

Improvements--Influence of Sub-Districts.--Since the issuance of your last bi-ennial report, we have created three school Sub-districts. While the revenue from this source does not relieve the shortage of funds, there is the marked improvement that inevitably follows when the community substantially demands longer terms and better teachers.

We note in this direction that where the people subject themselves to higher taxation for school purposes, the school is held in higher esteem, the attendance is much better, co-operation is accorded the teacher, and there is an almost unanimity of purpose on the part of all concerned. Unless a better law is enacted at the next session of our Legislature, we shall endeavor to establish more sub-districts.

Our Aim.--Owing to shortage of school funds, our Board had to suspend building and other improvements in this department of the work. Instead of increasing the number of schools, we have purposed to make the ones already established accomplish more and better results. We will have this year about 72 schools, with a total enrollment of about 2,850 children, 300 more than was reported two years ago.

Teachers.--Our teachers are generally doing good work, and ambition is no stranger among them. We note here that a great number are young teachers, and have entered the work for life.

Unfavorable Conditions.--This report will be misleading if I fail to mention some of the unfavorable features.

Along with the improved conditions of schools generally, and the aspiration of teachers already emphasized, it is to be lamented that the following are facts:

- 1st. That the average daily attendance will barely reach 60 per cent. of the enrollment in all schools of the county, excepting the sub-districts.
- 2d. That the cause of irregular attendance is largely chargeable to careless parents, who are wanting in interest and authority to overcome the reluctance of children.
- 3d. That the selection of teachers by patrons has resulted in material injury to whole communities.
- 4th. That the lowering of the county school levy from 5 to 4 mills has wrought bad results.

Needed Laws and Amendments.--

- 1st. A revenue law that will materially increase the school fund, making it available by July 1st each year.
- 2d. A law prescribing qualifications for the office of County Superintendents.
- 3d. A law giving School Boards full power to make the county levy for school purposes.
- 4th. A law requiring Penmanship and Book-keeping taught in the public schools.