

from Baltimore (Mr. Cushing) yesterday, that this system would not increase the taxation for the support of schools in the State.

Mr. CUSHING: My argument was that it diminished it.

Mr. MILLER: I have taken pains to look at the local laws of the several counties of the State for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not that assertion is true. It is conceded that this section and the succeeding section would authorize and require the levy of at least twenty cents on the hundred dollars State tax for the support of this system of public schools. Now I find that in Baltimore county the county commissioners of the county are authorized to levy a tax not exceeding eight cents on the hundred dollars; twelve cents, I am informed. That would be an increase for the county of Baltimore of at least eight cents. In Allegany county I find that the tax is not to exceed fifteen cents on the hundred dollars, and the increase would be at least five cents for that county. In Calvert county it is ten cents on the hundred dollars. Caroline is the only county that I find among all the counties of the State which comes anywhere near the proposed taxation. It provides that the tax shall not exceed twenty cents on the hundred dollars. In Cecil it is twelve cents on the hundred dollars.

Mr. PUGH: I do not know where the gentleman gets his facts, but if he is as far off in other counties as in the county of Cecil—

Mr. MILLER: I take them from the code of local laws.

Mr. PUGH: Then they must have been changed. I am sure that Cecil pays 20 cents on the \$100.

Mr. EARLE: It was increased last winter.

Mr. MILLER: In Frederick county, unless there has been some change since the adoption of the code, the provision is that the county commissioners shall only levy the sum of \$5,000.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM (in his seat.): It is \$8,000.

Mr. MILLER (continuing)—to be paid to the inspectors of primary schools of that county; and if the board of inspectors so determine, they may increase the sum to \$8,000, or they may at the discretion of said board of assessment entirely omit said levy. According to the present report, taking the assessment of Frederick county at \$21,929,182, the tax of 20 cents on the \$100 would require the citizens of Frederick county to raise an annual tax of at least \$45,000, where they raise a tax now not exceeding \$8,000.

In Dorchester county they are allowed according to the local law as published in the code, to levy a tax not exceeding \$4,000. In Harford county, the provision in the code is that it shall not exceed 12 cents on the \$100.

In Worcester county, according to the provisions of the code, there is no tax whatever

levied by the county commissioners for the support of common schools in that county, and I am informed by the gentleman from Worcester (Mr. Purnell) that the large sum of 20 cents on the \$100 will be imposed upon the people of the county who now pay nothing. In Somerset county the code provides that the tax shall not exceed 12 cents on the \$100.

I find in the provisions of some of the counties, Prince George's and Charles, for instance, that they appropriate so much money for the payment of primary school teachers, \$350 for instance, and authorize the county commissioners to levy that amount. It would be impossible to ascertain without spending upon it more time than I have had to devote to it, what the effect of this report would be in those counties, whether it would increase or diminish the tax. In Anne Arundel, the same provision is made as in Prince George's, that "the county commissioners shall levy upon the assessable property of the said county such sum annually as shall divide to each school district \$300 independent of the State fund, but shall not include district number thirty-eight in such distribution."

I suppose that the difference existing between the several counties arises to some extent from the fact that there is a larger school fund existing in some of the counties than in others for the benefit of their primary or common schools.

I take it that by the provisions of this report the school funds of the several counties, after the adoption of this system, will either be taken from the counties and put into the general school fund of the State, or that the county authorities will have power to dispose of them for such purposes as they see fit otherwise than for that purpose. If it is applied to the general school fund of the State under this report, it seems to me that it will work great injustice to the several counties which have more or less money invested in the school fund. Take the county of Somerset, for instance.

Mr. CUSHING: Are the taxes in the counties obligatory or permitted?

Mr. MILLER: Obligatory. Take the case of Worcester county, where there is no tax levied by the county commissioners at all. Their primary schools are kept up in that county now by a fund which belongs to that county; and they have got along under that system without taxing the people of the county at all for that purpose. Now the injustice is apparent of taking from that county their present school fund and imposing upon them a tax of 20 cents on the \$100 for the purpose of raising this money.

I have said this much in explanation of the views which I expressed yesterday, and in reply to the gentleman from Baltimore city (Mr. Cushing) who wished to create the impression that I had not made a fair statement