

In our own free and happy country, where the sovereign power is vested in the people, where the ballot box is the urn of fate, how important is education? Can it be expected that the blessing of liberty will flourish and acquire perpetuity in a soil, where vice and ignorance are permitted luxurantly to grow? As well might we expect a vessel without sails or compass to withstand the resistless fury of the storm, as to hope that liberty can exist when immortality and ignorance have sapped the foundation of the temple.

Standing, as we do, upon the narrow isthmus between the future and the past, how imposing the scenes which gather around us! If we turn our eyes onward, we behold the busy throng of mortals hurrying to that land from which no traveller returns; if we cast a retrospective glance over the plain which we have passed, we behold at a distance the youth of the land preparing to follow our steps; we see those who are to occupy our places when our names shall be written in the city of the dead. How interesting the scene! We are told that when the mother of the Gracchi was asked, where were her jewels, she pointed to her children. They were her ornaments, they were her protection, they were her support. And if Maryland were asked, where are her jewels? she might well point to the children of her citizens. They are to shine as her ornaments in after days; they are to adorn her legislative halls; they are to reflect honor upon her judiciary; they are to defend her in the hour of dangers; they are to support her in the character of good citizens. Let her foster and cherish these tender plants; let her place them on some congenial soil, refreshed by the waters that flow from the fountain of knowledge and illumined by the light of science.

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