

one. The extent of the knowledge of the people the creative power ought to be perfectly equal to the extent of the social organization. In other words, intelligence ought as perfectly to fill the social system as light fills space. This was the condition of man, when he was first made, that his knowledge was equal to the light which fills space. Knowledge enables the mind to understand things with the same accuracy and to the extent light enables the eye to see things. Knowledge is the medium through which the mind's eye sees abstract or mental things, just as light is the medium by which the natural eye sees material things; and the knowledge of the people to the extent of the social system ought to be perfect.

In this mode alone can we understand what education is or ought to be in a free government and what is its appropriate action. It has already been said that the State of Massachusetts presents the first example of a people making education a part of their constitution of government. When the pilgrims landed on the rock of Plymouth, the first act was to establish a system of instruction and they thereby made it a seminal principle of social organization. Among the ancient nations education was the fruit of individual effort and resources. The Jews proceeded further on this subject, than any other nation, for their laws and their doctrines of government were taught by public lectures; and it is remarkable that among all the nations of antiquity, there existed in their infancy the greatest degree of practical intelligence and purity; and in proportion to the length of time their governments ran, did ignorance and corruption increase.

Among the Jews, their law-giver in order to maintain the doctrines we have described above, exhorted his countrymen that they should learn the laws by-heart, that they should talk of them when they should lie down, when they should rise up, when they should go on a journey; and that their laws, and the wisdom that was in them, should be commingled with all their domestic pursuits.

Such a degree of knowledge is indispensable to the stability of government, the maintenance of liberty, and the protection of right; for how can a people preserve that of which they are ignorant? A people can no more preserve their rights and liberties when they are ignorant of them, than a ploughman can solve a mathematical problem of great intricacy; and indeed their knowledge of their rights and constitution of government ought to be as perfect as that of a profound mathematician of a simple problem. In this aspect of the case, how appropriate is the following language of Washington:

"Nor am I less persuaded that you will agree with me in opinion, that there is nothing which can better deserve your patronage than the promotion of *science* and *literature*. KNOWLEDGE is in every country the surest basis of public happiness. In one in which the measures of government receive their *impressions* so *immediately* from the *sense* of the *community* as in ours it is *proportionably essential*. To the security of a *free constitution* it con-