

CHAPTER II. PAGE 35.

SECTION 1. The dilapidated condition of many School houses in the State is a shame and reproach to our sense of decency and humanity. To defective buildings and miserable furniture may be attributed the inefficiency of Schools, and the utter disgust with which teachers of good manners retire from the work at the first moment that their contract sets them free. It is true that there are exceptions to the general rule, and in some Counties the children are provided with comfortable tenements, but these exceptions are lamentably few.

A letter received from a friend of Education says, "At present our Private and Public Schools, with few exceptions, are taught in places entirely unsuitable for Educational purposes. Dilapidated store-rooms, and rooms above stores are the miserable dens into which our children are gathered. The streets are their only play-grounds."

In a report of one of our County School Boards, I find the following: "Architects have displayed evidence of calculation for fitness and design in all buildings except in School houses. The Stable shows marked improvement for the comfort and convenience of its occupants, and even the pig-stye is improved, but the *School House*, the sanctum where the mind, the immortal mind, "which connects humanity with divinity, and may forever glow in the lustre of a brighter day," has been overlooked; and unventilated, diminutive erections are made to answer the purposes of School houses. It seems to have been forgotten that respiration is an essential support of health and life, and the common pure air which God has poured out in world-wide abundance is, in a great measure, denied to the youth of our County, while endeavoring to obtain an Education."

Such flagrant deficiencies should be immediately rectified. An ample appropriation ought to be promptly made to build and repair School houses, even if roads and bridges have, for a short period, to go without the annual sums which their hungry appetites demand.