

in a more moderate than at any period since the
restoration of 1852, and by no means flattering
or encouraging.

The most among all the questions of
state policy which in my judgment demand your
earnest and most careful consideration, and which
cannot longer be postponed, without disregarding
the highest interests of the State, should be placed
the subject of common school or public education.
Whatever causes may have existed heretofore, for the
long neglect of this all important subject, growing
out of our embarrassed financial condition, and
the heavy taxation incident thereto, it gives me much
pleasure to say, that they are now all removed as will
appear by the official reports from the Treasury
Department, which will in a few days be subma-
itted for your consideration. It will be a reproach
upon the character of the State, if with the means
now under its control, and with the knowledge
of the progress and results which have marked
the educational efforts of so many of our sister States,
we should continue to lag so far behind them, or
hesitate longer, to put forth an effort commensu-
rate with the importance of the subject, and the
growing necessities of the people.

As fairly there can be no matter of public concern,
so essential to the well being of society, or so fraught with the pub-
lic interest in all its aspects, present and prospective. The sub-
ject can appeal so strongly to our State pride, or can so justly
claim the public approbation and support, as the effort
is established for the people at large, our efficient system
of common school instruction.

It is Government such as ours, emanating from
the people, based upon their intelligence and virtue, supposed
in all its operations to reflect their will, where public men and
measures, now or later conform to public sentiment,
how indispensable to the very existence of all that is noble
in our civil institutions, must be the general diffusion
of intelligence and virtue. Now whilst all will
acknowledge this necessity and admit that our Gov-
ernment must rely entirely for its permanency, upon
the intelligent appreciation of its privileges by the mass
of the people, few permit themselves to go beyond