

ment of salaries. Each district was, to all intents and purposes, independent in its action, not because of the failure of the law, but owing to its long-continued neglect and loose administration.

No good could possibly have resulted from this method of conducting the Schools, and the end showed a community in some respects disposed to act arbitrarily, a slight diminution of the principal fund, but few good School-Houses, few good Scholars, and a great degree of lethargy.

This same want of system, in connection with the fact that while the law provided a plan by which School-Houses could be built, (by district taxation,) it failed in the essential feature of enforcing the payment of the tax levied, prevented the erection of School-Houses in a very great degree. Yet we have, in this County, some very good School-Houses, built mainly by the liberality of patrons. Generally, the houses are poorly built, improperly planned, badly located, and unfit for the purposes designed.

The absence of any concert of action, the election by patrons, frequently, of personal friends or political partizans, a looseness in the examination, and a seeming carelessness on the part of patrons as to the qualification of Teachers, served to introduce some decidedly incompetent instructors. In the main the average standing is passable. Yet many of those now teaching, on examination, may be found wanting. The low standard may possibly be, in some measure, due to the fact that there was no available or valuable supervision.

The Schools were supported generally, for nine months in each year, by an annual tax, averaging about thirteen cents on the one hundred dollars of the taxable property of the County; a tuition fee of one dollar per Term for all deemed able to pay, the State's annual appropriation, and the revenue derived from the permanent fund of nearly sixty thousand dollars.

The average efficiency of the Schools was far below what should have been held a very low standard.

The average intelligence of the County is good—better than could well be expected from the character of the Schools. We find but few who cannot read and write.

The interest in the Public Schools has, for the past year, been visibly increasing, and, in many localities, encouraged by the new system, the people are growing zealous and awaking to the necessity of greater exertion in sustaining Schools and building houses. As they become acquainted with the principles of the new law, they find a greater assurance of benefit to be derived, and there seems to be an increasing desire to lay hold with energy, and to assist in the erection of a permanent system.

Our Board has adopted, as the minimum salary for a School of fifteen Scholars, taught by a Teacher holding a second grade permit or certificate, the sum of fifty (\$50) dollars, adding fifteen dollars for first grades: an increase of two dollars and a half for each additional Scholar up to twenty-five, and one dollar for each pupil over twenty-five; making the maximum for second grade one hundred and fifteen dollars, and for first grade one hundred and thirty. But one-half is allowed for Scholars entering after the expiration of the half term.

For the distribution of Text-Books, after a trial of the system proposed in the By-Laws of the State Board, and its failure, from various considerations, to secure a proper result, the Board determined to supply books upon the requisition of Teachers, accompanied by the money, and the sale to patrons, Teachers and Pupils, on two days in each week. Books are furnished direct from the rooms of the Board.

The reports for the last term, ending November 15th, show the following result: