More Money for the Public Schools

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More Money for the Public Schools, Because of the Failures and Shortcomings in American Education

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MORE MONEY FOR THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

My object in this paper is to urge that the expenditure per pupil in the common schools of the United States is altogether insufficient. As foundation for my argument, I must first state what the annual expenditure per pupil now is. For this purpose I avail myself of the table of annual expenditure per pupil which is to appear in Commissioner Harris's Report for 1900–1901, an advance copy of which has kindly been given me.

The average expenditure per pupil
for the whole school year in the United States was then $21.14; but this expenditure varies very much in the different divisions of the country. Thus the average expenditure per pupil in the North Atlantic Division of the United States is $33.52, while in the South Central Division it is only $7.54. It also varies very much in the different States of the Union. Thus the highest expenditure is made in New York, namely, $41.68; the next highest in the District of Columbia, $40.50; the next highest in Nevada, $39.70; the next in Colorado, $38.29; the next in Massachusetts, $38.21. On the other hand, the lowest expenditures occur in the South Atlantic and the South Central Divisions, North Carolina spending
annually $4.56 per pupil; Mississippi, $6.48; Georgia, $6.68. The Western Division (which includes the Pacific Coast) has in general a high average expenditure per pupil, coming next to the North Atlantic Division.

This total average expenditure for the year being divided by the average number of days during which schools are kept in the several divisions or States (that is, by the average length of the school term in days), yields another interesting figure, namely, the average daily expenditure per pupil. For the whole United States this average daily expenditure in 1900–1901 was 14.7 cents; but again the range of the average daily expenditure per pupil is large. The Western, or Rocky Mountain and
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Pacific, Division pays most per pupil per day, namely, 22 cents; the North Atlantic Division pays 18.9 cents daily for each pupil; whereas the South Atlantic Division pays but 8.6 cents, and the South Central but 7.8 cents. The highest daily expenditures per pupil occur in the Western Division. Thus Montana spends 27.9 cents per day; Colorado, 25.8 cents; Nevada, 25.6 cents; whereas the District of Columbia spends 23 cents; Massachusetts, 20.7 cents; New York, 22.4 cents. Here, again, the South Atlantic Division and the South Central Division present the lowest figures. Maryland spends 9.9 cents per pupil per day; Virginia, 8.2 cents; North Carolina and Georgia, 6 cents; South Carolina, 5.3 cents;