

PART V
THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

CHAPTER XXXI

EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS AND CONDITIONS

§ I. THE PROBLEM OF EXPANSION

The Society of Jesus in the original intention of its founder was to be ministerial and missionary rather than educational in its aims. To exercise the sacred ministry on behalf of Catholics at home and unbelievers abroad, not to conduct schools, was its first objective. Schools were in the nature of an afterthought, an evolution of circumstances. "Who invented the colleges?" St. Ignatius was asked by his Boswellian biographer, Padre Gonzales de Camara. The answer came without hesitation, "Layneze was the first to touch on the subject." The colleges here in question were the Society's private schools for the training and education of its own members. The founder of the Jesuits at first had doubts whether his organization, then in embryo and with Constitutions yet to be formulated, could in view of the rigorous poverty to be professed by its members consistently conduct schools of this type, which manifestly would find it necessary to possess permanent sources of revenue for their support. Layneze, keen theologian, removed the saint's scruples by pointing out that such revenue-supported institutions, indispensable as they were for the Society's continued existence, did not run counter to the Jesuit vow of poverty. Seminaries for the education of the youth of the order were therefore the first step in the evolution of the Jesuit college. The next step was the admission of outsiders or externs (*externi*) to these private seminaries or scholasticates, as they would nowadays be called. A third and final step was the opening of colleges for externs exclusively or at least primarily, it was in 1548 that the first Jesuit school of this type, Messina, started on its career. Before the death of St. Ignatius a number of such colleges were in operation and the whole idea of the education of secular youth had been definitely embodied by him in the Constitutions as an important and even substantial feature of the Jesuit scheme of work.¹

In succeeding chapters of this history the story of Jesuit educational endeavor in the Middle United States will be told in connection with

¹ *Analecta Bollandiana*, 27 416 (1908), *Études Religieuses* (Paris), 98 474-484.

the sequence of events at St. Louis, Cincinnati, Bardstown and other points. Here we touch on broader features of the movement and first on the attitude of Jesuit superiors in face of the numerous requests that came to them for the educational services of their men.

An appeal from Bishop Bruté of Vincennes to Father Roothaan to open a college on the site now occupied by Notre Dame University was without effect. No one could have set himself more firmly against premature expansion of Jesuit activities in America than this vigilant General of the Society of Jesus. The saintly prelate's petition for a Jesuit college in Indiana was made four weeks before he passed away

I renew the simple petition for a college of the Society which I first made in 1834 on my arrival in this new diocese. I have felt much joy over Bishop Purcell's success on behalf of Ohio and it has revived my hopes for our Indiana. The particular locality [I mention] is one which I believe to be of the highest promise, namely, South Bend, your self-same celebrated Mission of St. Joseph, on behalf of which I forwarded to you my first petition in June, 1835, through Father Kohlman of blessed memory.²

Southbend village has already trebled itself—now approximately 2,000 souls, but the surrounding country has grown fourfold and more. An exceeding healthful country in the latitude of New York and covered in every direction with farms and villages—its situation is central with reference to all our northern Indiana (now a state of 70,000 to 80,000 souls), Michigan, Northern Illinois, Wisconsin, northwest Ohio, upper Canada on the west [*sic*], moreover, by the lakes, canals and routes which open out on every side one can make still more distant contacts, . . . One of your fathers conversant with the actual geography of our region and with its latest statistics, concerning which there is a fund of available documents that could be sent, I think, from your colleges [here] to Rome would easily make my general position intelligible. I find myself so weakened that I can scarcely repeat my first letters and make this final effort, which my successor will take up with you and carry on.

As to the college, the offer is a very simple one—an excellent tract of land, one mile from the town, from which it is separated by the St. Joseph river—at least 400 to 500 available acres—a spot already picked out by Rev. Mr. Badin for a school, on a hill near lake St. Mary, which is a small

² A rumor was current at the time that the Jesuits at the instance of Bishop Purcell were about to open a school in Brown County, Ohio. Father Anthony Kohlmann, S. J. (1771-1836), one-time superior of the Maryland Mission and founder of the New York Literary Institute, was later professor of theology in the Roman College. The "celebrated mission of St. Joseph" was situated on the banks of the St. Joseph River somewhere from one to three miles south of the site of Niles, Michigan, near the Michigan-Indiana boundary. It was started late in the seventeenth or early in the eighteenth century on behalf of Miami and Potawatomi bands and lasted until about 1768. Father Claude Allouez, S. J., the "Apostle of Wisconsin," is said to have died there in 1689. Cf. *supra*, Chap. XXIII, § 1.

considéré après les Espagnols (Fernand Soto) comme celui
 qui découvrit le mississipi imprimée au X^e vol. de la biogéog. par
 au mississipi par Sparks de Boston — et dans la
 "North American review" de janvier, de Boston aussi, la
 meilleur. pages 50 pages sur le sujet de cette biogéog.
 même du pr. Marquette —

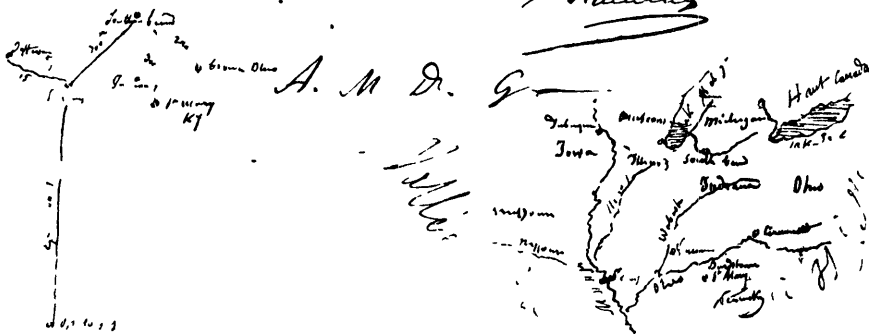
mais je suis trop long, ma lettre celle d'un malade
 touche trop faiblement la supputation plus positive que
 la Société veut. sagement voir d'abord plus clair —! en
 mes succès donc! je ne fais seulement le cours
 content de cet effort.

Je vous parlerais des bontés et soins si touchants
 prodigués au collège de St. Louis a notre digne
 jeune Mississipi M. Petit — il en a porté
 la reconnaissance au ciel — heureux si j'obtiens
 de l'y servir —

vos bontés à Rome me demeurent
 présentes comme les jours —

Trique prius & ultimus prius. pro
 vobis devotus

+ Vicar. G. Bruté Ev^o de
 Vincennes



Last page of letter by Bishop Bruté of Vincennes to the Jesuit General, John Roothaan, May 28, 1839, petitioning him to open a college in Indiana General Archives of the Society of Jesus, Rome

body of water belonging to us—no colleges yet established within a considerable radius St Mary's in Kentucky and the one in Brown Cy. [County, Ohio], which you are commencing, are about 300 miles away as is the one in St Louis, while the new one at Jefferson City which they propose to the fathers in St Louis is to the west of St Louis, 400 miles from South Bend.

The confidence of the West in the colleges of the fathers is manifest, it exists everywhere, influencing even the prejudiced and making them desirous to have these colleges—I am persuaded that this would particularly be the case in our North where the memory of the fathers is very much alive, as evidenced, not among those few Indian tribes which are being everywhere dislodged, but in the eagerness shown in all our towns to found historical societies, all of which trace our origins back to those [early] efforts of the Society of which they stand in admiration—I have written [on the subject] several times myself, but it is the protestant writers, reviewers, journalists, compilers of statistics who do more to spread abroad this glory of religion—only this year we have had two remarkable articles—the Life of the Father [Marquette] who is regarded after the Spaniards (Fernando Soto) as the discoverer of the Mississippi, published in volume X of the American Biography by Sparks of Boston—while in the North American Review for January, also of Boston and the best in the country, [there are] 50 pages more on the subject of this very biography of Father Marquette [?].

But I am too long, my letter, a sick man's, touches only too feebly on the more positive considerations which the Society in her wisdom would first wish to see more clearly set forth. But the rest to my successors! My heart is content with having made this effort! ³

Father Verhaegen, as Father Elet after him, was regarded in Jesuit domestic circles as a particularly ardent advocate of the policy of expansion. His principle, so a fellow-Jesuit of Kentucky, Father Evremont, averred, was this. "We must get possession of posts, in the beginning things will go badly, our successors will fare better." In a letter of June 6, 1843, urging upon the Father General the acceptance of the college in Fordham, New York, which Bishop Hughes had offered to the Society, Verhaegen wrote "As to myself, I am of the opinion that it would be one of the finest of the enterprises taken in hand under your administration. Believe me, Very Reverend Father, we must profit by these attractive offers. Later on they will no longer be made to the Society. I should certainly be happy to be able to contribute in some

³ Bruté à Roothaan, May 28, 1839 (AA). Bishop de la Hailandière, Bruté's successor in the see of Vincennes, transferred the Notre Dame property as it then stood (five hundred and twenty-four acres) to Father Sorin, first superior of the Congregation of the Holy Cross in the United States. The property was originally purchased by Father S. T. Badin from the government *Illinois Catholic Historical Review*, 4, 274

way to this very important undertaking. The beginnings would be a little difficult, but we should soon have a goodly number of subjects.”⁴

For Father Verhaegen as superior of the middlewestern Jesuits there was no lack of fields of labor to occupy if the pitifully small personnel at his command did not tie his hands. Prelates were eager to have his men open colleges in their dioceses. In March, 1840, he wrote to the General expressing his willingness to accept invitations from the Bishops of Detroit and Cincinnati to establish colleges in their respective cities provided a few professors were sent to him from Europe. “And if both colleges cannot be undertaken by the Society, let us accept one or the other.”⁵ Father Roothaan’s choice was Cincinnati, Detroit was to go without a Jesuit college until thirty-seven years later. In 1842 there was a possibility of Jefferson College in Louisiana passing into Catholic hands. Bishop Chanche of the newly erected diocese of Natchez, who was desirous of getting possession of it and turning it over to the Jesuits, had expressed a wish that Father Larkin of the Kentucky Mission be put in charge. Father Verhaegen took the matter up with the Father General in July, 1842. “The Bishop has asked me whether we could assume charge of this enterprise, which would do so much good for our religion in that non-Catholic locality. This of course is on the supposition that the buildings, which are ample and substantial, could be obtained from the managers of the college for a period of ten or fifteen years. I think the thing to be entirely impossible. What does your Paternity think?”⁶ Father Roothaan was opposed to the acceptance of Jefferson College under any circumstances. Two years later, in 1844, a Jesuit wrote to him from Kentucky. “Reverend Father Van de Velde has written to the Bishop [of Natchez] that in two years the Vice Provincial of Missouri could open a boarding school at Natchez—but his Lordship, not being willing to wait, has addressed himself to [the Jesuits of] Kentucky.”⁷ Neither the Kentucky nor the Missouri Jesuits were to establish themselves in the southern town though Father Van de Velde, when he came to it as its bishop in the fifties, sent re-

⁴ Verhaegen à Roothaan, June 6, 1843 (AA)

⁵ Verhaegen à Roothaan, March 12, 1840 (AA)

⁶ Verhaegen à Roothaan, July 6, 1842 (AA) Cf *infra*, Chap XXXII, notes 34, 35

⁷ Murphy à Roothaan, February 16, 1844, (AA) Father Van de Velde wrote to Archbishop Blanc of New Orleans “If the Legislature is under obligation to establish a college, it will do so without doubt, and then all the bad elements in Louisiana and all the anti-Jesuits will do all they can to decry us. It will be nothing but calumnies, vexations, rancors on every side. This is what frightens me almost as much as the debt. The debt is certain, the success is not so.” Van de Velde à Blanc, August 4, 1844 (AA) Cf *infra*, Chap XXXII, notes 34, 35

peated invitations to his associates of the North to open a house and college in Natchez.

In the forties numerous alluring offers were made to the French Jesuits settled in Kentucky, all of them declined except Bishop Hughes's gift to them of his college at Fordham. Bishop Purcell of Cincinnati would have had them (*c.* 1840) take over his college known as the Athenaeum, which was subsequently accepted by Father Verhaegen. Bishop Loras of Dubuque offered them (1841) property for a college near Rock Island, this venture to be followed in time by an Indian mission somewhere in his diocese. Bishop Reynolds of Charleston was ready (*c.* 1843) to finance a college for them in the metropolis of South Carolina while Bishop Byrne of Little Rock was anxious to secure their aid in building up his new diocese (1844).⁸ In 1841 Bishop Hailandière of Vincennes would have them start a college in Indianapolis. "As to the proposition made to us," Father Murphy, then rector of St. Mary's College, Kentucky, informed the General, "it offers great advantages. Indianapolis is quite a new town with a population of two thousand souls. It is the capital and center of the State. The Legislature and Supreme Court meet there. It is accordingly a location where a college can be brought to public notice, since all the counties [of the State] are represented there. On the other hand, the Bishop's conditions appear to us to be favorable. The unanimous advice of the consultants is to accept the proposition. I have accordingly written to the Bishop that I accept his offer as far as I can, that is, on the express condition of the approval of your Paternity."⁹ About a year later Murphy wrote again to Father Roothaan saying that Bishop de la Hailandière was insistent in urging his petition and had even sent his vicar-general to talk the matter over. But the provincial of France stood out against the Indianapolis offer as the new and burdensome Mission of Canada was now on his hands.¹⁰ Nothing came of de la Hailandière's efforts to secure the Kentucky Jesuits for the capital city of Indiana, which in later years was to be tendered more than once but without result to the Jesuits of St. Louis as a promising field for educational work.

All through the fifties and sixties overtures continued to be made for the services of the St. Louis Jesuits. In 1850 Father Elet informed the General that he was rejecting offers made to him by the "bishops of Vincennes, Detroit and Chicago."¹¹ In 1854 the Bishop of Yucatan offered a college, residence and novitiate in Campeche, all of which

⁸ Murphy à Roothaan, May 11, 1841, February 16, 1844, August 14, 1845 (AA).

⁹ Murphy à Roothaan, June 29, 1841. (AA).

¹⁰ Murphy à Roothaan, June 10, 1842 (AA)

¹¹ Elet à Roothaan, August 17, 1850 (AA)

were declined by Fathers Murphy and Beckx. "The Archbishop of Cincinnati," Murphy reported to the General in August, 1856, "is ready to purchase a certain college with his own money should we be in a position to accept it. The Bishop of Dubuque is making us a like offer. I mention these particulars merely to make known the attitude of these prelates in our regard. We shall return them very cordial thanks and thank likewise Almighty God, who works to such good purpose in human hearts. The Bishops of Louisville and St. Louis continue to be favorable."¹² In 1856 Bishop O'Regan was offering the Jesuits his college in Chicago.¹³ In 1857 Bishop Juncker of Alton was asking St. Louis for the ministerial services, at least temporary, of a few Jesuits.¹⁴ In 1861, the college of Sandwich, Ontario, previously offered to and declined by the French Jesuits of New York, was also declined by Father Murphy, Missouri vice-provincial, because it was outside his territory but more especially because he was exceedingly short-handed in men. In 1862 Bishop Rappe of Cleveland, on occasion of a mission preached at his cathedral in that city by Father Arnold Damen, broached the subject of a Jesuit house in some city of his diocese, preferably Toledo, where he was ready to provide a church and residence. Damen at once communicated the offer to Father Beckx, urging that it be accepted.¹⁵ But this opening, like similar ones brought at this period within reach of the middlewestern Jesuits, was under the circumstances wisely declined.

§ 2. CONDITIONS IN THE COLLEGES

During his visitation of St. Louis College in 1831-1832 Father Peter Kenney expressed disappointment with the status of classical studies in that institution.¹⁶ Frontier conditions, however, as Father Verhaegen pointed out to the General, were necessarily reflecting themselves in current educational standards and demands, he ventured the prediction that with greater development in the western country the academic situation at St. Louis College would steadily improve. That the prediction was not a rash one is borne out by the better organization which studies in that institution arrived at in the next two or three decades.¹⁷ Father Emig, Bardstown's second Jesuit rector and a resolute upholder of the classics, reporting to Father Roothaan on condi-

¹² Murphy ad Beckx, August 23, 1856 (AA). Where the college was which Bishop Purcell offered to purchase, does not appear.

¹³ Garraghan, *Catholic Church in Chicago, 1673-1871*, p. 169

¹⁴ De Smet à Beckx, June 29, 1857 (AA).

¹⁵ Damen à Beckx, April 23, 1862. (AA)

¹⁶ Cf. Chap. X, § 3

¹⁷ Cf. Chap. XXXIV.

tions in that college as he found them in January, 1852, wrote that there were some eighty boys taking Latin and Greek, a notable increase in this type of student over the record of the preceding year. By the beginning of the session 1853-1854, so Emig hoped, the seniors would be qualified to do their philosophy in Latin, a really notable achievement if it was ever actually realized. As it was, the bachelors of arts of the preceding session, 1850-1851, had no Greek and were so little up in Latin as to find difficulty with Nepos. It appeared, moreover, that the custom prevailed of conferring academic honors or degrees on such students as did four years of Latin and two of Greek, without regard to the actual proficiency attained by them in the two languages. "It is to be recommended that Reverend Father Provincial, the Rectors and the more experienced teachers meet together and determine what is to be required of youths going in for academic honors. Nothing of a truth is more seemly and more to be desired than uniformity in the conferring of academic honors."¹⁸

Father Roothaan's edition of the *Ratio Studiorum*, which appeared in 1832, was an attempt to modernize that classic Jesuit plan of studies to such extent as changed contemporary conditions seemed to require. Its appearance was the signal for a reversion to traditional Jesuit procedure in the colleges of the Society, a procedure which had become in large measure obscured amid the confusion consequent upon the suppression of the Society and its aftermath. In the pioneer days of St. Louis, as of Grand Coteau, Cincinnati and Bardstown, the *Ratio Studiorum*, it may be fairly said, was scarcely reckoned with in the framing of curricula and in pedagogic methods. A Jesuit letter-writer of the day put the matter significantly: "It is a document rarely met with in our houses." But under pressure from Father Roothaan the *Ratio* began to receive a measure at least of serious attention as an educational guidepost to be kept in view as far as conditions in America would allow. Even in our own day anything like a literal application of the provisions of the *Ratio* is felt by Jesuit educators in the United States to be impracticable. A Jesuit General has pointed out that this time-honored and in a sense official educational charter of the Society is not so much a program or course of studies as a body of pedagogic and

¹⁸ Emig ad Roothaan, January 26, 1852 (AA) For data on American Catholic colleges in the pioneer period, cf Francis Patrick Cassilly, *Catholic College Foundations and Development in the United States, 1677-1850* (Catholic University of America, Washington, D C, 1924), Sebastian Anthony Erbacher, O F M, *Catholic Higher Education for Men in the United States, 1850-1866* (Catholic University of America, Washington, D C, 1931) Cf also Henry Clyde Hubbart, *The Older Middle West, 1840-1880* (New York, 1936), "The Beginnings of the Middle Western College," pp 69-73.

administrative detail. It determines not so much what subjects to teach as how to teach them. It is chiefly if not altogether in this latter regard that the *Ratio* may be said to be in operation today.¹⁹

Evidences of the new attitude towards the *Ratio* began to appear in the administration of Father Elet. At a meeting of the rectors of the vice-province held in St. Louis in August, 1851, only a few weeks before his premature death, it was enjoined upon them that "more earnest efforts be made to promote the study of Latin and Greek and arrange the classes according to the *Ratio Studiorum*." This problem of the arrangement of the classes considerably engaged the wits of the college men of the vice-province and it was long in reaching a satisfactory adjustment. Father Francis Friedrich, German refugee of 1848, who showed himself a rather unsympathetic observer of things American, wrote to Father Roothaan from St. Louis in 1849 "Moreover, the principle is laid down, a principle always dreaded in the Society and justly so, that we ought to adopt the system of instruction according to which several teachers are engaged in conducting one and the same lower class, relieving one another in turns. Reverend Father Elet himself believes this to be an excellent system of teaching. . . . Now one may readily understand in what regard our *Ratio Studiorum* is held, I have sad experience of my own in this connection, however new I be in America."²⁰

¹⁹ "Under the present conditions a new revision of the *Ratio Studiorum* is not to be attempted. Not even the *Ratio* of Father Roothaan can be satisfactorily carried out on account of the special needs of different countries. For this reason the Provincial Superiors after consultation with their advisers and the most approved teachers should devise plans of studies for their provinces and for the various districts in which the same conditions prevail. There is, accordingly, no longer a uniform *Ratio Studiorum* in force as far as subject-matter and arrangement of studies are concerned . . . as the early Jesuits did not invent new methods of teaching but adopted the best method of their age, so will the Jesuits now employ the best methods of our own time" (F. X. Wernz) "Monroe, *Cyclopedia of Education* (New York, 1912), art. "Educational Work of Jesuits," 3 533. Present-day use of the *Ratio* in American Jesuit secondary schools is discussed in W. J. McGucken, S. J., *The Jesuits and Education* (Milwaukee, 1932), pp. 129-148. Cf. also Francis J. Donnelly, S. J., *Principles of Jesuit Education and Practice* (New York, 1934). Translations of the *Ratio* are in McGucken, *op. cit.*, and Edward A. Fitzpatrick, *St. Ignatius and the Ratio Studiorum* (New York, 1933).

²⁰ Friedrich ad Beckx, March 21, 1849 (AA). Father Friedrich's objection to what has been called the "branch-system" as opposed to the "class-system" was not well taken. As a matter of fact, the practice of having one major subject taught by the same professor to various groups of students prevails today in the mid-western Jesuit colleges, and this with the approval of the Father General, the older practice, according to which the same professor carries a group of students through several major subjects of instruction, is still to a greater or less extent maintained in the secondary or high school. In the eastern Jesuit colleges the

Some five years later than the date of Father Friedrich's strictures Father Gleizal, Florissant rector and master of novices, commented on the situation in these terms "The Colleges of St. Louis and Bardstown have a frightful number of professors, as you may assure yourself from the catalogue, which is now being printed. This results from the plan of studies, to my mind a very defective one and far removed, so it seems to me, from the one indicated by the *Ratio Studiorum*." ²¹ In 1858 Father Druyts was reporting to the General that the classical course at St. Louis University had been newly reorganized with a view to bringing it in better harmony with the *Ratio Studiorum* and was meeting with great satisfaction on the part of faculty and students alike. However this may have been, Father Beckx the following year urged upon the Visitor, Father Sopranis, that "studies both in the college of St. Louis and elsewhere be organized by degrees in harmony with the system of the Society, as is said to have been done in the Maryland Province and lately in California with great advantage." In 1860 Sopranis himself suggested to the St. Louis prefect of studies that he "propose some definite plan [of studies] adjusted both to the *Ratio Studiorum* of the Society and to the [circumstances] of this country." Even as late as 1863 the problem of the organization of the classes was still awaiting a satisfactory solution as certain comments of Father Keller's indicate:

Studies do not seem to be very flourishing [in St. Louis] and this not through any lack of teachers for these are numerous and excellent so that never before was this college staffed with such learned men, but somehow or other the classes are not arranged as they should be. Boys are set ahead too far to make it possible for them to grasp the subjects taught in their classes, in a lower class they might perhaps have succeeded in learning something. This situation, it is true, must be blamed in part on the Civil War, which has almost depleted the upper classes and so gives occasion to transfer from lower classes students who otherwise would not have been advanced. It must be incumbent, therefore, on the Rector and Prefect of Studies to show greater strictness and not to allow any one to pass from one class to another without proving his entire fitness by an examination. This, I think, ought to be impressed upon them, and at the end of the year let there be no candidate at all for a diploma rather than have academic honors bestowed on the unworthy ²²

Father Keller, assistant to the provincial at the time he wrote these words, was known among his confrères as a man of exacting standards

"class-system" is the one more or less in vogue Cf. McGucken, *op cit*, p. 233, Donnelly, *op cit*, p. 4

²¹ Gleizal à Roothaan, November 10, 1854. (AA)

²² Keller ad Beckx, April 21, 1863. (AA).

in education as in other things. But there is nothing to indicate that the view expressed by him in the present instance was unduly severe, he did no more than indicate his concern that proper steps be taken to safeguard the sincerity and solidity which, more than anything else, enter into the ideal of Jesuit education. As a matter of fact the effective organization of studies on the basis of the *Ratio* which Father Keller and others of his colleagues contended for arrived somewhat late in the midwestern Jesuit colleges. It was not until 1887 that a uniform and well-graded program of studies worked out on the lines of the *Ratio* was officially introduced into the high schools and colleges administered by the middlewestern Jesuits. By that time the general educational situation in the United States had shown marked improvement at least as concerned organized curricula and administrative methods. Further, the difficulties created by frontier conditions had to a great extent disappeared and Jesuit colleges were left free to shape their curricula more in accordance with the Society's traditions. But at St. Louis as elsewhere in the sixties the problem how to bestow the blessings of a classical education on the reluctant youth of western America was still a perplexing one. "It will take time," Father De Coen assured the General in June, 1860, "to convince the youth of America, even in a well-organized college like that of St. Louis, that the study of the ancient languages is of any use to them, we shall never be able to get along without teaching a special course for such as are preparing for a career of business."²³ And yet, as Father Roothaan often insisted, Jesuit education was virtually based upon the classics. In 1852 he expressed satisfaction at hearing that Father Stonestreet in Maryland had given over to the Christian Brothers such schools as were not in conformity with the Jesuit Institute, schools, to wit, in which Latin and Greek were not being taught. "It is entirely fit and proper that the various Institutes [religious orders and congregations] devote themselves to their respective specific tasks and do not in their eagerness to accomplish everything prevent themselves from doing the things to which they are called."²⁴

The veteran Father Verhaegen summed up for Father Sopranis in 1861 his views on the problem of the colleges:

In my opinion the ministries of the Society which are of most utility in this country are those in which Ours go about various places giving the

²³ De Coen à Beckx, June 1, 1860 (AA)

²⁴ Roothaan ad Stonestreet, October 4, 1852 (AA) In general Roothaan wished the Society of the United States to develop along the same lines as the Society in Europe. "I desire that in all things the Society assume the same form and proceed in the same manner as in Europe, as far as circumstances will permit, let nothing new be introduced" Roothaan à De Theux, May 10, 1834 (AA)

Spiritual Exercises to the laity, hearing confessions, confirming Catholics by various devices in the Faith and bringing non-Catholics into the bosom of the Church. It does not seem to me in this present state of the Vice-Province that the number of the colleges ought to be increased, and I judge that day-colleges ought to be preferred to boarding-schools. Let there be only one boarding-school in the whole Vice-Province, but that one excellently organized, and in the cities let there be day-schools only. As to the location of the single boarding-school, I do not think that anything regarding it can or ought to be determined before the end of the deplorable civil war which undoubtedly will change many things from what they are now. If our teachers do their work properly, if the Sodalties are well managed, if there are Fathers to give due instruction to the students and instruct them often in words that breathe the love of God, if the frequent use of the sacraments is commended earnestly and with success, it seems to me that all the [necessary] means are provided for instilling morality and piety into the students. I believe that both in the boarding-schools and the colleges, in view of the character and circumstances of the people of this region, especially the Catholics, both the classical and commercial course ought to be retained and I think it expedient that the two courses, as far as possible, be taught by the same professors. Schools in which only the commercial course is taught seem to me to be of the greatest utility nor do I see any work in which coadjutor-brothers who have an aptitude for teaching could be better employed under the direction of some one of the Fathers. These schools, if they are well conducted, promote the greater glory of God among the youth of this country with more efficacy perhaps than even the colleges²⁵

Two things especially which Verhaegen touches on in his letter, the boarding-school and the so-called commercial course, were giving rise at this time to discussion in Jesuit domestic circles. At the beginning of the sixties, to which period the letter belongs, the Jesuits of the Middle West were conducting two boarding-schools, St. Louis and Bardstown, not to mention the two schools among the Potawatomí and Osage. Probably the prevailing opinion in regard to this type of school, the *convictus* of Jesuit educational history, was that it scarcely repaid in its net results the trouble expended upon it and was in fact to be regarded as a necessary evil, seeing that it could not be dispensed with altogether. As Father Verhaegen expressed it, day-schools were to be preferred to boarding-schools. This judgment, however, was not applicable to the Indian schools, which perforce had to lodge the boys during the period of their studies if any impression at all was to be made upon them. Notwithstanding the skepticism that showed itself thus early in regard to its utility in meeting the scholastic and moral ends of education, the boarding-school successfully held its ground and in 1930 the Missouri Province alone was conducting three schools of

²⁵ Verhaegen ad Sopranis, June 5, 1861 (AA).

this sort, all with an honorable record of educational service behind them.

An anonymous correspondent writing at the same time as Father Verhaegen suggested that the vice-province should have a boarding-school which offered only the classical course to the exclusion of others. Though the necessity of providing opportunities of education for such students as were not ready for one reason or another to pursue the standard classical course made itself felt from the very beginning at St. Louis and elsewhere, the non-classical courses, commercial or English as they chance to be called, were regarded more or less as intruders into the curriculum as indeed they were from the traditional Jesuit viewpoint. Even before the so-called commercial course made its first appearance in the St. Louis University catalogue, the substance of the thing had found a place in the University's scheme of studies. In 1859 Father Druyts was finding that his most teasing problem, that of finding the necessary personnel for carrying on the numerous activities of the vice-province, was due in part to the circumstance that the colleges had to provide a double staff of professors, one for each of the two courses, classical and commercial, and he suggested the expediency of discontinuing the latter course in one or other of the colleges.²⁶ In 1862 Father Sopranis, after conferring on the subject with American superiors, decided on a uniform policy to be followed by Jesuit colleges in the United States in regard to the commercial course. First, such course was to be retained both to meet the wishes of parents and students and to help the colleges along in a financial way. Secondly, it was to be kept entirely apart from the classical course and no Jesuit professors were to be employed in it except for philosophy, which was to be given in English. Thirdly, the commercial students were to be subject in disciplinary matters to the prefect of studies.²⁷

In the event the commercial course succeeded in achieving for itself, at least for a period of years, a recognized place in the curricula of the middlewestern Jesuit colleges and, with the prestige that came from the introduction into it of philosophy and the higher mathematics, became almost a competitor of the classical course itself. But with the elimination in recent years of the more technical features of business education, the commercial course has approximated more and more to the English course so-called, and, in fine, has come to be identified with it.

It is a commonplace of educational history that the Jesuits, and in this they do not differ from Catholic educators generally, lay a major emphasis on the moral and religious training of their students. This

²⁶ Druyts ad Beckx, January 1, 1860 (AA)

²⁷ Sopranis ad Beckx, May 14, 1862 (AA)

obviously is the only logical course for men to pursue who profess to believe that moral and religious issues are paramount in life and that the only really worthwhile pursuit is the pursuit of the realities of faith which eye hath not seen nor ear heard. If it were not for the influence in a spiritual way which they hope to exercise over their students, the Jesuits would not be in the business of education at all. "The purpose which the Society proposes to itself in its schools," says a decree of a general congregation, "is to bring the neighbor to the knowledge and love of God", and it adds that the chief concern of the Jesuit educator ought therefore to be to train the students at once in Christian morality and letters.²⁸

Though in view of the scope of Jesuit education religious instruction is necessarily a highly important feature of the curriculum, in actual practice it has not always received the place of honor which is its due. This condition, as regards Jesuit American schools of the pioneer period, is largely to be accounted for by the presence in them of a large proportion of non-Catholic students, which made it embarrassing to carry on religious instruction freely and in due measure for the benefit of students professing the Catholic faith.²⁹ Father Anderledy, the Jesuit General, when a theological student at St. Louis University, 1848-1849, noted what he thought was a neglect of proper catechetical instruction for the benefit of the student-body and regretted that, being yet engaged in his studies, he could not proffer his services to help supply the need. As to the general religious tone prevailing in the schools, reports varied, being sometimes encouraging and sometimes less so. Father Gleizal wrote in 1854: "One notices a good spirit prevailing everywhere among our students and in the case of a good many a spirit of piety and the reception of the sacraments."³⁰ Two years later the same father commented on the excellent morale of his novices. That they are such, he asserted, "they owe undoubtedly to the education which they received in our colleges."³¹ On the other hand, thirteen years later, in 1869, Father Coosemans reported a complaint that piety in the St. Louis student-body did not measure up to standard. "The last retreat, by Father Van Goch, produced a very good effect, but did not entirely remedy this defect."³² Piety in the sense of a rather open expression

²⁸ "Siquidem finis quem Societas sibi in scholis suis proponit est proximum ad Dei cognitionem atque amorem adducere, haec in juventute instituenda sit prima Nostrorum cura ut discipuli una cum litteris mores Christianis dignos hauriant" *Epitome Instituti S J* (1924), p 164

²⁹ Friedrich ad Beckx, March 21, 1849 (AA) But cf Chap X, § 3

³⁰ Gleizal à Beckx, January 20, 1854 (AA).

³¹ Gleizal à Beckx, February 6, 1856 (AA)

³² Coosemans à Beckx, March 4, 1869 (AA)

of religious earnestness and fervor, however desirable this may be, is not a phenomenon that can be evoked at will, correct ethical conduct and compliance with peremptory Christian duties are matters that can be required of a student-body with more insistence and there is no evidence that the midwestern Jesuit colleges were falling short of their duty in this regard.

In connection with the religious training of the students a question was raised in the early fifties which caused a momentary flurry in Catholic academic circles. This was the alleged evil influence of the study of the pagan classics. The Abbé Gaume published in 1851 his famous polemic, *Le Ver Rongeur*, in which he assailed classical education as the "canker-worm" of modern society, and proposed that it be displaced in Catholic colleges in favor of an education based on the writings of the Fathers of the Church and other Christian authors. The Jesuits and other Catholic educators with them took up the defence of the classics, maintaining that the morals of the students were adequately safeguarded by the use of specially prepared and expurgated texts of the pagan authors. An echo of the controversy is caught in a letter of Father Murphy written in reply to one from Father Roothaan on the necessity of providing suitable editions of the classics for the students.

The work of the Abbé Gaume is known [to me] only through the criticism, as just as it is severe, of the *Catholic Review* of Boston. Here [in the United States] you find Ovid and Phaedrus expurgated. Our Fathers of old did not tamper with Vergil, as to Juvenal and Terence, one can get along without them altogether. We have, then, only to get up Horace in order to speak with propriety. The Greek prose-writers, and in the form you would like to have them, can be obtained here as in Europe. In this connection I can say that I have never met a single American pupil who read one line of Latin without being obliged to do so by his professor. Father Jourdan, whom we saw here lately, says as much. It is possible it may be otherwise at Georgetown and Worcester [Holy Cross], where studies are on a better basis. It will be easy to come to an understanding among ourselves in regard to getting suitable editions. As to English authors we shall do every thing possible to diminish the evil, it is all we can effect.³³

Another problem was that created by the presence of large numbers of non-Catholic students especially in the boarding-schools. The pioneer Jesuit colleges of the West, as the Jesuit colleges of today, placed no restrictions as to religious belief on their registrants. All, Catholics and non-Catholics alike, who met the requirements of good moral char-

³³ Murphy à Beckx, 1860 (?). (AA). The Gaume controversy is set forth in Joseph Burnichon, S. J., *La Compagnie de Jésus en France Histoire d'un Siècle, 1814-1914* (Paris, 1922), 4 25-37.

acter and academic fitness were admitted into the classes. But in the pioneer period the proportion of non-Catholic students in the high schools and arts colleges was often far in excess of what it ordinarily is today. This condition was due partly to the existing scarcity of colleges of any kind, so that Catholic institutions were freely patronized by students of all denominations, partly, it would seem, to the desire of Protestant parents to entrust the education of their sons to Catholic teachers. While students other than Catholic were thus eligible for admission, it was felt at the same time by managers of the Jesuit colleges that too large a proportion of this class of registrants reacted unfavorably on the religious morale of the Catholic students. Father Verhaegen declared in 1858 that the Protestant boys "drank in heresy with their mothers' milk" and later spread it among their school-companions, while Father Coosemans in 1864 attributed a marked falling off in religious piety among the students of St. Louis University to the large admixture of Protestants. As a result of this experience efforts were sometimes made to restrict the number of non-Catholic students, as in St. Louis in 1851, when they counted only ten out of one hundred and thirty-five boarders. But in 1865 they actually outnumbered the Catholic students so that a decision was reached during the course of the year to admit no more students who were not of the Church. Father Coosemans, commenting on the situation, said it was a common one in Catholic colleges generally throughout the country, and from one viewpoint was to be accounted a good result of the Civil War, indicating as it did the favorable attitude of Protestant parents towards Catholic schools. "As a result many [of the non-Catholic students] are converted while nearly all leave college with favorable impressions of our holy religion. Back at home they become our defenders against those who calumniate us."³⁴ In April, 1865, the majority of the first division boarders at St. Louis were, so it was reported, non-Catholics but withal "well disposed." Protestantism was said to have lost much ground in consequence of the Civil War. "Conversions to the Church were frequent and such as were prevented by human respect from becoming Catholics showed their good disposition by sending their children to Catholic schools." In the session 1864-1865 students of St. Louis University received into the Catholic Church numbered ten. "The rest lose their prejudices against our holy religion." A St. Louis University alumnus, with all his children, one excepted, was baptized (*c.* 1864). He gave as chief reason for his conversion the favorable impression he had received of the Catholic Church while a student at the University.

As to the net results achieved by Catholic college education in the

³⁴ Coosemans à Beckx, March 11, 1864 (AA).

United States in the early and middle decades of the last century, some difference of opinion asserted itself for a while in Jesuit circles. In a previous chapter note was taken of the eagerness of many among the pioneer middlewestern Jesuits for the parochial ministry and of their enthusiasm for the parish missions preached by Father Weninger among the Germans and by Father Damen among the English-speaking Catholics of the country. To this group the parishes and parish missions were everything and the colleges a factor of only secondary importance in the work of the vice-province. In their view the substantial fruits of Jesuit activity and zeal were being garnered in the parishes and the missions, not in the colleges. The ideal occupation was to work directly upon souls in the ministry, not indirectly, as must to a large extent be done within the four walls of a class-room. Father Verhaegen, to recall his view of the situation, declared that the most profitable of all employments for a Jesuit was to go around the country preaching sermons and recovering lost sheep for the fold. "We must, indeed," declared Father Weninger in 1858, "do one thing and not omit the other. Colleges are necessary and very excellent things, but they are not what is chiefly and much less what is exclusively needed in the present condition of things in this country."³⁵ But it was not merely a question which of the two outlets of apostolic enterprise and zeal, the sacred ministry or education, was of relatively greater importance. The indictment was made against the colleges that their output, the students who had enjoyed the advantages of religious training which they offered, did not to a surprising extent prove themselves practical Catholics in later life. Moreover, the colleges were turning out few candidates for the priesthood and the religious orders, the Jesuit novitiate at Florissant, to mention one instance, receiving a disproportionately small quota of its recruits from this quarter. Said Father De Smet in 1856 "They [the colleges] are no doubt necessary and one would have to create them if they did not exist, yet such is the moral situation of the country that few of the young men who leave them persevere in the holy practices of religion. I have heard this observation many times from the mouths of Bishops."³⁶ A few years before a report to the

³⁵ Weninger ad Beckx, May, 1858 (AA)

³⁶ De Smet à Beckx, May 16, 1856 (AA) Archbishop Kenrick of St. Louis expressed himself on the matter in 1843 "There is also another subject not, however, connected with the first spoken of, which ought to become matter of our deliberation [at the impending council of Baltimore] I allude to our colleges, which I have long since regarded as anything but useful to religion. The Catholics appear to lose rather than gain by frequenting such academies, and as for the protestants, they lose if you will some prejudices but they are rarely otherwise benefited by a residence in our colleges." Kenrick to Purcell, March 27, 1843 (I) Kenrick appears to have later held a more favorable view regarding the results

same effect had reached Father Roothaan.³⁷ Father Murphy, always a staunch friend of the colleges, communicated to the General in April, 1853, his own view of the situation

I admit that our colleges are not doing all the good which one might desire, but I believe that the fault is not in the colleges, but in the circumstances in which the majority of our pupils find themselves at their entrance into the world, scattered as they are over a vast continent, without support, without direction, often without church or priest. And yet without the colleges where would our poor youth be and what would become of the service and support which the colleges lend to religion? As to our own men, where would they be trained before throwing themselves into the ministry? . . . Such as they are, the colleges do a great deal of good. Everyone agrees that our churches in the towns do immense good. I believe before God that the proximity of the college helps a great deal to this end. Meantime the Society's position is made more secure and common life is maintained. Considering the position in which we are, we are doing as much for the churches as the colleges in France [are doing] and, I should think, more than those of England.³⁸

Father Murphy's apologia for the American Jesuit college rested on solid ground. After all, none of the advocates of ministerial work in preference to educational activities called into question the need of Catholic colleges. As has been seen, Father Weninger pronounced them "very excellent things" and Father De Smet declared that "one would have to create them if they did not exist." Archbishop Kenrick, who wrote unfavorably of the colleges in 1843, a few years later invited the Fathers of the Holy Cross to open one in St. Louis while Father Damen in later life revised his one-time unfavorable opinion of the colleges as he found out in his missionary rounds that one of their products was often an exemplary parishioner and the pastor's right-

of Catholic college education in the United States. His predecessor in the see of St. Louis, Rosati, wrote as early as 1830 on the subject of Catholic colleges: "All the Bishops would consider themselves happy to have them [colleges]. Moreover, what an amount of good is not done in these colleges. Therein Catholic young people are brought up in the practice of their religion, which they would not even know about if they were sent to protestant schools, therein, too, protestant children lose the prejudices they are inspired with against Catholics, Priests, the Church, and acquire sentiments of esteem and respect for persons whom they have come to know with intimacy. Some of them become Catholics with the permission of their parents and those who do not will always be the friends of the Catholic clergy." Rosati à Salhorgne, April 23, 1830. Kenrick Seminary Archives. Father Salhorgne was Superior General of the Congregation of the Missions, to which Bishop Rosati belonged.

³⁷ _____ ad Roothaan, November 5, 1852 (AA)

³⁸ Murphy à Roothaan, April, 1853 (AA)

hand man.³⁹ Finally, vocations from Catholic colleges to the priesthood, secular and religious, are no longer a rarity but have multiplied with the years

³⁹ *WL*, 12 63