positive management. And many now, because of their over-conservative tendencies and blind devotion to the past, do not see that it has outlived its usefulness and fails to meet our educational needs. The Legislature of 1897, whatever may have been its mistakes and follies, was wise in its day and generation, by giving heed to the expressed wishes and wise counsel of our leading educators, and thus abolishing the old district system which was the cause of so many petty jealousies and dissensions between families, the bane of our rural schools. This was a long step ahead. It at once made more effective organization practicable, better school facilities possible, and brought us nearer to equality of opportunity. And I assert, without fear of successful refutation, that in those counties where the township system has been fairly tried, they to-day have the best organized system of public schools, with the least friction, at any time in their history. Under the old district system we had too many incompetent school committeemen. They really did not have enough to do to become interested in their work. They employed too many inefficient teachers—'pets,' favorites, or relatives who kept school because they did not have anything else to do only to 'kill time' and draw their salary. As long as our form of government remains unchanged, school committeemen will be necessary to the conduct of our public schools. It is a component part of our democracy; but the small district system, in school administration, is democracy gone to seed. It has rolled upon the hands of those States most strongly under its influence, a burden more hopeless than the stone of Sisyphus. There is no inertia more inert than civic inertia. I was amused some time ago in reading the visitation of a County Superintendent in a certain Northwestern State, under the small district system. It was as follows: Number enrolled, one; average attendance, one; classification, A. No. 1; communication, none; methods, good; register, none; ventilation, good; maps and sharts, well supplied; teacher's wages, $25 per month. The great paramount question, opening up to us for the past few years, is that of the rectification of our mistake in splitting up our school territory into minute fragments by the small district system, and trying the consolidation of these minute but warring units of administration into larger ones. The prime essential is to get schools large enough to warrant fair pay, increase greater permanency in the teaching force, and furnish a field in which good work will be possible. No teacher of ordinary human mold can do good work in a school of ten pupils, no matter how much he is paid. And no school board of the average type can be brought to pay decent wages for the teaching of ten children. Should our township system become a permanent thing and combination of schools