pain being sufficient to make a lasting impression on the mind. This effect could not be produced often

on repetition, and the fact is, I firmly believe, that good sound memories are often, are daily, radically injured by this most unscientific, rude, and cruel mode of teaching. If the same means are employed to impress a second or a third word or lesson on the memory, the same idea of pain will be associated with a different set of ideas of the words, and the result is confusion—a result, I believe, only too common in such cases. If a boy were flogged for one lesson, burnt with a hot rod for another, and had his ear cut off for a third, he would probably remember all three for his life, but short of associating different lessons with different punishments I cannot see the advantage of punishments to the memory. Many men have told me that they have remembered a certain thing for life because they were severely punished when they were taught it; in one case it was the meaning of a Latin word, in another the correction of a false quantity, in my own case a mistake in a copy. We all remember these ridiculous trifles because of the severity of the punishment with which they were associated, and this is used as an argument in favour of punishment in teaching. But is it possible that our memories can have been improved in this manner? The fact is a single trifle has been impressed on our memories

for life by a cruel act, and the proper means of educating our memories have been neglected. A teacher with his single mind undertakes to teach a great variety of minds. They are all as unlike one another, and as unlike his own, as their faces and figures are unlike, probably much more so. He undertakes to teach from thirty to forty up to eighty different minds, each one requiring different treatment if success in teaching is the object to be attained. But they are all ground in the same mill, and the difference in the character of each mind is manifested in the various amount of flogging measured to each body. The teacher has probably been a deep student of what he undertakes to teach. He knows a great deal more than he can ever hope himself to impart to his pupils, and he may have read Locke and the psychologists, but psychology has formed no part of his preparation as a teacher, and he never attempts to teach it. He finds that he cannot teach some of the thirty or forty boys. He says they will not learn, he flogs them, he then says that he has done his best with them, and his teaching conscience is satisfied and at rest. According to Rousseau it requires the whole of a man's time and attention to educate one boy. I do not admire Rousseau, and as he never himself undertook to

teach a boy, he is not a good authority. On the other hand I believe most teachers undertake more than they can perform well, and if they can persuade themselves that flogging aids them it saves time and trouble.

There remains to be considered how punishments are successful as a means of driving a boy to work, and to force him to concentrate his attention on the object to be attained. One of the principal and most important parts of the art of education is to teach the pupil the power of concentrating his mind on his work. Attention and industry are not the same thing, but are nearly so, and industry without attention is almost useless. When industrious habits, with the power of concentrating the mind on the object to be attained, are acquired, the most difficult part of education may be said to be overcome, and the rest is comparatively easy and agreeable. There is nothing easier than to flog a boy, but no one will say that it is easy to inculcate habits of industry and attention. Children and boys are never idle. Theirs is a life of ceaseless activity. On the other hand they are not industrious. They are ever engaged in the pursuit of amusement, and variety and change being the essentials of amusement, persistent attention to one subject is not

congenial to their tastes. The task that a teacher has before him is to convert this activity into downright industry, to make it methodical and assiduous, instead of random and changeable. If the habit of enforcing our wishes by violence had not been handed down to us from early barbarous times, it could never have entered the head of a civilised man to attain such an object as this by flogging. It is a happy thing for us that the mind cannot be dealt with successfully by violence. If it were so, violence would not have been gradually abandoned as we gain experience, but it would have been more generally adopted as the necessity for complete control arose. The mental excitement produced by violence renders the mind unnaturally difficult to control, and an excess of punishment would put it into such a state of feverish excitement as to be utterly beyond all control. The mind is a most delicate structure, all powerful, but easily injured.

> We do it wrong, being so majestical,
> To offer it the show of violence.

It is by gentle, skilful means that it can be brought into efficient working order. The mind can control the mind, but the arm is far too rough a tool for such a purpose. Memory can be improved by

cultivation, and attention is a faculty that can be acquired. They are both attributes of the mind, constituting an important element of its power. They are so essential to education that without them education cannot be said to be accomplished at all. If teachers were students of psychology, and pursued the methods that proved to be most successful in imparting these invaluable qualities to their pupils, the success of education so conducted would be incalculable. But it appears to me that no attempt is made to cultivate the memory, or to impart the power of concentrating the mind on the work to be done, in a systematic manner. The usual means resorted to with this object is to drive the boy to teach himself, and thus to acquire by haphazard these important mental faculties. Those who defend the system of punishments must be prepared to contend that they are the best means of imparting to boys the faculties of memory and attention. In many of the elementary schools these punishments have been given up as useless. But at our great public schools the boys of the upper classes are flogged. It is surprising that such a system should be retained in those fine institutions, and that the masters should consent to perform such a degrading office. It seems probable, however, that they will be the last instead

of the first to set the example of a more refined and more becoming system of control in education.

Boys are devoted to fun and amusement. Gaiety and carelessness are their natural characteristics. They extract fun and amusement even from their punishments, and everyone knows how they ridicule this serious business. A high-spirited boy takes a pride in showing that he cares not for it, and that the pain is to him a matter of supreme indifference. I should not think highly of the boy, myself, who was deterred from doing anything for no better reason than the fear of a flogging. He would be totally unfit for the fun, frolic, and thoughtless daring that are the charms of boyish life, and make boys such amusing and engaging members of society. These punishments engender amongst them a spirit of ridicule and defiance; and I do not doubt that the difficulty sometimes experienced of controlling boys at public schools, when there appears to be a tendency to defy the authority of the masters, arises mainly from the recourse to these punishments instead of to more efficient means of exercising influence.

It is difficult in social science to appeal to experience. If a man has succeeded, or thinks that he has succeeded, by one method, without trying another,

he calls that experience. But in this case I can appeal to the general experience of the civilised world. From the earliest times to the present the use of these punishments, in all cases without exception, has gradually diminished in severity and frequency. In our own day it has rapidly diminished, and we hear them condemned on all sides in the case of adults. I wish I had the power to deal them the finishing stroke in the case of children. If the experience of the world in a long series of ages shows us that the tendency of civilisation is decidedly in the direction of their disuse, can anyone doubt that in course of time they will be totally abolished? Is it not a good argument in social science to affirm that when a decided tendency to advance in a certain direction is observed to prevail, and no instance to the contrary is apparent, for as many generations as we can look back upon, the advance in the same direction is sure to continue for generations to come? If this is true, the abolition of these punishments is certain to follow in times to come. Why, then, should we hesitate to hasten what must be the result of the march of intellect? Why not at once take the final step, instead of hesitating, creeping, and faltering in the path of kindness and sympathy, whilst the cries

of distress of our children assail our ears from every bye-street or court that we may pass through? Do we wish some future generation to call ours a barbarous age, and call us their barbarian ancestors, who flogged our children though we abolished flogging amongst ourselves? The slow, cautious steps of philanthropy make the highly sympathetic mind feverish with impatience. With the amount of suffering that there is, how is it that we cannot move faster? I have the suffering of children very much at heart. It is distressing to me not to have the power to help them. I appeal to the Social Science Association to take them under their care. It is for their sakes as children that I make the appeal, for their happiness and for their good. I have used the argument that if they are better treated they will become better men and better women: but my purpose is not to advocate the cause of men and women; it is emphatically for children that I make my appeal to sympathy, philanthropy, and reason.

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