

upon which the children of all, without distinction of rich or poor, might contend for the golden prize of literary fame. The avenues which lead to them, should therefore, be free and open to the children of all, as the light of day or the air of heaven. The Committee fully convinced that any rate of charges, no matter how small the sum, which discriminates between the rich and the poor, is repugnant to the institution itself, and should never be resorted to except in cases of pressing necessity: aware, however, that cases may arise in which the school may be on the point of being discontinued for the want of funds, they have provided that in such cases, the Trustees shall have a discretionary power to levy a limited amount upon the parents of those children who are able to pay.

As the design of the State in providing a school fund, is the diffusion of knowledge and the education of the children of her citizens, especially those of the poor and the needy, it is much to be regretted that no provisions have heretofore been made for the education of orphans. That class of our children, which of all others, needs the fostering care, which claims the sympathy and aid of the State; that class, which from their peculiar situations are unable to attend the public schools; that class is denied the privileges which are extended to others, and deprived of the advantages of education. It is well known that these children, so soon as their age will permit, are placed out in the community, generally to learn some useful mechanical art; but if they are deprived of the advantages of education, while in the asylum, and go forth from thence with minds unimproved, they are almost inevitably doomed to grow up in ignorance: *for no man takes an orphan to educate it.* The very name of *orphan* touches the finest cords of the human heart, and sends forth a thrill of sympathy that finds a response in every bosom. Behold that humble tenement which rises before you; it is the abode of the fatherless and friendless. Approach and obtain a nearer view of its innocent inmates; no mother is near to console them, no father to share their smiles; their bread is administered by the hand of a stranger: but their sad condition is still more embittered by the reflection, that while they enjoyed the blessing of a parental home, humble it may have been, they also enjoyed an inheritance in the common school fund; but now that the heavy hand of Providence has fallen upon them, the State has repudiated her obligations of educating them, has deprived them of their inheritance, and erased their names from the catalogue of those who are to be the recipients of her educational bounty. Why should this be so? Why should thousands of our children be left to depend on public charity, not only for their food and raiment, but also for their education? In other States the education of the orphan is scrupulously provided for, and shall it be any longer said to the reproach of Maryland, that she has thrown open the doors of her public schools, even to the children