

Teachers.--I find a great improvement in the qualification of teachers for which I give the Uniform Examination Law credit. There is no comparison between the teachers of to-day and of a few years ago. I find no trouble in filling the better places; some trouble filling the poorer places. I think that there should be a closer relation between the teaching of pupils and their agricultural or other environment. I think that industrial training should be made a feature in training schools and of examinations

Respectfully,

R. L. WILLIAMS,
County Superintendent.

MANATEE COUNTY

Dear Sir--Complying with your request I beg to submit herewith a brief review of the operations of the public schools of our county for the past two years:

Schools Organized and New Buildings.--Keeping pace with the general growth of the county and increase of population, more schools and more buildings became necessary. Since my last report to you our county board has established five new schools and made very liberal allowances for the erection of eight buildings in addition to needed repairs upon old buildings.

In making appropriations for the erection of new buildings the County Board always requires the patrons to bear a part of the cost in the way of labor, etc.

As far as it has been within the power of the school boards during my administration, from a financial standpoint, it has been their aim to provide for the convenience and comfort of the pupils in every school district suitable frame buildings, furnished with patent desks and stoves; to accomplish this end the patrons have done much in assisting the board, and now I believe I am safe in saying that the general average of our school buildings will compare favorably with those of any county in the State.

Our Financial Condition.--(line omitted) is not what we most desire; our school fund is just a year in arrears, mainly attributable to the following causes:

- 1st. Refusal of old Board of County Commissioners to grant school levy asked for.
- 2d. Low assessed valuation of real and personal property in the county.
- 3d. The time of collecting taxes, i. e., but a trifle of county taxes collected until after our school term closes.
- 4th. Large increase in scholastic population, necessitating more schools, more teachers, more buildings, more furniture, etc., without a corresponding increase in the school fund.

To preserve the present status of our schools no further retrenchment can be wisely advocated; the remedy can be more easily found in abolishing the five mills limit and placing the power of fixing the school levy with the county school board. Our people always cheerfully pay their school tax;