

only. The Schools have all been in operation since the 1st of September except one School, which we closed at the end of the Fall term for want of scholars. It will be re-opened, in all probability, on the 2nd of January, 1866. The number of boys attending school is four hundred and twenty-five, of girls three hundred and seventy-two.

The above is as faithful an exhibit of the condition of our Schools as I can furnish, but it is by no means a fair exhibit of what the Schools ought to be. We have had a good many things to contend against. Our oldest citizens say, that there has not been as much sickness in our County, particularly among children, for any year for the last forty years, as during the past Fall, and this alone had almost broken up our Schools in some neighborhoods. Another cause is the great scarcity of labor. Farmers have been compelled to keep their larger children at home to assist them in their farming operations, and the smaller ones, because the larger ones could not accompany them to School. I have had many assurances, however, that the attendance will be much better after the commencement of the new year. So much for general facts. I will now take up your last communication and give such information as I can upon the various topics embraced in your questions in the order in which they occur.

Your inquiries as to the condition of the Schools under the old law, the mode of supervision, &c., have been answered above, except the supervision. The Schools were *nominally* under the *immediate* supervision of three Trustees for each School, who appointed the Teacher, and then considered that their duties for the year were finished. The Teacher had to procure, as he could best do, all necessaries for his School House, or go without them, and the consequence was, he went without them as a general rule. There were appointed biennially, by the Orphans Court, five School Commissioners, who met, I think, twice a year, to distribute the School funds among the Schools; they made a report of their proceedings to the Orphans Court, and considered that their duties were all performed. It was not considered to be the duty of anybody to visit the Schools and see that the Teacher performed his duty, or at least such a duty was never performed. Under such a state of affairs, it was impossible for the Schools to attain to any great degree of efficiency. Our people are, as a general thing, an intelligent people, and in my opinion, there are comparatively few, who cannot read and write. There are some who have never enjoyed the blessings of instruction, and can neither read nor write.

I cannot say that I have noticed any disposition among our people to go to the expense of building suitable School Houses. While they seem to favor the cause of education, and to be friendly to the new system, they at the same time entertain the idea, that our Board is to do everything of this kind. They pay their taxes and then seem to consider that their part is done. I hope to see a better state of things in this respect, should not something occur to make them oppose the system instead of favoring it.

Before we received the By-Laws, we had determined to pay our Teachers, without regard to the number of their pupils, one hundred dollars per term, and as we had engaged them until the 1st of February, that will be the salaries for the time they are engaged. We have adopted the plan of selling the Text Books to the scholars, and each scholar owns the books he uses. We paid for salaries for the term ending November 15th, the sum of \$4,500. The amount of incidental expenses I am unable to give you, because some things necessary for the Schools have been furnished by the School Visitors, and the bills have not yet been presented to the Board. The amount, however, will not exceed \$300 to the best of my judgment. While our present income shall continue, we will be able to keep our Schools in operation, and gradually lay by a small surplus to improve our School Houses, beginning with those in the worst order, and continuing until the work shall be accom-