THE ARISTOTELIAN–THOMISTIC CONCEPT OF EDUCATION

ONE of the main problems in this kind of meeting is to have a very definite topic, and since the subject "The Aristotelian-Thomistic Concept of Education" is very broad, the special point I have chosen is an answer to the following question: "How can the different moral and intellectual habits be integrated to give a perfect man?" In the last years a quest for integration in educational problems has given many tentative answers to this basic aspect of our culture and I shall try to present the solution advanced by Aristotle and St. Thomas. Their solution surely shall be quite different from that of modern educators, but to my mind it is the most complete, and perfectly according to the principles of human nature although its adoption in our higher institutes of learning would demand radical changes. My contention is not that Aristotle and St. Thomas have said the last word on the problem. They have given the basic and eternal principles of the solution, but nevertheless many points have not been solved, for the very simple reason that at their time they could not foresee accurately the diverse contingencies which were to befall humanity in the course of the centuries. We must therefore keep an eye on the past, but on the other hand we should strive to correct the faults of modern education for the coming generations. It would be a very serious mistake to effect a complete break with the past because the principles set forth by Aristotle and St. Thomas are perpetually true being based on the exigencies of human nature. It is quite obvious that education may admit of a certain fluxibility since humanity itself is realized differently at different times, and in different historical settings; it is also

* Paper delivered at the New England Conference of the American Catholic Philosophical Association, April 27, 1946. (Editor's note.)

perfectly true that it remains one and the same throughout the ages, and so we must conclude that education must admit a certain fixity and unity.

It is generally conceded that education is concerned with the formation of habits. To those already familiar with thomistic thought it is readily understood that "habit" is not any mechanical aptitude acquired by the repetition of the act. For Aristotle the word "hexis" [1] and the corresponding "habitus" for St. Thomas imply the perfection of a human faculty.[2] St. Thomas maintains that the intellect and the will are the only faculties directly and immediately capable of acquiring habits.[3] Concerning the sense-appetite and the interior senses he holds that they can possess habits—though in a secondary sense—and only in so far as they are dependent on the superior faculties.[4] The exterior senses are utterly incapable of acquiring habits.[5] Although both Aristotle and St. Thomas insist very strongly on the formation of habits it should not be construed that habits constitute ends in themselves, habits are ordered to operation, and habits which do not operate imply an imperfection.[6] This is especially true in the moral habits or virtues where the lack of operation at the proper moment and in the proper circumstances is precisely a lack of moral perfection.[7] So according to Aristotle and St. Thomas we must hold that habits are the state of perfection with which a human faculty is endowed, and therefore is rendered capable of operating in a perfect way.[8]

Since all strictly human activity is derived from the intellect

[1] Cf. *Met.*, lib. 5, c. 20, 1022 b 10.
[2] *Com. in Met.*, lib. 5, lect. 20, no. 1064 (ed. Cathala).
[3] *Sum. Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 50, art. 3c.
[4] *Sum. Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 50, art. 3 ad 3um.
[5] *Idem.*
[6] *Sum. Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 49, art. 3c.
[7] *Sum. Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 47, art. 2c.
[8] *Sum. Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 49, art. 4c.

and the will, the primary distinction of habits shall be taken from the faculty which possesses a certain habit; this gives us the primary division of intellectual habits—habits which are perfections of the intellect; and moral habits—habits which are perfections of the will. Moreover we should keep in mind that the will is essentially subordinated to the intellect, and we may infer from that principle that the intellectual habits shall be superior to the moral habits, and the moral habits shall presuppose the possession of the intellectual habits, especially the speculative sciences, as we shall endeavor to demonstrate later on. This primary distinction of habits in intellectual and moral habits must be completed by the division acording to the formal object of each, and again the different habits may be grouped into four main categories which correspond to the four human activities in which the intellect and the will take part, as noted by St. Thomas in his Commentary on the Ethics no. 1 and 2. Aristotle in the Metaphysics enumerates three orders of intellectual activity: " . . . every intellectual activity is either practical, productive, or speculative "; [9] but St. Thomas subdivides the productive into two parts namely the liberal arts, and the mechanical arts or what is commonly called " techniques." [10] According to Aristotle and St. Thomas we may divide the different habits in the following way,—this division is based primarily on the object:

A. Intellectual habits whose function is to give perfection to the intellect itself. The intellectual habits may then be subdivided as follows:

   1. Intellectual habits whose object implies necessity, and in this case we have " habitus principiorum "; science which is subdivided in Natural Philosophy and mathematics; and wisdom which is metaphysics.

[9] *Met.*, lib. 6, ch. 1, 1025 b 25.
[10] *Com. St. Th. in Eth.*, lib. 1, lect. 1, no. 1 et 2.

2. Intellectual habits whose object does not imply necessity. This group is again subdivided in the following fashion:
   (a) In the practical order: prudence
   (b) In the productive order: art. Art is manifold and may be ordered as follows:
      (i) the liberal arts, comprising: poetics, rhetoric, dialectics, logic, arithmetic.—Naturally grammar is presupposed to the first four.
      (ii) the mechanical arts which are commonly called the "techniques." They are also called "useful arts" and minister to the material wants of man.

B. Moral habits: namely fortitude, temperance and justice. All these moral habits may be subdivided in many particular virtues.[11]

At first sight all this may seem quite obvious, but before trying to establish a definite order among the habits it might be very useful to have a few explanations concerning the divisions given above:

1. The division between liberal arts and mechanical arts must not be confused with a very common division actually in use: liberal arts, "fine arts," useful arts. "Fine arts" is an expression not used by Aristotle; instead he uses the expression "imitative arts";[12] and in this expression is implied poetry (verse), music, dance, statuary and painting—strange as it may seem architecture is classified among the useful arts, because

[11] The divisions given above should not be considered as an exhaustive and complete classification of habits. The author is fully aware that the problem is only very lightly sketched, and he has given the main divisions as relevant to the general topic treated in this paper.

[12] *Poetics*, 1447 a 16.

the primary purpose of architecture is not "rational enjoyment" [13] in one form or other but the construction of dwelling-places for men or gods. All liberal arts are primarily concerned with the training of the intellect,—and this is also true of the "imitative arts" though in a way quite different from the other liberal arts.

2. Concerning the speculative sciences it must be remarked that the only absolutely speculative habit is metaphysical knowledge. Quite often it is thought that natural philosophy whose subject-matter is "mobile being" is a speculative science, but Aristotle in his book "On the parts of Animals" in the following text establishes an opposition between metaphysics as a purely speculative science, and natural philosophy which in a sense as least is productive, "Howbeit, the method of reasoning in natural science and also the mode of necessity itself is not the same as in the theoretical sciences." [14] It is speculative since it considers what exists, still it is concerned with a state of becoming in the universe,—becoming according to a purpose; and in this sense it may be assimilated to the productive habits.

3. In the classification of habits as given above one might remark that there is not any mention of the moral sciences. It should not be concluded that Aristotle did not possess any knowledge of these sciences; his ethical and political treatises bear evidence to the contrary; but it simply means that ethics or what he calls individual morality is subordinated or "subalternated" to that part of natural philosophy called psychology. Concerning political science—which for Aristotle is the highest moral science—it is my contention that in the works of Aristotle it is still in a rudimentary stage.[15] Even now we

[13] *Met.*, 982 b 23. [14] *On the Parts of animals*, 640 a 1 sqq..

[15] By the expression "rudimentary stage" it is simply meant that many political problems were unknown to Aristotle since political society at his time had not achieved a very great development. His principles are true and should be applied to modern situations v. g. rights of minorities, nationalism, the sovereignty of states etc., etc.

might say that political science is at its beginning, and it shall remain in that state until we obtain more exact knowledge concerning the social being or social entity as such. A moral science relating to the individual could not be developed before we had obtained a clear and precise notion concerning the nature of man; and the same problem confronts political science.

4. Concerning history there is very little said in the works of Aristotle. In his work "On the Soul" he examines the different opinions set forth by his predecesors about the soul and he says "We must take with us for comparison the theories expounded by our predecessors, in order that we may adopt those which are well stated, and be on our guard against any which are unsatisfactory." [16] It seems that Aristotle's theory of history would consider history as an auxiliary knowledge, v. g. history of philosophy as subservient to philosophy, so that the philosopher may consider the different opinions of his predecessors, and that he may choose what is true or at least partially true, and reject what is false. The case is similar in the other branches of human activity, and history may in that way be subservient to art, science, prudence and so forth as one may readily see by studying his different works.

After having briefly considered the different orders of human activity, namely the productive, the practical, and the speculative, we may ask ourselves which one should predominate in Aristotelian and Thomistic education. On the solution to this problem rests the organization and the integration of the curriculum as we shall explain later on. The solution accepted by both Aristotle and St. Thomas is that speculative knowledge is the highest form of human achievement. Many modern educators reject this thesis, either openly or indirectly, and maintain that education should be mainly and primarily practical, or productive in one way or other. Let us first of all explain

[16] *On the Soul*, 403 a 20.

what is meant by speculative knowledge. By speculative knowledge Aristotle understands knowledge whose object or purpose is the possession of truth, "Moreover philosophy is rightly called a knowledge of truth. The object of theoretic knowledge is truth, while that of practical knowledge is action." [17] St. Thomas holds exactly the same view in his commentary on the same passage.[18] And again both Aristotle and St. Thomas maintain that the ultimate happiness that man can attain in this life is the posssession of metaphysics which is the highest speculative habit.[19] We shall now explain the primacy of speculative knowledge according to the principles of Aristotle and St. Thomas.

In the tenth book of Ethics we may examine the following propositions: "And that happiness consists in speculation has been said already, and this is according to what we have previously established and according to the truth. Speculation is the best form of operation (since among all the faculties in man, the intellect is the highest, and its object is the most noble).[20] And in the following lines he shows that speculation is an end in itself, that it involves leisure, and finally he affirms that speculation is the activity of what is divine in man: "Such a life shall be above man, in the speculative life man does not live according to his nature, but acording to what is divine in him. In so far is the speculative life above his composite nature, in so far does it surpass the activities of the other virtues. Consequently if the intellect in comparison to man is divine, so is the operation according to this divine principle." [21] And finally: "It follows that the activity of God is speculation, and in man that operation that is most similar to the divine operation constitutes happiness." [22] In his commentaries on the preceeding texts of Aristotle, St. Thomas accepts this teaching of the Greek

[17] *Met.*, 993 b 20.
[18] *Com. St. Th. in Met.*, lib. 2, lect. 2, no. 289-290.
[19] *Qu. Disp. de Anima*, art. 16c.
[20] *Ethics*, lib. 10, 1177 a 20.
[21] *Ethics*, 1177 b 28.
[22] *Ethics*, 1178 b 20.

philosopher.[23] In the sixth book of Ethics Aristotle has a very decisive text: "It would be absurd if one were to think that Political Science or Prudence is the highest form of knowledge, for man is not the highest thing in the world." [24] This assertion is based on the fact that all intellectual activity is primarily determined by its object, and the more perfect is the object the more so is the knowledge in its essential characteristics, though accidentally it may be vague and lacking precision,—but this defect must be attributed to the knowing-subject, and not to the object itself. To understand this more profoundly we must always keep in mind that through knowledge man becomes all things, as Aristotle says in his work "On the Soul," [25] but by the knowledge of things inferior to himself he is not brought to a higher level, on the contrary the fullness of human nature is accomplished by its cognitive assimilation of the Supreme Being. If man were the most perfect being in the universe, self-knowledge, prudence, and political knowledge would be the highest forms of intellectual activity; and a man-centered development of personality would be his purpose in life. Aristotle has clearly seen that it can not be so, and by refusing to admit the primacy of practical and productive knowledge he has shown that human perfection lies in something superhuman which is assimilated by the intellect.

Furthermore there is another aspect to this problem. It should be kept in mind that the human intellect is the least perfect of all intellects,—in fact it is so weak that it is unable to function perfectly without the help of the sense-faculties, and through the help of the active intellect the object must be produced in a state of intelligibility; this imperfection of man's intellect manifests itself in its utter passivity. It is quite true that man's intellect has some active functions in art (productive knowledge), and in prudence (practical knowledge) but it must

[23] *Com. in Ethi.*, lib. 10, no. 2087-2105-2111-2125.
[24] *Ethics*, 1141 a 20. [25] *On the Soul*, 431 b 21.

be remembered that art only imitates nature and presupposes the knowledge of nature; so also in prudence there is a practical direction given to our actions but the end towards which prudence is directing our actions has been given by nature, and is already known by speculative knowledge. Man can not decide what shall be his end, this is determined by nature, and by knowing man we know what is man's purpose.

That is why there can not be any dichotomy, or divorce, or separation between speculative knowledge, practical knowledge and productive knowledge. If speculative knowledge were suppressed, or even if it were denied the primacy it must occupy among intellectual activities, the logical outcome of such a state of affairs would be subjectivism in morality, and subjectivism in art, because in that hypothesis there would not be any intellect superior to man's to guide him to his destiny. Subjectivism in any form, precisely implies this supremacy of the human intellect, which then becomes essentially active and productive, and maker of law and morality. This is the complete destruction of all objective regulation. All this may seem quite remote from our fundamental problem of education, but it is not beside the point. If our education is not mainly and primarily speculative, if it does not give objective and immutable principles the only results we may expect shall be subjectivism and intellectual anarchy.

In the past there may have been many reasons why educators have been inclined to neglect speculative knowledge. I do not intend to delve in the more remote causes of this tendency, but at least we may say that speculation has been very badly understood. I shall now attempt to explain why speculation has been so grossly neglected; there seem to be two causes, one concerning metaphysics, the other natural philosophy. When we mention metaphysics we seem to bring back some mummified science which is supposed to be dead, at least for the last centuries. I admit that the value of metaphysics as taught in many in-

stances, is practically nil, and one of the main reasons is that metaphysics has been separated from what we commonly call "theodicy," and after a while "theodicy" has practically become an independent science. "Theodicy" and metaphysics are not two sciences, but "theodicy" is but the conclusion of metaphysics and natural philosophy; Aristotle held so strongly to the unity of metaphysics and "theodicy" that he calls metaphysics "theology." [26] No one in his right mind would admit that it is useless to prove the existence of a Supreme Being,—and that is precisely the prime function and purpose of metaphysics,—to prove the existence of a Supreme Being and to deduce the attributes, and to show his relationship to other beings. Metaphysics is not a science that leads nowhere. Moreover, if epistemology were restored to metaphysics, and if it were presented as a defense of metaphysical principles which can not be defended by any superior science,—since there is no higher science in the natural order—then one would again understand the importance of studying this science which is at the basis of knowledge. If metaphysics has become sterile it is simply because it has been separated from its purpose and even from its basic principles.

Concerning natural philosophy I think that the situation is even worse. The introduction of the Wolffian classification of the sciences has been very harmful to natural philosophy, since it brought about a tendency to absorb natural philosophy in metaphysics.[27] Furthermore there has been a tendency to consider what is commonly called "psychology" and "cosmology" as two distinct sciences; and certain authors have even pretended that the psychology of the human soul is a metaphysical consideration. All this is plainly contradictory to the teachings of Aristotle and St. Thomas. But the main trouble in natural philosophy is that modern textbooks have simply omitted the

[26] *Met.*, 1026 a 18.

[27] Christian Wolff "Logica" discursus preliminaris c. 3.

most important parts of natural philosophy and to come down to details, the omission of finality in nature as contained in the second book of "Physics" of Aristotle has given a totally wrong perspective to this science. In the second book of Physics, Aristotle develops this doctrine of the final cause, and it is only by its teleological aspect that natural philosophy can be understood. Strange as it may seem, some modern thomists who are considered absolutely faithful to Aristotle and St. Thomas are guilty of this fault, v. g. Gredt, whose textbook is among the best. The result of this omission is a materialistic view of the universe, and moreover this implies a static outlook which is absolutely opposed to St. Thomas and Aristotle's teachings. And finally many modern thomists have not been able to explain satisfactorily the relationship between natural philosophy and the sciences, and that because they have not understood the basic principles of thomism. To my mind this failure has been one of the greatest tragedies of philosophy for the last centuries, and from this misunderstanding has sprung the opposition so common between philosophers and scientists. Modern thomists seem to have an idealistic conception of natural philosophy, they seem to think that universal or abstract knowledge of material things is more perfect than concrete or particular knowledge. This is not according to Aristotelian and Thomistic teaching, and S. Thomas in the Disputed Question "De Veritate" says that it is not sufficient to know universal natures, but using universal nature as a medium we must tend to the knowledge of the particulars. "Dummodo cognitio nostra usque ad propria reducatur." [28] This tendency to the knowledge of the particulars is the domain of the sciences. Natural philosophy as ordinarily presented is an incomplete science which must be completed necessarily by experimental knowledge. There is no opposition between the two,—they have the same purpose,

[28] *Qu. Disp. De veritate,* qu. 8, art. 10, ad 1um.

that is primarily to explain the universe, and secondarily the sciences may be subservient to the mechanical arts. Naturally the methods of science shall not be the same as those of philosophy, because the immediate subject is not the same, but the subject of science is but the concretion or limitation of universal nature. Wolff never understood those points, and the thomists who have adopted the Wolffian classification of sciences never did understand it either; in certain cases we meet with thomistic authors who seem to think that natural philosophy is but some kind of metaphysical science, but that is wrong. Naturally if we understand natural philosophy in a distorted fashion there is a fair explanation why speculation has been neglected, it had become a stultified form of knowledge; but if it is understood as it should be according to Aristotle and St. Thomas it retains all its interest, leads us to God, to his Divine Providence, shows the place of man in the universe, restores the explanation of " experimental sciences " to its proper principle without having recourse to any dichotomy as usually presented by modern exponents of thomism. Entire sections of the physical works of Aristotle have been omitted or badly understood and so we have lost the principles which solve the modern scientific problems.

It is only through speculative science that we may arrive at an orderly and rational explanation of the universe, because for us the universe is not an object of art but of knowledge, since our intellect is not the cause of things but merely strives to know them as they are.

Returning to our division proposed at the beginning; liberal arts, mechanical arts, moral habits, and intellectual habits we may draw a few conclusions concerning thomistic education:

1. It is quite generally admitted by thomists that logic must be possesed before any philosophical science may be acquired. For a beginner, logic must be studied more as an art and an

instrument to philosophy than as a science in itself. Being considered acording to this viewpoint, logic is primarily concerned with the training-value of the intellect.[29] This corresponds to the teaching of St. Thomas in his commentary on the 6th Book of Ethics, lect. 7, no. 1211. Prior to logic the students must have some knowledge of dialectics and rhetoric. Naturally an adequate knowledge of grammar is presupposed to all this, since logic treats of terms, propositions, syllogisms, etc. Epistemology must not be studied in a course of elementary logic since it presupposes "psychology."

To my mind the part played by "poetics" in our modern education is not sufficiently important, since there are many whose primary intellectual activity shall be achieved through poetical medium,—by the expression "poetical medium" I mean the modern counterparts of Aristotelian works of art, namely the stage-play, the film, and the novel. Even though I am not preoccupied with the moral and instructive values of these modern forms of art,—since the finality of art as such is not moral education or instruction, but some form of "rational enjoyment,"—we must admit that a refinement of taste capable of providing a sane form of "rational enjoyment" must be developed. If we fail in this duty an entire stratum of our society will search for childish pleasure or pure physical relaxation which is good in itself but has hardly any intellectual value of its own.

2. As regards science the problem is somewhat more complicated. We may say that science may be studied according to two different patterns:

(a) independently of philosophy, and in this case the study of science may produce excellent technicians, but then it is impossible to integrate science to a higher learning, and science remains separated from philosophy. This is a very dangerous

[29] *Com. in De Trin. Boethii*, qu. 5, art. 1 ad 2.

position and easily develops a materialistic tendency. If science is studied in this way it must be understood by the student that his study of science is essentially incomplete. This separation of science and philosophy has been the modern position. It may be very difficult to have all students follow a course of natural philosophy,—at times it may be almost impossible,—but in that case it must be realized that such a way of doing is simply tolerated and is not an ideal arrangement in itself.

(b) As continuing natural philosophy and this is the way in which science should be studied to become integrated to philosophy. In this case the student is able to understand that a particular science is but a concrete and limited application of a more universal principle, and by the very fact he is protected against all materialistic outlook.

3. It should be remembered that it is absolutely impossible to learn ethics in a scientific way if beforehand the student does not possess a general notion of psychology; and furthermore it is absolutely impossible to understand psychology without general natural philosophy, since the basic principles of all living beings are "body and soul"; and "body and soul" are but an application of the general principles of matter and form which are the two intrinsic and essential principles of all composite beings.

4. It is impossible to arive at the knowledge of the existence of God through natural means without natural philosophy and metaphysics. Any education which excludes these two sciences from its program is atheistic. Against this conclusion it may be objected that students have faith in God, so they are not atheists. This may be true of some students, while others haven't any faith at all. Moreover those who have faith and believe in a Supreme Being must be capable of defending this faith through rational principles, otherwise they will conclude that there is an opposition between faith and reason. Moreover

an education without God destroys the basis of ethics and morality since it destroys natural law, and eternal law. There may remain a vague notion of God, a "feeling," a "sense of human decency" or anything of the kind, but it is not scientific and rational.

5. Thomistic education is not only an intellectual education, it is integral and aims at a perfect man. Since man is not a pure subsistent intellect, he has other faculties which must be trained, namely the sense-appetite and the will. Both these faculties are blind-faculties, they do not of themselves possess knowledge, they can not judge right or wrong, they are inclined to extremes and here again the intellect using the general principles set forth by ethics must decide what must be done in this particular instance. This is the function of prudence which judges the right medium at the right moment, and at the proper circumstances, and commands to follow the right decision. Prudence is what we may call a complex virtue; it is partly intellectual since it comprises acts of memory, understanding, docility, shrewdness and reason; it is partly a moral virtue since it has an imperative function, and dictates the right medium in matters of temperance and fortitude. Thomism avoids the teachings of extreme intellectualism which pretends that virtue is simply knowledge; thomism maintains that the principles of virtues are acquired through science, though virtue itself is acquired by the repetition of the acts, and not simply by knowing what is right and what is wrong.

6. During the past centuries, and especially during the last decades there has been an ever-increasing development of the mechanical arts, and by this expression I mean all the different crafts and techniques which help man in his material wants. Thomists approve of all this progress, but it must be reminded that however great have been our achievements in this field, it still remains true that they constitute the inferior level of

human culture, since the perfection of an intellectual habit is measured by its object. Moreover the material productions of modern technological advancements must be used for a good purpose, that is according to the dictates of a true objective morality. It is very unfortunate that our material advancements have not been paralleled by a concomitant practice of justice,—in fact it could not be otherwise since we had rejected all objective morality and substituted the principles that " might makes right," or " business is business," or again the principles of " rugged individualism " without any fair consideration for the opponent or the inferior. That is why a truly Aristotelian-Thomistic education must stress the virtue of justice, both individual and social, in all its implications, since it understands that the products of human activity must be made, organized, distributed, used for the welfare of the individual and for the common good. And this is the function of the virtue of justice. A man may be a good technician, an excellent artist, and still be a barbarian and he shall remain a barbarian if he does not use his proficiency and skill for the good of man, and this shall be achieved through prudence and justice. We have seen excellent scientists very advanced in their particular field, but who used their skill for wrong purposes. That is why according to St. Thomas and Aristotle if one does not possess prudence and justice he should not be entrusted with anything he may use aaginst his own welfare and against the common good,—he is not a bad artist, or a bad scientist because he does not act according to the principles of morality,—but because he can not unite his artistic and mechanical abilities with prudence and justice he has failed to integrate his intellectual productive habits with the moral habits.

A similar situation exists in the political field. For Aristotle and St. Thomas political science and political prudence are the noblest forms of moral activity as St. Thomas says in his Prologue to his Commentary on Aristotle's Politics, while nowa-

days political science has become an art of compromising, and the scientific character of political science has been replaced by propaganda, vague slogans, and what not; and moreover political prudence has become mere shrewdness, functioning independently of the common good. In this field the problem is not so much to inject moral considerations in politics, but to understand that political activity is essentially moral activity and to act accordingly. As Aristotle and St. Thomas say Ethics is subordinated to Political Science and not vice-versa; [30] and according to both no one who does not possess political science and political prudence should mingle in social affairs, and he who does not possess political prudence at all should not be a citizen, since being a citizen supposes a certain perfection in the social domain.[31] All this has become exceedingly important in our modern society since every individual is called upon to fulfill his share in the government through elections; and it may be said that social sciences have a very important part in our modern curriculum, but it must be stressed that this is essentially a moral problem of the highest order,—the principles are acquired by the study of the social sciences, but the practice demands a sound personal prudence and an honest life according to the moral virtues.

We may resume the main characteristics of thomistic education in the following way:

(a) Aristotelian-thomistic education is essentially an integral education, and by this is meant that it is not merely preoccupied with the intellectual advancement of students but is also concerned with the moral formation. Aristotelian-thomistic education rejects the view that instruction and moral formation should be separated, or even that one is possible without the other,—intellectual formation and moral development are but two aspects of one processus of becoming.

[30] *Eth. Nic.*, 1094 a 18, 1095 a 1, 1102 a 17.
[31] *Politics*, 1275 b 19.

(b) It must also be said that Aristotelian-thomistic education is a balanced system of education and by this is meant that it recognizes that the diverse subject-matters in the curriculum should be distributed and organized according to a hierarchical order, and it gives the very principle of this orderly disposition. Modern education as a rule has been deficient in this respect.—it tends to exclusiveness, and becomes one-sided, in this sense at least that one branch is apt to absorb the others and destroy their value. We should not be surprised at this difficulty encountered nowadays, since modern educators have not been capable of finding their limitations, and at times they have been unwilling to admit their shortcomings. Each branch wants to be supreme, and there is no way in modern thought to judge what constitutes one domain of activity superior to another, because fundamental theses as the nature of man, natural law, the existence of God, finality in nature and other universal truths have been abandoned. Naturally it is quite impossible for all students to study all the diverse sciences, but each must recognize that he must admit some form of limitation; the technician must understand that his activity in many cases is subject to moral law, moreover the moralist must admit that his science is dependent on natural philosophy and metaphysics, and the metaphysician,—though his science is the highest in the natural order,—must acknowledge that he is subject to error as everyone else.

(c) Aristotelian-thomistic education is essentially an intellectual education, and any activity which does not imply intellectual activity is not strictly human. Aristotelian-thomistic education is not primarily an education of the will, of the passions, or of feeling; and though they have their share in human life, they fulfill their function only in so far as they are regulated by the intellect.

(d) Finally Aristotelian-thomistic education is broad-minded,

—it is opened to all advancements, and can absorb and integrate all present and future progress. In this sense it can be said to be soundly "liberal" because the intellect can judge what is necessary and what is contingent. There can not be any compromise on necessary issues, but contingent situations are primarily relevant to prudence.

Time and again in the course of centuries we have abandoned the teachings of Aristotle and St. Thomas, and this is also true in our present age. Moral values have been considered as accidental, speculation has been despised,—though it is the noblest activity,—and we measure civilization and culture in terms of machines, gadgets. We are continually speaking of the "dignity of man" and yet we precisely deny this dignity theoretically by refusing to admit that man has an immortal soul, an immaterial intellect and a will by which he may know and love God and thereby attain his real dignity; practically by killing millions just as we slaughter cattle. According to the sound principles of Aristotle and St. Thomas we must return to a God-centered education which can be the beginning of a real and objective world-order.

Lucien Dufault, O. M. I., L. S. TH.

Oblate Fathers College, Natick, Mass.