

It seems to be nothing more than simple justice to those who are taxed to build School houses, to pay teachers and other expenses, that the benefit designed to be secured should reach its object. The child is too young to have any election in the matter. He is not competent to judge. He must be controlled, trained up in the right way; that is, must be sent to School. This is first, the duty of the parent and guardian, but if they fail, it becomes the duty of the State, a duty to be enforced by such humane and prudent regulations as a wise legislation may suggest.

If this be not done, ignorant and unnatural parents, or covetous masters can defeat the benevolent intention of Free Education, and deprive children of instruction, causing them to grow up without knowledge to prepare them for the duties and privileges of citizenship. This law intimates no interference with parental rights. It guards the rights of the child when the parent neglects them.

It suggests no novel or strange expedient. Similar provisions exist in the School systems of other States, and are deemed essential to a just enforcement of the law, both as regards duty to children, to tax payers and to society.

SEC. 8. The attention of the Honorable Senators and Members from the City of Baltimore is earnestly directed to the truant system as adopted in the City of Boston. Some enactment of similar purport would be of incalculable good to our Metropolis, not only in diffusing the elements of Education by bringing children to School, but in preventing disorder and crime, now too prevalent. The necessity of such a law must be obvious to every citizen who has occasion to frequent the outskirts of the City, where vagrant boys congregate and commit offences against civility and decency.

By reference to the statistics of the Baltimore City Schools as exhibited in Table A, it will be seen that out of sixteen thousand and eighty-six children registered as connected with the Schools, the average daily attendance is only ten thousand seven hundred and fifty-four. Thus for each day we have five thousand three hundred and thirty-two absentees or truants, being the very