

the Government, in whose patriotism and ability I have sincere confidence, I am prepared to lend my hearty co-operation.

In connection with no subject demanding the attention of our people and the fostering care of the State, do I feel a greater interest than that of education. Our beautiful but complicated system of Government is based upon the intelligence and virtue of the masses. Enslavement of mind is necessarily the result of ignorance, vices, which the rigors of the law cannot correct, may be prevented by the elevating and ennobling influence of intellectual and moral cultivation. Under a monarchy ignorance may be tolerated, but the very genius of our institutions views it as its most dangerous antagonist; a free people to be happily free, ⁴⁰ must be educated. Our forefathers who constituted the beneficent form of Government under which it is our happy privilege to live, left upon record their opinions of the necessity of education for the immortality of their work.

At such time as is practicable and consistent with other interests, and the ultimate success of the cause itself, our best energies should be devoted to the establishment and support of a well digested system of common schools, where every child, no matter what its position or misfortune, may receive the blessing of a sound primary education. Years have elapsed since Maryland should have had a permanent and general system of public schools. While our people are not inferior to those of any other State in the Union, in the fervor of their patriotism; in their attachments to their country; in their loyalty to the Constitution; in their generous devotion to the comprehensive interests of the nation and in their fidelity to their own obligations and the laws of the land, it must be acknowledged they are behind many of their sister States in the facilities afforded for popular instruction. Many of the best minds of the present century can look back with satisfaction and trace the first dawnings of their