

if needed, we can perhaps secure such legislation as will entirely adapt our School Law to the important work which it is designed to accomplish.

While traveling through your County, you have had a full opportunity to converse with the citizens and to make personal investigations, as well as to examine School-Houses, School Furniture and School Teachers. Let me have the result of your observations, which, added to such information as I have gathered, will give us a fair exhibit of what has been done, what we are doing, and what we expect to do.

Respectfully yours,

L. VAN BOKKELEN.

ALLEGANY COUNTY.

In reply to your communication, asking information upon certain topics suggested, I have the honor to report :

Topic 1st "The condition of Public Schools under the old local law—the School-Houses, Teachers, and mode of supervising."

Answer. The old law, all will concede, was extremely defective. In many respects, especially toward the close of its existence, it was worse than none at all, for these reasons among others. There was no supervision. Supervision was supposed to be exercised by local directors. The directors were often illiterate men, who paid little attention to the Schools. The School-Houses were very inferior. Little money was spent upon them. They were poorly built, poorly furnished—in short, scarcely School-Houses at all. Teachers were placed in Schools who were themselves often very ignorant. Reading, writing and arithmetic being the branches mostly taught, and these very imperfectly, it degenerated at last into a system of very bad habits for the children. It wanted, in itself, the elements and agencies of vitality.

Topic 2d. "By what funds supported, and what degree of efficiency the Schools attained?"

Answer. They were supported by the State and County Tax, and by tuition charges of \$1 per term for each Scholar. Their efficiency, or want of efficiency, is covered in answer to topic 1st. Of real efficiency there was none.

Topic 3d. "Your opinion of the general intelligence of the people of the County, and how many can read and write?"

Answer. The general intelligence of the people of the County is at an extremely low ebb. A large proportion can neither read nor write, and make no such pretensions. Many imagine they can read and write, when they can certainly not do either; and of those who can read and write, no great number can do much more. Of