

tality of the Schools and the liberal use of the Free School Fund, and partly from the influence of an industrious and enterprising class of citizens from other States, who have caused many parts of the previously barren hills to rejoice and blossom.

I believe the general intelligence of the people of this County to be fully up to, if not above the ordinary level. The wealth of the County is not concentrated in the hands of a few large proprietors, but is diffused among an active, industrious, and enterprising people of moderate means.

I may say, upon the *fourth topic*, that there is evidence of zeal in sustaining the Schools, not perhaps so much as the ardent friends of the system would desire to find; but a decided, general feeling in favor of a uniform system of public instruction. There may be a few, but, in my judgment, a comparatively small number, who are exerting what influence they possess to discredit the system, and neutralize the labor of its friends. There are others who were opposed to its introduction, but who are now disposed to accept it as the established policy of the State, and do not hesitate to declare that the public good requires it should be made as perfect as possible. There are others who are simply indifferent; having no direct personal interest in the subject, they evince no care for its success. There is still another class, who have always been sincere friends of public education, but who, because the introduction of the present general system has been so closely associated with other great political measures which have divided our people, are more or less influenced by prejudices which it is hoped forbearance and a prudent administration of the system will speedily remove. A large majority of our people, however, as I believe, sincerely and heartily approve it, and are willing to sustain the Schools and contribute to the development and perfection of the system. As an evidence of the favor with which the Public Schools are regarded, I may remark that but few private Schools are sustained in the entire County. Up to the present time, in the experience of the officers of the late County system and that of the present Board, a disposition to aid in the erection and proper furnishing of School-Houses, has been met with in a few localities only. The idea seems to have pervaded the minds of the people, that the entire expense of the system, including the purchase and enclosure of lots, the erection and furnishing of houses and the sinking of wells for a supply of water, as well as the employment of Teachers, and the supply of all needed apparatus, was provided for in the tax and the ordinary revenues of the Board; and to such an extent has this idea prevailed, that the County Board has not unfrequently been called upon to refund to individuals money voluntarily contributed by them years ago toward erecting School-Houses for their own immediate neighborhoods. This subject, however, is, I believe, gradually becoming better understood. Your late official visit to the County, and the explanatory addresses delivered during your tour, to assemblies of citizens in different districts, has had, in this respect, I believe, a salutary effect. Nevertheless, I