

GS182

# AN ADDRESS

TO THE

## PEOPLE OF CAMBRIDGE

From the School Committee,

CONCERNING A

RECENT CASE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN  
THE ALLSTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL.



Published by order of the Board.

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## City of Cambridge.

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AT a meeting of the School Committee, held Sept. 7, 1866, Mr. BADGER, from the committee to whom was referred the petition of James Walker and others, requesting the abolition of the corporal punishment of girls in the Public Schools, reported a recommendation that a member of the Board be designated to prepare for publication a statement of the recent case of corporal punishment in the Allston Grammar School.

The recommendation was adopted, and Mr. MUZZEY was appointed to prepare the statement.

At a meeting held on the 28th of September, Mr. MUZZEY presented a report, in the form of an address to the people of Cambridge, upon the subject referred to him at the preceding meeting. The report was unanimously adopted by the Board; and four thousand copies of the same, with the names of the members of the School Committee affixed thereto, were ordered to be printed for general distribution.

Attest:

W. W. WELLINGTON, *Secretary.*

## A D D R E S S.

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TO THE PEOPLE OF CAMBRIDGE:—

It has been the custom of your School Committee to reserve for discussion in their Annual Report, such matters of interest as transpire in the public schools during the year. A recent event in the Allston Grammar School, however, has been made to assume such importance as to seem to require a departure from this custom. It is true that misrepresentation and abuse in time bring their own correction; but during the period of their sway, they may produce infinite harm. To remove false impressions of fact, so that the elements for a just judgment may exist, is our present purpose; and we address you with the conviction that an appeal for justice, calmly and truthfully presented, can hardly fail of its aim in a fair-minded and intelligent community.

On the 12th of June, corporal punishment was inflicted upon Josephine Foster, a pupil of the Allston Grammar School, by Miss Sarah M. Gray, an assistant teacher in that school.

At a meeting of the School Committee, held the next day, the following communication was received:—

"CAMBRIDGEPORT, Mass., June 13, 1866.

*To the Honorable Board of School Committee :*

We, the undersigned, Charles Foster and Elizabeth Foster, do hereby make complaint and prefer charges against Mr. B. W. Roberts, Miss Sarah M. Gray, and Miss Hodges, for cruelty in punishment inflicted on our daughter, Josephine Foster, at the Allston Grammar School, on the 12th of June. We think and believe our daughter, Josephine Foster, was, without sufficient cause, cruelly and most shamefully punished ; and we ask and pray that the honorable Committee will have justice done us.

Yours with respect,

E. FOSTER,  
CHARLES FOSTER."

The Board ordered notice of this complaint to be served on Mr. Roberts; and at a meeting of the Board, held on the 18th of June, each of the accused teachers made an oral statement of the cause and nature of the punishment, after which the following order was adopted : —

*Ordered,* That, when this Committee adjourns, it adjourn to meet on Thursday, the twenty-first day of June, at 7½ o'clock, P.M.; and that notice be given to Mr. and Mrs. Foster, and also to the accused, that they will then have an opportunity to appear and give evidence concerning the charges made in the communication of the 13th inst.

At the time assigned for the hearing, the complainants, with their counsel, S. H. Folsom, Esq., and the teachers, with their counsel, Hon. C. T. Russell, appeared, and both parties were fully heard by the Board.

Evidence was offered which satisfied the Board of the following facts: During the forenoon session



of the school, on the day of the punishment, Josephine Foster, a member of the school, sixteen years of age, refused to comply with a direction of Mr. Roberts in her writing lesson. For such disobedience, the master, as a punishment, ordered her to stand in front of the other pupils, and told her to take that position thereafter during the hours of instruction in writing, until she was ready to comply with his requirement. This punishment seemed to make but little impression upon her.

Mr. Roberts was absent from the schoolroom during the opening hour of the afternoon session; and Miss Gray, with another female teacher, had charge of the room. While the principal was absent, Miss Gray observed Josephine engaged in whispering with another girl, and, going to her seat, inquired of her if she had been whispering; to which Josephine replied, "Yes." Miss Gray then asked, "What do you think of whispering?" Josephine answered, "I don't know." The manner of answering expressed indifference and defiance, being, as the teacher described it, equivalent to the words, "I don't care." Miss Gray then put the same questions to Josephine's companion in the offence, who answered in the same words used by Josephine, and imitated her disrespectful manner. Miss Gray thereupon sent both of the girls to the recitation-room, following them there herself. She inquired what they had been whispering about, and was informed by Josephine that her

companion asked her, in substance, if she was going to obey Mr. Roberts' order during the writing lesson; to which she (Josephine) replied, "No." Leaving Josephine in the room, Miss Gray took the other pupil into a separate apartment, inflicted upon her hand a few blows with a rattan, and dismissed her to her seat. Miss Gray then returned to the recitation-room, and directed Josephine to hold out her hand for similar punishment. This she refused to do, saying, "I won't be whipped." Miss Gray endeavored, unsuccessfully, to persuade her to obey; but, meeting only with a persistent refusal, concluded to suspend the attempt for the time, and to await Mr. Roberts' return. Meanwhile, Josephine remained in the recitation-room.

Mr. Roberts reached the schoolroom about a quarter past three o'clock, and Miss Gray at once reported the case to him. He expressed regret that the difficulty had arisen, particularly as the girl had frequently before manifested unwillingness to comply with the requirements of her teachers, and was of a disobedient and stubborn nature. He suggested that Josephine be allowed to take recess with the other scholars, in the hope that the exercise and mingling with other pupils might bring her to a better frame of mind. The period of recess was improved by Mr. Roberts and Miss Gray to consult together, and with other teachers of the school, as to what ought to be done. After conferring, all agreed

that an abandonment of the intended punishment would, under the circumstances, have a pernicious effect on the particular pupil, and injure the general discipline of the school. Mr. Roberts, however, declined to take the case into his own hands, — saying to Miss Gray that it would be less humiliating to the girl to submit to a female teacher than to him, and that, as Josephine had manifested a disposition to make physical resistance, she (Miss Gray) might call upon one of the other female teachers, if she required assistance. He also recommended her to use his ferule (a flexible instrument, made of two flat pieces of leather, sewed together, and filled with some soft substance), as less likely to produce injury, should a blow, by accident, fall elsewhere than upon the hand. This ferule was shown to be a common implement of punishment in schools, and to be in use in several of the other Grammar schools of the city.

When the recess was over, Josephine was directed to return to the recitation-room by Miss Gray, who requested Miss Hodges, an assistant teacher, to accompany her there. Miss Gray then informed Josephine that she must submit to the punishment, and endeavored to reason her into acquiescence. Josephine refused, saying, as before, “I won’t be whipped;” and immediately, and before any blow was struck, set up a loud screaming, and, as Miss Gray made an attempt to inflict a blow upon her hand, she violently resisted. Up to this time, Miss Hodges had



remained a passive observer of what was taking place; but Miss Gray, finding it impossible to inflict the punishment alone, now asked Miss Hodges to assist her. Miss Hodges, accordingly, held Josephine's left hand, while Miss Gray inflicted several moderate blows upon the right hand. These blows were not severe, and could not have occasioned much pain. It was the opinion of both Miss Hodges and Miss Gray, that Josephine's outcries, which she began before the first blow was given, arose from anger and the desire to make a sensation. As these outcries disturbed the school, and occasioned derisive laughter on the part of some of the boys, Mr. Roberts, for the purpose of restoring order and gaining an opportunity to visit the recitation-room himself, ordered the boys to perform a marching movement, to the music of the piano (a regular exercise of the school, which occupies just two minutes). Entering the recitation room, Mr. Roberts ordered Josephine to cease screaming, and, taking her hand (which Miss Hodges relinquished), he told her that she must be punished until the outcry was stopped. This ceased shortly, but five blows being administered in Mr. Roberts' presence. He then left the recitation-room, and returned to the schoolroom just as the boys were concluding the marching, he having been absent from his room less than two minutes. After Mr. Roberts left the recitation-room, Miss Gray entered into conversation with Josephine; remarking to her that she would not



have insulted or resisted Mr. Roberts, and that she (Miss Gray) must be respected and obeyed equally with the principal, in his absence and while exercising his authority. After considerable persuasion, Josephine held out her hand voluntarily, and received from Miss Gray from three to five light blows.

Miss Hodges then, at Miss Gray's request, left the room, and Miss Gray continued her efforts to produce a good effect from the discipline administered. In this labor she had reason to suppose herself successful, when, while sitting with her arm around the pupil, and engaged in friendly conversation with her (the school having been dismissed), they were interrupted by the violent entrance into the room of Josephine's mother, brother, and sister, accompanied by another person. Evidently laboring under great excitement produced by an exaggerated account of the affair, the mother at once proceeded, in her daughter's presence, to denounce Miss Gray and Miss Hodges, in an angry manner, for the punishment. But, after an explanation, she then, as in her testimony at the hearing, conceded the propriety of some corporal punishment of her daughter, although she objected to the manner in which it was inflicted. In all, from fifteen to twenty blows were inflicted. These were administered by Miss Gray alone, and were upon the hand only. Josephine and her mother testified, that, for four days, her left arm and thumb bore marks which were caused by Mr. Rob-

erts' and Miss Hodges' holding her. Her right hand, they also testified, showed some red marks, which disappeared by eight o'clock of the same evening. It appeared, at the hearing, that another teacher had been obliged to whip Josephine, for serious misconduct, a few months previous to this occasion; and that, during the preceding three or four months, she had disobeyed the principal of the school as often as once in two or three days. It also appeared, that Josephine was a member of the third class, and that her teachers supposed her to be not over thirteen years of age. The common age of members of that class is even less than that. The Allston Grammar School, at the time of this occurrence, numbered over five hundred pupils. Mr. Roberts has been its master for eighteen years, and Miss Gray and Miss Hodges both are teachers of several years' experience.

We have thus minutely detailed the main facts of the case, so that the careful reader may be able to compare them with the prejudiced and exaggerated accounts that have found their way into some of the public prints, and because we deem it due to all concerned in the occurrence, that a full and authentic statement of the leading facts that appeared at the hearing should be made public.

It will be observed, —

1. That the offence for which the punishment was

inflicted did not consist of whispering merely, but was aggravated by the determination to resist the proper requirement of the master as to the writing lesson, expressed in the whisper, and the after-impertinence and contempt for authority offered to Miss Gray. It should be borne in mind, also, that the general record of the pupil's conduct in school was bad.

2. That but one teacher inflicted the punishment. All that was done by the other teachers was to hold the pupil, and this was necessary for her own safety; as, otherwise, the blows might have fallen, during her resistance, elsewhere than, as intended, upon her hand. The marks made by the holding were no part of the punishment, but recklessly brought upon herself by her wrongful resistance.

3. No blow was struck in haste or anger; nor did any receive its impulse from malice or revenge. The evidence showed no trace of improper motive on the teachers' part.

4. The punishment was inflicted after consultation among the teachers. When the pupil manifested a determination to offer forcible resistance, the teacher suspended action, and an opportunity was given to the pupil for reflection and relaxation.

5. It is a well-known fact, that rank of class, not age, mainly determines the degree of humiliation and disgrace attaching to punishment in the eyes of school-children. Thus, a member of the first or

highest class, if only thirteen years of age, would feel more shame at being subjected to corporal punishment, than would a pupil of sixteen who belonged to the third class.

6. The instrument with which the punishment was given was selected with humane forethought to prevent the possibility of injury to the pupil through her resistance. And the master, desiring to spare the girl any unnecessary shame, declined to take charge of the punishment, and directed it to be inflicted by, and in the presence of, only female teachers.

7. Nor should it be forgotten, that the punishment secured its end, in that the pupil finally acknowledged the authority of Miss Gray, and submitted voluntarily to correction at her hands; and that the teacher had secured a salutary influence over the pupil, and was found in kindly intercourse with her, on the entrance of her mother into the room.

At the time of this occurrence, the following rule was in force:—

“*Discipline.*— It is enjoined on the instructors to exercise vigilant, prudent, and firm discipline, and to govern by persuasion and gentle measures, as far as practicable. In every case in which a teacher shall think it necessary to inflict corporal punishment, said teacher shall make and preserve a statement in writing of the nature of the offence and the severity of the punishment; which statement shall be subject to the inspection of the sub-committee of the school.” — *Regulations of the Public Schools of Cambridge*, chap. ii. sec. 9.

The evidence produced at the hearing failed to



satisfy the Board, that, under this rule, there had been such an improper use of the teacher's power, in this particular case, as to demand the interference of the School Committee. They, therefore, after due deliberation and consideration of all the facts, unanimously adopted the following resolution:—

*Resolved*, That, having heard the evidence and arguments of both the complainants and the teachers, regarding the punishment inflicted on Josephine Foster, we are of opinion that the case does not require any action on the part of this Board.

The Committee were not at liberty to censure the teachers for a mere error of discretion, in the infliction of punishment not clearly excessive, and not resulting in serious consequences to the pupil. Still less could the Board try these teachers by the standard of what its members might have thought it proper to do in the case, had they themselves stood in the place of the teachers.

The Board had to exercise a *judicial* office, and therefore could inquire into and determine only the question of an alleged transgression of their rule. It was this question alone that both parties appealed to the Board to decide. And, having passed upon that, they had no further duty in those proceedings. An inquiry into the expediency of the rule itself was not, on that occasion, pertinent or admissible, but belonged to other functions of the Board than those they were then convened to exercise. Plain as this point seems, it is believed that much misapprehension has existed

upon it; for members of the Board who condemn the practice of corporal punishment in schools, have been unjustly assailed for their votes on this occasion, and charged with inconsistency of action. As well charge a juror, who disbelieves in the rightfulness of capital punishment, with unfaithfulness to his principles, because, being sworn to try the prisoner *by the evidence*, he agrees to a verdict of guilty of murder.

As related to the history of this case, we deem it incumbent upon us to notice the effort which has been made to stigmatize the Cambridge rule concerning corporal punishment as of an unusual and inhuman character. With strange perversity, the report has been spread abroad that the School Committee of Cambridge tolerate, if not encourage, by rule, cruel and uncommon punishments in our schools; and this charge has been circulated with an industry worthy only of the service of truth; until, at length, the falsehood comes back to us burdened with the censure of foreign lands, and threatens to intrude its influence among the political and social problems of the time.

We are not indifferent to the unhappy fame which the authors of this groundless charge have given to our community. It would, perhaps, be reasonable to expect our own citizens to carefully acquaint themselves with the facts, before lending their unnatural aid to the work of degrading the reputation of our school system. But no one, with knowledge of the facts,

could have made the charge. It becomes our duty to refute it.

In respect to corporal punishment, the schools of Cambridge are, and have always been, subject to the principles, and under the protection, of the common law, which prevails throughout the land. What the wisdom of our courts and legislation, tender of personal rights, allows, and nothing beyond that, may be done here, as elsewhere. We have no peculiar rule. We confer no extraordinary power upon our teachers. The rule on this subject has been of long standing, and existed when several of the gentlemen who, in their petition asking for its essential modification, express themselves as "shocked by the fact brought to light" regarding its existence, by the Foster case, were themselves members of the Board.

By the public law, the teacher stands to the pupil *in loco parentis*. What a father may lawfully do in the correction of his child, the teacher may do to the pupil. The authority of the teacher over the child in school, in matters of discipline, is measured exactly by the authority of the parent in the home government. Neither may abuse the child. Both have the right to inflict corporal punishment; but both must act from proper motives, and administer the correction in a proper manner. There can be no dispute about these principles. They are sustained by numerous deci-

sions. This subject has recently received the attention of the Supreme Court of Vermont, who, in the course of an able opinion, use the following language:—

“A schoolmaster has the right to inflict reasonable corporal punishment. Much difference prevails as to the circumstances which will justify the infliction of punishment, and the extent to which it may properly be administered. On account of this difference of opinion and the difficulty which exists in determining what is a reasonable punishment, and the advantage which the master has by being on the spot to know all the circumstances, the manner, look, tone, gestures, of the offender (which are not always easily described), and thus to form a correct opinion as to the necessity and extent of the punishment, considerable allowance should be made to the teacher by way of protecting him in the exercise of his discretion. Especially should he have this indulgence when he appears to have acted from good motives, and not from anger or malice. Hence the teacher is not to be held liable on the ground of excess of punishment, unless the punishment is *clearly* excessive, and would be held so in the general judgment of reasonable men. But, if there is any reasonable doubt whether the punishment was excessive, the master should have the benefit of that doubt.”

On the point whether the *instrument* used by the teacher in inflicting the punishment was a proper one, the Court remark:—

“Evidence that the same kind of instrument was used in other schools in the vicinity will rebut the charge of malice, by showing that the teacher did not resort to an unusual instrument.”—*Lander v. Seaver*, 32 Vermont R., 123.

And to the same effect is the decision of the Supreme Court of North Carolina, in the case of *The State v. Pendergrass*, 2 Dever. & Bat. R., 365, wherein the Court say:—



“The teacher is the substitute of the parent, and is charged in part with the performance of his duties, and in the exercise of these delegated duties is invested with his power. Within the sphere of his authority, the master is the judge when correction is required, and of the degree of correction necessary; and like all others intrusted with a discretion, he cannot be made penally responsible for error of judgment, but only for wickedness of purpose. His judgment must be *presumed* correct, because he is the judge, and also because of the difficulty of proving the offence, or accumulation of offences, that called for correction; of showing the peculiar temperament, disposition, and habits of the individual corrected; and of exhibiting the various milder means that may have been ineffectually used before correction was resorted to.”

(See also *Stevens v. Fassett*, 27 Maine, 280; *Commonwealth v. Randall*, 4 Gray, 36; Reeves' Domestic Rel. 374, 375; Wharton's Amer. Crim. Law, 1259; 2 Kent Com., 205.)

While school committees in our own State and country have thought it not advisable to deprive the teacher of his established right to inflict corporal punishment, they have, in many places, sought, by special rules, to limit its exercise. Such is the aim of our own Regulation upon this subject, which enjoins upon teachers “to govern by persuasion and gentle measures, as far as practicable,” and requires a record to be kept of the particular circumstances of every case in which corporal punishment is resorted to. In seeking to restrain the infliction of such punishment to extreme cases, our own Rule will be found to compare favorably with the rules in force in other places. For instance, the Boston Rule is as follows:—

“ All instructors shall aim at such discipline in their schools as would be exercised by a kind, judicious parent in his family ; shall avoid corporal punishment in all cases where good order can be preserved by milder measures ; and in no case shall resort be had to confinement in a closet or wardrobe, or to other cruel or unusual punishment, as a mode of discipline. It shall be the duty of the several masters and teachers in the public schools, at the close of each month, to make, in writing, to the Chairmen of their District Committees, a report of all cases in which corporal punishment has been inflicted ; which report shall state the name of the pupil, the amount of punishment, and the reason for its infliction ; and the Chairman of each District Committee shall, in his quarterly report, give the number of cases of corporal punishment during the previous quarter, and the average to each teacher of the District. Corporal punishment shall be inflicted only after the nature of the offence has been fully explained to the scholar ; and shall be restricted to blows on the hand with a rattan, except in cases where a pupil refuses to submit to such punishment. Corporal punishment shall not be inflicted on a girl in a Grammar school without the consent and approval of the master, which, in each individual case, must first be obtained.” — *Regulations of the Public Schools of Boston*, chap. viii. sec. 13.

The rules in other places in our Commonwealth are of the same general tenor.

So far, then, from being behind public sentiment in this matter, our Regulation places us with those advanced communities that seek to shelter the pupil from the unrestrained exercise of that power of the teacher which the courts recognize and the legislature allows. But behind courts and legislatures rests the force which controls this matter. It is because parents, in the government of their children at home, are not ready to abandon the rod, that it is found difficult to dispense with it in school. Surely the parent

may do this more easily than the teacher. The parent has the advantage of the natural tie of affection, and of an infinite variety of substitutes for corporal punishment, which are denied to the teacher. Reform in this matter, therefore, must begin outside the schoolroom. The persuasive influences of the home discipline will then reach the schoolroom, and relieve the teacher in the most trying part of his task. But do not expect of him there what you yourselves yet fail to accomplish at home. Remember also that our rules are made for the government of the Public Schools, embracing children of both native and foreign parentage, coming from all the various classes of our society, and surrounded by widely differing influences of home. We cannot discriminate between pupils in the rule itself: that necessarily must be left to the discretion of the teacher to whom its execution is entrusted.

In a schoolroom, the first thing to be secured is good order. Without this, lessons can be neither learned nor recited. To secure this, there must be rules, and they must be faithfully observed. Nor is this all. An important office of the teacher is to create in the pupil a proper respect for authority. Instruction on this point cannot begin too early in the school-life of the child, nor can he there obtain aught of mental or moral training more essential to his building-up into a good and



useful citizen. American youth, for the reason that they are born to an inheritance of unparalleled individual freedom, stand in peculiar need of the early acquisition of a reverence for law and its administrators. The work of the schoolroom is but half done, if it does not teach this lesson. There, a rule not enforced, or indifferently executed, certainly is worse than a dead letter. It begets a mischievous influence, that may last through life. School regulations, therefore, must be firmly, judiciously, and impartially enforced. The teacher should require implicit obedience from his scholars, and he is entitled to respectful deportment from all who enter his schoolroom, or speak of him in the presence and hearing of his pupils; for example is of great potency with the young. "Sire," said the sensible schoolmaster to Charles II., when receiving his royal visit, "pull off thy hat in my school; for, if my scholars discover that the king is above me in authority here, they will soon cease to respect me."

A practical knowledge of school government teaches that rules are useless without penalties for their violation. Children differ in moral nature as widely as in physical development. All cannot be governed in the same way. What is serious punishment to one, may be utterly ineffective with another. Hence the difficulty in limiting the teacher's range of choice as to modes of discipline, which has restrained school com-



mittees from taking away the rod, that still finds its place at the fireside.

But there are substitutes for the rod worse than the rod itself. An eminent Massachusetts judge, whose jurisdiction made him familiar with the treatment of sailors, has expressed the opinion, that, since the abolition of flogging on shipboard, more cruelty has been practised toward them, under other forms of punishment, than they ever suffered from the lash. Is there no cause to fear, that this might, in some measure, prove true with children, whose teachers were forced to discover some substitute for corporal punishment, that should, nevertheless, meet the case of the most obstinate and unruly? For, setting this aside, the teacher's range of other forms of punishment is small, and against each arises its special objection. We pass by those means of torture and cruelty, which, though sometimes resorted to, are not likely to disgrace Cambridge schools, to consider, for a moment, some of the substitutes for corporal punishment in most familiar use.

*Deprivation of recess* may injure the health of the pupil, who, perhaps more than any other scholar, needs the pure air, or the opportunity to throw off the superabundant energy of his nature, that, pent up, drives him into the very mischief in the schoolroom for which he is punished. *Detaining a pupil after school* often produces inconvenience in family ar-

rangements at home, and punishes the unoffending teacher, who must remain also, even more than the guilty pupil. There is something exceedingly repulsive in the *holding up of a scholar to ridicule* before the school, which is sometimes resorted to as a mode of discipline. Many a person dates a life of suffering back to the hour when, a sensitive child, he was made by his teacher, for some fault, "the laughing-stock of the school." *Expulsion from school* is often suggested as solving the difficulty. But they who rely upon this, as it seems to us, can hardly have considered the very weighty objections that lie against it. The education of youth is not a voluntary matter in Massachusetts. Our statute law compels "Every person having under his control a child between the ages of eight and fourteen years," to cause such child to attend school during a certain portion of each year. — *Gen. Stats.*, ch. 41, sec. 1. Our public policy does not permit the idle or vicious child to grow up without the elevating influences of education; and yet the easy remedy of expulsion would cast upon our community this very class, and take from them the only reclaiming influence of their lives. It is to be feared that such would seek dismissal from school rather than shun it. The community at large have a stake in this matter. Are life and property too secure now? Do the haunts of ignorance and crime need further recruitment? Are our houses of correction in want of tenants? Shall we decimate our public schools to fill our reform

schools? Viewed only in the selfish light of protection to society, we cannot afford to adopt the measure of expulsion. And shall we give no thought to the higher interests of humanity, with which this fatal policy is linked?

Whatever the privilege of the teacher as to punishments, he ought always to regard the development of the moral nature of the child as the grace and crown of his work. Let him make his appeal first of all to those promptings to duty and right which are not wholly wanting in any human breast, and resort to the lower influence of physical force only when the loftier effort fails of its end.

Before concluding, we ought, in justice to the teachers of the Allston School, to remark, that the infliction of corporal punishment has not been confined to that school alone. It has been resorted to, as a necessary means of correction, with both sexes of pupils, in most, if not all, of the Grammar schools in the city. Such being the fact, and Mr. Roberts and his assistants having been held undeserving of censure at the recent investigation, the Board could not have been expected to distinguish their case from others at the annual election of teachers, which followed this event. During the interval between the hearing and the election, the regular private examination of the Allston School was made by a member of the Board, who reported that he found the school, "in all its



classes, and in every respect, up to its usual high standard," and that he failed to discover within the school any trace of the public excitement, but observed "everywhere a quiet, ready, and cheerful compliance on the part of the pupils with the wishes and requirements of their teachers."

And now it only remains for us to say, that, should the School Committee, in accordance with the desire expressed in the petition which has been addressed to them, take from our teachers altogether the power of inflicting corporal punishment upon one sex of pupils, they would make a distinction between boys and girls of doubtful justice, and inaugurate an experiment in school-discipline which wise and experienced friends of public schools elsewhere think too hazardous to attempt, and one that evidently must depend for success very much upon the co-operation of parents, and the banishment of the rod also from the home.

J. WARREN MERRILL, *Chairman ex officio.*  
 HENRY W. MUZZEY,  
 COURTLAND W. ANABLE,  
 CHARLES A. SKINNER,  
 HENRY W. WARREN,  
 JOHN B. TAYLOR,  
 NATHANIEL MIGHILL,  
 SUMNER R. MASON,  
 HENRY C. BADGER,  
 JAMES R. MORSE,  
 JOHN N. MURDOCK,

*School  
 Committee.*

CAMBRIDGE, Sept. 28, 1866.