

swallowed edifices, and also citizens when they were least on their guard. John's genius was luminous, agreeable, incomparably bright and suave, but on occasion bursting forth like thunder from a calm sky and reducing to powder human fortune and glory—things which appeared to all eyes as firm and unshakable. Anthusa, not yet knowing what her son might be nor even what he desired to be, gave him an education suitable to his times and rank. It was the education then in vogue among the noble and wealthy families of Antioch. Good schools were opened in the city, and John was first seen among the grammarians. Great care was also taken in these early days for the physical training of youth. Antioch was ruled by the old Greek spirit and thought, and body and mind were simultaneously developed. In the Palaestra John learned how to control the various members of his body and to compose his exterior. He practised gymnastic exercises so zealously that his attitudes and the slightest motions of his body were ordered and accomplished with the greatest grace. A more graceful orator never stood in a pulpit. According to the training received in these ancient schools of "physical culture," he was rubbed well with oil, moulded and kneaded by the hands of professional athletes, rolled in the dust, deluged with the healthful sweat of his own exertion, and then bathed in pure and perfumed water. His muscles, under such treatment, became supple and hard, and his limbs alert and strong. John entered with zest into this daily exercise, and he endeavored to subdue his body which in time yielded to the effort of his will as does the wild beast to the whip of its tamer. When in after years he exhorted his hearers to overcome their unruly senses, he did not fail to recall to their minds the peaceful but laborious contests in which they engaged under the direction of the gymnasiarch.

The grammarians taught John how to read and write. It was the custom even among the Christians to place the pagan writers of antiquity in the hands of their children, for these authors were considered to be the well-spring of the beautiful and also models of reasoning and elegance. Another motive which induced the Christians to have their sons taught the pagan classics was derived from the active opposition displayed by the rhetoricians to permit the Christians to read the ancient writers. In fact Julian the Apostate published a decree in which he forbade the Christians to read the pagan classics, and he told them to be content "with Matthew and Luke." John's mother, though very pious and devoted to religion, did not hesitate to initiate him into the studies of pagan antiquity. He read assiduously the classic poets, and they were afterwards explained and commented on in the schools. He was particularly pleased with Homer, that inexhaustible narrator of adventures and battles who captivates the imagination of the young. He also became acquainted with the writers of the Alexandrian epoch who were very popular with the frivolous Antiochians on account of their airy elegance and agreeable philosophy. He knew by heart the finest passages to be found in them, and recited them in loud voice and with admirable action before his fellow-students. This was a practice in the ancient schools, charmed by the harmony of sounds and the music of verse. Accordingly John stocked his fertile mind with the pleasing fictions of Greece, and later on it will be no surprise to find him dwelling on some characteristics of the classic poets whom he desired to forget in order that he might think of God and meditate on the Sacred Word. This acquaintance with the poets of antiquity served him well in later days, when he became a writer, for he knew perfectly how to clothe his