

'65. Table D shows a total average attendance of pupils of 4997, which is 792 in excess of that of the previous year; while the total attendance of different pupils is 8630, or 559 in excess of the attendance of '65. The surplus of average scholars over the total number of different pupils when compared with the report of '65 indicates a commendable though very moderate improvement in the continuance of children at school during several terms.

By a comparison of the total attendance during the year with the census of children between the ages of six and nineteen, about five-sevenths of the number authorized by law to attend school were present, or about one-eighth more than attended any previous year from the first establishment of the Public School system in the county. This favorable change may have been effected by the wise provision in the law which furnishes an assistant teacher to every school numbering sixty pupils. It has increased the teaching corps in the county twenty per cent. and thereby afforded additional facilities for improvement to the scholars.

During the year more than three thousand miles were travelled in making three hundred and twenty-seven regular school visits. With few exceptions each subsequent visit found the schools in much better condition materially, mentally and morally than when first visited. The teachers almost universally appreciate the present school system, and by a commendable zeal in their arduous labors have been generally successful in winning for it a favorable reception at the hands of the public.

It has been found that wherever the school visitor has actively co-operated with the teacher and Commissioner, the scholars have made a progress far in advance of that made by others where this united co-operation is wanting. It is to be regretted that there are yet school districts in the county where it has been impossible to induce gentlemen to act as visitors.

Without discussing the comparative merits of ladies and gentlemen as teachers, I have found the schools taught by ladies as efficiently managed and governed as those taught by gentlemen. The prejudice existing against the employment of the former is rapidly disappearing, and the assertion may be ventured that they will in a few years be sought for in preference to gentlemen.

There are two prominent evils in connection with the practical operations of the school, which urgently call for remedial measures, viz., irregular attendance and tardiness. It is true, the by-laws impose checks to prevent their occurrence, but a glance at any school register will show that these checks fail to accomplish the desired result. It is generally the case that the most numerous complaints against teachers and schools proceed from parents whose children attend only