

of rules and regulations, with a revised course of study, was adopted by the Board of Public Instruction October 1, 1889, renewed in 1891, and again in 1894. This greatly aids the teachers in classifying their schools and systematizing the work of the school term. This was received with general approval, did much to improve our school work and make it uniform throughout the county.

County Institutes.--Realizing at an early date the necessity for better teachers and better schools, I constantly advocated the holding of Teachers' Institutes, and as early as 1887 organized one at Ocala, to continue one week. While comparatively little was accomplished in so brief a time, the results were felt throughout the county, and a demand came from not only the teachers, but also from the patrons and citizens for their continuance. They were continued thereafter at stated times for one or two weeks each year until a system of institutes continued until the organization of Summer Schools by State Superintendent W. N. Sheats, which met my hearty approval and co-operation. My efforts in behalf of this educational movement need no comment from me in this report.

Teachers' Associations.--While fully appreciating the value of Teachers' Associations as a mental stimulant and an incentive to better work in the school-room, the duties of my office have been so numerous and exacting as to leave little time for attention to them. I will state, however, that considerable interest has been manifested by our teachers during past years in a County Teachers' Association, which was continued for several years and was usually well sustained by those who could attend. Our county is so large, schools in some sections are so scattered and remote from the place of assembling, that it has been utterly impossible for many teachers to attend such meetings. At present the Association is discontinued.

Amendments to School Laws.--

1. I would let the school law stand as it is, especially the part that relates to the examination of teachers.
2. I would make the selection and appointment of teachers for any and all counties the duty of Boards of Public Instruction.
3. I would advocate the abolition of the present census law as a useless expense to the State. If the census is of such importance that it must be taken, place that responsibility upon the County Superintendent, and let it be taken in January, while schools are in session, instead of June, thereby getting a far more reliable census than in the past.

Conclusion.--In making this, my last report to your office, let me state that a school system has been thoroughly established in this county, and it now only needs complete development by those to whose care it has been committed. Notwithstanding the great disasters which we have sustained, our finances have been so managed as to meet all obligations without increasing the rate of taxation to the utmost limit. The aim of my work has been to leave the cause of popular education in Marion county safe and firmly established, not only with the officials, but in the hearts and homes of our people.

Respectfully,

M. L. PAYNE,

County Superintendent Public Instruction.