

Finances.--Our financial condition is still improving. The present board has canceled a debt of about \$10,000 in the last four years, and have a surplus of about \$4,000 with which to begin the present term.

Our board is of the opinion that the county school levy should be in the hands of the School Boards, and that the present 5 mill limit should be superseded by an 8 mill limit. Our people favor more school tax.

Special Tax Districts.--The expense of establishing a special tax district--from \$50 to \$75 or more--and the common objection to any new style red-tape institution among a people who are extra conservative, and consequently fail to see the good points in any thing out of the usual line, are the causes of the unpopularity of this mode of levying a school tax, while at the same time the people are generally outspoken for more school tax. There would be no need of the sub-district if 8 mills were made the limit, and the school levy given to the school boards.

Teachers.--There has been slow but marked improvement in the work done by our teachers. Many attend the different Normal schools and colleges during the Summer, and those who do not feel able to bear this expense, attend a seven weeks' school conducted by the Superintendent.

Examination Law.--I am opposed to any tinkering with the present examination law. Every time it has been changed its efficiency has been injured. It is a hardship only to those who had better be in some other business than teaching. I can see no good to accrue from changing the present grading law. That the examination law, including the grading law, has revolutionized the common schools of the State and made them the hope and pride of the people, is acknowledged by all. Let us change nothing till we are sure of something better, and nothing better has yet been presented. Polish, brighten and put keener edge on the sword we already have, if we would do more execution.

Compulsory Education Law

I am opposed to any attempt at compulsory education. The Anglo-Saxon is not easily driven. He submits to paternal government, if at all, with poor grace, and grows more and more angry the longer he submits. He is of the opinion that he is the sole and rightful judge as to whether his children shall go to school or not, and that he is a usurper who takes away that right; and I agree with him. A much more sensible law would be a law requiring every County Board to expend the one mill tax exclusively for school books to be loaned to the children of parents who have more than one attending school. Such a law would have in many cases the effect desired by a compulsory law.

Transportation of Pupils.--Our board has not yet seen the way clear to introduce the transportation idea. The theory is good, and as soon as we have funds sufficient, doubtless it will be put into practice.

Better Training in Our Schools for Life Work.--The people of Florida are an agricultural and horticultural and stock raising people. A common school training which will make better farmers, better pomologists, better gardeners, better stock raisers, would certainly be in improvement which all should appreciate. A simple treatise on agricultural chemistry, a text-book on the proper treatment of domestic animals and a common school botany would be all that is necessary for a beginning. Much better that our children be thoroughly