

advancement of pupils are unsatisfactory, due mainly to short terms and many inexperienced teachers. I feel that I can congratulate our teachers upon the earnestness manifested in their work on such small salaries and so short terms.

Buildings.--Marion County has as good, if not better, buildings than any county of the State. We have had fairly good buildings for several years and in the last two years have built but few houses. At Ft. McCoy, we had a house to burn, worth \$500, which was replaced with another building equally as good if not better, the patrons and citizens paying more than half the cost. We have built small, but good buildings at Eaton Creek, Lake Bryant, Andalusia and Free Stone, in each instance the Board has paid only for the material. We have spent about \$1,000, on repairs the past two years, and now have the most of our white school houses ceiled, painted and in fairly good repair.

Financial.--The financial condition of the county is not satisfactory but is much better than heretofore. While my Annual Report made to the State Superintendent, the 30th day of last June, shows the total outstanding warrants of the county to be a little over \$8,000, of this amount more than \$1,000 was advanced to the different sub-districts, which I think was contrary to the letter of the law, but, under the circumstances, it seemed and has worked for the best.

In September the outstanding warrants were the lowest of any time during the year, only \$3,000 remained unpaid, and of this amount about \$500 were due from sub-districts, and the treasurer's report showed a balance of nearly \$500, making an actual deficit of only \$2,000 this I consider very encouraging, when four years ago the lowest the outstanding warrants went during the year, was over \$13,000.

The Board has made the most satisfactory arrangements this year it ever had for the advancement of funds to meet all school expenses.

It arranged with Monroe and Chambliss, Bankers, of Ocala, to pay all warrants as presented at their bank at face value, and the Board pays 6 per cent. interest per annum on all warrants held by them, from the date they are cashed at bank, until there is money in the treasury to pay the same. In this manner we save considerable interest in warrants not being cashed in a week or two weeks, and often a month after they are issued. Our treasurer is required to take up warrants from the bank as soon as he has any funds in the treasury.

Our great need is more taxes to improve the schools. We can never advance to a high degree of efficiency without a longer term and better salaries. The tax-payers of this county would willingly and gladly pay more school taxes. On my rounds over the county, I make it a special point to talk with people about taxes, and I find that the representative men do not complain about taxes for schools, nor do the majority. They say they will willingly pay twice their school taxes if it will improve schools.

The maximum school levy should be abolished, and the amount to be levied for each county should be fixed by the County School Board.

Special Tax School District.--We have six organized Special Tax School Districts in the county and several more in process of organization. The Special Tax School District is popular where tried, and has greatly improved each school and I believe within another year we will have twenty or more. While I am heartily in favor of the Special District plan, I do not think it can take the place of an increase in the general school levy.