

most dangerous antagonist; a free people, to be happily free, must be educated. Our forefathers who constructed the beneficent form of government under which it is our happy fortune 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 our 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 blessings 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 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 intellect to opportunities afforded them for tuition in the common schools, and yet for want of such advantages thousands of the youth of our land who are gifted by nature with those endowments which would fit them to adorn society and become useful men in the various callings of life, are doomed to imbibe the vices and habits which surround them, of which idleness, neglect and evil associations are the prolific cause.

It is not from a disintegrated system (such as now exists among us) that our fond hopes of a diffused elevation of the youthful mind is to be realized. It is from a well arranged and amply supported general system of primary schools, having a common head, and uniform throughout the State in its basis and mode of operation, that great and permanent results are to be expected. To this noble cause, upon which to a large extent the future happiness and security of our common country and its institutions must depend, my warmest hopes are directed, and to it I earnestly invoke the attention of the Legislature.

I have witnessed with great satisfaction the demonstration of practical enthusiasm which abound among the people of our State on the subject of agriculture. The last few years have added much to our happiness and to the enhancement of our wealth, by the growing interest which has been awakened to the improvement of our soils. Science, without which the hand of man against a thousand blind chances must toil hopelessly on, has been confidently appealed to and made to minister to our wants and necessities. Many portions of our territory, once uninviting and cheerless prospects to the eye of the agriculturist, have by the aid of science been made to gladden the hearts of their