

## SCHOOL GOVERNMENT.

The interest felt in this subject, especially by all young and inexperienced teachers, and the prominence which it claims at the hands of all educators, suggests at once its great importance.

The ability to secure a quiet and orderly school-room must be ranked first in the order of acquirements in all who would achieve success in the profession of teaching; for without this all other accomplishments, however great they may be, pass for nothing. In fact it will be found that some of the most signal failures in attempts to teach have been by those who were most amply qualified as to both mental and moral acquirements. Now and then, it is true, a teacher may be found who seems to have no power to communicate to others the knowledge acquired, fails in method and manner of instruction; but such cases I am persuaded are comparatively rare. Some also (a few) fail for want of animation, spirit and enthusiasm in the work of the school-room, arising either from ill health or from a constitutional deficiency, and the "trustees," unwilling to pronounce them lazy, and use that rather disagreeable old Saxon word, vote them "incompetent."

Still, it holds true that the great majority of those who make a failure of it do so through inability to secure respectable order and quiet in the school-room. From my experience and observation I should say the ability to govern is both native and acquired. In the first place nature must have furnished a foundation upon which to build, or there can be no superstructure. When nature has failed, the best Normal School in the country will fail in turning out a teacher, in the true sense of the word; for these institutions cannot undertake to furnish capacity. The teacher, born to govern, as poets to sing, is at once at home in the school-room. The very atmosphere that surrounds her breathes of order and quiet. A look, a motion of the finger—these silent monitors are more potent than the thunder of commands or the threatening rap of the ferule.

There is discipline, which means law,

observable in all the movements of the school-room; but it is discipline that enforces itself. The expressed or implied wish of the teacher is all sufficient to secure perfect and prompt obedience. To spend an hour in such a school-room is simple delight. An instance of this native power to govern is in point. In the absence of a teacher of an intermediate grade a lad of fourteen years, from the next higher grade, was placed in charge by the principal. The moment he had taken his seat on the rostrum and the restless eyes had looked him over, he was master of the situation. No greater respect could have been paid or implicit obedience rendered to a college professor than was accorded to that boy in the teacher's chair. As for himself, he maintained the utmost dignity, moving about among the pupils, many of whom were nearly his age, with a self-assurance and gentlemanly ease that was very remarkable in one without experience and withal so young. It is a matter of wonder that forty or fifty boys and girls, many of them restless and turbulent spirits, unaccustomed to submission and obedience at home, are reduced into a condition of quiet and order for six hours a day by a single will that assumes control of them. Any teacher knows that should any considerable number of them choose to defy her authority, she has no power to surround and capture them.—Mere force at such a time would prove sheer impotence. It is a matter of still greater wonder that such implicit obedience should be accorded to a mere boy, and cannot be accounted for but upon the supposition that he was born to rule.

The large majority of teachers, however, are not so fortunate. Endowed with a moderate amount of executive ability, they learn to reduce order out of chaos after many failures and much bitter experience. Self-discipline must do for them what nature has failed to do. And it is only because they have at last come to recognize fully the importance of reigning queen-like in the school-room, and have determined at all hazards to secure quiet and order, that