

The claims of education have often been urged and advocated with eloquence. Bills have been reported and considered, but either from lack of time for thorough investigation, a deficiency of funds for the liberal support of systems proposed, or from local opposition, none of these bills have received the sanction of a constitutional majority. This is no cause for regret. Perhaps it may be regarded as a happy fact, that we have not adopted a plan upon the wisdom of which so much depends, until after the largest exchange of views, and the undoubted ability to sustain it.

Maryland is now in a condition to begin. Her debt is only nominal. Her wealth and population are increasing, and, best of all, the mind of the people is fully aroused to the importance of a complete system of public education. Whether the present Legislature be prepared to adopt a bill, or whether further information be requisite before a suitable law can be passed, will remain for you to decide. It is sound doctrine to assert that the cardinal principle which should lie at the foundation of our educational system is, *that all the children of the State shall be educated by the State*. As without a wise educational system, the government itself cannot exist. The expenses of educating the people should be defrayed by the people at large, without reference to the particular benefit of individuals. Even those who, without children of their own, nevertheless, are compelled to pay a large tax, receive an ample equivalent in the protection of their persons, and the security of their property.

There were in Maryland, according to the last census, over 100,000 white children between the ages of 8 and 18 years; of these 33,254 were reported by families as attending the 907 public schools then organized; 11,677 youths were attending at other schools, academies and colleges, while over 50,000 were attending no school whatever. In 1850 there were 20,000 white adults who could not read nor write, of whom 12,000 were men, being one-seventh of all the voters in the State unable to read the ballot which they deposited.

The entire income for the support of public schools in 1850 from taxes, tuition fees and other sources was \$220,148 00. If the 50,000 children attending no school be added to the 33,000 who were attending, it would be an average of less than three dollars per annum for instruction, books and stationery of each child, or twenty-five cents per month. How entirely inadequate this sum is facts most emphatically declare. Since 1850 the condition of things, with reference to education, has not materially improved, and from all the evidence your committee can gather it appears that the next census will exhibit the present system as even more inadequate to the wants of our rapidly increasing population, than it was ten years ago. While we cannot procure accurate statistical