

Your Committee have not permitted themselves to doubt for a moment, that the original design of the Legislature, in setting apart the particular fund now under consideration, was, that each and every poor child in the State, should, as far as possible, participate equally in the benefits to be produced by that fund; any other design, would have been inconsistent with the immutable principles of justice, and could never have been entertained by enlightened legislators, engaged in a work of benevolence. Assuming then, such to have been the original design, and taking it as a fundamental principle, it remains to be enquired, what plan, for the distribution of this fund, can be devised, which shall give to this principle its full effect?

Several modes of distribution have been contended for, heretofore, by persons coming from different parts of the State, some of which shall be briefly noticed. That which has been urged with most vehemence, as well as seeming plausibility, is, that the distribution shall be made to the several counties, and the city of Baltimore, in exact proportion to their respective numbers of white population, regardless of all other considerations.

This, it appears to your Committee, would be far from conforming to the original design; far from giving effect to the just principle of equal participation in the benefits to be produced. Nothing is more certain than that the same amount of instruction, the same degree of benefit, in the way of education, can be afforded to a given number of children, at a much less cost, in some sections of our State, than in others. In the city of Baltimore, or in the densely populated counties, children enough are easily assembled at any school, to give full employment to the teacher; his time and services are worth a certain sum; any diminution, or augmentation of the number of scholars, is immaterial; consequently, the greatest possible number would, in those sections, receive the benefit of instruction from every teacher employed, or, from