

## REPORT.

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The Committee in presenting the following bill, beg leave to make a few brief remarks. They do not consider it essential to dwell at any considerable length on the importance and the advantages to be derived from a well digested system of public education. It is an axiom, universally admitted in the science of government, that the most valuable and cherished institution of the State depend for their stability and perpetuity on the virtue and intelligence of the people. If then the interests of the State, be so intimately connected with the moral and intellectual culture of her citizens, it becomes her solemn duty to aid in the diffusion of knowledge and the encouragement of virtue; it is her duty to take by the hand the children of her citizens, especially those of the poor and the needy, and lead them to the altar of science; and while she would point out to them at a distance the beauty of the temple, it is no less her duty to aid them in ascending the rugged pathway, which leads to the summit on which it stands.

These principles were early recognized by the founders of our State. By reference to the annals of the past, we find that the colonists of Maryland, amidst all their vicissitudes of fortune, were not unmindful of the education of their children. Even long before the war-hoop of the Indian was hushed in the forest, the voice of the tutor was heard in the discharge of his high vocation, the soil was dedicated to the genius of science. As early as the year 1696, King William's School was established under the patronage of the State. This institution, the prototype of those which now form the ornament and the pride of Maryland, continued to flourish for nearly a century, casting abroad upon the land the light of knowledge, until it was finally merged into our own time honored seat of learning, Saint John's College.

Our ancestors were early impressed with the importance of a system of public education, and as far back as the year 1717,