

property of the individual Districts. The salaries paid to clerks and examiners were from the County levy. Our people have always paid their school taxes with alacrity; so willing indeed are they to do so, that when there was actually no law, through some oversight in codification, to compel them, they voluntarily and unhesitatingly paid the required assessment.

In this connection I may be permitted to reply to the inquiry made in your circular of September 24. "What action has been instituted to secure the continuance of the local tax for prolonging the school terms, and procuring necessary apparatus for efficient school work?" In accordance with your suggestion the attention of the people of the County was called, through the public prints, to the fact, that after the first day of January, 1867, by provision of the constitution, all local laws for the collection of taxes for the support of schools would be abrogated, and that the proportionate share of Talbot County of the fund derived from State taxation would be sufficient to keep the schools open but one half of the year; that, in order that County taxation might be authoritatively made, it would be necessary for the people to express their assent through the ballot box. I requested that the tickets to be used upon the day of the election should have upon their face such expressions as should indicate the views of the voters upon this subject, and they were so printed. The result showed that there was no opposition worthy of consideration in any other than one district, and there, I feel sure, the opposition originated from a misconception of the nature of the question at issue. The majority in the whole County was 967 in a vote of 1531, only 282 ballots having been cast against authorizing the Legislature to pass a law for Local Taxation to support the schools.

III. "Your opinion of the general intelligence of the people of the County, and whether there are many who cannot read and write."

I think we can compare favorably with any of our sister Counties, in general intelligence. There is no evidence that we are lacking in that faculty called by some metaphysicians and known by common people as *common sense*,—the faculty which makes us to do our part in the work of the world successfully and well. We are all farmers, and it is said by strangers, very successful farmers; not inapt to seize hold of all advantages, and by applying mind to matter, work out our good. We are secluded from the rest of the world, but only so far secluded as to escape the mental and moral epidemics which pass over other communities. Our people, like all others purely agricultural, are not so bright and smart, as the residents of towns and cities, whose wits