

hold attention and to call forth energy. He will take a narrow view of his duties, be satisfied with mechanical results, will fall into sterile methods, and whatever verbal facility his pupils may acquire, they will not be taught to become self-active in the pursuit of rational aims, will not be made capable of complete living in the world in which God has placed them. Nature gives endowments, but it is the business of education to produce faculty and character, and if it fails in this, it fails altogether.

The Catholics of the United-States have an educational system of their own. They have some four thousand schools of all kinds, in which not less than seven hundred thousand pupils are receiving instruction. Here is an interest which is at once vast and all-important. The welfare of both the Church and the State is to a great extent involved in the work which these schools perform. In the Pastoral Letter of the Third Plenary Council, the purpose of the bishops in the matter of education is said to be two-fold—"to multiply our schools and to perfect them."—These are noble aims, but it is well to bear in mind that in America, at least, multiplication is infinitely easier than perfection, and consequently that, if it is really our purpose to make our schools excellent, it will be necessary to devote to this end far more thought and labor than will suffice to increase their number. In the decrees of the Third Plenary Council, on the means of improving parochial schools, the bishops declare that it is their purpose to labor strenuously, that Catholics shall have "good and effective schools, inferior in no way to the public schools." We cannot take the public schools as a standard, for they vary from place to place, and while many are good, many are bad. Our aim should be simply to form the best schools, and to this end we should be willing to receive information and guidance wherever they may be had. Since the pastor, by virtue of his office, is the head of the parochial school, the council requires that the theological students learn psychology and pedagogics, with a special view to teaching. This is a decree of great importance, and it is to be hoped that in every theological seminary there will henceforth be found a chair of pedagogics, in which the history and science of education will be taught. This is a subject with which every educated man should be familiar, one which, in a way, involves every other, and which, apart from its professional