occurring after the adjourment of the Council were filled by the Board in the appointment of Messrs. David Evans, Dr. Joseph D. Brooks and John H. Leber.

NEW SCHOOL LAW,

At its last session, the Legislature of the State passed a new school law, directing the establishment of a uniform system of free schools throughout the State. In relation to the design of the Legislature in the application of this law to the city of Baltimore, doubts were entertained, if we are correctly informed, by a majority of the gentlemen composing your Honorable Body during the past year. The same doubts, based upon the inapplicability of the law to our city schools, were, and are still entertained, with but few exceptions, by all the Commissioners, and by a large majority of the citizens whom they represent as residents of the several wards into which the city is divided.

The Board has received no official information in relation to their government by another body than the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore. It has, therefore, continued to operate under the authority by which it was constituted, and under the fostering care of which the schools have reached as high a degree of attainment in character and usefulness as those of any other city of which we have any knowledge. It is therefore to your Honorable Body that the Board looks for direction, and it will await your action before it admits of any change in relation to its government, or to the rules and regulations that have been adopted for the management of the schools under the sanction of the ordinances by which they were first ordered and have since been conducted.

In this connection it may be proper to state, that from information received from prominent members of the late Constitutional Convention of the State by which the School Law was ordered, we have learned that the system of free schools contemplated by that body was not intended to interfere with the progress of the Baltimore city schools, nor to effect any change in their government or method of management. In

fact we have repeatedly heard from members of the Convention, that it was the design of that body to expand our system over the State, in such manner as was supposed would bring up the schools of the counties to an equality of grade with those of the city. The purpose of the Convention was not by any means to damage the schools of the city by reducing their character to a level with that of the county schools, but to elevate these schools to an equal standing with those of the city. It must be apparent that this purpose could be best accomplished by following in the path that has been opened by the working of our well tried and truly successful system. It were certainly unwise in our authorized legislative councils to arrest the progress of a plan that has been in operation more than thirty-seven years, and which has produced a large number of schools, declared by persons competent to judge of their character to be fully equal to any schools wherever existing.

It is the duty of your Honorable Body, as well as of the Board of Commissioners, to preserve the Public Schools from such legislation and government as may tend to impair their usefulness, by lowering the standard of their character and lessening their influence in the view of the people for whose benefit they were established. The citizens of Baltimore have become jealous of their Public Schools. Those schools were many years in progress before the people could be induced to extend to them their patronage. They have now become, in a degree, familiar with their operations and with the agencies of their success, and it is manifest that they desire their support and encouragement in such manner as may develop in the fullest extent the educational abilities in their possession.

It was not without the expenditure of large means and the application of a great amount of labor, that our city schools were elevated to their present condition of prosperity. Nor can it be that by a magic hand those of the counties may be raised suddenly to the standard they have reached, and to effect which years of anxious watchfulness and care have been applied. It may be that by a single act of legislation