

Almost every School House in the County needs repairs; some of them are in a dilapidated condition; but situated as they are, not much has been done, or can be done to improve them before the spring. The Teachers under the old local laws were generally well qualified, having to undergo a rigid examination before a competent Board of Examiners. The School law in operation immediately before the present, passed in January session, 1854, chapter 278,—an Act to amend and modify the previous Primary School System of Charles County—appointed five School Commissioners, who examined Teachers, and appointed five local Trustees; which Trustees appointed Teachers for their respective Schools. No one could be appointed who did not hold a certificate of qualification from the School Commissioners. The local Trustees could discharge the Teacher whenever they wished to do so.

The Schools were supported by the "Free School Fund," the "Academic Fund," and additional County taxation to make the Teacher's salary amount to three hundred dollars. Private contributions generally increased the salary. The County was taxed to build and repair School Houses.

Under the Primary School System, the standard of Education, intelligence, and general information, has been very perceptibly and considerably elevated among our people. The poorer classes can generally read and write. How many are not able to do so I cannot inform you.

I believe there is a willingness on the part of our people to build and furnish School Houses; but, with some exceptions, their ability is not commensurate with their inclinations, owing to losses sustained by war.

During the Fall Term, when we had no By-Laws to govern us, we agreed to pay the Teachers in the following way. The minimum salary per term was seventy-five dollars; the maximum, one hundred. The Schools were divided into four classes:

- First class having less than twenty scholars.
- Second " " between twenty and thirty scholars.
- Third " " between thirty and forty scholars.
- Fourth " " over forty scholars.

In the first class, eight pupils, or less, entitled the Teacher to seventy-five dollars per term, and for every additional pupil three dollars and twelve and a half cents were paid. (\$3.12½.)

In the second class, eighteen pupils, or less, made the minimum, and for each additional pupil \$3.12½.

In third class, twenty-five pupils, or less, increased the same way.

In fourth class, thirty-three pupils, or less, entitled the Teacher to \$75.00, &c., &c.

The object of the Board was to protect the smaller Schools, but I am not pleased with the practical working of our plan; and our Board is well pleased to adopt the mode directed by the State Board. Before seeing the By-Laws, however, we had changed for the present term the foregoing plan, to one identical in every