

## PUBLIC SCHOOL DEPARTMENT.

[Contributed to, and under the management of, Mr. S. McAllister, Headmaster of Ryerson School, Toronto.]

## ORDER.

BY J. O. MILLER, MADOC.

AMONG the many great questions of the day, perhaps none is of more importance to the teacher than how to obtain and maintain order. Of course by this we do not mean how often the use of the rod is necessary. Alas! those happy days have passed away; and there are probably few amongst us who could tell the exact number of diurnal floggings necessary to the maintenance of attention in the school-room. Doubtless many of us often long for the opportunity to give vent to the pent up vials, and to administer the strap all round; but our professional reputation is at stake, and we must perforce discover some other means of restraining the unruly spirits of both teacher and pupil.

It is comparatively easy to imagine perfect order. Any one who has seen a well-drilled regiment of soldiers go through the manual exercise can easily conceive a regiment of school-children doing the same thing. Theoretically, order is not hard to obtain. A few leading principles must be applied; directions must of course be given; commands must be issued; and the result is—confusion. *Quæ nocent docent*, and any teacher who has tried the above method can easily bear witness to the truth of the assertion. A few suggestions on this important point may therefore be of some value.

First, let us consider the subject as it affects the teacher. Good order depends upon the teacher, and upon him alone. It is perhaps superfluous to add that to obtain it requires long, strong, and continuous effort. How necessary therefore is it, that his bodily health should be perfect! We think that teachers are too apt to neglect this all-important fact. We often complain that we cannot teach so

well on wet, dismal days, as on bright ones; and often the fault is laid at the door of the children. Beyond a doubt, wet weather depresses the spirits, causes us to feel restless and ill at ease. If this is the case, how much more is it so when we are suffering from colds or other slight indisposition. The teacher should guard with the greatest care his bodily health. In order that the mental faculties may have full play, it is absolutely necessary that they be unencumbered by bodily ailments.

But this is not all; mental depression is worse than bodily affliction. How can the teacher hope for a successful day's work if he goes into the school-room with his mind pre-occupied. In order to obtain positive attention, wherein consists *order*, his flow of animal spirits must be good; all cares and anxieties must (for the time being, at least) be put aside; his whole soul must enter into his work. Discouragement and want of immediate success must be boldly met. The consideration of "ways and means" must never be allowed to occupy the mind during school-hours; keep these things for "home-work." Concentrate every effort on the subject under consideration. Be cheerful and hopeful. Do not let the balance of the mind be disturbed by anything. If we thought that teachers ever lost temper we should advise them not to do so; but of course they never do this; therefore, we wish to insist on the improvement of the temper rather than to advise against the loss of it.

*Affability* in the teacher is essential to voluntary obedience on the part of the children. School education is but a continuation of home training, and, except in rare cases, children have been accustomed to habitual kindness from their parents. When a child first comes to school it observes the teacher