

yet to meet an intelligent man in Maryland who considers the present system of education in Maryland to be one worthy of Maryland. It is more perfect in some portions than in others; but in those portions where it has been perfected the people have not complained of the expense.

Why then load up your report with injunctions to your legislature to do acts which they not only have the power, but which I believe no man doubts their willingness to do? If you do not think education worth the money, say so clearly, and put it on record that you believe a moderate tax for free school education in the State is a disadvantage. But do not attempt to go round and round the stump, on the pretence all the time of going forward. Either go forward or go back. Either say that you want it, or say that you will not have it—that the price demanded is too great, and that you believe it to be a disadvantage to the State.

Mr. STOCKBRIDGE. There is one element which enters into the consideration of this matter of the amount of taxation, to which I have heard no reference made, and which seems to me to be an important consideration. We have now in several counties of the State public schools. As I understand the provisions of the report before us, it provides for free public schools. So that in estimating the taxation, or the amount of charge upon the people, the amount which is paid by those who send pupils to the schools under the present system should properly be deducted in order to ascertain the difference in the amount. So far as I am aware, that charge throughout the State is not less than a dollar per quarter per pupil.

Mr. DANIEL. For all those able to pay.

Mr. STOCKBRIDGE. Of course; which is ninety-nine one-hundredths throughout the State.

Mr. DANIEL. The gentleman is mistaken.

Mr. STOCKBRIDGE. I am not mistaken. I speak by the book when I say it, for the great bulk of those under the present system consider those that pay the aristocracy above those that do not; and if they cannot pay they do not go. That is the result of it.

This is an important consideration, because it amounts in the course of the year to a great burden of taxation. Thus if a poor man has five children whom he sends to school under the present system, he pays a tax for the support of the schools to the amount of \$20 a year; which is just the tax under the system provided by this bill for the man that has \$10,000 worth of property. This element of taxation which now comes in to swell the grand total of what is paid by the State should be taken into consideration when we come to compare the one system with the other. It is a shifting of the burden of taxation, in many cases, from those who are ill able to bear it to those who are abundantly able. The man

now who is rich in children only, pays the great burden of taxation, while a man of wealth who happens to be a bachelor or childless almost entirely escapes. He pays nothing in proportion to the other man. Under the system which is now arranged, which is a money system, throwing the burden of this taxation for the support of this branch of the government, precisely according to the policy of the other branches of the government of the State, the burden is placed upon the shoulders of those able to bear it.

I think therefore that this element should be considered; and that when we reckon the cost of the present system, we should add to the taxation of the State and county the amount paid by parents for the education of their children; and then we have the total footing up of the present system. Then the taxation alone will constitute the footing up of the new system. The difference in that view of the case will not be as great as it would appear on the face of it.

Mr. SANDS. I should not rise if it were not to suggest a consideration I have not heard urged here, and one which I think should be convincing and conclusive upon this subject of the increase of taxation. I assert as a truth susceptible of immediate mathematical demonstration, this fact, first and foremost, from the figures, that you really increase the tax upon the people less than one-twentieth of one per cent., under these proposed sections. I assert as a truth susceptible of mathematical demonstration that by this system you utterly destroy taxation upon the school question within the period of twenty years—utterly destroy it. So that you who are acting here for the people to-day, by the adoption of these sections, this system, do beyond all cavil ordain that within the period of twenty years all taxation upon the subject of public schools shall cease utterly and entirely, and leave the State with a fund of six millions devoted to this grand object. That is just as clear as figures can make it.

Some of your counties are paying ten, and some twelve, fifteen and twenty cents. That is dropping water into the sea. It is providing for the institutions of this year, and providing for them very poorly, at the best, and the taxation you pay is gone forever, and with your present system the tax will be upon you forever. No one doubts it. Mark you, sir, I say that under the system as at present existing, your tax on the average all over the State will run up to 15 and 20 cents on the \$100 this day. It is a fair calculation that you are paying that for the present defective system, creating no school fund, providing no means by which this taxation shall ever cease. By adopting this system you are providing a school fund which inevitably will in twenty years, and for all time, leave you with six millions of dollars in the treasury for the use of the public schools, with no taxation whatsoever.