

6. A record of the contracts, receipts and disbursements connected with the uniform series of Text Books authorized by the State Board of Education.

7. Such information concerning private and denominational Schools, Academies and Colleges, as will enable the General Assembly to estimate the extent and efficiency of all the facilities for education within the State.

8. The progress made in the establishment of the County High Schools, with such suggestions as may improve the efficiency of the instruction and increase the benefits which these schools are designed to confer.

The information required will be found in the text, statistical tables, and other documents herewith presented. The design is to give the fullest practicable record of the work of the Department of Public Instruction, that not only the General Assembly, but every citizen who is interested in the moral and intellectual progress of the State, and concerned for the welfare of children, may judge of the efficiency of the existing system of Free Public Schools by the results attained under the zealous and laborious supervision of the School officers.

Our Free School system is young, and has to contend against the difficulties incident upon organization. Like every untried scheme it must win its way to public confidence by its victories, and thus disarm prejudice and secure a place in the affections of wise and liberal minded citizens so firm, that its beneficent intentions may, by a cordial support, be fully realized.

It is by results that the value of this, in common with every act of legislation, ought to be tested. To the results attained in the space of twelve months, and in the face of many obstacles, the rigid scrutiny of every friend of popular education is invited; that if there be faults they may be corrected; if there be virtues they may have full and free opportunity for practical development. We wish the School system of Maryland to be put upon trial and judged according to evidence; to have it impartially compared with the School systems of the sister States; with those States supposed to enjoy greater opportunities than our own, and in which there has been for many consecutive years, steady, even increasing effort to perfect the Public School law. It is thought that the investigation and comparison will prove that the Free School system of our State, though young, is a young giant, and capable of overcoming while in its cradle the difficulties with which other systems have for many years been unsuccessfully contending.

Identified as I am with the School Law in its leading features; believing it to be a good working law; in all its sections strictly and efficiently practical, needing very few amendments, and these chiefly to correct ambiguities of lan-