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**STATE AID TO EDUCATION**

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The table which appears elsewhere shows how the states rank in state support of, or aid to, or apportionment for education to the minor civil divisions of the state. The table is based on Financial Statistics of State Governments for 1925, Federal Department of Commerce, and the North Carolina figures have been checked.

For the year ending June 30, 1925, our state government apportioned \$1,842,788 for education to the minor civil divisions. The per inhabitant apportionment was sixty-five cents, and North Carolina ranks forty-first on this basis. Wyoming's state government apportioned an average of \$8.98 per inhabitant. Iowa's state government does not contribute much financial aid to her public schools, only 26 cents per inhabitant. Iowa is wealthy throughout her borders and every county is probably abundantly able to provide good schools. The same is largely true of the other states that rank below North Carolina.

**Where State Fund Goes**

The bulk of our state support of public schools is in the form of the equalization fund which for the period covered by the table amounted to a million and a quarter dollars. In addition to the equalization fund the state contributed approximately six hundred thousand dollars to the following: the state normal schools, teacher training, establishment of standard highschools, vocational education, rural libraries, medical inspection, certification of teachers, and other items. Thus a part of the state apportionment, the equalization fund, may be considered direct aid, the remainder indirect aid.

The table shows that all of the Southern states except Florida rank ahead of North Carolina in state apportionment to public education, both on a total and on a per inhabitant basis. North Carolina's policy, more so than in any other state in the South except Florida, appears to be that of local provision of educational facilities. Our state constitution guarantees equal opportunities for all children in the state, but our state does less to equalize the opportunities than any other state in the South save one, and less than any other state of the Union save seven.

**Uneven Wealth**

North Carolina is a state of uneven wealth distribution. The richest county averages two thousand dollars of taxables per inhabitant; the poorest county averages only four hundred and sixty-five dollars per inhabitant. It would be interesting to see the school districts of the state ranked from the richest to the poorest, and in a large measure our schools are financed on the district plan. There are few, if any, states in which wealth is as unevenly distributed geographically as in North Carolina. Some sections of the state are fairly rich. Other sections are extremely poor. Twenty-seven counties have less than seven hundred dollars of taxable wealth per inhabitant. It is not a question of one or two poor counties. The wealth decreases gradually from the wealthiest to the poorest county.

The state recognizes this fact, and provides an equalization fund of a million and a quarter dollars (it is now a million and a half), but everyone recognizes that it is thoroughly inadequate to the needs.

When our forefathers adopted our state constitution education was recognized to be a state concern. But throughout the history of the state it has been largely a local district and county concern. The educational opportunity of a child today depends upon where he happens to be born or raised.

In fact our educational system might readily be characterized as one of highly centralized administrative authority and local financial support. The state administers; the county or the local district provides. We believe it is a rather unique condition. Shall we continue our educational system on the basis of local wealth and willingness, or shall we put into practice the accepted theory that education is the state's affair; and enforce the constitu-

tional guarantee that every child in North Carolina shall have an equal chance at an education?

**COUNTY GOVERNMENT LAWS**

All told, 8,274 public local laws affecting county government in North Carolina were passed by the eight regular and four extra sessions of the legislature between 1911 and 1925. The count covers sixty-five hundred and fifty-eight county government laws passed, three hundred and ten of them repealed, fifteen re-enacted, and thirteen hundred and ninety-one amended, usually at the following session. An average of nearly eighty-three laws per county passed, repealed, re-enacted, and amended in the brief period of twelve years! This average is greatly exceeded in certain counties. For Robeson county, just to cite one instance, one hundred and forty-seven laws were passed, knocking down, setting up, and amending various details of local law during the period named. Such are the amazing figures turned in by Mr. Myron Green, one of our county government research workers.

As a result, county commissioners and other court house officers are innocently unaware of the law under which they are charged with conducting county business. The county attorney, as a rule, does not have a complete file of the public local laws, neither he nor anybody else in the county. Hunting down the law in some particular emergency of county affairs is a far bigger job than hunting for a needle in a haystack. The changes in county government are very like the combinations of a whirling kaleidoscope!

This endless tinkering with county government laws makes it impossible for county officials to keep up with the changes. They therefore throw up their hands in despair, and pursue the even tenor of their ways according to use, wont and custom, quite regardless of the law whatever it may chance to be. As a result, county government in this state is both headless and lawless.

Under the circumstances, there cannot possibly be in North Carolina, as in other states, brief, simple manuals of instruction for county officers, as for instance in Texas, Oklahoma, and a score of other commonwealths.

**A State-Wide Law Needed**

We are wondering whether or not there can be in North Carolina a state-wide county government law, which among other things (1) clothes the county commissioners with supreme legislative authority in all matters purely local, provided, of course, they do not violate the constitution and the statute laws, (2) making the county commissioners the final fiscal agents of the county in all matters touching the handling of county moneys, directing and supervising the tax list, requiring of them annual county budgets and the apportioning of revenues to different county purposes, prescribing forms of bookkeeping and reporting by the various county offices, boards and commissions, and (3) classifying the counties according to wealth and population and leaving to popular vote the form of government any county in its class may choose—(1) the present anomalous system in the lowest class, if the voters wish it, or (2) the commissioner form in another class, as in Buncombe and Jackson counties or (3) the county-manager form as in Alamance, minus the popular election of this officer.

I am only roughly outlining the rights, powers, privileges, and duties of county government as it might be if the voters locally so determine it under a state-wide law. The legislature would still be necessarily and properly the final sovereign power. The point is to have a law that would shut out completely or at least measurably this endless tinkering with county government at every session of the legislature. We have a state-wide municipal law, why not a state-wide county law?

It must be so or all the thinking and work of our State Commission on County Government is likely to be scrapped at the very next session of the legislature. At present, the county is not only the creature but the victim of the legislature. We must have a safe return to local democracy, or the state in addition to legislation must exercise control

**LISTING TAXABLES**

The strong should bear the burdens of the weak, and the weak should bear their own burdens. We believe that this is the principle upon which our public schools should be financed. The rich areas should contribute to the support of schools in the poor areas, but only after the poor areas have paid in proportion to their ability. The danger of large aid to the schools out of the general fund of the state treasury lies in the tendency of the poorer areas to shift the burden onto the richer areas. This tendency is seen in North Carolina today, with our small equalization fund. Under our present system of listing property it would be fatal for the state to attempt an equalization program on a large scale. A prerequisite to state support of education should be the uniform listing of all taxable wealth in North Carolina. Naturally this can be accomplished only through adequate state machinery. The strong should bear the burdens of the weak, but not until the weak have borne their own burdens. Not until all taxable wealth is listed at its full market value in money or at a uniform percent of its true value will each bear his own burden, and not until this is done should the state much further extend its equalization school fund.

and direction of county affairs as in Indiana. As it is, we have county-government legislation at the capital, no end of it, but also no centralized guidance, direction and supervision of county affairs by either the state or the county, or none that is effective.—E. C. Branson.

**HIGHWAYS AND EDUCATION**

The influence which the use of the motor car has exerted upon education can not always be stated in statistical terms. Studies made by the Bureau of Education of the United States show that in 1924 there were 19,656 motor buses in use by rural schools and 470,000 children were transported daily to them by motor vehicles.

The actual reports of 2,310 out of 3,309 county superintendents in the United States show that in this year there were 1,424 new school consolidations. Improved roads make possible a daily attendance at school, while the use of the bus has been a large factor in the elimination of the little red schoolhouse, which, while a picturesque element in our education system, is far below the standard set by the new consolidated schools, with their elaborate equipment for physical and mental training of the child and better grade of teachers.—Representative B. E. Kemp, Louisiana.

**THE COUNTY FAIR**

The harvest moon, yellow as a new cheese, rides high in the heavens. The sun sinks in shrouded majesty, lighting a canopy of clouds banked in the west. A haunting mist softens the lines of the high-board fence, the grand stand and the judge's stand at the race track. The twin lights of hundreds of automobiles are gently blurred like stars beneath a filmy cloud. The evening breeze wafts the scent of new-cut corn across the country. All is in readiness for tomorrow's county fair. For weeks the children and their parents have been looking forward to the event. The women folk have been canning fruit and making pickles for the exhibit. The men have fed and groomed the colt, the calf and the shorthorn. Tomorrow is the big day. In the households and in the fields and barns careful preparations have been made for the scheduled competitive events. Here, also, will be a great open forum for the discussion of the issues which interest the farmer folk. The astute campaigner for county office will be bustling about with the proverbial box of cigars under one arm, the other free to lift little Johnny Jones and his sister to his knee while he praises them to their parents. Properly done this means two votes and maybe more. The displays in the agricultural hall are properly arranged, as well as the exhibits of new machinery and other mechanical

devices. The county fair is a great institution. Long may it live.—Dearborn Independent.

**WHY BUREAUCRATS THRIVE**

The war against centralization of power in Federal bureaucracies has been carried before the American Bar Association. F. Dumont Smith of Kansas, in a plea for a return to local self-rule, declares the "old virile spirit" has gone. He says:

"The American citizen is being pauperized by government alms. If he supports the government he asks the government in return to support him. If prices are too high, instead of doing without, he wants the government to lower them. If they are too low, he wants the government to raise them. He wants the government to build his roads, educate his offspring, sanitize him, physic him, bring his children into the world, prescribe his dietary and tell him what to believe in matters of conscience."

It is a stinging indictment, but it stings because the tendency is to swap individual liberty and the rights of the states for a good, fat bonus or a juicy bounty. If the citizen and his community fail to do what must or should be done, it will be done by the Federal government. Consequently bureaus multiply and the bureaucrats flourish.

As the Kansan says, enormous powers have been centralized in Washington. The war hastened this process, but it was under way long before the German war-machine started to roll down across the Rhine. It will continue so long as an organized minority is able to enforce its will on a majority and until there is a sharper realization that while a citizen has undoubted rights under his government, those rights cannot cancel his duties.—New York Evening Post.

**THE BEST LIGHTED COUNTY**

That Cleveland County, N. C., is "the best lighted county in America" is the claim made for it by Max Gardner. As he says in a message just received by The Progressive Farmer: "One of the biggest things ever done for our county was the organization of rural community non-profit corporations to supply electric power to our farmers. Today we have 800 farm homes supplied with electric power and Cleveland is the best lighted county in America. We are rapidly installing running water, following electric power. Nothing has approached the social contentment that has followed in the wake of electricity in rural Cleveland county."—Progressive Farmer.

**TOWN-COUNTRY**

North Carolina is primarily an agricultural state. When the farmers prosper, all interests do, and when the farmers have no money to spend, then business is sorry in stores, factories, and professional offices. If the rural welfare is so essential to general prosperity, it behooves the public to give a maximum attention towards maintaining prosperity on the farm. The farmer is essentially a spender, and the towns are the places where he leaves his money soon after he gets it.

For several years now, farming has been a losing business. College graduates are seldom going back to the country, but are seeking town jobs. There are good reasons for this. Thinking young people want to enjoy certain comforts, as well as to eke out an existence.

That farming is the most independent living one can choose, is often quoted. Perhaps the words "haphazard," "unremunerative," and "risky" of profession would cover it better. That there is real cause for concern is evident from the bills for congressional farm relief now pending. Satisfactory adjustments must arise locally, however. What those measures are must be determined by thinking men really interested in their neighbors' prosperity.

For one thing, farmers should be taught the advantages of cash and discounted payments, of budgeting their expenses, and determining costs of production. Simple bookkeeping is just as valuable in the farming business as it is in any other industry. As yet, however, a simple, inexpensive system has not been available. The civic clubs of the state can well afford to do some constructive work in this direction.—Durham Herald.

**HE LIVED A FULL LIFE**

One of the three most learned linguists that ever lived, a citizen of Worcester, Mass., named Elihu Burritt, said:

"Knowledge cannot be stolen from us. It cannot be bought or sold. We may be poor, and the sheriff may come and sell our furniture, or drive away our cow, or take our pet lamb, and leave us homeless and penniless, but he cannot lay the law's hand upon the jewelry of our minds."

Or, it may be added, upon riches limited only by our power to enjoy—the vista of forest and mountain; the thousand eyes of night; the arch of dawn over the sparkling waters! Mr. Burritt knew fifty languages; Cardinal Mezzofanti perhaps sixty. But Burritt was more than a linguist: he was a ripe scholar, a pioneer of peace—and a first-rate blacksmith. He made a good job of his life.—Collier's.

**STATE-AID TO EDUCATION, 1925**

In the following table, based on Financial Statistics of State Governments, Federal Department of Commerce, the states are ranked according to the per inhabitant state government apportionment for education to the minor civil divisions, for the fiscal year ending 1925. The table covers public schools only, and not higher education.

Wyoming is first with a state apportionment for education averaging \$8.98 per inhabitant. The average for all the states is \$2.22 per inhabitant.

North Carolina's state government apportionment for education to minor civil divisions was \$1,842,788, or 65 cents per inhabitant, and our rank was forty-first. The equalization fund of a million and a quarter dollars comprised the bulk of the state-aid to public education.

S. H. Hobbs, Jr.  
 Department of Rural Social-Economics, University of North Carolina.

Rank	State	State apport. for educ.	Apport. per inhab.	Rank	State	State apport. for educ.	Apport. per inhab.
1	Wyoming	\$ 2,060,835	\$8.98	25	Wisconsin	\$4,859,583	\$1.71
2	Utah	3,475,691	6.90	26	Indiana	5,066,716	1.63
3	Washington	8,502,918	5.63	27	Alabama	3,983,047	1.59
4	Nevada	888,915	5.23	28	Missouri	5,324,004	1.53
5	Delaware	1,235,697	5.21	29	Georgia	4,715,423	1.52
6	California	20,775,402	4.81	30	Oklahoma	3,318,018	1.45
7	Texas	23,187,766	4.45	31	Tennessee	3,319,322	1.35
8	New Jersey	15,930,678	4.43	32	Idaho	683,709	1.34
9	Arizona	1,789,921	4.19	33	Montana	818,215	1.22
10	New York	41,368,746	3.70	34	West Virginia	1,915,399	1.17
11	Michigan	15,055,175	3.62	35	Vermont	408,318	1.16
12	Minnesota	9,032,647	3.46	36	Illinois	7,697,368	1.09
13	South Dakota	1,715,335	2.62	37	Colorado	1,002,046	.96
14	North Dakota	1,670,578	2.45	37	Nebraska	1,310,062	.96
15	Maine	1,852,025	2.35	39	Connecticut	1,337,974	.85
16	Pennsylvania	21,181,345	2.23	40	New Hampshire	346,932	.77
17	Virginia	5,530,056	2.22	41	North Carolina	1,842,788	.65
18	New Mexico	838,866	2.18	42	Ohio	4,092,936	.63
19	Maryland	3,212,772	2.06	42	Rhode Island	425,643	.63
20	Mississippi	3,660,297	2.04	44	Massachusetts	2,178,062	.57
21	Louisiana	3,808,419	2.00	45	Oregon	414,598	.48
22	Arkansas	3,731,923	1.98	46	Florida	566,774	.45
23	Kentucky	4,758,244	1.90	47	Kansas	646,044	.36
24	South Carolina	3,411,421	1.89	48	Iowa	630,478	.26