

These annual visits to the Counties will be the most pleasant, and I hope the most profitable duties of my office.

In the present report I do not speak of results attained, beyond the preliminaries of organization. In my communication to the Governor, next December the entire history of School work for the year will be given, with full statistical tables.

The topics now to be presented will be considered under the following heads:

1. The work of the State Board of Education.
2. The State Normal School.
3. School Houses.
4. School Revenues. New Assessment and State Census.
5. The Schools and School Authorities of the City of Baltimore.
6. Maryland Agricultural College.
7. Schools for Colored Children.
8. Amendments to the School Law.

I —STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

The Board has held, in addition to three stated meetings required by law, eight special sessions, during which School Commissioners for the Counties were appointed, the Presidents designated, and their salaries fixed. A complete series of Text Books was selected for use of Primary, Grammar and High Schools. Plans for the organization of the Normal School were considered, and a gentleman of known ability and large experience and skill in teaching, was selected as the Principal. A code of By-Laws, with Rules for Government of Schools, and forms for the transaction of business so as to secure entire uniformity and accurate statistical reports, has been issued.

These subjects, requiring much time and study, were discussed in sessions which occupied, on several occasions, the greater part of the day.

In appointing Commissioners, the Board conferred with prominent citizens of each County, and thus, availing themselves of local knowledge, were able to select gentlemen eminently qualified by zeal and intelligence for the work.

Before deciding upon the series of Text Books, large facilities were secured through the enterprise of publishers and the criticisms of competing agents, for the thorough examination of all the educational works issued in the United States. Amid so many excellent series, it was difficult to decide, but it is claimed that, in the result attained, Maryland has secured, according to the mature judgment of the Board, the very best Text Books that are published, and has the further advantage of introducing the Books into the Schools at a cost extraordinarily low, being, after the payment of all expenses of transportation to Baltimore and of distribution through the State, less than one-half the usual retail price. By an arrangement with Messrs. Cushings & Bailey, who were appointed State Agents for Text Book distribution, the whole business has been so systematized and simplified that this Department, in which great trouble and complication were