

great purposes for which government is instituted, and capable to direct its powers, free from selfish designs, for the greatest good of the greatest number.

It is wise to investigate the causes of the inefficiency of the various systems of Public Schools heretofore enforced in our State. We are now behind the times, and in no grade of Public Instruction can we compare favorably with many younger States. Most of our Academies are little better than Grammar Schools. Our Colleges are provided with a full corps of Professors, but exhibit small catalogues of students. The fault has been with the old system of Primary instruction. Primary instruction has been inefficient because none of the means of conducting a School successfully have been supplied, and whenever a parent has had the ability, children, even of tender years, and young men have been sent away from home to secure elementary, academic and collegiate education. Our School Houses, with few exceptions, are inconveniently located, badly built and out of repair. I doubt whether we have two hundred really comfortable and suitable School houses in the State. The furniture is of the rudest kind. Books have been procured by the children slowly, and of various editions. No maps or black boards have been provided. In these badly furnished and rudely built, and inconveniently located houses, Teachers, with very small salaries, have been placed to instruct from twenty to fifty children, some without books, all without the ordinary comforts and conveniences of a well ordered School.

We need not be surprised at the result. The public money has been spent and very little good accomplished. It is true that this is not the case everywhere. There are honorable exceptions. There are Counties which, by liberal local tax, have been sustaining Schools, building School Houses, providing furniture and books, and dealing liberally with Teachers. They have succeeded, but their success is not yet equal to their expectation or intention. Compare such Counties with those which have made little progress, and it will be found that the difference results from the liberal appropriations for School Houses, School furniture and Teachers salaries, and the active and intelligent supervision which controls the system. The one has provided the means essential to the most moderate degree of success, the other has neglected to do likewise.

School work, like all other work, is "matter of fact business." We may indulge in earnest declamation about the beauty of virtue, the value of intelligence, the necessity of education. We may contrast the comforts of civilized life with the discomforts of the uncivilized. We may be enthusiastic about the spirit of the age and the wonders of the 19th century. These sentiments are right, but they do nothing for the cause of progress unless they lead us to build School Houses