

While a few alleged the want of time for its performance, the most of them excused themselves on the honest plea of inability ; so that Teachers were generally taken on trust, and the children deprived of the powerful incentive which a systematic course of examinations can alone furnish.

If the enterprise and business capacity of a people could be taken as a correct standard of intelligence, few communities would excel the adult citizens of Kent County ; but shrewdness is not intelligence, and a high degree of capacity for business may co-exist with an extremely defective education.

Of such, there is undoubtedly a great deal in this County ; but the number who can neither read nor write, I am disposed to believe, in the absence of any reliable statistics, is not large ; not, perhaps, exceeding 10 per centum.

Our citizens *seem* to know the value of education ; but, for a variety of reasons, do not accord to the Public Schools that hearty and zealous support which would place them at once in the position they should occupy. The inefficiency of the former system, the increase of taxation, and the advanced rates of living, are among the causes of apathy ; but at the foundation of all, lies the great error of placing a merely utilitarian value upon the Public Schools, with little or no regard to the intrinsic value of education, beyond a tolerably good investment. But I think there is a more healthy feeling growing up, and have no doubt that the people will soon cheerfully assume the burden of remodeling and beautifying their School premises.

The Board of School Commissioners of this County adopted the graduated system of salaries, as recommended by the Commissioners' Convention, held in the City of Baltimore, in August last, making three hundred dollars the minimum, and increasing two dollars and fifty cents each, per session, for the first ten pupils above fifteen, one dollar and fifty cents for the next ten, and one dollar for the next twenty-five.

With us, this plan has not been found to work well, and we shall, I think, be obliged to modify it essentially, or to abandon it altogether.

In the distribution of Text Books, our plan has been to take the receipts of Teachers, and deduct upon settlement, the amount actually sold, from the salary due. Hitherto we have kept five depositories, but now that the main distribution has been made, the number may be reduced to three, or perhaps two. This mode of distribution has been attended with no other expense than cartage from the boat to the place of deposit.

The question of the duration of our Schools is one of considerable difficulty. Upon the basis of the reports of the session ended November 15th, it would be easy enough to make a reliable calculation, but there are now four Schools in operation, which were then vacant, and one or two others may soon be opened. Besides this, I am very confident that but little more than one-third of the children of suitable age to attend, were in the Schools during the