

consent of the County Board. The Board allows pupils to attend two or more schools, but they must be reported as "illegal" in all but their own district.

2d. Whereas, formerly in plain violation of the law, patrons chose their teachers, and the Board merely registered their decrees for the past two years the Board has, to a greater extent than heretofore, made the assignments. The old plan resulted in some grievous misfits. The new plan yields better results. Naturally, the change occasioned some friction at first, but on the whole, not more, but rather less, I think, than there was under the old plan; for the patrons were not always a unit in the choice of teachers, and much vigorous "kicking" was indulged. Of course, it is the dictate of common sense not to make a point of displeasing patrons in the matter of assignments. Other things being equal, it is better to have them pleased. It promotes attendance. But when they insist on improper assignments, the Board thought the educational interests of the children more important even than the gratification of the patrons.

Needed Amendments to School Law.--The present school law, as a whole, is excellent and has yielded good results, but I would like to see it amended in some particulars.

1st. The Third Grade Certificate is too easy to obtain. Raise the requirement to 65 per cent. average, with 45 per cent. as a minimum; or 70 per cent. average, with minimum of 50 per cent., and strike Composition and History from the required branches. It is quite possible to get the present per cent. and be incompetent in branches that are primary and very important.

2d. Also, so amend the law that the practice of grading the Reading, in part, by the Superintendent, may have clear, legal warrant. I think, too, that 50 per cent., or more, of the Reading Examination should be oral. I have known the written examinations creditably passed by persons who could not read fluently and intelligibly. In the majority of our schools, the pupils are studying in primary branches, such as are embraced in the requirement for a Third Grade Certificate. In them, the foundation work is done, and the teachers should be well equipped.

3d. There should be one Grading Committee for each Judicial Circuit of the State. This would diminish the opportunity for the play of the local and personal influences, and, in some counties, insure more competent Grading Committees.

4th. The phraseology and terminology of the law can be improved so as to make its several parts more consistent, and remove ambiguities.

Work of the Law and State Normal School.--The law, as a whole, has wrought very great improvement. To it, and to the State Normal School, conducted by a corps of earnest, conscientious instructors, with an untiring and progressive President, our county is indebted for a marked improvement in the character of the teaching in our public schools.

R. Q. BAKER,
County Superintendent.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

I am pleased to make the following general report on educational matters from Washington county.