the city schools may be brought down from the eminence which required years to attain. But by no such act of legislation can the schools of the counties be brought up to an immediate equality with them. An error of this kind now admitted may work such mischief as may require years to remove.

In our estimate of the relative claims of the city and of the counties upon the consideration of the Legislature of the State, it must be remembered that the population of the city is not far short of that of all the counties together, and that nearly one-half of the educational interests of the State belong to the city. Besides, in this estimate, it must be considered that the Council having in charge the city's government has not been backward in the discharge of its duty in the management of the peoples interests as they relate to their schools. Acts of such vital importance, to our city, whose government and educational interests have been so well managed, cannot, with any show of justice, be slighted in estimating the agencies that contribute alike to her prosperity and character to the extent thus effected by her Public Schools.

In connection with this consideration appears the inequality of the appropriation of the State Educational Fund. Nearly half of all the money appropriated for the general use of the schools of the State, is paid into the treasury by the tax-payers of the city. The part of this money that is distributed in a pro rata apportionment between the city and the counties is largely favorable to the counties and oppressive upon the city. This is a matter that must, in time, come to the knowledge of our citizens, and it is likely that when informed upon the subject they will be dissatisfied until something like an equality is ordered in the use of their own property.

It must not be supposed that the Board is opposed to a judicious and equal system of Public Education for the State and in which the city of Baltimore may be included. Nor is the insinuation intended that the City Council and citizens of Baltimore are opposed to such system. It is believed that the Board, the City Council and the citizens of Baltimore, are

opposed to the present School Law, because it is not adapted to the purpose for which it was designed by the Constitutional Convention and by the Legislature. The design is that of affording aid and encouragement to the schools alike of the city and the counties. But the law, if enforced, in its present form, would seriously damage the schools of the city, and in working this damage it must effect unfavorably the schools of the counties. In the view of experience it is sufficiently clear that the educational enterprise of the city must be endangered, by the lowering of the grade of its excellence; and when this enterprise of the city fails, that of the counties must share in its dishonor.

A committee has been appointed by our Board to act in connection with your Honorable Body, in any effort that may be ordered for the purpose of having our city schools exempted from the operations of the school law. This exemption may be continued until such a system may be adapted as will be of like advantage to the city and counties. The large cities of other States are not subjected to the school laws as they are applied to the counties; exceptions are allowed to the cities of New York and Brooklyn, and other cities of the State of New York as well as those of other States.

CONDITION OF THE SCHOOLS.

In reference to the Public Schools, generally, we are happy in being able to state that during the year, as in former years, they have made gradual and uninterrupted progress. In character, usefulness and importance, they are now quite a year in advance of their condition when the last annual report was presented.

The number of pupils has continued to increase, which has produced a corresponding increase in the number of the teachers. And while other institutions and almost every department of public business in our midst, have been seriously embarrassed in their operations during the recent national troubles, the progress of Public Instruction in our city has suffered no abatement. On the contrary, many persons who