

Teachers' Associations having been wisely recommended as important means for elevating the standard of public instruction, liberal provision for their encouragement, embodied in the School law, would tend greatly to increase their efficiency and usefulness. The time specified for the duration of their meetings is so short that but little good can be effected. If, instead of Saturday, the Friday and Saturday of some month, once in each term, were given them, and a certain minimum amount fixed, to be appropriated by each County Board, to procure the services of competent lecturers, provide educational works and periodicals calculated to diffuse among the teachers a more extensive knowledge of the high and responsible duties of their honorable profession, and of the improved methods of teaching and School government, I think the Associations would fully accomplish the purposes of the law for their organization.

I would respectfully call your attention to a comparison of Sec. 7, Chap. 3, Title 1; Sec. 6 Chap. 4, same title, and Sec. 5, Chap. 7, Title 2, of the School Law, with each other. In the first it is optional with parents to provide books of the uniform series in any manner; in the next the idea is conveyed that a rate-bill is to be charged for their use; and in the last section, the various Boards have committed to them the power of providing for the sale of the books, or charging a rate-bill for their use. It seems as if the action of the Board would include all the scholars under its jurisdiction, yet the first section alluded to apparently exempts the parent complying with it, from obedience. A verbal modification of these sections would make them clear and consistent.

I find great objection to purchasing books and stationery, or paying for their use, as required by law. The citizens say that they thought the system was to be free, but that the present mode of procuring books and stationery, with the increased tax, makes it less free than before. It is my opinion, and that of nearly all with whom I have conversed upon the subject, that the cheapest and most uniform way to supply the books and stationery, would be by an additional tax of two cents. The revenue thus arising would be ample for the purpose; obviate this objection; tend to make the system, in this particular, the same in all the counties; have it emphatically free, and by relieving the teacher of the onerous duties of a book-agent, which consume much of his precious time, and not unfrequently occasion unpleasant feelings, would better qualify him to bestow his undivided attention upon the official duties of the School. As an additional argument, I respectfully submit an extract from the report of the Superintendent of a sister State: "It will be found, almost without exception, that where the system of making the Schools free, by a property tax, has been adopted, the Schools are better, more permanent in their arrangements, and more regular in their attendance, than in those districts where rate-bills are still collected."

Very respectfully, yours, &c.,

R. C. MCGINN,

*Prest. Board School Com., Balto. Co.*