

Overlooking as it does the ancient Capital of our State, the scene of his untiring labors, this monumental mound will stand through the years as a constant reminder of the personality and career of our late great Governor.

A commonwealth can be judged by the class of leadership it develops and applauds. The character of a people is formed and developed by the kind and quality of men and women to whom it gives recognition and the class of and achievements of Governor Ritchie, we as a people and as a State add to the best of our traditions.

The lasting significance of acts such as today are here performed will be better realized when it is borne in mind that the traditions of a people are the essence of the soul of that people at its highest and its best. Tradition feeds upon the example and acts performed by those who forge to the front, and by their life and work give added prestige to us all.

It is highly meet and proper, therefore, that this step should have been taken to honor the name and memory of Governor Ritchie. He was plainly one of the finest types produced by the public life of Maryland; his culture, integrity and gentility combined to make him the symbol of our best traditions.

He raised the standards of public life in Maryland by force of his character and example as the servant of his State. Through the years of his career as Assistant City Solicitor of the City of Baltimore; as People's Counsel before the Public Service Commission; as Attorney General of the State; and as its Chief Executive for 15 years, he furnished such an example of service as to stimulate the pride of, and make a lasting impression upon, the people of his State—and in his later years to impress markedly the people of the entire Nation.

The fortunate possessor of rare physical, social and intellectual qualities, at every step of his career, he generated a feeling of cleanness, dignity, sanity and safety in civic affairs. An appraisal of the career of Governor Ritchie shows that among his chief characteristics were intense fidelity; great capacity; persistent and intelligent industry; clearheadedness and intellectual honesty.

Evidence of fidelity in accepting obligation—meeting burdens, and the performance of duties, immediately strikes the mind upon even the slightest inspection of his record. There was no trifling—sidestepping—slovenly performance or neglect of duty left in Governor Ritchie's trail at any of its stages. He acted, just as the people expect a high-class public servant to act, and instantly met and took the responsibilities involved.

In the satisfaction of obligations assumed, and the duties imposed at each step of his career, he gave to the people in the performance of his work, a persistent continuance of labor and quality of brain power seldom equaled, and perhaps never surpassed, in any of the positions occupied by him as a representative of the people.

When he came into the Governorship, it soon became apparent that the people of Maryland not only had as Chief Executive a dignified high-class gentleman, but one who was given to incessant labor in the meeting of his duties, and who brought to bear in connection therewith an intellect of the very highest grade,—and with all, a clearheadedness and honesty of mind unfortunately all too rare in public life.