

To repeat all these laws, and to embody in me perfect enactment, whatever of value may be gathered from them and all other sources, foreign and domestic, within your reach, to give such a law universal operation within the State, to place its administration into the hands of an able, energetic and responsible superintendent, with competent subordinates and ample powers, to provide the necessary means by State authority, to be paid into the Public Treasury and thence to be disbursed for the support of education, in every county, according to its population, the number of its established schools and the pupils belonging to each, is the course which in my judgment it becomes the Legislative wisdom of the State to adopt, if they desire fully and permanently to promote the cause of public education within the State.

That the Act of 1825, for the establishment of primary schools, with its supplements, have been greatly imperious, is fearfully confirmed by the fact, that although since that period thirty years have elapsed, the Census of 1850 discloses the humiliating truth, that even within the last ten years, next preceding the year in which that Census was taken, the number of our white adults who can neither read nor write, has been doubled, whilst the increase of our population during the same period had not exceeded one fifth. I have no doubt there are at this time, within the limits of our State not less than twenty-five thousand white adults, who have never been taught their alphabet, and of whom therefore it may with truth be said, that the discovery of the art of printing remains to them a barren and useless invention. Within this period thousands of the youths of the State, in many of whose minds cultivated minds, many have shewn the "indiments of the Statesman's skill and the patriot's fire" have attained to manhood, and other thousands are pressing on as warm fellows even, to the same goal, to take their stand upon the stage of citizenship, to whom poverty has denied the benefits of any degree of education. And yet, under our free republican institutions they are