

altogether subordinate to that of the state. Though the discipline of his schools was strict; though the details of his system were such as to give time for study, for bodily exercise, for rest; though even every thing pertaining to dress, to behaviour, to the very way of walking, was most particularly regulated, the then admired system proved to be an utter failure. There was no soul in that apparently well organized body. Without true piety and religion there can be no education worthy of the name.

The education of the child must begin in his father's home. God has deputed the parents to be the first teachers of their children; nature itself commands it.

Education must prepare a generation of good citizens and true Christians. Knowledge and virtue are necessary to the citizen as well as to the Christian. Real knowledge is obtained by the study of secular or natural sciences and of true religion. Virtue is acquired by daily or rather constant habit, through timely exhortations and the good examples of both the parents and the teachers. To impart such knowledge to youth and train children to virtue, schools are established and professors selected, for the parents, forsooth, as a rule, cannot give sufficient time to this great work, or have not adequate learning to do so themselves.

Now, there are many who say: There ought to be public schools for all children, no matter what their religion may be; religion can be taught at home and at church; schools should exist only for secular instruction. Even in this country there is a tendency to follow this false principle. Not a few would deprive us of our Catholic schools.

Every Christian indispensably admits the necessity of religion. The practical conclusion is that children must be taught true religion whenever opportunity is afforded, and therefore at school; they must be brought up in the practice of every duty of religion, which it would be impossible to do, if they were not under the influence of religion at school, as well as at home and in the church. Catholic parents should then support Catholic schools and choose Catholic teachers for their children.

Plinius exhorts Correllia Hispulla to select for a tutor to her son a man whose principal qualification was good morals—"Cujus pudor in primis, castitas constet." He was right.

The best school is that where the teacher is a good, well-behaved Christian, and where discipline is firmly maintained, as Quintilian says: "Magistrum eligent sanctissimum, et disciplinam quæ optima fuerit."

Dearest young friends, in this university you find devoted, holy teachers, who are really learned in all the natural sciences that you require to study; their lives are pure, for, as members of a religious community, and many of them as priests of God, they are bound to chastity; and they live up to the virtues of the Gospel; by their examples and their lessons, they will teach you virtue, which is the best fruit of religion.

Then, my young friends, using the very words of the Holy Ghost, I will say to each of you: "My son, from thy youth up receive instruction; and even to thy grey hairs thou shalt find wisdom," (Eccl. vi., 18). But remember that the work of following a course of studies is a hard one, which requires great assiduity and perseverance. See the farmer, how he is obliged to work incessantly, to plough, to sow, to harrow, to weed, to reap. You also must attend to study and instruction, "as one that plougheth and soweth, and wait for their good fruits; for in working about them you shall labour a little, and shall quickly eat of their fruits," (ibid. 19, 20). "Give ear and take wise counsel, and cast not away my advice," (ibid. 24).

I therefore hope that all of you, even the youngest, will study well during this scholastic year, and profit by every lesson you shall be taught, by every good example given you. Let there be between the students such emulation as will secure progress in your studies. If you act upon the good advice I have given you, you will, when you leave this seat of learning, be well equipped to perform your part in society and in the Church—which if you do, you will be good citizens, upright and sincere Catholics, exercising a salutary influence in this world and deserving of eternal reward. Amen.