

cost of transportation, and of the stationery, which is furnished to the schools free of all charge whatever. To those who advocate the supplying books free of all cost to the children it may be said, that we believe the present system is economical, because it prevents the wanton destruction of books; that it teaches the children neatness and care, by placing the ownership in them; and lastly, that it secures the important end of enabling the pupil to possess and retain the manuals with which he has become familiar to be used as means to continue his education, or as books of reference after he shall have left school. The presence of books in every family is a means of educating the popular mind, and if there can be no others let them be the Text-Books.

There is one class of our citizens who make no objection to the law, but on the contrary are its most earnest advocates—I mean the teachers: They of all others are the most capable from their general intelligence, and their position to judge of its merits and defects. At a meeting of the "Teachers' Association" of this County, they gave expression to their estimation of the system, in a series of resolutions warmly endorsing all its leading features. I can safely commit the defense of the law to this body of our citizens, feeling confident that they who can speak without the slightest suspicion of partisan or selfish motives, are able and willing to uphold the new school system, and repel any attack that may be made upon it. Under it, they secure a just estimate of their own services, permanence of situation, punctuality in their pay, sympathy in the labor and an appreciation of their honorable profession. And under this stimulus they all declare that they are able to teach with greater zeal and renewed energy and increased ability.

Having replied to all your enquiries, as fully as is necessary, or perhaps more at length than I should have done, I proceed to give an account of the school work in this County during the past year and up to this date, disregarding those matters which are set forth satisfactorily in the tabular reports herewith rendered.

When this Board assumed the charge of the schools, it found the County already laid off into School Districts, each of which was supplied with a house, and with a teacher actively engaged in his duties. There was no record of the boundaries of these districts, and no recorded title to a large majority of the houses and lands attached. The number of School Districts was greater and so remains, than would be necessary but for the peculiar formation of the County. The segregation of our population into small neighborhoods by the numerous water courses, or estuaries, by which the whole County is intersected, renders a multiplication of School Districts unavoidable, if we would place Schools within the reach of every child. This leads to an evil hereafter to be referred to,