

BIENNIAL REPORT

OF THE

SUPERINTENDENT

OF

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION,

TO THE

FIFTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE

STATE OF IOWA.

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DES MOINES:

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STATE OF IOWA,  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, }  
DES MOINES, January 13, 1874.

*To the General Assembly of the State of Iowa:*

I have the honor to transmit, herewith, the sixteenth regular report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the period commencing September 16th, 1871, and ending September 15th, 1873; together with accompanying documents.

Very respectfully,  
ALONZO ABERNETHY,  
*Superintendent of Public Instruction.*

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## SIXTEENTH REGULAR REPORT

OF THE

## SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

1872-1873.

In presenting this report of the condition and progress of the public schools of Iowa for the past two years, attention is first called to the following general summary of statistics. The evidences of unabated interest manifested in our common schools, and of their substantial improvement, from year to year, afford just cause for congratulation:

## GENERAL SUMMARY.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS.		1872.	1873.
Number of district townships.....		1317	1266
Increase in two years.....	6		
Number of sub-districts.....		8438	7814
Increase in two years.....	77		
Number of independent districts.....		400	1270
Increase in two years.....	926		
Whole number of school districts.....		1717	2536
Increase in two years.....	932		
SCHOOLS.			
Number of ungraded.....		8156	8397
Increase in two years.....	556		
Number of graded.....		403	419
Increase in two years.....	130		
Whole number of schools.....		8559	8816
Increase in two years.....	686		
Average number of months schools have been taught.....		6.5	6.5

## TEACHERS.

	1872.	1873.
Number of males employed.....	5901	6091
Increase in two years.....	598	
Number of females employed.....	9320	10193
Increase in two years.....	1589	
Whole number employed.....	15221	16284
Increase in two years.....	2187	
Average compensation of males per month.....	\$36.00	\$36.28
Increase in two years.....	\$ .28	
Average compensation of females per mo. ....	\$28.06	\$27.68
Decrease in two years.....	\$ .12	

## SCHOLARS.

No. of males between the ages of 5 and 21.....	244890	252485
No. of females between the ages of 5 and 21.....	230609	238859
Whole number of persons between the ages of 5 and 21.....	475499	491344
Increase in two years.....	29862	
No. of pupils enrolled in public schools.....	340789	347572
Increase in two years.....	5332	
Percentage of enrollment on total enumeration.....		71.
Total average attendance.....	214905	204204
Decrease in two years.....	7522	
Percentage of attendance upon whole number registered.....		58.
Percentage of attendance upon enumeration.....		42.

## SCHOOL-HOUSES.

Number of frame.....	7122	7782
Increase in two years.....	1313	
Number of brick.....	626	635
Increase in two years.....	35	
Number of stone.....	257	259
Increase in two years.....	12	
Number of log.....	248	180
Decrease in two years.....	114	
Whole number.....	8253	8856
Increase in two years.....	1246	
Value of.....	\$ 7,495,926.19	\$8,164,324.66
Increase in two years.....	\$ 1,391,308.50	

## APPARATUS.

	1872.	1873.
Value of.....	\$113,009.75	\$122,337.60
Increase in two years.....	\$17,963.17	

## DISTRICT LIBRARIES.

Number of volumes.....	11633	12944
Increase in two years.....	1462	

## SCHOOL FINANCES.

## RECEIPTS.

*School-House Fund.*

Amount received from district tax.....	\$1,223,759.71	\$1,102,129.88
Amount received from other sources.....		155,849.50

*Contingent Fund.*

Amount received from district tax.....	756,616.88	661,948.35
Amount received from other sources.....		82,164.92

*Teachers' Fund.*

Amount received from district tax.....	1,721,712.92	1,805,050.69
Amount received from semi-annual apportionment.....	603,769.72	605,353.50
Amount received from other sources.....		107,183.55
Total receipts.....	\$ 4,305,850.23	\$4,519,689.39

## EXPENDITURES.

*School-House Fund.*

Amount paid for school-houses and for sites.....	\$1,187,283.64	\$ 900,339.34
Amount paid for library and apparatus.....	25,439.08	20,129.21
Amount paid on bonds and interest.....		263,614.89

*Contingent Fund.*

Amount paid for rent of school-houses.....	\$ 13,009.94	\$ 17,372.40
Amount paid for repairing school-houses.....	206,586.43	160,063.83
Amount paid for fuel.....	197,219.24	228,150.64
Amount paid secretary and treasurer.....	70,836.63	74,858.29
Amount paid for other purposes.....	235,244.97	316,310.25

*Teachers' Fund.*

	1872.	1873.
Amount paid teachers .....	\$2,130,047.84	\$2,248,676.69
Total expenses for school purposes.....	4,065,667.77	4,229,455.54
Increase in two years .....	\$624,844.07	

## PERMANENT SCHOOL FUND.

Amount of the permanent school fund, Nov. 1st, 1873.....	\$3,294,742.83
Amount of interest on the same for 1873.....	275,789.42
Number of acres of school land yet unpatented.....	374,263

## INDEBTEDNESS.

Amount of outstanding district orders, Sept. 15th, 1873 .....	\$502,690.90
Amount of outstanding independent district bonds, Sept. 15, 1873 .....	644,982.48
Total indebtedness, Sept. 15, 1873.....	1,147,673.38

## COUNTY SUPERVISION.

## EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS.

	1872.	1873.
Number of applicants examined.....	15119	17287
Number receiving Professional certificates.....	410	594
Number receiving certificates of First Grade.....	4218	5167
Number receiving certificates of Second Grade.....	6406	7239
Number receiving certificates of Third Grade.....	2462	2264
Total number of certificates granted.....	13496	15264
Number of applicants rejected.....	1623	3268
Number of certificates revoked.....	36	220
Average age of applicants.....	22	22
Number who have had no experience .....	2779	3543
Number who have taught less than one year.....	2721	3275
Number who have attended a Normal School .....	1111	1710
Number of teachers employed who hold State Certificates.....		87

## VISITATION OF SCHOOLS.

Number of schools visited by county superintendents.....	7655	7665
Number of visits made during the year .....	10572	11969
Number of educational meetings held.....	365	466
Number of public addresses made during the year .....	283	517

## APPEALS.

Number of cases of appeal decided by county superintendents .....	139	179
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## INSTITUTES.

	1872.	1873.
Number of counties in which institutes have been held.....	85	84
Number of teachers who have attended teachers' institutes.....	8595	8700

## PRIVATE SCHOOLS.

Number of private schools.....	78	121
Number of teachers employed.....	246	364
Number of pupils attending.....	6163	12132

## COST OF EDUCATION IN IOWA FOR 1873.

## BASED ON TOTAL POPULATION.

For tuition per capita.....	\$1.80
For incidentals per capita.....	.95
For erection of school-houses per capita.....	.93
Total per capita.....	\$3.38

## BASED ON SCHOOL POPULATION, (between 5 and 21.)

For tuition per capita.....	\$4.58
For incidentals per capita.....	1.66
For erection of school-houses per capita.....	2.36
Total per capita.....	\$8.60

## BASED ON TOTAL ENROLLMENT.

For tuition per pupil registered.....	\$6.47
For incidentals per pupil registered.....	2.35
For erection of school-houses per pupil registered.....	3.35
Total per pupil registered.....	\$12.17

## BASED ON TOTAL AVERAGE ATTENDANCE.

For tuition per pupil.....	\$11.01
For incidentals per pupil.....	4.00
For erection of school-houses per pupil.....	5.70
Total per pupil.....	\$20.71

## BASED ON TAXABLE PROPERTY.

For tuition, number of mills on the dollar.....	6.17
For incidentals, number of mills on the dollar.....	2.24
For erection of school-houses, number of mills on the dollar.....	3.18
Total number of mills on the dollar.....	11.59



## BASED ON THE NUMBER OF HEADS OF FAMILIES.

For family per family.....	\$ 9.44
For incidentals per family.....	3.43
For erection of school-houses per family.....	4.89
Total.....	\$17.76

## BASED ON NUMBER OF ADULT MALES, (estimated).

For tuition per capita.....	\$ 8.07
For incidentals per capita.....	2.93
For erection of school-houses per capita.....	4.17
Total.....	\$15.17

The foregoing statistics and comparisons exhibit concisely the present condition of our public schools. They show a uniform and healthy growth in almost every department, during the last two years; the only especial exception to this, being the marked increase in the number of independent districts, to the cause of which, allusion is made elsewhere in the remarks upon recent changes in the school laws.

Full abstracts of the reports of county superintendents will be found in the tabular statements in the latter part of this report. These tables contain all the information required by law, and also embrace many items not heretofore published. The reports exhibit on the whole a very satisfactory condition of the public schools.

For the purpose of exhibiting the rapid and uniform growth of our school system for a more extended period, the following table has been prepared, embracing some of the more important items of school statistics for the last ten years, from 1863 to 1873.

Years.	No. of Schools.	No. of youth be- tween the ages of 5 and 12 years in 1863.	No. of youth en- rolled.	Total average attendance.	Average num- ber of pupils taught in each school has been taught.	Average com- pensation of teachers per month.		Amount paid Teachers.	Am't paid for school-houses, grounds, libraries, and apparatus.	Am't paid for fuel and other conveniences.	Total amount expended for school purposes.
						Males.	Females.				
1863	6237	231,781	109,760	111,185	4 m	2 d	\$22.00	\$15.68	\$70,115	\$160,255	\$761,767
1864	6623	386,912	110,569	117,378	5 m	5 d	25.12	17.66	89,673	74,711	1,097,800
1865	7732	1,109,155	117,681	119,945	5 m	5 d	31.04	22.80	98,738	1,171	1,228,865
1866	7000	368,408	121,827	130,174	5 m	4 d	33.60	23.76	1,006,623	572,593	1,579,216
1867	6229	379,969	148,620	149,620	5 m	6 d	35.88	24.01	1,101,353	692,661	1,800,014
1868	6439	998,620	160,773	160,773	6 m	8 d	35.32	25.72	1,330,825	917,065	2,247,890
1869	6788	118,128	178,329	178,329	6 m	12 d	36.90	27.10	1,438,904	941,884	2,380,788
1870	6919	431,134	202,840	202,840	6 m	4 d	35.00	26.80	1,636,951	1,046,405	2,683,356
1871	7233	460,620	211,598	211,598	6 m	10 d	36.00	27.80	1,800,803	1,065,931	2,866,734
1872	8541	475,669	214,903	214,903	6 m	10 d	36.00	28.00	2,130,048	1,212,721	3,342,769
1873	8816	101,344	204,204	204,204	6 m	10 d	36.28	27.68	2,248,677	1,181,682	3,430,359

During the period embraced in this table, the total population of the state has increased from 702,162 to 1,249,418, and the total assessed valuation of property, personal and real, from \$167,113,639 to \$364,336,580, the per cent. of increase in population being seventy-eight; in the valuation of property one hundred and eighteen.

The number of schools has increased, during the same period, from 6,237 to 8,816, an increase of forty-one per cent. The increase in the number of schools, however, is less than in other items; the real gain is much greater than would appear from these figures, each room or department of out four hundred and nineteen graded schools, over which a single teacher presides, being counted as one school. These schools which are rapidly increasing in number, require the services of from two to twenty-five teachers each. While in 1863 the number of schools would nearly express the number of teachers required; now the 8,816 schools reported, require the continued services of more than ten thousand teachers. The increase in the number of schools, or of the teachers required, does not fully indicate the growth of our schools, since the increase in these items, is not in the same ratio as in the number of youth and the attendance. In the year 1863 the average attendance per school was thirty-two, in 1873, forty.

By referring to the preceding general summary it will be seen that the reported number of teachers employed in 1873 is 16,284, but as the 8,816 ungraded schools require the services of but one teacher each, and as the graded schools require less than 1,400 teachers the reports show some six thousand more teachers employed than would be actually required if all continued to teach during the whole school term of the year. Teachers, however, are often employed in two or more districts during the same year, and are thus counted twice in the general summary. Deducting the number of these there will still probably remain, three or four thousand teachers in excess of the number of schools. Owing to the general nature of our industries a large number of male teachers are necessarily employed otherwise in the summer season, either in agricultural labor, or in other occupations, which are pursued chiefly during that season of the year. In this manner, the ungraded school is frequently taught by male and female teachers, alternately, during the same year. Because of the increased attendance, and usually of more advanced pupils, and the rigors of our winters, teachers of ungraded schools command a higher salary during the winter term. As stricter discipline, is required, and as in rural districts, teachers are liable to greater exposure to the inclemency of the weather, males are

employed to a greater extent during this season, than females; these facts account in part for the very considerable difference between the salaries of male and female teachers; the salaries paid to females being nearly equal to those paid to males, for similar services rendered during the same season of the year.

The number of persons between the ages of five and twenty-one years, has advanced from 281,733 to 491,344; an increase of seventy-four per cent; the total enrollment has increased in the same ratio, while the total average attendance has increased eighty-three per cent.

The average number of months during which the schools have been taught, has gradually risen from four months and two days to six months and ten days.

The average compensation of male teachers per month, has advanced by an almost uniform law, from \$22.60 to \$36.28; of female teachers from \$15.68 to \$27.68.

The most remarkable advance, however, is found in the school expenditures; the annual amounts paid teachers, rising from \$570,115 to \$2,248,677, an increase of two hundred and ninety-four per cent. The expenditures for new school-houses and sites, and for libraries and apparatus have increased from \$160,253, to 1,184,982, and that for rent and repairs of school-houses, for fuel, for compensation of district secretaries and treasurers, and for other incidentals from \$31,169 to \$796,696. The aggregate annual expenditures rising from \$761,537 in 1863 to \$4,229,455, in 1873, or four hundred and fifty-five per cent.

The significance of these facts is unmistakable. Such munificent expenditures can only be accounted for by the liberality and public spirit of our people, all of whom manifest their love of popular education and their faith in the public schools by the annual dedication, to their support of more than one per cent. of their entire taxable property; this too uninterruptedly through a series of years commencing in the midst of a war which taxed our energies and resources to the extreme, and continuing through years of general depression in business; years of moderate yield of produce, of discouragingly low prices, and even amid the scanty surroundings and privations of pioneer life. Few human enterprises have a grander significance, or give evidence of more noble purpose than the generous contributions from the scanty resources of the pioneer, for the purposes of public education. The cost of supporting the public schools of the state, is a subject of such general discussion at the present time, that it was thought best to

publish some facts giving the cost to each person; to each scholar; to each dollar of taxable property, &c., for the past year.

These facts are based upon the aggregate expenditures for schools, including the interest on the permanent school funds, amounts received from fines, &c., so that the actual cost to our people is somewhat less than the figures given. From these statements it appears that the total expense of supporting the public schools, exclusive of school-house building, is two dollars and fifty-five cents to each man, woman, and child in the state; eight dollars and eighty-two cents to each pupil enrolled in the schools; also twelve dollars and eighty-three cents to each head of a family; about eleven dollars to each adult male, and eight and forty-one one-hundredths mills on the dollar of the taxable property of the state. If the cost of building school-houses be added, the expense is considerably increased as will be seen from the foregoing summary.

There is but little opposition to the levy of taxes for the support of schools, and there would be still less if the funds were always properly guarded and judiciously expended. However much our people disagree upon other subjects, they are practically united upon this. The opposition of wealth has long since ceased to exist, and our wealthy men are usually the most liberal in their views and the most active friends of popular education. They are often found upon our school boards, and usually make the best of school officers. It is not uncommon for boards of directors, especially in the larger towns and cities, to be composed wholly of men who represent the enterprise, wealth and business of their cities.

The taxes which are levied to support the schools, by our people, are self imposed. Under our laws no taxes can be legally levied or collected for the erection of school-houses until they have first been voted by the electors of the district at a legally called school-meeting. Our school-houses are the pride of the state, and an honor to our people. If they are sometimes built at a prodigal expense, the tax-payers have only themselves to blame. The teachers' and contingent funds are determined under certain restrictions, by the boards of directors elected annually in all except independent districts, where the board is wholly changed triennially. The only exception to this method of determining school taxes, is in case of the county school tax of from one to three mills on the dollar, usually the former, which is levied by the board of supervisors. When there is unnecessary extravagance, it will generally be found in the school-house fund, over the amount of which the board



have little or no control, and I have long inclined to the opinion that if the determination of the amount to be levied and the method of expending the school-house taxes were also committed to the board of directors instead of the electors, or to such a fraction of them as may happen to attend one or the other of the annual school meetings, the management would prove both more economical and more judicious.

If the time ever arrives when the three school funds can be consolidated into one, much labor and trouble will be saved in the levy and collection of taxes, and in keeping, disbursing and accounting for the same, and the whole management be greatly simplified.

It has been a matter of no little solicitude with me that the information respecting the present condition and management of the public schools, gathered through the agency of our school officers, is in many respects of such an unsatisfactory character, because unreliable. The deplorable condition of the financial statistics is alluded to under that special head, in another place; in other respects, the statistics do not furnish information sufficiently reliable to be of the highest value. The reports of some of the more important items and such as have received special attention, look suspicious on close inspection.

The law requires each sub-director and each district secretary to report annually, "the number of persons, male and female each, in his district, between the ages of five and twenty-one years." Upon these reports are based the so-called semi-annual apportionments of the teachers' fund, amounting to five or six hundred thousand dollars a year. The reports ought to be correct, so that each district will receive its just proportion of this fund. They are made under the official certificate of officers duly qualified, and under bonds, for the faithful performance of official duty. In the last reports received, occasionally figures like the following, taken at random in a district, are found: Number of males 143, females 47; males 164, females 100; males 33, females 15; males 82, females 196. There is very little probability that such reports are correct. They vary too far from the almost uniform ratio existing between the sexes. In nearly all cases where attention is directed to such seeming discrepancies, the reports are found to be wholly incorrect. It not unfrequently happens, that the number of youth reported from a given district, to the county superintendent appears surprisingly large, when compared with previous reports, and with school registers, so as to raise the suspicion that the list is increased for a specific purpose, viz: that the district may receive a larger share of the public fund. It is a delicate matter for the county superintendent to question the sworn

certificate of a secretary; when it is done, however, the list is often found to need a material reduction. On the contrary, sub-directors and secretaries often neglect to report the full number of youth, under the impression that it is a matter of no special importance. I am assured by those who have the means of knowing, that to this cause is largely due the reported decrease in the number of youth in many townships and some counties even, where if the facts were correctly reported, there has been an actual increase.

An examination of the columns, "number of persons between the ages of five and twenty-one years," in the foregoing table, will reveal either a considerable degree of inaccuracy in the general result, or a somewhat surprising degree of irregularity in the amount and percentage of increase from year to year. Beginning with the year ending September 15th, 1868, we find that in

1868 the increase was.....	20,661 or 5.5 per cent.
1869 the increase was.....	24,538 or 6.2 per cent.
1870 the increase was but.....	12,966 or 3.1 per cent.
1871 the increase was.....	29,495 or 6.8 per cent.
1872 the increase was but.....	14,288 or 3.1 per cent.
1873 the increase was.....	16,427 or 3.5 per cent.

Such figures are suggestive, at least, of a very considerable degree of inaccuracy. If secretaries were required to report the *name* and *age* of each child, instead of the *number* of children, it is believed that in accuracy and deception would be much less likely to occur, and county superintendents would have reliable data for this portion of the report. It would require little additional labor, or expense, and would make possible a just and equitable distribution of the school fund. Then, too, the legislature might easily obtain, if thought desirable, some interesting and valuable statistics as to the number of children who are not, but who ought to be, in school. At present we are able to obtain the number between five and twenty-one, who are not enrolled in any school, by subtracting the number enrolled from the whole number reported, which aggregated, in 1873, 143,772, or 25 per cent. of the whole number. But this information is of little practical value, since there are, doubtless, many thousands of children 5, 6, and 7 years of age whose parents prefer to give them instruction at home, many of whom are better off than they would be at school, and there is a still larger class of persons, 20, 19, 18, 17, and even 16 years old, who having enjoyed the advantages of a common school education, are now employed



in the school-room, on the farm, in the work-shop, or who are married and settled in life.

In view of the fact that, in several of the states, compulsory school laws have recently been enacted, and that, even in Iowa, during the two sessions of the fourteenth general assembly, the senate passed a bill requiring all parents and guardians, under penalty, to send every child between the ages of six and fourteen years to school at least three months during every year, and of the increasing interest manifested in this subject, it would be well to know how many youth between six and fourteen years of age are not enrolled in any school during the year.

With a view of inaugurating a plan for obtaining some facts of this kind, the last blanks sent to secretaries and county superintendents were prepared with a column marked "Number of persons between the ages of seven and fourteen years, not enrolled in any school." Many of the secretaries in the large cities took pains to obtain the information, and fill the column in the blanks. A large number of sub-directors and district secretaries also filled the blanks; but so many failed to report this item that no conclusions can be drawn therefrom. These facts can be secured by requiring secretaries to report the names and ages of all youth; from such reports and from the teachers' registers the facts could readily be obtained. It might be shown that other items, such as the "Number of youth enrolled in the schools"; "Total average attendance"; "Number of teachers employed", all of which are required by law, are equally unreliable.

It is not my intention to convey the impression, that these statistics are less reliable in Iowa than elsewhere, or that, such as they are, they are of no value to the legislature or to our people. On the contrary, I believe that they possess the very highest importance, in view of the ever increasing interest manifested in public education, and the rapidity with which it is rising up and eclipsing all other functions of our civil government. These statistics, notwithstanding their inaccuracies, teach us lessons of the highest import. This is an age of statistics; an age of search after facts. *It is facts that we want, not theories*, to aid us in giving shape and direction, in the future, to our school system, requiring, as it does, immense annual expenditures, and the services of many thousands of skilled workmen. Full and accurate statistics are indispensable to enable the legislature to frame laws to meet the ever-increasing demands of public education.

General Eaton, U. S. Commissioner of Education, alluding to the value of educational statistics, in his last annual report, says:

"The supremacy of nations has long been determined by their power to win in the shock of battle. All efforts to ascertain national statistics were, therefore, formerly determined by this view. They counted only the material of war. Our fathers even, as will be seen by the censuses taken by the Colonies, only report (as for instance in the Massachusetts census of 1765) the number of dwelling-houses and families, number and sex of white persons, negroes and Indians, distinguishing in the case of the whites the number of each sex, and the number above and below sixteen years of age.

But if the supremacy of nations is to be determined by any other test, the inquiry in regard to statistics must be turned in that direction; and in proportion as nations have advanced in civilization, it will be seen that they have been taking into the account of their strength those facts and conditions which test intellectual power, moral power, commercial and industrial power.

Figures, however dry, are now called for in every department of inquiry relating to the material indications of human progress. No statesman can exclude them from his consideration.

In 1840 the United States, for the first time, in taking the census, recognized facts bearing upon the intelligence of the people. The progress toward this step is well deserving careful study. Going back to the passage of that colonial law in New England which required the selectmen of the town to know the facts in regard to the instruction of children, and to enforce attention to them, it will be noted how, in addition to the care of the town officers over the subject, it became necessary to call in the co-operation of the chief authority of the colony.

As the Colonies became States, and States multiplied, it will be noticed that the mere passage of a law by the State, providing the manner in which the local communities could act for the education of their children, proved insufficient; that it was found necessary for the State to take some observation of the manner in which the communities administered the law; in other words, that school statistics should be gathered. This action, increasing and extending itself from 1825, received a special impulse from the revival of education between that date and 1840, when it culminated in demanding that the nation should in its census take some cognizance of these facts, so primary and essential in every adequate account of its forces.

But however much could be made out of the census in this particular, it was taken only once in ten years, and the conviction grew on the part of educators that more frequent observations, and a summary of this class of facts, as occurring throughout the country, were absolutely necessary to a proper knowledge of their duties as educators, and the establishment of this Bureau naturally followed.

Few things, if any, in the census are more perplexing to its Superintendent than educational statistics. Indeed, nothing can describe either the confusion in which these statistics were found when the work of their annual generalization was undertaken in this office, or the perplexity connected with any statement of them which should be useful in guiding the educational affairs of the country.

It should be observed also that those who are interested in this examination of the entire relations of the questions of education to the public welfare cannot be limited to those classes of persons who are chosen to make laws, either in the national, State, or municipal councils, or who are selected to administer the laws or to adjudicate cases under them. These questions have a direct interest for every citizen, whatever his rank or position or occupation, and he has a direct responsibility in reference to their solution. Every dollar of property in a city or State, or in the nation, is interested in the burdens to be imposed upon it by way of taxation for the support of pauperism, for the punishment of crime, and for the correction of the manifold evils which are the sources of these burdens. Every dollar of value, therefore, is interested in the education of the people, as the great and almost the only process of prevention in the power of civil government to employ, to reduce the expenses resulting from crime and pauperism, as well as other and numerous evils, which are avoided or diminished by the universal application of intelligence and virtue on the part of our citizens. It should be recognized as a fact, therefore, that every citizen, whether as an owner of property, or solely on account of his rights and immunities as a citizen, is deeply concerned in striking the balance between the benefits of education and the evils of ignorance and vice in his city, in his state, in the nation.

And when we have a record of these considerations, which should command the profoundest attention of the statesman and the patriot, we are dealing with the same principles of political economy which must be apprehended by the humblest citizen as the guide of his conduct.

Each is alike interested in the question whether the nation is growing better or worse, whether property is increasing or diminishing, whether life is shorter or longer, and whether he himself is contributing to the one result or the other. And when this circle of inquiries has been traversed, should it be found that all questions of method and forms of government, of expediency in political economy, and all solutions of problems of civil government, come together and are determined by the methods adopted in the instruction and training of the young, and the extent and faithfulness of their application, of what supreme and primary importance will the universal voice of mankind pronounce all inquiries into educational statistics?

Moreover, as the American citizen contemplates the movements among the nations of the earth, and recognizes the changes that are entering into the conditions which determine national progress, he cannot fail to rejoice in seeing the greater and greater extent to which the fundamental ideas of his own government are having weight among the peoples of the earth. He sees all the oppressions of tyranny and caste yielding to the alembic of enlightened reason; he sees imperial, royal, and aristocratic councils stooping to consider the quality of men as a factor in the problems of political economy; he observes in all civilized countries mere physical force going down before brain-power and moral power; that reason and truth and right are showing their influence in proportion as light is shed among communities and nations:

that changes in science and intelligence are followed by corresponding changes, even in the appeal to arms. The warrior, in measuring his foe, the merchant in trusting his correspondent, the mechanic or artist in looking at his competitor, and the capitalist in considering the value of the laborer, must estimate the other's intelligence and training.

Unfortunately, we have no tests entirely satisfactory; those of reading, writing, or both, only having so far been generally applied. But all facts showing the opportunities of education, and the extent to which they are improved, have their value; and for the United States, year by year, the reports of this office are reaching more nearly to satisfactory results. Slowly, according to the inadequate means furnished us, and impeded by the chaotic condition of statistics and reports out of which correct conclusions are to be reached, we are coming into possession of that knowledge which may be a fair test of our capacity as a nation, and the methods by which our excellence and greatness may be increased and the welfare of our people promoted."

### SCHOOL FINANCES.

Every person intrusted with public funds, is properly held accountable for the same; he should be required to keep an accurate and systematic record of receipts and disbursements. Any person, association, or corporation, that should undertake to do business, employ agents, receive and pay out money without requiring the rendition of strict accounts, would almost certainly fail. The necessary tendency of such a course would be to encourage carelessness and corruption.

The misapplication of public funds is common enough without paying a premium on official misconduct, yet such is practically the tendency of our present law in its application to the duties of school district treasurers. The law requires the treasurer to "render a statement of the finances of the district from time to time, as may be required by the board of directors." This report is made to the *board*, and only when called for. No stated report is required by law, and no time fixed when it shall be his duty to make a report. Cases are by no means infrequent in which it is only necessary for the treasurer to satisfy the board that he is wholly unprepared to make a detailed and specific report, to be excused from the performance of this duty. The integrity of the officer, and of his management of the funds, is assumed rather than proved, and a simple statement of the amount unexpended is often accepted for the full and explicit report which the law contemplates.

The secretary makes the annual report, not only of the general school statistics, which properly pertain to his office, but also of the receipts



and disbursements of the funds of the district, which pass through the hands of the treasurer.

The result is that the financial report is most frequently inaccurate, and in fact seldom correct. It is true that in those districts where all the records required by law are properly kept, where the secretaries and treasurers perform their whole duty, correct reports may be made under the present law, and many hundreds of such reports are now made; but from diligent inquiry, and from a careful examination of the secretaries reports filed in several counties, during the two last two years, I am convinced that a very large majority of the reports are not reliable, and fail to exhibit the actual amount of public money received and paid out by the districts. My attention was early called to this subject by the biennial report for 1870-71 from this office, in which my immediate predecessor was impelled to state, after having made unusual efforts to secure accuracy in the financial exhibit of the several counties, that but *five* county superintendents, out of the ninety-nine in the state, had furnished accurate reports for the year 1871. [See pp. 250 and 254.] From this report, which is a summary of the secretaries' returns, received through county superintendents, it appears that the districts paid out during the year ending September 15, 1871, \$297,845.75 more than they received from all sources; that is, the total expenditures plus the amounts reported as on hand, when the reports were made, exceed the total receipts, including the amounts on hand at the beginning of the year, by nearly \$300,000; an excess of payments over receipts being reported in each fund. In the school-house, \$31,957.02; in the contingent, \$86,512.94; and in the teachers', \$179,395.79. Although in the general summary, each fund appears greatly overdrawn, this is by no means the case in the reports from all the counties, some of which report a larger amount paid out from each fund than received; others fail to account for thousands of dollars, the receipt of which is acknowledged; while others report an excess in one fund on one side; in another, a deficit. One county reports an overpayment of several thousand dollars; perhaps the next on the list fails to account, in any manner, for an equal or greater amount. My attention having been called to the subject, I endeavored to find out the cause of these inaccuracies, only, if possible, to remedy the evil. With a view to accomplish this object, some changes were made in the blanks sent out, upon which secretaries were to make the returns for 1872. These blanks were so modified that secretaries were required to answer in the financial portion of the reports, substantially but two questions.

1. How much money has the district received for each fund since the date of the last report?

2. What disposition has been made of this money?

The report simply required the secretary to account in some way, for the money which the treasurer had received, and for which he was responsible. It was made as plain as practicable, directions were printed upon every blank, so that there might be no excuse for failure to make the report correct. County superintendents directed to return all incomplete reports for correction, to visit the townships when necessary, and, if possible, to secure better returns, and to inaugurate a system of correct reports. When these returns began to reach this office, while a majority were found perfect, many were still wretchedly defective. An explanatory circular was at once prepared and sent to each superintendent, directing all who had not yet sent their reports, to withhold them until they could be made complete and accurate; additional blanks were sent to those who had already forwarded imperfect reports. But, with all efforts, and after the most untiring labors of county superintendents, many incomplete reports were finally received, as will be seen from the abstracts for 1872.

The excuses generally given by secretaries are: 1st, that, as their terms of office commence in March, while the report is required in September, when they have been in office but six months, it is impossible for them to make a correct report covering a year, especially where the records of their predecessors were either imperfectly kept or wholly neglected. 2nd, that the treasurers, only, who receive and disburse the funds, can properly give a correct account of the same; that secretaries cannot make a correct report of funds carelessly handled by other officers. These excuses are not wholly without force. Secretaries are not, ordinarily, in possession of the necessary data, to report correctly, what the law requires; nor do treasurers have the requisite incentive for properly itemizing and recording receipts and expenditures, in the absence of any law requiring a stated report or a specific time of settlement. These causes could be removed. 1st, by providing for the election of secretaries and treasurers at the September, instead of the March meeting of the board. 2nd, by dividing the labor now enjoined upon secretaries so as to require treasurers, also, to make an annual report on the third Monday in September, when their terms of office would expire, to the county superintendents.

The law provides that "the board of directors shall hold their regular meetings on the third Monday in March and September, of each year."



All new members of the board enter upon their duties at the March meeting, when the president, secretary, and treasurer are chosen. To elect the secretary and treasurer at the September instead of the March meeting, would, for several reasons be preferable. In district townships, the board at the March meeting, is composed wholly of newly elected members, and unless some of them have been re-elected, of inexperienced members. Could the secretary and treasurer remain in office six months after the annual election, their past experience would often be valuable to the board. There would be less inclination to elect favorites, and a tendency to retain efficient and faithful officers. Another decided advantage would be derived from such a change, in enabling the secretary to make his annual report at the close of his term of office. He could then have no excuse for failure to report those facts of which he was officially cognizant; nor would the accuracy of his report depend upon the faithfulness of his predecessor. If treasurers, when coming into office, and examining the law to learn their duties, should find a provision requiring them, at the end of their term of office, or at any other *stated* time, to make a detailed and specific report, showing the sum total of all public funds coming into their hands, the date of each receipt, its amount, and for what fund; also each item of expenditure, giving date, the fund from which drawn, and specific purpose, they would be much more likely to commence right by keeping a record, from which, alone, a proper report could be made. Such a system once begun, could, and in most cases would be regularly kept through the whole term. If they were further required to make this report annually to the county superintendent, to take the place of the similar financial report now required of secretaries, thus relieving the latter officers of a duty which they always do at a disadvantage and seldom correctly, and requiring of them a report of the general statistics only of their districts, such as the number of schools graded and ungraded, and number of months they have been taught; number of teachers and average compensation; a list of names and ages of persons between five and twenty-one years of age; number enrolled in the schools, average attendance and cost of tuition per month; text books used; number and value of school-houses, and the like, the accuracy of the reports would be greatly increased. By thus dividing the annual return and requiring each officer to report the statistics pertaining to his office, the duties would be greatly simplified, and much better results secured without additional expense. If in addition to this, county superintendents were constituted auditing officers to audit the treasurers' accounts and settle

with them, it is believed that reliable reports could reasonably be looked for in the future.

Another plan was recommended last year in the law submitted by the code commissioners to the general assembly, viz: that of doing away with the office of the district treasurer altogether, and authorizing the county treasurer to pay out all school funds, directly to the parties entitled to receive the same for service performed or material furnished, on warrants drawn by the district officers. County treasurers are already required to keep separate accounts with each fund for each district. It would require but little more labor for them to pay out the funds in this manner than it does to make the quarterly and monthly payments now required by law. If the handling and accounting for the same funds, a second time, often in a very indifferent manner by district treasurers, at a present annual expense of some \$40,000, as compensation of these officers, could be dispensed with, it would, doubtless, tend to secure a better management of these funds, and prevent the numerous losses that almost necessarily occur by parceling out four or five million dollars annually among two or three thousand different officers.

Whatever of trustworthiness there may be in the financial exhibit of the school funds of the state, in the present report, is due largely to the labors of those county superintendents, who in preparing reports for this department, uniformly and persistently refused to accept imperfect reports from district secretaries or to enter them in the abstract for this office; but who went first to the county treasurer's office to learn from his books the exact amount of each fund which had been paid over to the several districts during the year, and afterwards visited the secretaries to see that the full amounts were entered on the debit side of their reports, and then by examining the records of the treasurer and secretary tried as far as possible to account for the money thus received. It was often a thankless task; they, however, had the satisfaction, in many cases, of seeing the records for once, at least, put in proper shape, and of ferreting out in not a few instances, considerable sums of money which had gone into the hands of district treasurers, and for which no account had ever been rendered, and of the existence of which no one seemed to have any knowledge. Cases have been reported where large amounts have been reclaimed to the districts by these investigations, and it would appear that much more attention has been given to the subject within the last year or two than ever before. Greater efforts have also been made to keep proper records and make

full reports. It should, perhaps, be said that even the reports which are properly balanced, and in which the funds appear to be duly accounted for, are not necessarily correct. It is possible for the secretary, or even the county superintendent to balance a report by taking from the sum of the receipts, the sum of all known expenditures, and placing the remainder in the column "amount on hand," without any reference to the actual amount in the hands of the treasurer at the time the report was made; so that the next year's report of the "amount on hand at date of last report," may be a much smaller sum than is now reported as "amount on hand." The sums of these two columns ought to be equal, viz: the amount on hand in one report and the amount on hand at date of last report in the following year, but they are seldom found to agree. There is a reported aggregate loss of \$80,581.94 in the several funds from 1872 to 1873. In other words, the secretaries reported on hand, one year ago \$1,266,626.60 while they now report that there was on hand at that time but \$1,186,044.66, a fact clearly indicative of the utter unreliability of the figures and also of the general bad management of the school funds. Nor is this shrinkage at all uniform, as any one may learn by examining the financial abstracts from the counties. Taking the school-house fund, for example, Adams county reported on hand last year \$3,938.31; now it reports that there was on hand at that time but \$100.22; showing that more than ninety-seven per cent. of the amount then reported in the hands of the district treasurers, is unaccounted for, and so far as appears from the report, wholly lost to the school funds of the county. The reported deficit in Appanoose county, is \$593.63; in Benton, \$2,012.57; in Boone, \$3,071.61; in one or two counties the loss in this fund, is ten or twelve thousand dollars. Other counties report an excess; that of Adair, being \$452.46; Allamakee, \$429.27; Buena Vista, \$3,211.05; and Cerro Gordo, \$6,736.84; and at this rate generally down the list. Results like the foregoing suggest the question, whether the complications of the present management of the school funds are not especially designed to prevent any real accountability of school officers, and tempt to dishonesty. If reason and common sense do not teach the necessity of guarding the school taxes of the state, better than they have been guarded in the past, our experience certainly does. It suggests equally the importance of a judicious selection of school officers, and of some competent authority to whom their official records shall be submitted for examination and to whom they shall be accountable, in addition to the vague accountability to the people by whom they are elected.

Discrepancies and losses of this kind are clearly diminishing, and will probably continue to diminish even under the present law, but it is believed that proper management of the school funds and reliable data relating thereto, can never be secured until the laws are modified in some manner; and that much better management throughout, could be secured either by abolishing the office of district treasurer, and committing the disbursement of the school funds wholly to county treasurers, and requiring them to make an annual report of receipts and disbursements thereof, or by the much less radical change of electing district secretaries and treasurers at the September, instead of the March meeting of the board, and requiring each at the close of his term of office to make a full report to the county superintendent. The first and direct purpose of these exhibits being to hold treasurers and school boards responsible for the proper use of the moneys with which they are entrusted, and to give public information thereon; they possess a value to our people, to public officers and to the legislature, in a constantly increasing ratio. The magnitude of the interests involved, and the obstacles in the way of any practical solution of the difficulties, would seem to command for this subject the careful consideration and earnest thought of all our people, especially of those who are entrusted with law making power.

#### RECENT CHANGES IN SCHOOL LAWS.

The school laws of Iowa have remained without radical change since 1858, when the district township replaced the old independent district system. In 1862, and again in 1873, the law itself was remodeled, but the main features of the system remained unchanged; otherwise only occasional modifications and additions have been made. During the two sessions of the fourteenth general assembly a large number of minor changes were made and a few of more general importance.

#### PHYSIOLOGY ADDED.

I have watched with interest the result of adding physiology to the branches in which teachers are required to pass examination before receiving certificates to teach in the public schools of the state; as the law took effect September 1st, of the present year, it is too soon to judge of the general result.

Efforts were made through the county superintendents, the *School*



*Journal* and the public press of the state, immediately after the passage of the law, to notify teachers that in all examinations after September 1st, they must be prepared to pass examination in physiology. A limited number of teachers had previously pursued the study, and were already prepared, but a very large percentage were wholly unacquainted with the subject, and it has been found necessary to give special attention to this branch in the teachers' and normal institutes held during the year.

Among teachers themselves, I have heard but one verdict, the change has everywhere, so far as I know, been received with favor. It is regarded as a timely, necessary, and wise provision.

I do not apprehend that physiology will, for the present, be very generally taught in the ungraded, nor in the lower departments of the graded schools otherwise than orally. But teachers will be prepared to give instruction to those who may desire to pursue the study, and this knowledge will be especially serviceable to teachers themselves in many ways, and will enable those who will, to give occasional oral lessons on the more important topics of which it treats. It cannot fail to prove salutary in its influence upon our schools and especially upon our teachers.

#### MANNER OF VOTING TAXES CHANGED.

Heretofore the law required boards of directors to estimate the number of mills on the dollar, necessary to raise the amounts required for the teachers' and contingent funds, and to certify the same, together with such school-house taxes as had been voted by the electors, to the board of supervisors, whose duty it was to levy said taxes. There were some objections to this plan. Boards of directors sometimes estimated the per centum somewhat at random without knowing what it would yield, and ignorant of the assessed valuation of the property of the district. The action of the state board of equalization, in increasing or diminishing the assessments sometimes materially deranged the district assessments. The boards of directors certified up their estimates not later than May, after which the assessed valuation of the property was liable to be greatly increased or diminished, in the one case imposing a greater burden of taxation, and giving the district more money than was needed to support the schools, in the other case yielding an insufficient revenue. The action of the state board of equalization increases or diminishes the valuation, in some instances to the extent of

forty per cent., and when it is remembered that the school taxes, the whole of which are subject to such fluctuations, sometimes exceed all other taxes levied, and generally are nearly equal to them, it is evident that a remedy was needed.

To obviate these difficulties, the law was so changed as to require boards of directors, to certify *the specific amounts* deemed necessary to support the schools, instead of certifying the number of mills on the dollar, leaving it to the board of supervisors who make the levy subsequent to the action of the state board of equalization, to estimate the per centum necessary to raise the amounts determined and certified. The board of directors have now simply to determine the amount of money necessary for the several funds, and the board of supervisors estimate and levy the per centum on the property of the district, necessary to yield the required amounts.

Attention was called to this change, in the school laws, distributed to school officers in 1872, through the *School Journal* and otherwise, but the reports for 1873, show that a very large number of districts are still pursuing the old plan, apparently utterly oblivious to the change in the law, except in a few instances where county superintendents had made special effort, by circulars and instructions, to call attention to the change in the law.

If this were an unimportant matter, or a mere question of form, it might not even deserve notice, but it is, on the contrary, one of the most important duties imposed upon boards of directors. If taxes are levied and collected, it must be by authority of law, and in due form. The board of supervisors have no authority to levy such taxes, except upon the certificate of the board of directors. If such certificate is wanting, or is not made in substantial conformity to law no taxes can legally be levied. It becomes a question how far the old law, now repealed, may be followed, and the present one disregarded, without rendering the acts of the board illegal and void.

It is believed that the change was a needed one, and that the present law, if complied with, will be a decided improvement.

#### PROHIBITING CHANGES IN TEXT-BOOKS.

In April, 1872, a law was enacted prohibiting boards of directors from changing the text-books used in their schools oftener than once in every period of three years, except by a vote of the electors. Sufficient time has not yet elapsed to test the efficiency of the law in preventing



the evil of too frequent changes in text-books. There is no good reason why school books should be frequently changed. The expense to our people of supplying the requisite school books is very great. It is rapidly increasing in the multiplicity of books required for each branch, and the increasing number of studies pursued. The expense attending frequent changes in text-books is a just and common cause of complaint. As the ordinary retail price of school books greatly exceeds the cost of publication, the propriety and feasibility of devising some other method of supplying the schools with the necessary text-books has been occasionally canvassed.

Many letters have been received at this office during the last two years, asking if boards of directors have authority, under the law, to purchase text-books for the use of pupils in the public schools of their districts. Boards have, in not a few cases, exercised such power, and purchased books for the use of pupils. In my opinion the law nowhere invests boards with such authority; nor do I think such power ought to be placed in their hands. It would tend rather to aggravate the existing evil than otherwise. It would seem that whenever it becomes desirable for the state to furnish text-books for the schools, some cheaper and better plan may be devised.

The want of uniformity has been a very common complaint, and attempts have been made in several counties within the last two years to secure a greater degree of uniformity; and in some instances, I am told, with considerable success; in others, with less satisfactory results. By reference to the table marked *N* in the statistical part of this report it will be seen what a refreshing variety of books is in use in our public schools. Each county, as a general rule, reports this list nearly in full.

#### FORMATION OF INDEPENDENT DISTRICTS FROM SUB-DISTRICTS.

The most radical change made in the school law, since its adoption in 1858, was that produced by the law of 1872, authorizing the formation of independent districts, from the sub-districts of a district township upon vote of the electors. It is a return to the old independent district system, whenever the people of any district may elect. The objects sought by the passage of this law were, 1st, to obviate the objectionable features peculiar to our district township system, the principal one of which is the representation of territory, rather than population;

and, 2d, to give back to the people of each sub-district the entire management of their own school interests. These advantages are secured somewhat at the expense of other benefits arising from larger and more uniform districts. In fact, there are very marked advantages and disadvantages inhering in, or necessarily resulting from, each system.

In the year and a half during which the law has been in force, the people of about one district township in fourteen have elected to form independent districts from the sub-districts of the township. Of the 1,700 district townships, containing 8,000 sub-districts, which were organized when this law took effect, 119 district townships, containing 901 sub-districts, were reported September 15th, 1873, as having completed the new organization. In 53 of the 99 counties, independent districts have been organized under the law. In Keokuk county the sub-districts of seven townships have become independent, forming fifty-nine independent districts; this being the largest number in any one county. If the new plan proves more desirable, or more satisfactory to the people generally than the old, and the best attainable system, it will doubtless soon prevail throughout the state. At least one or the other, or else some substitute for both, will be likely eventually to replace the present complex system, and doubtless ought to do so, for the sake of simplicity and harmony. It would seem to be according to the dictates of good judgment to stop and re-examine the subject carefully in the light of such experience as we now have, and this appears the more advisable since there has been, and still exists the greatest diversity of opinion among our people as to the advantages and disadvantages of the two systems.

#### OBJECTIONS TO THE DISTRICT TOWNSHIP SYSTEM.

1st. The district township system is liable to be, and in fact often is, managed in the interest of the smaller and weaker sub-districts at the expense and to the injury of the larger. The sub-districts have usually about the same area, while some are much more wealthy and populous than others. Each sub-director is expected to look after the interests of his own sub-district, and often demands and receives the same amount of public money for the support of a school containing from ten to twenty pupils that another containing from thirty to fifty receives; demands and receives the same amount to pay the teacher of a dozen small pupils that another is allowed to pay the teacher for a full school of advanced pupils. The school funds ought not to be used

in this manner, and yet they often are so used. Under such management the larger and wealthier sub-districts receive much less than their wants demand, and much less than the taxes which they pay; and they seek the only remedy which appears to be open to them, viz: the dissolution of the district township.

2d. It not unfrequently happens that the people of one portion of a district township are fully alive to the value of good schools, while the people of another and larger part are less liberal and prefer the log school-house, the cheap teacher and the short term of school; and who are able to out-vote and prevent the former from providing such schools as they want to see established.

3d. Again, under the district township system, there are too many elections. The law provides for the sub-district meeting on the first Monday in March, to elect sub-directors, and the district township meeting on the second Monday in March, to vote the necessary school-house taxes, direct the sale of school-houses and determine what additional branches shall be taught in the schools. Neither of these meetings is usually considered important; nor do the people generally attend them. Occasionally interested parties assemble and perpetrate some fraud on the district in the election of incompetent officers, or the imposition of an unnecessary tax.

4th. Still another objection urged against the system, is the instability of sub-district boundaries, which in some cases, through local dissensions and divisions, are almost every year changed, requiring the removal of school-houses and causing dissatisfaction. Such are some of the causes that secured the passage of this law, and its adoption thus far by the electors.

#### OBJECTIONS TO THE INDEPENDENT DISTRICT SYSTEM.

The following, among other objections, have been urged against the return to the independent district system in operation in the state prior to 1858, that:

1st. It will increase the number of school districts from fifteen or sixteen hundred to eight or nine thousand. This increase of school corporations or corporate bodies is an evil in itself.

2d. It will greatly increase the number of school officers required to manage the school interests. If the system were inaugurated throughout the state under the present law, the number would be increased from less than ten thousand, under the old system, to more

than thirty-six thousand, under the new, requiring the election, qualification and services of more than twenty-six thousand additional school officers.

3d. Such an increase in the number of districts and diminution in their size, would tend to the election of inefficient and careless officers, of persons who neither possess the ability to perform the duties properly, nor sufficient interest to make the attempt.

4th. It will increase the number of officers who are paid for their services, viz: The secretaries and treasurers, officers who are required to give bond for the performance of official duties, and who receive from ten to three hundred dollars a year for their services. To pay sixteen thousand additional secretaries and treasurers twenty dollars each, the average salary now paid to these officers, would cost the state three hundred and twenty thousand dollars a year, being nearly one-tenth of our total present expenditures for school purposes.

5th. In parceling out the school funds into the hands of so many officers there will be greater liability to mismanagement and loss, more danger of misapplication of public money, and less chance to detect it.

6th. It will largely increase the labors of county auditors and county treasurers in making out tax lists, collecting and accounting for taxes.

7th. It will increase the difficulty and expense of securing the annual statistics, and make them less reliable.

8th. It will produce endless strife and contention in the adjustment of boundary lines, and in the settlement of assets and liabilities between districts.

9th. It will increase the evil of favoritism and nepotism in the selection of teachers, and tend to the employment of poorer teachers.

10th. It will prevent the formation of township union and graded schools, many of which are now in successful operation. It will destroy those already organized; it has already destroyed a number of them.

11th. It will multiply the text-book evil in the matter of uniformity between districts.

12th. It will greatly increase the inequality of taxation for school purposes, usually placing the heavier burden of tax upon the poorer districts and poorer people. Cases have been reported to this office where the assessed valuation of the property of the sub-districts, now independent districts, of a township varies from seven to twenty-eight thousand dollars, requiring in the one case a tax of forty mills on the dollar to raise two hundred and eighty dollars to support a school, in the other, a tax



of ten mills. Variations of this kind doubtless exist in nearly every township in the state; especially is this the case in districts traversed by lines of railroad.

13th. It will result in the creation of school districts so small and weak financially, as to be utterly unable to support schools for the time required by law without imposing upon themselves unbearable burdens of taxation. These small districts are always at the mercy of the large which can out vote them on the question of adopting the system.

So far as taxation for the support of public schools is a state duty and a public burden, it ought to be borne equally by our people. Uniformity of taxation for a common purpose is desirable. If a uniform state, county, or township tax is levied and distributed to be used by separate boards, the manner of distribution is a most difficult one. The *taxation* feature of the district township system, few objected to; the method of *distribution* caused nearly all the trouble. Where the benefits to be enjoyed are equal, or nearly so, as in the case of public schools, that system of taxation which is most nearly uniform, is doubtless the best; that system which discriminates between different localities, or occupations, the worst.

A large majority of the most active friends of education in Iowa have always insisted that a serious mistake was made in the incorporation of the sub-district feature into the district township system; that if each civil township had been made a simple, single district to be governed by a board of directors chosen at large in the district, as in independent districts, and provision made for but one annual meeting of the electors, instead of two, much better results might have been looked for, and better satisfaction given.

A somewhat extended detail of this subject seemed desirable, because it is one largely affecting the whole school interests of the state; because it is a subject of general interest at the present time, and because it may seem advisable to take some action with reference to it at the approaching session of the legislature. The choice under the present law is between the old district township system, with its serious objections, and the new independent district system, with its objections. It is a choice between two evils. If the district township system, with its sub-districts, has proved objectionable, much more has the other. It is very doubtful if our people will ever be satisfied with either of these two alternatives.

The observations of another year have only confirmed my convictions that the system submitted by the code commissioners a year ago, which

received the approval of the school committees of both houses of the last legislature, and which passed the senate by a large majority, is greatly superior to our present law. If, from the experience of the past two years, this conclusion has been generally reached, the adoption of the system proposed will, in my opinion, prove a happy and final settlement of the district boundary question, and tend greatly to promote good schools in Iowa.

#### SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND ILLITERACY.

From the U. S. Census of 1870, these statistics of illiteracy in Iowa appear:

Number of persons over ten years of age who cannot write.....	24115
Number of persons between 10 and 15 years of age who cannot write.....	5028
Number of persons between 15 and 21 years of age who cannot write.....	3826
Number of persons over 21 years of age who cannot write.....	35917
Number of persons over 10 years of age who cannot write.....	45671

The public schools of Iowa had been wholly free to all persons residing in the state, between the ages of 5 and 21 years, for twelve years prior to 1870, when the U. S. Census was taken. During this period our school system underwent no material change. The system itself, and the schools maintained under it, were regarded as of more than average excellence, and in fact were often commended for their superiority; having attained an enviable reputation both at home and abroad. Yet, according to that census, there were 2,754 persons over ten, and under twenty-one years of age, who could not write, and, probably, nearly as many who could not read; at least, so many who could not read and write. Here are nearly ten thousand youth in our midst, most of whom have resided in the state for the last ten years, to all of whom our free schools have been accessible for at least five years, who have never availed themselves of any of the advantages of these schools. The wonder, however, is, not that there is so much, as that there is so little illiteracy in the state when the statistics of school attendance are examined.

There were during the year preceding Sept. 15th, 1873, 347,572 persons enrolled in the public schools, who have actually attended school during some part of the year; whereas the total average attendance



during the same period, was but 204,204, or but fifty-eight per cent. of the number enrolled, leaving 143,368 persons, whose names have been registered, or forty-two per cent. of the whole number constantly absent from the schools. The average length of time the schools have been taught is six months and ten days; while the average length of school attendance is less than four months. We thus provide and pay for two and one-half months of school more than would be actually required to instruct the number registered if they attended regularly. The cost of maintaining this two and one-half months of unnecessary school, exclusive of school-house building, is \$1,171,300, or 5-13 of the whole cost for the year. A considerable portion of this showing is due to our arrangement of winter and summer schools; in the rural districts, where it is customary to have a three months' school in the summer, and a three or four months' school in the winter, the latter being especially designed for the older scholars, the former for the younger, so that a very large number of pupils really enjoy but about three months' school, during the year, instead of six or seven, which are provided. Parents often get the impression that it is the design of the law to provide a summer school for the small, and winter school for the large scholars. A much better plan in some respects, if it were practicable, would be to provide for one term of five, six, or seven months, commencing in October or November and continuing with a brief vacation or two, but without further interruption. Another considerable source of irregularity and non-attendance is found in the fact, that there is so little regularity as to the time of commencing the schools in many rural districts. This is usually left to the option of the sub-director; many times to the convenience of the teacher; so that parents often fail to receive sufficient notice of the time of opening the school, to have their children prepared for prompt attendance. Our system of education will never be perfect until we secure both good attendance and good schools.

Heretofore efforts have been directed mainly to the attainment of the latter, under the hypothesis that the two were so inseparably connected, that good schools implied good attendance. We have been accustomed to think that when a people valued good schools enough to provide them, they would also patronize them. Efforts to secure either, through the instrumentality of the law, will only partially succeed until public sentiment demands them; parents must also be convinced that they are inflicting an irreparable wrong and injury upon those children, who, under any pretext, are required or permitted to remain out of school

during any portion of the term, when physically able to attend. Children who are irregular in attendance lose their position and standing in their classes; they also lose their interest in their studies, their love of study, and of school. In efforts to make up lost time and keep up with classmates, they pass over many of the essential portions of their studies too hastily, without sufficiently mastering them, making all future progress difficult and of doubtful value, since, having gone over one portion without understanding it, they lose the power to master subsequent portions; their scholarship degenerates, and their time is lost. Their schooling becomes practically valueless, even worse than valueless, for they not only fail to comprehend their studies, or receive from them any profit, but they acquire habits which are positively pernicious and fatal to any real progress in the future. The habits of punctuality and regularity acquired by a prompt and uniform compliance with all the regulations of a good school, are most valuable lessons.

Said Horace Mann, in one of his reports to the Massachusetts Board of Education: "The importance of punctuality can hardly be overstated, either as it regards the progress of the school collectively or the habits of the individual pupils. If morals were to be divided into the greater and the less, the virtue of punctuality should be set down in the first class." Habits formed at school at this age, when they are so easily fixed, will impress themselves upon the character, and to some extent govern the future life. The irregular pupil is in every way placed at a disadvantage among his fellows; he drops to the foot of his class; he becomes the poor scholar; the easy task is assigned him at recitation; he is quietly passed by when visitors are present, and at public examinations; he soon learns that the teacher has a poor opinion of his scholarship and ability; his schoolmates hold him in corresponding estimation; he soon begins to rate himself by the same standard; he receives no encouragement; he loses his ambition, and at the same time his self-respect and self-reliance. He loses then, and generally forever, the glorious opportunity for that discipline and culture which alone can make him a man of the full stature of influence and usefulness, and most likely dwarfs his whole subsequent life. The father or the mother has kept from him the jewel of great price among the rich treasures of life. A few will nobly rise above such surroundings, will grow in spite of them, as now and then one has done in the past, illustrious examples of whom we have in all the ranks and avocations of American life; will overcome obstacles which lie in their pathway, and become strong in the race in which everything is against them as they work their way to eminence and success; but they form the exception and not the rule.

## SCHOOL SUPERVISION.

Our public school system contemplates a three-fold plan of superintendence, viz.: state, county, and district. The superintendent of public instruction is charged with the general supervision of all the public schools of the state, but this must necessarily be of the most general character. In a state like Iowa, with ninety-nine organized counties, twenty-five hundred school districts, nine thousand schools, fifteen thousand school officers, and as many teachers, it is impossible, even if it were desirable, for this officer to exercise personal supervision to any considerable extent.

## DISTRICT SUPERVISION.

The supervision of our schools by school directors often extends little farther than fixing the time when the schools shall be taught, employing teachers, and paying them when their work is done; and even these, or the first at least, is sometimes left to the teacher, or to chance. These officers seldom give much time or thought to the examination of the condition of the schools, or to their improvement. If the teacher is found to be a poor one, or the school worthless, it is regarded as a matter of regret, and the hope entertained that the next attempt will be more successful. The sub-director dislikes to have trouble with the teacher, and hesitates to act. Cases are not infrequently reported to this office in which allegations are made as to the incompetency of teachers, and worthlessness of schools, to remedy which, the directors either neglect, or refuse to interfere. The written contract has been signed, the teacher refuses to give up the school, and rather than go to the trouble of an investigation, or risk a lawsuit, the matter is permitted to pass unnoticed. In a late visit to one of the populous counties, a school officer came ten miles to consult me, whether I would advise the board to pay a teacher for the full time, who had pretended to teach for weeks in succession in a sub-district containing twenty-five or thirty scholars, with an attendance of only two or three pupils, and for days in succession without a single pupil in attendance. It appeared that the sub-director had several times, without avail, requested, and even urged the teacher to give up the school, and that finally the board had offered to pay him for all the time during which any pupils were present, as shown by his register, but the teacher refused to settle on such a basis, and threatened to bring suit on the contract unless payment in full was made for the whole time.

So far as I have been able to learn, comparatively few sub-directors discharge the duty enjoined by law, to visit their schools at least twice during each term of school. No system of supervision like this can be made very efficient in advancing the schools, correcting errors in school teaching and management, or even in discovering the existence of evils.

## COUNTY SUPERVISION.

The office of county superintendent was established in Iowa in May, 1858. It would seem that this fifteen or sixteen years of trial should have been sufficient to test its efficiency and value; yet there exist the widest differences of opinion as to its usefulness. More especially within the last few years has the expediency of abolishing the office been canvassed. The widespread opposition to the office is in itself evidence, not only of its partial failure to meet the popular demand, but also to some extent of its want of efficiency. It is evidence either against the office itself, or the manner of its administration.

The friends of the system, and the more active friends of education generally, claim that it has not had a fair trial, because, first, it is an elective office, usually filled by persons chosen at political conventions, where a number of officers are selected for different positions, the county superintendent being the last on the list, to be traded by politicians, or farmed out to some locality which would otherwise be unrepresented; second, because the pay has not been sufficient generally to attract the best qualified persons to the office. When first established in 1858, the compensation was made about equal to that of county clerk, but this was thought to be too expensive at that early period, and the pay was fixed at two dollars a day; in 1866 it was raised to three dollars, and such additional compensation as the board of supervisors might allow.

The average compensation of county superintendents during the year 1872 was \$556.25; and the average in 1873, to October 1st, was \$450.45; for the remaining three months of the term it will, at the same rate, be \$150.15, making \$600.60 for 1873.

When it is remembered that the duties of this office often require a considerable outlay for traveling expenses, which must be deducted from the amount received by the superintendent, it will readily be seen that the pay of county superintendent is small when compared with the salaries of other county officers, and is less than half the average salary paid to first-class superintendents of our city schools.



It would be easy to name forty superintendents of city schools in Iowa who receive out of the school funds, for their services, a greater sum in the aggregate than the ninety-nine county superintendents receive for superintending nine thousand schools, and three hundred and fifty thousand pupils. It is true that the kind of supervision exercised in the one case is quite different and much more thorough and minute than the other can be. The money used in the supervision of city schools is, without doubt, judiciously and wisely expended; but the other labor is no less necessary and no less efficient, when properly managed.

From an examination of abstracts *C* and *H* of this report it will be seen that the amounts paid to secretaries and treasurers for their services in keeping records, making reports, holding and disbursing school funds, for 1872, were \$70,836.63; and for 1873, \$74,858.22, or \$15,000 a year more than county superintendents received for all their services during the same period. Neither is it claimed that the secretaries and treasurers receive, as a rule, more than a fair remuneration for their services.

It is evident from this showing, that our law-makers have, as a class, never had a very high appreciation of the value of this office, or of the desirableness of securing first-class officers for the position; since the men who as legislators determined these questions in the state councils not infrequently went to their homes and advocated the payment of much better salaries to local superintendents, and teachers even, in order to secure competency and a high order of talent. It is not strange that the state, having in this manner contracted for second and third rate officers, often receive about what the bids call for; nor is it to be wondered at, that our people sometimes finding themselves under the necessity of submitting to very poor officials, like a company of brave soldiers under an ignorant captain, have become restless, and have asked to be relieved altogether from a leadership, which is not in fact a leadership, and from which there is little hope of profit. The greatest wonder is, that the office, under such circumstances, has not become more unpopular than it actually has; and it doubtless would, but for the fact that a large number of talented, earnest, superior men have been, from time to time, drawn into this office, and have devoted their best energies to the performance of its duties. It has been said that the office has often been sought, as a stepping-stone for something better, and it would appear that such may sometimes have been the case, when it is remembered how many men who began public life as county

superintendents in Iowa have, during the last sixteen years, filled positions of trust and responsibility, as members of congress, district and circuit judges, senators and representatives in our legislature, college presidents and professors, state and county officers, and successful business and professional men.

It has become apparent to most people who have given the matter attention, that the highest efficiency in the office, and the greatest good to the schools can only be secured by guarding the office against incompetency, and removing it from the arena of politics.

In the state of New York, where the office was formerly filled somewhat as ours now is, and the compensation was about the same, it fell into disrepute among the people, who asked for its abolition, and continued the demand from year to year, until they finally prevailed, and the office was abolished. Says the Hon. S. S. Spencer, late deputy superintendent of public instruction of the state, in writing a history of the schools of New York of that period:

"The legislature was annually flooded by petitions for the abolition of the office, as unnecessary, oppressive, and improperly administered. Committee after committee, to whom these petitions were referred, reported against the adoption of the measure desired, and the soundest and most convincing arguments were brought to bear upon the great and manifest utility of the office. It was clearly and repeatedly shown that the abuses complained of were such as admitted of an easy and practical remedy, while the advantages secured by the retention of this class of officers could be obtained through no other agency. Public clamor, however, persisted, year after year in demanding the repeal of the obnoxious act, and in the face of the avowed and strong opposition of the successive heads of the department, of the several committees of both houses of the legislature charged with the supervision of the interests of public instruction, and of the great body of the most enlightened friends of education throughout the state, this most unfortunate and ill-advised measure was consummated."

This action was taken in 1847. The same authority says:

"Its effect upon the prosperity and advancement of the common school system was, in many essential respects, most disastrous. During a period of nearly forty years, the progress of that system had been uninterruptedly onward and upward; and a succession of wise enactments had strengthened and consolidated its foundations and expanded its usefulness in every direction. The destruction of that feature which, perhaps, more than any other, had come to constitute its most distinctive characteristics and crowning excellence, giving to its details their peculiar symmetry and power, was the first *retrograde* step in its history. Its consequences were speedily manifested in the comparative inefficiency and intility of the local and general supervision of the schools in the absence of any connecting link between the department and the several town and district officers and the inhabitants of the



respective districts—in the discontinuance of a local appellate tribunal where the numerous controversies constantly springing up relative to the external affairs and internal arrangements of the districts might be equitably adjusted by a disinterested officer on the spot—in the facilities afforded for a perversion or wrongful appropriation of the public funds by the absence of any responsible check—and in the utter impracticability of obtaining, with any accuracy, those statistical details, in reference to the practical operation of the system, so indispensable to the department, to the legislature, and to the public. Nine hundred town superintendents, however well qualified for the discharge of the special duties devolved upon them, within their limited jurisdiction, were wholly unable to supply the place and fulfill the functions of county officers in constant communication with the state superintendent and with each other, whose abilities were or should have been unquestioned, whose influence was extensive, and their means of usefulness unrestricted. The dial of progress and improvement was set back for a long series of years—only to be restored and advanced by a radical and fundamental change in the entire system."

After the lapse of nearly nine years, the office was again restored in 1856, in a modified form, by providing for the election of a school commissioner in each assembly district in the state, one hundred and twelve in number, and affixing a better salary.

In his annual report for 1872 the superintendent of public instruction, Hon. A. B. Weaver, says: "For seventeen consecutive years, the present plan of supervision by commissioners has been in undisturbed operation. Time has proved it advantageous, and revealed its defects. Adherence to it for so long a period without change indicates that it has worked with considerable success, and has secured a corresponding degree of popular favor. \* \* \* \* \* Supervision is an essential element and a pervading power in any well executed plan of education. It is the agency through which the detailed administration of the whole school law is secured. Provisions, however excellent in themselves must depend upon this for their effect. Like circulation in the physical system, it is the means of health and vigor in all parts of the organization, energy in the performance of this function tends to produce efficiency in all; sluggishness in this respect, causes weakness throughout. No comprehensive system of education, embracing so wide a field as ours, and requiring such an extended sub-division of labor, will produce results much better or much worse than the character of the supervision which it employs."

A move is now being made in that state to have the office filled by appointment, or if by election, to be chosen by the school officers of the districts, so as to remove it from political nominating conventions.

In Pennsylvania, county superintendents are elected and their salary fixed by conventions of school officers, held every three years at the seat of county government. Certain conditions of eligibility are prescribed by law, with the purpose of excluding from the office all but practical teachers of experience and ability. Hon. J. P. Wickersham, state superintendent of public instruction, in a recent report says:

"We have had superintendents of schools in our counties since 1854, a period of fifteen years, and nothing is risked in saying that wherever persons well qualified have filled the office, it has done great good and is popular. It must be continued, either in its present or in some modified form that will render it more efficient. The work it does, I am satisfied, can not be as well done by any other agency that can be substituted for it."

Whenever we become satisfied that the office is unnecessary, expensive or improperly filled, policy and good judgment require us to modify or abolish it. As a general rule, all enterprises require supervision in proportion as they are extended; this is especially true of such enterprises as involve the employment of a large number of persons, and the expenditure of large sums of money. In conducting the operations of an army, a very large proportion of the expense is incurred in the management and inspection of the forces employed. In the cost of supporting a single regiment of soldiers, probably not less than twenty to twenty-five per cent. is expended for the supervision and inspection, or for such services as simply organizes, systematizes and directs the labor of others. Not much less is expended in the management of our railroad enterprises, in every part of which will be found the directing, instructing and inspecting officer, from the president and general superintendent, down through all the departments to the section boss. If a hundred persons are employed in a factory, a work-shop, or on a farm, they are divided into sections, all under some kind of personal supervision. In all the functions of our civil government, the same general rule applies. If the state of Iowa undertakes the erection of a new building, or the management of any enterprise which requires the employment of capital and labor, she necessarily and wisely pays a moderately large per cent. of the whole cost for superintendence of the work and of the men who perform the labor. But she has undertaken the erection of an edifice involving vast expenditures, of proportions infinitely grand and lofty, which, though finished in its several parts about once in every decade, is never completed; the foundation of this edifice being intelligence, the superstructure good citizenship, and whose crowning arch is noble character and moral excellence. The supervision of the public schools of the state, heretofore exercised, has been at an expense of less than one and one-half per cent. of the whole sum expended, and less than three per cent. of the amount paid for teachers' services alone. In graded schools where the services of a superintendent are required, the cost of supervision usually ranges from three to ten per cent. of the whole amount expended; this, too, in

schools which are divided into grades so as to facilitate the labors of the teachers, and which usually have the services of teachers who have had successful experience. In almost every respect these graded schools have superior advantages. Yet they can well afford the expense of a thoroughly qualified principal or superintendent. If it is true, as is often stated, that the office of county superintendent is too expensive, it is because the office is unnecessary, or that the work can be better or cheaper done by some other agency; it cannot be true on any other hypothesis. If, on the contrary, it is or can be made an efficient means of guarding the public schools from incompetent and worthless teachers by systematic and thorough examinations, if it can aid, instruct and inspire teachers to the employment of better methods of teaching, of governing and managing their schools, in securing a better classification of pupils and the arrangement of courses of study, better care and protection of the property of the district, and in infusing into the schools and among the pupils a proper spirit of emulation; if it can do anything to diminish the apathy and indifference of our people, and secure a better appreciation of the value of the public schools, and a larger attendance, and aid in the settlement of the school difficulties constantly arising, and be of service in calling and managing the teachers' associations and institutes in which is given all the normal training attainable by the great majority of our teachers; and aid in furnishing to the legislature and the public, reliable information of the public schools of the state better than any other agency, it is a most valuable and indispensable arm of the service and should be improved and made still more efficient.

In order to lay before the legislature as much information as possible upon this subject, it seems advisable to allude to some of the more important duties of the county superintendent prescribed by law.

#### EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS.

Section 1758, of the code, provides that "No person shall be employed to teach a common school which is to receive its distributive share of the school fund, unless he shall have a certificate of qualification, signed by the county superintendent of the county in which the school is situated, or by some other officer duly authorized by law; and any teacher who commences teaching without such certificate, shall forfeit all claim to compensation for the time during which he teaches without such certificate."

For twelve years prior to September 1, 1873, there existed a state board of examiners, consisting of the faculty of the state university, empowered to grant perpetual certificates, which authorized the holder to teach in any common school in the state. This board was abolished by act of the last legislature. About one hundred of the teachers holding these certificates are now engaged in teaching in the state. The only parties now authorized to issue certificates, are county superintendents; and as these certificates cannot be granted for a longer period than one year, the number of examinations made, and certificates issued in any one year, must equal the whole number of teachers engaged, less the number of those who hold state certificates. As all who hold certificates cannot secure schools, the number of certificates required to be issued must exceed the number of teachers employed. By reference to abstract "I," in this report, it will be seen that the number of applicants examined during the last year was 17,287; the number of certificates granted, 15,264. The importance of having this work done thoroughly, systematically, judiciously, and wisely, cannot be overstated. Upon the performance of this work alone will depend, in a great measure, the future condition and progress of our schools. Those persons to whom this duty is assigned, must ever stand as sentinels at the door of the school-room, intrusted with the duty of guarding the youth of the state against incapable, worthless, pernicious and immoral teachers. The importance of the duty increases in proportion to the number of unqualified and incompetent persons who seek admission to the profession. There is a constant tendency among our best teachers who are qualified by training, study and experience, to seek other avenues of labor, by reason of the small salaries paid, to the perpetual depletion of the teachers' ranks, by the withdrawing of the best, as shown by the fact that 3,543 teachers were employed in 1873 who had no previous experience, a large proportion of whom are, doubtless, young girls and boys, without any adequate training, or preparation for their work; certificates are granted to many of them only temporarily, as a matter of necessity, and at the personal solicitation of school directors, and upon their representations that better teachers cannot be secured.

The examination of teachers can be judiciously and properly done only:

1. By persons who are thoroughly qualified for the work; by those who are themselves first class teachers; whose qualifications are superior to those of the persons examined. No others should be entrusted with this duty.



2. By those who make schools and teaching a study, who devote their time to, and are thoroughly conversant with, the practical duties of teaching.

3. By persons whose tenure of office does not depend upon securing the good will of every doting parent who has a son or daughter ambitious to teach school.

4. By a system of thorough, *written examinations*; which are principally written from carefully prepared and frequently renewed lists of printed questions. No others are now regarded as of value. The power to license should always be distinct from the power to appoint teachers; and for obvious reasons these functions should not be exercised by one and the same person. There is a very general feeling among the better teachers of the state, that the standard of teachers' qualifications should be very much higher than it is at present.

The want of some uniform standard has often been dwelt upon in associations and conventions, and I have been repeatedly requested by resolution and otherwise, to prepare lists of questions indicative of the proper standard, for the information and guidance of county superintendents. Accordingly I directed Mr. Stewart, my deputy, during the intervals of the regular duties of the office, to prepare a list of questions to serve as models rather than for actual use; the principal objects being to secure a uniform standard of examination, and to indicate the line of demarkation that should separate the different classes of certificates, also the scope of questions proper to be used for each class.

It was recommended that candidates, during the examination, should be under the observation of the superintendent; no communication with others, nor access to books or memoranda being permitted; that the printed lists of questions should, in all cases, be returned with the written answers, and all arithmetical operations should be exhibited in full.

That to be entitled to a certificate, the candidate should correctly answer ninety per cent. of the whole of the questions proposed, and not less than seventy per cent. in each branch; also that first and second class certificates be granted for one year; third class for six months.

That all examinations should be to some extent oral; and that examples in reading should always be given by the applicant.

Also that professional certificates be issued to applicants answering one hundred per cent. of the questions for first-class certificates, and who make teaching a profession.

The following are the lists of the questions:

### *Preliminary Questions and Directions for all Applicants.*

1. Write your name, age and post-office address.
2. Where were you educated, and how many teachers' institutes have you attended?
3. How many terms have you taught?
4. Of what educational journal are you a regular reader, and what works on teaching have you read?

5. Number your answers to correspond with the questions, and give due attention to the use of capitals and to punctuation.

No communication, nor reference to books or memoranda, is permitted during the examination. Write carefully.

A fee of one dollar must be paid before commencing the examination, unless on the last Saturday of any month. An applicant who is a stranger to the county superintendent, must furnish satisfactory evidence that he possesses a good moral character.

### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICANTS FOR FIRST CLASS CERTIFICATES.

#### *Orthography.*

1. Give the principal rules for the use of capital letters.
2. What are the principal rules for spelling?
3. What is a primitive word?
4. What is a digraph?
5. What is primary, and what is secondary accent?
6. What are the divisions and subdivisions of the elementary sounds of the English language?
7. What sound of the letter "a" is diphthongal, and of what simple elementary sounds is it composed?
8. Is long "u" a simple or compound element? If compound, give analysis.
9. Correct the orthography of the following words; also divide each into the proper number of syllables, indicating the sound of each vowel by the proper symbol: Degenerate, mischevus, defisite, finanse, alternate, sacriligious, tortois.
10. Write a list of words in which different vowels have the same sound.

#### *Reading.*

1. Name the different kinds of composition.
2. How does prose differ from poetry?
3. Grade and define pitch.
4. Name the elements of expression.
5. What do you understand by the phrase, "spirit of the selection?"
6. Name the organs of speech.
7. Difference between quantity and movement.

8. Difference between force and stress.
9. Give the qualities of voice and their corresponding emotions.
10. What is the rhetorical pause?

### *Writing.*

1. What is an element?
2. What is a principle?
3. Form in order all the principles of which letters are composed.
4. How many spaces in height is the capital letter E?
5. Give rule for shading.
6. How do you teach penmanship?
7. Analyze the capital letter W?
8. How should the hand rest on the paper?
9. How does the space between the combined small letters compare with the space between the parts of letters?
10. What system of penmanship is, in your judgment, the best, and what are its advantages?

### *Arithmetic.*

1. How many cubic feet of stone are required for the wall of a well; the diameter before being walled, 6 feet; after being walled, 3 feet; depth, 30 feet?
2. What is the G. C. D. of four-eighths and nine-twelfths?
3. What is the L. C. M. of eight-twelfths and nine-fifteenths?
4. The specific gravity of gold is 19.36, of copper, 8.85; what is the specific gravity of a mixture containing 13 lbs. of gold and 12 lbs. copper, and how many carats fine is the mixture?
5. What is the diameter of a sphere which contains 500 cubic feet?
6. How large a stick of square timber can be obtained from a log whose diameter is 24 inches?
7. What are the four principal cases in interest, and what the rule for each case?
8. What shall I pay for a bond of \$100, with interest at 6 per cent., in order that I may realize 8 per cent. on the investment?
9. The 8th term of an arithmetical series is 76, and the 34th term 206; what is the 19th term?
10. Insert 4 arithmetical means between 2 and 3.

### *Geography.*

1. Are degrees of latitude of exactly the same length? If they differ in length, where are they shortest, and why?
2. What is the ecliptic?
3. What is the inclination of the earth's axis to the plane of its orbit?
4. What are the different forms of government?

5. What produces the changes of season, and why are the summers warmer than the winters?
6. What are the agricultural and mineral products of the United States?
7. What is meant by isothermal lines?
8. What are the most favorable conditions for animal and vegetable life?
9. What are the functions of the legislative, judicial, and executive departments of a government?
10. Draw a map of Iowa, showing the principal towns, streams, and railroads.

### *Grammar.*

1. Correct grammatical errors in the following examples:  
That opinion is too universal to be easily corrected. He instructed and fed the crowd who surrounded him. This court is famous for the justice of their decisions. Neither wealth nor honor can secure the happiness of their votaries.
2. What is the active voice, and what the passive? What verbs have no voice? Give examples.
3. "To err is human;" parse each word in full.
4. What are the qualities necessary for a good style of composition?
5. Give a synopsis of the conjugation of the verb *walk*.
6. Analyze the following sentence in full:  
"Better  
Pursue a frivolous trade by serious means,  
Than a sublime art frivolously."
7. What are the figures of etymology?
8. What of syntax?
9. What of rhetoric?
10. Of what does prosody treat?

### *Physiology.*

1. What three kinds of food do we need?
2. Name the mineral matters which should be contained in our food.
3. What are the lacteals?
4. What is the gastric juice?
5. What organic principles does it contain?
6. What are the organs of the nervous system?
7. What is a sense?
8. What is the cause of near sightedness?
9. Name the three coats of the eye.
10. What is the object of the crystalline lens?

### *United States History.*

1. What causes led to the revolutionary war, and what were its principal events and results?



2. State the important differences that exist between the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution of the United States.
3. What was the Compromise of 1850?
4. What were the alleged reasons for the secession of the Southern States?
5. When was the Emancipation Proclamation issued, and what were its effects?
6. Name the principal victories won by General Grant; by Sherman; by Sheridan; by Lee.
7. How were the "Alabama Claims" finally adjusted?
8. When are parties entitled to trial by jury?
9. What rights has the accused in regard to witnesses?
10. What is the 14th amendment to the Constitution?

### *Theory and Practice of Teaching.*

1. How should a recitation be conducted, and what are its chief objects?
2. What is your method of keeping scholarship and deportment record?
3. What is your general plan of governing school?
4. In what cases should corporal punishment be resorted to? When should a pupil be expelled?
5. What other punishments do you use, and in what cases?
6. Define *deduction*; *induction*; *objective*; *subjective*.
7. How do you give moral instruction to pupils?
8. What other general instruction should be given to pupils?
9. What are the objects of education?
10. What is the object of text-books?

### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICANTS FOR SECOND CLASS CERTIFICATES.

#### *Orthography.*

1. Name the vowels.
2. Give examples of words in which the different sounds of each vowel occur.
3. What is a diphthong?
4. How are consonants divided?
5. What are double consonants?
6. What is a prefix?
7. What is a suffix?
8. What is a word?
9. What is a derivative word?
10. Spell, correctly, the following words: *Fascious, cillindrical.*

#### *Reading.*

1. What is emphasis?
2. What is transition?

3. How do you render a word emphatic?
4. What is quantity?
5. What is quality?
6. What is personation?
7. How do the marks of punctuation affect oral reading?
8. What elementary sounds are susceptible of prolongation?
9. How do you read dialogue?
10. How do you read a soliloquy?

#### *Writing.*

1. What is penmanship?
2. What is a space?
3. How do capital letters compare in size with small letters?
4. What degree of slant should letters have?
5. Describe the finger movement.
6. Describe the muscular movement.
7. Analyze the capital stem.
8. Which would you cultivate, finger or muscular movement, and why?
9. Are these movements combined in forming letters?
10. What is the proper sitting position?

#### *Arithmetic.*

1. How change a given number of pounds troy, to pounds avoirdupois?
2. Divide one hundredth by one, and multiply the quotient by one thousandth.
3. I buy a horse for 12 per cent. less than its value, and sell it for 10 per cent. more than its value, what per cent. do I gain?
4. What is present worth?
5. What are *ad valorem*, and what specific duties?
6. Require the proceeds of a 90 days' note for \$1,330 discounted at a bank at ten per cent. per annum.
7. What is the value, in gold, of \$100 in currency, when gold is worth 14½ per cent. premium?
8. If 4 men can dig a ditch 72 rods long, 5 feet wide, and 2 feet deep, in 12 days, how many men can dig a ditch 120 rods long, 6 feet wide, and 1 foot 6 inches deep in 9 days?
9. What is the sum of an infinite series one-fourth, one-sixteenth, one-sixty-fourth, &c.?
10. What are the solid contents of a globe 16 feet in diameter.

#### *Geography.*

1. What are the mountain systems of North America?
2. How are civilized nations distinguished?
3. Draw a map of Iowa, showing the principal towns.
4. What is the width in degrees and minutes of each zone?

- Describe the principal ocean currents.
- Why are some large bodies of water fresh and why some salt?
- What are the principal cities of the United States?
- What are the principal rivers of the United States?
- What are the principal cities of Europe?
- The principal rivers of Europe?

### Grammar.

Correct the grammatical errors in the following examples:

- It is her.  
Let this remain a secret between you and I.  
He was the first who entered.  
Discontent and sorrow manifested itself in his countenance.
- Define person.
- Give the plural of knight templar; of genius.
- Give the principal and subordinate classification of adjectives.
- Into what classes are pronouns divided?
- What are personal pronouns, and how are they classified?
- Give a synopsis of the conjugation of the verb *write*.
- Parse in full "My desire is that you may succeed."
- Analyze in full,  
"A lad, made orphan by a winter shipwreck, played among the waste."
- Write a letter in due form, to some board of directors, asking a situation as teacher.

### Physiology.

- What is the vital element of the air?
- What is the condition of the air we exhale?
- Name the organs of circulation.
- What are the capillaries?
- Where is the blood purified?
- What is the average temperature of the body?
- How is the temperature of the body regulated?
- What is the office of the lymphatics?
- How can you determine whether the blood comes from an artery or a vein?
- How and where is the heat of the body generated?

### United States History.

- What discoveries and settlements did the French make in North America?
- When and where did the first Continental Congress assemble; why was it called, and for what purpose?
- Who was king of England at the commencement of the Revolutionary war, and who was the king's prime minister?

- What caused the war of 1812, and during what presidential administration did it occur?
- What officers constitute the cabinet of the president?
- By whom, and for what length of time, are senators in congress elected?
- What constitutes treason? What provision is made in the constitution for its punishment?
- When was Iowa admitted into the Union?
- When and where was the first permanent white settlement made in Iowa?
- What constitutes the congress of the United States?

### Theory and Practice of Teaching.

- What are the particular advantages of oral spelling, and of written spelling?
- What is your method of teaching grammar?
- What is your method of conducting recitations?
- What is your method of keeping a record of the scholarship and deportment of your pupils?
- What studies do you consider especially adapted to children?
- What is meant by "natural order" of educating the faculties?
- What system of reward and punishment do you adopt in school?
- What general exercises would you introduce into an ungraded school?
- To what extent should a pupil receive assistance in the preparation of his lessons?
- Is it, or is it not necessary for teachers of lower grades to acquaint themselves with the higher branches of study?

### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICANTS FOR THIRD CLASS CERTIFICATES.

#### Orthography.

Correct the errors in the orthography of the following words:

- Sepperate, to divide.
- Councel, advice.
- Independant, not subordinate.
- Superced, to replace.
- Febuary, the second month.
- Flaxid, want of firmness.
- Etemology, a division of grammar.
- Diferance, discordance.
- Write the vowels.
- What is an aspirate?

#### Reading

- What is articulation?
- What is monotone?



3. What is inflection?
4. When should the rising inflection be used?
5. When the falling?
6. Name the kinds of circumflexes.
7. Name the different kinds of pitch.
8. What is modulation?
9. What is stress?
10. What is movement?

### *Writing.*

1. How should you sit while writing?
2. Give rule for holding the pen.
3. Which is the base line?
4. Which the head line?
5. What is a space in height?
6. What is a space in width?
7. What is a hair line?
8. What is a right curve?
9. What is a left curve?
10. What is a point?

### *Arithmetic.*

1. Add eight millions, eighty thousand, eight hundred; seven hundred thousand and seventy; five millions, eighty-nine thousand, seven hundred and eight; and sixty millions, six hundred thousand and seventy.
2. Write all the signs commonly used in arithmetic, and state the use of each.
3. What is the greatest common divisor?
4. What is the least common multiple?
5. What is the rule for multiplying a fraction by a fraction?
6. Give rule for dividing one fraction by another.
7. How many solid feet in a cord of wood?
8. What fundamental rules are used in reducing numbers of a higher denomination to a lower?
9. What is meant by the term per cent.?
10. I bought a knife for seventy-five cents and sold it for one dollar, what per cent. did I make?

### *Geography.*

1. Bound, and give the capital of Iowa.
2. What are the principal streams of Iowa flowing into the Mississippi?
3. What are the principal towns, of Iowa, situated on the Mississippi?
4. Define latitude and longitude.

5. In what direction, and into what body of water does the Rio Grande flow?
6. The Mississippi?
7. The Columbia?
8. What city at the mouth of the Hudson?
9. Which is the right, and which the left bank of a stream?
10. Give the names and location of the different zones; also the names of the circles separating them.

### *Grammar.*

1. Name and define the several parts of speech.
2. Into what classes are nouns divided?
3. What are the properties of nouns?
4. Define case.
5. How are adjectives classified?
6. How are pronouns classified?
7. How are verbs classified?
8. What are the properties of verbs?
9. What is an irregular verb?
10. Parse the following sentence in full; "I seldom write letters."

### *Physiology.*

1. How does nature punish a violation of her laws?
2. Is the preservation of health a moral duty?
3. Name some of nature's laws.
4. What are the uses of the bones?
5. What is the composition of bone?
6. What are the muscles?
7. For what purpose should we exercise?
8. Ought a scholar to study during the time of recess?
9. What is the best time for taking exercise?
10. How should the season regulate our diet?

### *United States History.*

1. When and where was the first permanent settlement made within the present limits of the United States?
2. Mention three battles of the Revolutionary war.
3. Name the thirteen original States.
4. Who was President of the United States at the beginning of the Mexican war?
5. When and where was the battle of Gettysburg fought?
6. How long did the war of the Rebellion last?
7. Name the Presidents of the United States.
8. Name the principal battles of the Mexican war.

9. In what States were important battles fought during the late Rebellion?
10. What were the results of the war of the Rebellion?

### *Theory and Practice of Teaching.*

1. What should the teacher's daily register show?
2. What educational works have you read?
3. What may be taught by the conduct, manner, and habits of the teacher?
4. Mention some of the particulars in regard to manners, in which you would instruct your pupils.
5. What is the object of the study of arithmetic?
6. How do you teach spelling?
7. How do you teach the alphabet?
8. What is the proper summer, and what the proper winter temperature for the school-room?
9. Make a programme of daily exercises for an ungraded school.
10. For what is a teacher responsible?

### STATE CERTIFICATES.

Justice to the many hundreds of superior, earnest, and noble teachers in Iowa, who are studying and laboring to qualify themselves for the higher duties of their calling, and to elevate the profession, demands that some provision of law be made, whereby certificates of a more permanent character, and good anywhere in the state, may be secured by those who are willing to prepare themselves for rigorous examinations, and who purpose making teaching a permanent profession. Elsewhere under an allusion to the *State Teachers' Association* will be found the action of the association at its last meeting with reference to this subject. I most heartily concur in the report of the committee, and of the association, on this subject, and commend it to the favorable consideration of the legislature.

### SCHOOL INSPECTION.

By reference to abstracts "E" and "J," it appears that about the usual time has been spent in visiting and inspecting schools, as during previous years.

In the conventions of county superintendents, held during the year 1872, special attention was given to this subject, as one greatly in need of full discussion, careful study and judicious management, that better results might be secured, than had generally attended the labor in the past.

Nor are results up to the present time by any means satisfactory; so much depends upon the ability, qualifications, and good judgment of the inspector that, upon this hinges the value of the services performed. In a number of counties, school visitation and inspection has been conducted so successfully and has been so well appreciated that the superintendents have been directed to devote their entire time to the duties of the office, at a fixed salary, and so far as known to me, with entire satisfaction to the people of those counties, and with great profit to the schools. Desiring to obtain some more specific information as to the relative proportion of time spent in this labor, the methods employed by the different superintendents to make school visitation efficient, and to avail myself of their experience during the last two years, I sent out, early in November last, a circular, containing a list of questions to be answered. The information was neither asked for, nor furnished with a view to publication; but I have thought best to insert three or four of the replies in full, selecting those of officers who retire from the office at the close of the present term, as indicating about the usual amount of time spent, methods employed, and brief summary of results.

The following is a list of the questions, and a few of the replies:

1. How many days have you been employed in the performance of your official duties during your present term of office to November 1, 1873?
2. What portion of this time have you spent in visiting schools?
3. What evils have you been able wholly or partially to correct by such visitation?
4. What general results, or general good, has such visitation accomplished?
5. What special methods for the improvement of schools have you employed in your school visitation?
6. Have you ever made, or do you now make, any systematic report to boards of directors, or to your board of supervisors, giving the results of your investigation and inspection?
7. How many of the teachers in your county, in your opinion, regard visitation as now practiced, as of value to the schools, and as an important aid to them in the performance of their duties?
8. Could school visitation, in your opinion, be safely dispensed with?
9. If provision should be made for holding an annual institute of from four to eight weeks in your county, under competent instructors, could visitation be dispensed with in the case of schools taught by persons who had attended one or more such institutes?



## E. H. ELY, BUCHANAN COUNTY.

Your circular is received, and in reply, I have the honor to report as follows:

1. I resigned the office of county superintendent October 18, 1873, entered upon in January 1, 1872. During that period, I had charged Buchanan county for two hundred and seventy-seven days service. I did not charge for less than eight hours work and there were many days in which I did from one to six hour's work that were not charged to the county.

2. I made three hundred and seventy-eight visits during that time of which I made a record. Some of them were for a full day; others for but a short time, depending on the condition of the school visited.

3. One evil corrected, in part at least, in many cases, is the want of responsibility on the part of teachers, if no one visits the school, who knows what a school is, and what it ought to do, or accomplish. The young teacher is apt to feel a want of responsibility, or accountability, this, perhaps unconsciously; this evil is corrected by the expectation that the superintendent will visit the school and hold the teacher responsible for the condition of things in the school.

I always suggest improvements in method, or correct the programme when I think such correction or change advisable; usually I did not conduct any exercise further than a general examination of the school as a whole, making my suggestions to the teacher in private.

4. A general good aimed at, in my visiting has been to induce patrons of the school to visit it, thus exciting greater interest in school work among the inhabitants of the district; in my experience this has invariably resulted in good to the school.

5. My aim has been to present to each school some incentives to study and to good behavior that were new to them, and calculated to encourage them. My method has been varied to meet the condition of different schools.

6. I prepared a number of lectures and delivered them in different parts of the county, calculated to induce school boards to co-operate more earnestly with teachers in the management of schools; an annual report to the board of supervisors, mainly statistical.

7. I do not think there is a teacher in the county who does not desire to receive visits from the county superintendent, unless such teacher is ashamed of his work and fears exposure.

8. I think not, without endangering the best interests of the schools, and do not believe that any one can thoroughly and successfully supervise any work without frequently visiting the workmen and examining the work.

9. I conducted a normal institute in this county this year, for five weeks and have no doubt of the beneficial results to our schools, still I do not think any system of normal training can take the place of visitation. Teachers are human, and sometimes mercenary; all such need to have their work examined frequently and thoroughly. Children in school need to be visited by some one clothed with authority superior to that vested in the teacher, to act in the thousand and one cases arising under our system.

## G. W. THOMPSON, HENRY COUNTY.

1. The undersigned has been employed in the discharge of his official duties during the present term of office to November 1st, 1873, four hundred and fifty days.

2. Of this time two hundred and sixty days were spent in visiting schools.

3. As I visit schools without previous notice to the teachers, and thus find them "in their every-day dress," I know an improvement has been made in their condition in the following particulars: 1st, in condition of school-room; 2d, in deportment of pupils; 3d, in methods of instruction.

4. Greater unity of action.

5. Endeavor to find out defects first; if in instruction, suggest remedies, *privately*, to the teacher; if in deportment of pupils, to the school. Request patrons to visit the school.

6. I have not.

7. I know of none in the county, among the teachers, who do not regard visitation as *important*. The *best* teachers regard it as an essential aid. During the time schools are in progress invitations from teachers to visit their schools are received almost daily.

8. The objection to school visitation is a pecuniary one.

9. In my opinion this objection could and would be made, with equal force, against normal instruction. If, however, such provision could be made, satisfactory to the tax-payers, I think special supervision, by visitation, might be dispensed with and the schools suffer no material loss.

## E. BAKER, MAHASKA COUNTY.

1. Four hundred and twenty.

2. One hundred and seventy-one.

3. I. Destruction of school property—houses, fences, grounds, apparatus, books, etc.

II. Punctuality of teachers and pupils, neatness, and general habits.

III. By visiting we ascertain who can teach and govern, and who cannot. Those that can teach or are susceptible of being taught how to teach, we retain, the other class is discarded. Ability to teach and govern can only be ascertained in the school room.

4. Clearing the schools of pretenders, of those who cannot teach, and rendering aid to the discouraged; made nearly uniform the method of teaching—uniformity of books used in the same school, etc. Have succeeded to a certain extent in making the people believe that the schools are theirs and require some of their attention.

We are securing groves around many of the school houses—think the missionary work is done in that direction.

A desire among the teachers to know how others teach, I do not deem the

least part of the work done, and that is accomplished; visiting other schools and meeting together for school work is common, and nearly all engage in the work.

5. I make a memorandum of the method of teaching, of governing, of the manner of teachers and pupils, of all merits and demerits noticeable. Notice the condition of the books, the writing, if writing is not taught learn the why, and remove the cause. (Writing is now taught the same as arithmetic and as well.) I take as many patrons with me as possible, and scarcely ever fail of "getting up" a revival. Before I leave a district I give the teacher the benefit of all the notes I have made for him.

If I have succeeded in any direction in my work, it has been in creating a hopeful, moral atmosphere among the teachers and pupils of the county. The method of accomplishing this work cannot well be described.

6. No, sir.

7. Nearly all—and the older and more successful the teacher, the oftener they wish to meet the superintendent. They tell him of their successes and failures, with him form new plans and open new mines, etc., etc.

8. No, sir. When our teachers have all received a professional training, it may be possible.

9. An institute of six or eight weeks each year would accomplish much, and the better qualified the teachers become, the less necessity of visits from county superintendents.

#### E. R. ELDRIDGE, WASHINGTON COUNTY.

1. I have been employed every working day of the year, and as this (Washington) is a thickly populated county, I could have given work to a deputy for at least one half of the time, and this, too, would have been profitable to the school interests of the county.

2. Because of the great amount of time necessarily spent in the office, I have only visited about eighty days per annum, or a little over one-fourth of the time.

3. The evils which I have been enabled to lessen by such visitations are hereafter partially enumerated, viz:

First. I have been enabled more fully to estimate the worth of the teacher by seeing his method of working—oftentimes discovering that fine theorizing in the examination is not an unfailling index to the character of the work in the school-room. In this way I have been enabled to dispense with those who are not capable of managing successfully a school.

Second. Methods of school organization, classification or discipline have been quietly modified when necessary, new ideas, by illustrations, given on manner of conducting classes, and a better interest infused into the school. A well timed and judicious visit from the county superintendent puts more spirit and life into a school than almost any other agency that can be used.

4. In addition to the "good results" mentioned in No. 3, along with the "evils remedied," I mention the meeting with patrons and school officers,

which affords an opportunity to converse with them in regard to their schools, which is of advantage to them, and also infuses into them spirit and interest in school work.

5. First. I have held educational meetings and delivered lectures on kindred topics, and also organized educational associations, which were jointly worked by the patrons, teachers and school officers, with great advantage to our schools.

Second. I have frequently secured the presence of the sub-director, and this has been beneficial to the school by supporting the teacher where there was a weakness.

Third. Have presented systematic methods of study to pupils, having found that very many teachers were incompetent to give instruction on this point.

Fourth. Have endeavored to incite investigation, rather than being satisfied with knowing what the book says.

6. Have tried reporting through the county papers. Found, if properly done, that it was full of good results. Have made no reports to boards of supervisors.

7. Out of a teaching force of 200, all, save one, agree that the visits of a live and competent county superintendent, are beneficial and worth fully the amount it costs the county.

8. To this question I must give my emphatic no. It is one of the most powerful levers that a superintendent has for bringing up inefficient teachers. Inspection is death to weakness and inefficiency.

9. The four or eight weeks' institute would be an excellent thing, but this would be much more successful if coupled with the visitation of an energetic, qualified county superintendent.

Our great need is qualified superintendents. Give us a law that will provide for the selection of such only, and we have a remedy then for many ills now belonging to this office.

We have been, and are now cursed with inefficient incumbents in this office. People are limited in hiring a teacher—he must have a certificate of qualification—but they may elect the meanest ignoramus in the county for their superintendent and there is no remedy.

My position is this—do not give up the superintendency without a great struggle. Let us improve it rather than kill it.

We have only to look around for excellent illustrations which demonstrate the indispensability of this office. No enterprise is successful unless well guided.

Supervision is direction. It cannot be done by "many heads"—there must be a good degree of centralization—and hence, to avoid the truth of the old adage, "What is everybody's business is nobody's business," we must have the county superintendency; one mind to guide school affairs as we see unity in every other successful organization.

The idea of the county normal I most heartily endorse. In fact, these *primaries* are what we need now, rather than larger and higher schools—these will be needed, too, in the future.



## MISS CARRIE A. BASSETT, WOODBURY COUNTY.

1. Two hundred and eleven.
2. Thirty-eight.
3. In conducting recitations; in disciplining; some of the little annoyances to which young teachers are subject.
4. The necessity for daily preparation on the part of the teacher; to correct their course of study; making programme for study and recitations; giving practical work in class-drills. It has enabled me to better ascertain wherein the teachers were deficient, that I might know what subjects to have presented at our teachers' meetings and institutes.
5. General remarks to the school; personal suggestions and criticisms to the teacher; conducting recitations; giving oral lessons; encouraging teachers to visit other schools, and what to observe while there; trying to find means to secure uniformity in text-books; uniting all the schools in one township together, having recitations conducted by different teachers and myself. Methods discussed and general criticisms given at our associations and institutes.
6. Only a verbal report.
7. About ninety-two per cent.
8. I think not.
9. The same supervision would still, I think, be necessary.

## APPEALS.

During the last two years, county superintendents have been called upon to decide three hundred and eighteen cases, appealed from the action of district boards. It is believed that these have been determined, in most cases, in such a manner as to settle existing difficulties, give general satisfaction, and secure substantial justice, with little or no expense to the districts, or to the parties interested.

## TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.

Attention is called to exhibits "F" and "K," as containing some interesting information in reference to teachers' institutes in the several counties. During the year 1872, institutes were held in eighty-five counties; with a total attendance of eight thousand five hundred and ninety-five teachers, or an average of about one hundred to each institute. In 1873, eighty-four institutes were held in as many counties, with a somewhat larger aggregate attendance.

The value of these institutes can hardly be overstated. Year by year they are becoming more valuable, as their legitimate work is better understood, and as the number of teachers, qualified to give thorough

and practical instruction in them, increases. The best educational talent of the state is now everywhere brought into requisition in these institutes, including the presidents and professors of the state university, state agricultural college, denominational universities, colleges and academies; the superintendents, principals, and superior teachers of our graded and high schools; clergymen, judges, lawyers, physicians, editors and cultured men and women, in all ranks and vocations. The governor of the state, also, amidst the many cares of his office has yet found time, occasionally, to visit institutes, to delight, instruct, and inspire the immense audiences of teachers and citizens which everywhere assemble to hear him. They have become a powerful agency in educating teachers, who have no better means of obtaining normal instruction, and in educating public sentiment; and thousands of teachers every year go out from these discussions and instructions, with clearer views of their respective duties; with a determination to do better service in the future, and with a higher inspiration for their calling.

General Eaton says, in his annual report for 1871:

"It is gratifying to observe how widely and uniformly the teachers' institutes have been employed throughout the country for the improvement of teachers, and through them of the schools. Many of the ablest thinkers and educators have contributed to their success. For many teachers they are the only source of correct ideas in regard to methods of instruction, discipline and school management. They scatter the germs of the best thoughts upon education, and, by the general attendance of the citizens of the places where they are held, contribute greatly to improve the public mind and correct and elevate the educational sentiment. Too often the expenses of these institutes have to be met by voluntary contributions. Undoubtedly there should be careful legal provision in every state for an adequate system of teachers' institutes by a sufficient fund, to be under the proper control of the state, county, or city officers, for the ample compensation of the best educators whose services can be procured in conducting them."

These most eloquent words are taken from the last school report of the Hon. Newton Bateman, superintendent of public instruction of Illinois:

"If one commonwealth more than another has laid the American people under obligations for valuable lessons in the theory and art, the means and methods, of public education, that commonwealth is Massachusetts. And long before there was a free school system in Illinois, the hills and valleys of that state were traversed, year after year, by strong, gifted, and eloquent men, engaged in the very work that has here

been described—instructing the teachers, addressing the people, organizing and conducting institutes, holding educational conventions, and mightily awakening and stirring the inhabitants everywhere. The voice of Horace Mann was heard, from Cape Cod to the Berkshire mountains, warning, entreating, expostulating, beseeching the people, with the vehemence and power of one of the old prophets, to look to the education of their children. Hear him:

‘We all bear witness that there is but one salvation for the state—the knowledge of duty, and the will to do it, among the people. But what measures are we taking to cause that knowledge to spring up, like a new intellectual creation, in every mind; and to cause that will to be quickened into life, in every breast? We all agree—the universal experience and history of mankind being our authority—that, in nineteen cases out of twenty, if the human mind is ever to be expanded by knowledge and imbued with virtuous principles, it must be done during the susceptible years of childhood and youth. But when we come to the *sine qua non*—to the work—to the point where volition must issue forth into action, or it is valueless—when we come to the taxing, to the building, to the books, to the apparatus, to the whole system of preparatory and contemporaneous measures for carrying on and perfecting the work of education—where wishes and sympathy and verbal encouragement are nothing without the effective co-operation of those muscles which perform labor and transfer money—when we come to this point, then excuses teem, and the well-wishers retire from the stage, like actors at the close of a drama. I gladly acknowledge that there are honorable exceptions, in all ranks and classes of men; and in no state in the union are there so many of these exceptions as in Massachusetts; and yet even here, is it not most extensively true, that when we appeal to the different classes and occupations of men, we meet with indifference, if not with repulse? We solicit the farmer to visit the school, but he is too much engaged with the care of his stock to look after his children. We apply to the tradesman, but his account of profit and loss must be adjusted before he can attend to the source of all profit and loss—in the mind. We call upon the physician, but he has too many patients in the arms of death, to allow him one hour for arresting the spread of a contagion by which, if neglected, hundreds of others must perish. We apply to the lawyer and the judge, but they are redressing the wrongs and avenging the violated laws of society—they are so engaged in uncoiling the folds of a parent serpent which has wound itself round the state, that they cannot stop to crush a hundred of its young, ere they issue from the nest, to wind their folds alike around the state, and the law, and its ministers. We apply to the clergyman, he bids us God speed—but commends us, for assistance, to the first man we meet; for he and his flock are beleaguered by seven evil spirits, in the form of seven heresies, each fatal to the souls of men. We sally forth from his doors, and the first man we meet is his clerical brother; but he, too, has seven fatal heresies to combat, and he solemnly assures us that the most dangerous leader of them all, is the man we have just left. We apply to the wealthy and the benevolent, who are carrying on vast religious enterprises abroad; but they have just shipped their cargoes of gold to Africa, to Asia, and to the uttermost isles of the sea, and can spare nothing—never asking themselves the question, who, in

the next generation, will support the enterprises they have begun, and retain the foot hold they may acquire, if they suffer heathenism and idolatry of worshipping base passions to spring up in their native land, and around their own doors. We go to those great antagonist theological institutions, which have selected high social eminences, all over the land, and entrenched themselves against each other, as warring generals fortify their camps upon the summit of confronting hills—we implore them to send out one wise and mighty man to guide this great people through a wilderness more difficult to traverse than that which stretched between Egypt and Canaan; but each hostile sect is engaged in propagating a creed which it *knows* to be true, against the fatal delusions of those various and opposite creeds, which each of the other sects also *knows* to be true!

Oh, when will men learn, that ever since the Savior bowed his head upon the cross and said “It is finished,” there has been truth enough in the world, to make all men wise and holy and happy—all that is wanted—all that ever has been wanted is—minds that will appreciate truth. The barbarian cannot appreciate it, whether born in New Zealand or in New England. The benighted and brutified child, whose thoughts are born of prejudice, whose actions of sensualism, whose moral sensibilities have been daily seared from his birth, with the hot iron of vicious customs and maxims, cannot discern truth, cannot know it, will not embrace it, whether his father is called a savage or a christian. To give truth a passport to the souls of men, to ensure it home and supremacy in the human heart, there must be some previous awakening and culture of the intellectual and moral nature. In this respect it is with spiritual, as with scientific truth. The great astronomical truths which pertain to the solar system, have existed ever since the creation; for generations past, they have been known to the learned; and all the planets, as they move, are heralds and torch-bearers, sent round by the hand of God, revolution after revolution, and age after age, to make perpetual proclamation through all their circuits, and to light up the heavens, from side to side, with ocular and refulgent demonstrations of their existence; and yet, until their elements are all laboriously taught, until our minds are opened and made capacious for their reception, these glorious truths are a blank, and for our vision and joy, might as well never have been. And so of all truth—there must be a mind enlarged, ennobled, purified, to embrace truth, in all its beauty, sublimity and holiness, as well as beautiful, sublime and holy truths to be embraced.

Will the great political and financial problems which now agitate the Union ever be rightly solved and permanently adjusted, while they are submitted, year after year, to voters who cannot even read and write? Can any additional intelligence and integrity be expected in our rulers, without additional intelligence and integrity in the constituency that elects them? Complain of president or congress as much as we will, they are the very men whom we, the people, have chosen. If the country is an active volcano of ignorance and guilt, why should not congress be a crater for the out-gushing of its lava? Will Providence interfere to rescue us by a miracle, while we are voluntarily pursuing a course which would make a speedier interference, and a more stupendous miracle, necessary for our subsequent rescue? How much of time, of



talent and of wealth, we are annually expending in legislatures, in political conventions, through newspapers—to gain adherents to one system of policy, or its opposite, to an old party or to a new one—but how little to rear a people with minds capable of understanding systems of policy, when developed, and of discerning between the right and the wrong, in the parties which beset and would inveigle them. What honors and emoluments are showered upon successful politicians; what penury and obscurity are the portion of those who are moulding the character of a rising generation of sovereigns! And here let not the truth be forgotten, that the weightiest obligation to foster and perfect the work of education, lies upon those states which enjoy the most; for to whomsoever much is given, of them shall be much required?"

With such words of truth, eloquence and power, that mighty apostle of common schools spoke to the people of Massachusetts, making of every village-crowned eminence in the state a very Mars Hill to echo his grand appeals, onward through vale and hamlet, till every ear should hear and every heart be moved; while a select corps of accomplished men followed up the march of the orator, utilizing the profound impressions left by his addresses upon the minds of the people, by gathering the teachers into institutes and conventions, unfolding to them the principles of education, and instructing them in the true science and art of teaching. The voice of the orator died away among the hills of New England—his noble presence vanished forever from the shores of time, long ago; but the results abide—the common schools of Massachusetts, taken all in all, are the best in the Union and in the world. That the men and the agencies mentioned were among the most potential factors of this noble consummation, none can deny, and distant will be the day when the school children of that good old commonwealth will cease to honor the name and revere the memory of their good and gifted friend."

The great drawback to our teachers' institutes at present, however, is the limited time which the law requires, and which the meager appropriation for securing competent instructors, seems to necessitate. Conductors are often perplexed to determine what to introduce and what to omit, in the five or six days to which they are limited.

#### NORMAL INSTITUTES.

In a few counties assistance has been given by boards of supervisors in defraying the expenses of institutes for a period of two or four weeks. In others, the teachers themselves, under the direction of the county superintendent, have voluntarily gathered themselves into normal institutes, remaining in session four, six and eight weeks, under the instruction of superior teachers, paid by their own contributions. I have never known such an institute to prove a failure. About fifteen have been held in as many different counties, during the present year, with the best of results. In a number of counties where such schools were inaugurated last year, the teachers have reassembled

this year for a greater length of time, and with a largely increased attendance. If such institutes could be held annually in all our more populous counties, and in districts composed of from two to four counties in the more sparsely settled portions, to remain four, eight, or twelve weeks, under efficient and earnest instructors, teachers would attend them by thousands, and would be able in a few years to familiarize themselves with all the details of their profession, and go over nearly the whole ground contemplated in a complete normal course, extending through a series of years, and that too, at an almost nominal expense to the state. No other known agency could so directly, immediately and powerfully reach the great body of teachers of the common schools of the state, and of the thousands of young persons preparing for this work. A sufficient number of normal institutes of this kind could be held in the state next year, during the summer vacations, when instructors could be easily secured from the scores and hundreds of able teachers now employed in our graded and high schools, to receive the voluntary attendance of one-half the teachers of Iowa, at an expense to the state, less than would be incurred in the erection of a single normal school building large enough to accommodate three hundred students. If the state cannot or will not yet aid in the establishment of permanent normal schools, if we are doomed to wait another decade before our people learn that Iowa, with one or two other states, has fallen behind almost every enlightened state known to modern civilization in giving state aid and encouragement to normal training, we can yet by this means, reach at once effectually and powerfully, the public schools and teachers of Iowa.

#### NORMAL SCHOOLS.

The greatest want of our public schools is that of educated and trained teachers. This want was never more apparent than at present. How to supply it is a problem of no easy solution. I desire now to allude to one, only, of the means by which this want may be met. The state has undertaken to educate its youth. The assumption of this duty involves the additional obligation of making a judicious use of the necessary means, and of removing, so far as practicable, the obstacles to its successful consummation. We have heretofore tried the experiment of increasing the wages of teachers, but the want is not removed. The necessity of special training for the teacher, as a means of accomplishing this result, early forced itself upon the conviction of educators, and has culminated in the establishment of numerous normal

schools under state patronage. The results have indisputably proved that the building up of such schools can no longer be regarded as an experiment; they are now, by almost universal consent, recognized as an essential factor in the solution of this question. Massachusetts led the way in this country, by establishing a state normal school in 1839, and now has five or six. New York established one in 1844, and now has eight in full operation. Of the north-western states, it is believed that Iowa stands alone in having made little or no provision hitherto, for the special education of teachers. That the demand for normal instruction is growing, is evinced by the constantly increasing number of normal departments of our colleges, academies, and high schools, and by the very general discussion of the subject, especially among teachers, who manifest their convictions and their earnestness in the resolutions offered every year at their annual meetings, and by the frequent inquiries made for normal schools. The following letter, dated December 1, 1873, is a specimen of the communications constantly addressed to this office for information:

"SIR: Being desirous of attending a good normal school until I graduate, and not knowing much about the normal schools of this state, I take the liberty of asking your advice on the subject. Will you please write me which you consider the best school of this kind in Iowa."

The normal schools, normal departments, and normal institutes already established, are exercising a good local influence, but we need schools of a higher order, of a more distinctive character, and which shall make the training of teachers their exclusive work. We need normal schools that shall command respect in all their features; compare favorably with our state university, our agricultural college, and well-established denominational colleges; which shall offer the proper facilities to persons desiring to make thorough preparation for teaching; and furnish teachers who will be exponents of the profession. Such teachers are needed to elevate and animate the whole; to become teachers of teachers, to prepare the many for the technical, industrial education soon to be demanded of our schools, by the introduction of the natural and physical sciences, and industrial arts. These schools are demanded, not in the interests of teachers alone, nor for the purpose of furnishing graduates to act as teachers of our common schools, but especially in the interests of public policy, and of all the manifold industries of our people.

Scores of persons are leaving Iowa, every year, to seek normal instruction in the states adjoining us on the north, east, south, and west;

every one of which has in successful operation one or more normal schools, established and supported by the state. Hundreds of others, finding no adequate facilities for pursuing their studies at home give up their projects for higher culture, or seek admission to some other vocation.

The progress of public sentiment in favor of having the state aid in the establishment of normal schools, has been slow but uniform. In every succeeding legislature for the past ten years, it has found an increased number of friends and advocates. At the opening of the session of the fourteenth general assembly, a committee on normal schools was added to the standing committees of each house. These committees uniting upon a plan, introduced a bill to provide for establishing not more than four state normal schools. This bill with some modifications first passed the senate; it then went to the house of representatives, was ordered to the third reading, and on the vote on the final passage, the vote stood forty-seven for, and forty-five against, wanting four votes only of the required constitutional majority to become a law. Iowa ought not longer to ignore the united example and experience of her sister states, all of whom, with few exceptions, are supplementing, aiding and improving their common schools, by the establishment of state normal schools. This subject was ably discussed by my predecessor in the biennial report from this department for 1870-1, to which those are referred who desire to pursue the subject.

#### SCHOOL-HOUSES.

Within the past two years, twelve hundred and forty-six school-houses have been erected, exclusive of the number built to replace those which had become unfit for use. We are expending something over a million and a quarter dollars annually for this purpose. The school-houses built twenty and thirty years ago, are nearly all replaced by new and better structures. The old log school-houses of the earlier days are gradually disappearing. Ten years ago there were eight hundred and forty-seven of these; now there are but one hundred and eighty; some counties report none.

There is, as a general rule, no uniformity even in houses of the same capacity throughout the state.

There has been a very considerable demand made upon this office during the last two years for plans for school-houses, especially of the more expensive class.

The school officers whose duty it is to determine the cost, plan



capacity, conveniences, ventilation, warming, etc., of new buildings, are usually persons who have little or no knowledge of these subjects, and who must either send off and pay a round price to an architect for a plan which may prove to be wholly unsuitable to their wants, and much more expensive than they are able to build, or else adopt the plan of some house of like dimensions in a neighboring city, whether good or bad.

A few experiments of this kind which have come under my observation in my very limited travels within the last two years, lead me to believe that we are squandering a large amount of money for want of some better information upon this subject.

It might be a measure of economy, to authorize some person to prepare or cause to be prepared, some plans of school-buildings, and have them engraved and published, for distribution to the districts in the state. A small amount, judiciously expended in this manner might save annually large sums of money now paid for expensive and unsuitable plans or lost in the erection of badly arranged and poorly constructed school-houses.

Judging from the number of hot air furnaces and other appliances, every year put in and torn out of school-houses, as unsatisfactory and unreliable, the question of warming and ventilating school-houses of large size, is one of no little difficulty.

### THE STATE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

The meetings of this association increase in interest from year to year. The meeting for 1872 was held in the Burtis Opera House, Davenport, commencing August 27th, and continued three days; that for 1873 was held in the University Chapel at Iowa City, August 26-28. Both of them were largely attended and of unusual interest. Many able papers upon educational topics of interest were read; most of which were afterwards published in the *School Journal*. At the Davenport meeting, a committee was appointed to collect material for a history of education in Iowa. This committee has already gathered a large amount of valuable material, and will continue to solicit contributions from all who may have in their possession any data which would be of service in the compilation of such a history. The chairman of this committee is Prof. L. F. Parker, of Iowa City.

The committee on school legislation of which Prof. S. N. Fellows, D. D., of Iowa City, was chairman, made the following report at their

last annual meeting, which was adopted, and which I cordially commend to the favorable consideration of the legislature.

ON NORMAL SCHOOLS.—Whereas, The importance and necessity of the special preparation of teachers for the work of instruction is everywhere conceded theoretically, and in all the states but two, practically, by the establishment of professional schools for this purpose, we cannot but regret the failure of our legislature to provide for this want, nor cease to regard it an imperative duty to recommend and urge, in all possible ways, the needful legislation, therefore,

*Resolved*, That, while we recognize the value of the professional agencies already at work, especially the normal department of the state university, public and private training schools and county institutes, yet we earnestly solicit the co-operation of our legislature, and the people of the state, in securing without delay, a system of normal schools in which special provision shall be made for the training of,

1. Persons now engaged in teaching;
2. Persons expecting to teach in the common district schools;
3. Persons expecting to become principals and superintendents of schools.

ON COUNTY SUPERVISION.—Whereas, As a profession, we recognize the importance and value of supervision, 1st, in the impartial selection of qualified teachers; 2d, in the visitation of schools for the purpose of detecting and correcting faults of scholarship and of methods of teaching and discipline and of stimulating improvement, especially on the part of inexperienced teachers, therefore,

*\*Resolved*, That we recommend such additional legislation in regard to supervision as will render more efficient and permanent, the office of county superintendent.

ON TEACHERS' CERTIFICATES.—In order to properly recognize and encourage experienced and successful teachers, we recommend the following:

That there be three boards of examiners—state, county, and city.

The state board, with the superintendent of public instruction as chairman, and four others, authorized to issue, 1st, perpetual state diplomas; 2d, graded state certificates for two, four, and six years.

A county board, with the county superintendent as chairman, and two others, authorized to issue county graded certificates for one, two and four years.

In all cities of the first and second classes, a city board, with the city superintendent as chairman, and the county superintendent ex-officio

member, and one other member, authorized to issue city graded certificates for one, two, and four years.

ON THE GENERAL SCHOOL LAWS.—*Resolved*, That we urge the appointment by the legislature of a competent commission, who shall simplify and harmonize the school law.

ON CABINETS FOR HIGH SCHOOLS.—Whereas, The state should afford all possible aid to the public schools, and, Whereas, the university and geological survey are eminently proper helps to this end, therefore,

*Resolved*, That we request the legislature to provide for the furnishing of cabinets to the schools of the state, representing its geology and other departments of natural science, either distributing the samples of specimens remaining from the geological survey or by exchange of specimens collected in the various localities of the state, through the curator of the museum.

#### OFFICE WORK.

The work of the office during the last two years has been very great. Notwithstanding the valuable aid rendered in every part of the office work by J. W. Stewart, Esq., deputy superintendent of public instruction, who has devoted himself with great energy and ability to the performance of its duties, and of the valuable services of M. Gibney, Esq., the large official correspondence with school officers, and other office-work has required my almost constant presence and attention.

Although I have visited many portions of the state in attending teachers' institutes, county superintendents' conventions, and other educational gatherings; this work has necessarily been done so hurriedly, and only at such times as it appeared possible for me to leave the office for a day or two, that I have not had the opportunity to gather, from personal observation, the information concerning the actual condition of the public schools, which I could have desired, and which would have been of value to the legislature and the public.

#### IN MEMORIAM.

During the period for which this report is made, two school officers, J. J. E. Norman, superintendent of Dubuque county, and Thomas F. Healy, superintendent of Allamakee county, have died. Both were men of marked ability and faithfulness in the discharge of their official duties.

Mr. Norman, of Dubuque, who had served his county uninterruptedly

for a period of eleven years with unusual acceptance and fidelity, was killed by an accident, in the streets of Dubuque, on the 12th of December, 1872. In his death the public schools of Dubuque county lost a true and tried friend.

Thomas F. Healy, of Waukon, though serving in his first term, was one of the most zealous, conscientious, and efficient officers in the state. He entered upon his duties with great earnestness, and gave to them his whole energies until overtaken with a severe attack of lung fever while visiting schools, from which, after an illness of only five days, he died on the 31st day of May, 1873, at his home in Waukon.

It is appropriate that mention should here be made of the loss which the state has sustained in the death of Hon. ORAN FAVILLE, a former incumbent of this office, which occurred on the 31st day of October, 1872.

The following brief account of his life is taken principally from *The Iowa Instructor and School Journal*, for March, 1867:

ORAN FAVILLE was born October 13, 1817, at Manheim, Herkimer county, N. Y. He was brought up on a farm, and educated at the district schools, but having access to a small public library, he was enabled to gratify a taste for reading, and was prompted to higher things. He commenced teaching in the winter of 1834-5, and was engaged in schools in the following winters, until 1838, when he removed to Ohio, where he spent two years in teaching and in preparatory study at Granville College. He afterward studied two years at the Fairfield Academy, in his native county, with intervals of teaching, and entered the junior class in Wesleyan University, at Middletown, Conn., in 1842. After graduation he taught two years in the Oneida Conference Seminary, at Cazenovia, N. Y., six years in the Troy Conference Seminary, at West Poughkeepsie, Vt., and the next year in McKendree College, at Lebanon, Ill. In 1853 he took charge of the Wesleyan Female College, at Delaware, Ohio, but ill-health compelling him to resign his profession, he removed in 1855 to Iowa, and commenced frontier life as a farmer in Mitchell county.

In October, 1857, Mr. Faville was elected lieutenant governor, and *ex officio* president of the state board of education, then newly organized. At its first session, in December, 1858, the board adopted the main features of the present system of public instruction. In April, 1863, he became the acting secretary of the board, and in January following was appointed its secretary by the governor. In March, 1864, he was elected by the legislature superintendent of public instruction, the board of education having been abolished. He was re-elected by



the people in October, 1865, and continued to perform the arduous duties, until March 1, 1867, when failing health compelled him to resign the office, which he had filled with great fidelity and distinguished ability during the four preceding years. He subsequently returned to Waverly, Bremer county, where he remained in comparative quiet and retirement until the date of his decease.

Governor Faville was amiable in disposition, refined in his tastes and sentiments, possessed of a cultivated mind, and was actuated by the most noble purposes. Socially, he was held in high estimation throughout the state. To him, very largely, is the state of Iowa indebted for its present system of education, and our public schools may justly be regarded as a noble and fitting monument to his memory. By his death the cause lost a wise counselor and an able advocate.

ALONZO ABERNETHY,  
*Superintendent of Public Instruction.*

## ABSTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS.

### ADAIR COUNTY.—WM. E. CATON.

1872.

I have not done as much labor in visiting schools as the needs of our schools demanded, because the remuneration was insufficient to compensate me for such labor. I have encouraged the holding of teachers' associations, and where practicable, I have been present at such meetings. I have also monthly reports from each school, containing an average of attendance, scholarship and deportment; these with making the examination of teachers thorough, have been of much benefit to the schools. This being a comparatively new county, and new districts being set off occasionally, the financial returns are from some of the townships incomplete. The school-houses that have been built during the year are of good size, generally 20x26 with ten feet posts, and with good seats. We very much lack in regard to text-books, as there is no uniformity. In many of the townships there are as many different kinds of text-books as there are scholars. Our institute was well attended, and teachers appeared willing to help raise the standard of our schools by using every means to better qualify themselves for their work.

1873.

The pay for labor performed by the county superintendent is so small, especially in this county, when county warrants are at a discount of from twenty-five to forty per cent., that I could not perform the duties of the office as they should be. I have made no visits during the year to any of our schools, but have labored by thorough examinations to raise the standard of teachers' qualifications.