

To the Township Councillor, whose idea of his usefulness is, and whose hope of his re-election depends upon the making of each year's tax bill less than the last one, this statutory provision requiring the whole township to contribute to each school section a certain sum towards maintenance of its school was an innovation, and a bold one at that.

This provision was regarded, doubtless, as a downright imposition and a cruel injustice. To discuss intelligibly the proposal to double the amount of the grant by townships to each school section we should enquire why the grant of \$100 was made imperative.

Every Township Council is required by law to divide the township into school sections, and so that no section of territory in any school section shall be more than three miles from the school-house in that section.

Those of us who have had any experience in township municipal matters, and all County Public School inspectors, know that the laying out of township school sections is a work of art—very high art, in fact.

The art is displayed in the endeavor of the people of each school section to include within the boundaries of their respective section as many of the most valuable farms, mills, stores and factories as possible, so that when the usual assessment of three or four hundred dollars is made to supplement the Government and county grants for schools the tax can be spread over as much valuable property as possible; and as the largest section contains the greatest number of voters, the result is that in time, by alterations, there is exemplified the truth of the declaration that "Unto him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away, even that which he hath," for the large sections often become larger and the small ones still smaller. And as to the shape of some of these sections, it outrivals the worst gerrymandered constituency.

To correct this state of things, and to avoid the agitation and litigation which takes place in the efforts of the small sections to "enlarge their boundaries," the statute requires that every school section shall receive a like sum of \$100 towards the maintenance of its school; in short, the property in the large and wealthy section is required to furnish its own \$100 and something towards the payment of a like amount to the poorer sections.

There is another matter to be considered: by the introduction of labor-saving machinery, by changes in the system of cultivation, and by changes in the occupation of the laboring-classes, the number of agricultural laborers is being reduced in some sections, and with this reduction the school population has become much less. For example, a school adjacent to a town, which I taught thirty-five years ago, had in my time about ninety pupils; at present the largest number in attendance, I am told by the inspector, rarely reaches half that number. The number of pupils in some sections has become so reduced