

## 2 On the rôle of the schools (1543)

CR XI, 606-18

Oration on the necessity of joining together the schools and the ministry of the Gospel, recited by Doctor Bernhard Ziegler.<sup>1</sup>

At this point custom imposes on me the need to speak of an ecclesiastical topic, and the choice is difficult for many reasons amidst such a multitude of things of the greatest importance; but in the end I have chosen a most ordinary subject-matter, the consideration of which should nevertheless lead to stimulating the study of literature, and confirm us in loving this kind of life more, and in bearing with greater strength the toil of this task. For I wish to speak of the schools of Scriptures, and to show that the schools have always, by God's counsel, been joined to the churches, and that they need to be joined.

Indeed, it is of great delight to me, when I recall to mind all the ages of the Church and the entire chain of history, to see, as if before my eyes, so many luminaries of humankind – Adam, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Joseph, Elias, Elijah and the Apostles. I believe that for you, too, the recalling to mind both of such great men and of the excellent things that they have accomplished is highly enjoyable. And even if, consequently, in the choice of argument I was swayed by the pleasantness of these things, nevertheless the following was the more important reason.

I know that we scholars are not only despised, but also hated. Many believe that our labours are not something necessary for life, but slothful leisure. In fact, they even curse the theologians as 'outcasts' (*katharmata*) and a plague of the state.<sup>2</sup> And I am not as uncouth and inexperienced in human affairs as to believe that by anybody's oration all those who feel that way can be brought to reason. But, nevertheless, that error has to be censured, so that we may understand better the kind of life to which we are called by divine agency, and that we may confirm our minds in this our course, and instil into some good minds, within this gathering of young men listening to us, honourable and, indeed, useful opinions. What more glorious thing can one imagine than that we (although we are by far inferior in teaching, wisdom and virtue) uphold in truth the same duty in the Church of God that those most illustrious men – Noah,

<sup>1</sup> Bernard Ziegler (1496–1556) was then the Professor of Hebrew at the University of Leipzig.

<sup>2</sup> Reading *Rerum* for *Rerem*.

Shem, Abraham, Isaiah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist and the Apostles – upheld?

I do not detract anything from the dignity of any hierarchy, but rather I strive to honour them all, and I recall the saying of Aristotle, who said (with the meaning that many classes and arts are necessary for life): a state is not made up from doctors and doctors, but from doctors and farmers,<sup>3</sup> i.e. from a union of all the arts that God has shown us, so that they may be a protection for life. The glory of those who rule the government is great in every aspect, and that of the soldiers who protect the state by their weapons is no less. Then the farmers, the craftsmen and also the merchants have their own place. God wanted men to be united among themselves by this variety of duties.

But what purpose do all these duties serve? Perhaps some pig from the herd of Epicurus [Horace, *Letters* 1.4. 16] may say: so that, in a quiet life, we may pleurably enjoy its delights, and decay gradually without the hope of immortality, as the innate heat gradually abates. In truth this utterance is full of indecency and villainy. More correctly, men are formed for fellowship to such a degree that the knowledge of God shines in this gathering, and God is praised and invoked, and one is imbued by the other with that doctrine that opens access to eternal joy and to the presence of God. Consider this fellowship of men similar to a school, in which men have to occupy their minds with God and with virtue more than with anything else. The homes of that assembly are the states. And we hold the view that the government – the leaders, the army, the farmers, the craftsmen, in short all the ranks of life – serves this highest work, that is the propagation of doctrine.

Why did David fight his wars abroad? Not in order to be carried into the town on elephants in triumph, but so that, at home, at the temple and in schools, the boys and girls might study the Scriptures, read Moses and hear those who interpret the law and the promises by which God has made Himself manifest. By the weapons of strong men these assemblies in the temples and in the schools are protected, so that the knowledge of God may not be extinguished utterly among men. And yet, few rulers strive for that aim. Julius Caesar fights so that he be not divested of his dignity by the envious, and Anthony wages war so that he can squander other people's money.

<sup>3</sup> This seems to be a paraphrase of the beginning passages of Aristotle's *Politics*, iv.iii: 'every state contains many elements. . . of the common people, some are farmers, traders and some artisans'.

However, in the Church it is proper for all those of good sense to make provision for that most exalted purpose: to establish, to build and to protect states, so that the knowledge of God be spread in them.

Let me add an image, perhaps foolishly taken from a trifling thing – but, on the other hand, there are many small but manifest images of the greatest things. Often when I think about the communal life, when by night the servant goes in front carrying a lantern, it comes to my mind that states are similar to the lantern, and the heavenly teaching to the light. And just as the lantern is of no use in the dark without light, thus the city is a useless mass, if the knowledge of God and the teaching of what is good are destroyed.

Therefore it has to be acknowledged that it is necessary that there be churches and assemblies which praise God and which spread the teaching of His nature and His will far and wide. Only the Cyclopes will dare to deny this. Therefore, even if many – illiterate men – think that, by the guidance of nature, they can comprehend the will of God, nevertheless we in the Church know that God, in His infinite goodness, has disclosed Himself to humankind by certain and manifest evidence, so that He might make plain His hidden will concerning our salvation. He thundered forth the law from heaven, He sent His son and He added evidence – the resurrection of the dead and other acts, of which it is manifest that they are the work of God alone. He also ordered us with a loud voice to listen to His son, saying: ‘This is my beloved son, hear him’ [Luke 9:35]. Therefore the doctrine necessary for the Church is not a wisdom that is understood by the cunning of human wit, but it is the secret will of God, brought forth by His son from the bosom of the eternal Father. God wanted it to be committed to writing right from the beginning, so that its memory could be preserved for all times.

The creation of things is a great and admirable work. However, it is no smaller favour that He disclosed Himself, made Himself known to men and has spoken to us in friendly terms, so as to show that He is moved by concern for humankind. As far as I am concerned, I am moved to think of the goodness of God when I consider the nature of things, adorned by wonderful variety, and suitable for our enjoyment. I am much more strongly moved, though, every time I think of God’s conversations with the Church Fathers and prophets, of the friendly companionship of Christ with the entire people, of the light of the Holy Spirit spread from heaven, and of the conversations of Christ with many after His resurrection. All minds need

to be turned assiduously to the thought of these most excellent things. For, indeed, it is not in vain or without reason that God has disclosed Himself so many times, in such manifest evidence. We do not judge these to be empty spectres, or illusions or games. God performed great and serious things; he wanted to show that He was truly moved by solicitude for our salvation. He wished to pass on to us testimonies both of His voice and of His teaching, in which He bestows upon us the heavenly gifts and the fellowship of His felicity. He did not want the Fathers, the Prophets and the Apostles to rejoice in these friendly conversations any more than He wants all men of all times to rejoice in the doctrine itself. Just as Moses, standing on the rock, saw God before his very eyes in the clear light, thus you should know that, with certainty, He converses with you every time you read those very books of the law, of the Prophets and of the Apostles, which God has consigned to the Church, so that it may hear His voice in perpetuity.

Now I reach the topic that I chose. If God wanted the prophetic and apostolic book to exist forever in the Church, and our minds to be guided by that document, and the understanding of Himself to be intensified, then it is always necessary for schools to be attached to the churches. They would teach the elements of education, and explain and interpret the Word of God. Even though the matter of which I am speaking is hardly doubtful, one still has to speak about it in greater detail, given that education is held in such contempt.

First let us consider the history of all ages and the sequence of all the eras of the Church. You know that in Moses' community the classes of the priests and the Levites were placed by the tabernacle, as it was called, not only in order to sacrifice animals, but much more in order to explain the law to the people, to answer doubting minds and to judge on dogmatic quarrels. Chapter seventeen of Deuteronomy demonstrates this clearly, ordering that all quarrels be taken to the priests, the Levites and to the place of the tabernacle, and that cases be adjudicated not by the whims of those in power, but by divine law [Deuteronomy 17:8–12].

You must not think that these groups of priests were idle, or occupied only with sacrifices. An altogether greater responsibility and a greater burden were imposed on them, namely to be the keepers and interpreters of doctrine, and the judges of the most serious disputes. Their profession comprised education, divine law, history, the classification of time periods, the pattern of the year, by establishing the turning-points from the observation of the

movements of the heavens, the investigation of nature, the medical art and finally music. It was among their foremost duties to report, in good faith, in the public records also the deeds accomplished among God's people, so that a continuous sequence of history existed in the Church. For God wanted all the past times to be known to posterity, so that they might have certain evidence of His doctrine. For God did not want our minds to waver, without knowing of the beginning of the world, the beginning of religion, its spread, its perversions and renewal. Therefore, He wanted a history of all times – short, but containing the highest things – to be always present in the Church, and He preserved it.

What then was that assembly of priests other than a school or an academy, set up in an excellent way? In the approximately 1,500 years until Christ it was the interpreter and keeper of divine teaching. For although often the popes wielded a tyrannical rule, and there were great periods of darkness in regard to doctrine because of the ignorance of priests, nevertheless thereupon, having roused the prophets, God has rekindled the study of virtue and the light of teaching in that school. Indeed, because God promised that He would always be present at that assembly, there have always been some pious and serviceable teachers, who educated the elite of the people. In this matter the succession of great men is worthy of consideration. Just as in the line of battle the next soldier follows in the footsteps of the one before him when he is slain, so the succession not only of high priests but also of prophets has been continuous in that school.

After Samuel Nathan flourished, then Ahijah the Shilonite, under Solomon, and Jeroboam. [I Kings 1:11–15] Then Ananias followed at the time of Asa. Then Elias was roused to prophesy. After having performed many great deeds during a long time, he chose Elijah as his successor before being transported to Heaven by God. For about seventy years Elijah not only directed the principal councils of the realm, but also upheld the task of teaching, when crowds of disciples followed him about in great numbers and with great assiduity. The young Isaiah saw Elijah, who was then in his old age, just as Jeremiah saw Isaiah, Daniel Jeremiah, Zacharias Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah saw Zacharias, and Onias, celebrated in Ecclesiastes, saw Nehemiah.

Some time later there followed the wars of the Maccabees; at that time the priests had already been struggling ambitiously for some time for leadership – after the fashion of the pagans – and they had been scandalously neglecting teaching and discipline. Nevertheless, the priest Mathathias arose,

an upholder of divine law, and many pious men took his side. Some time later there were Simeon and Zacharias, who are mentioned in Luke's Gospel. Then there was John the Baptist and after him Christ, who had the assiduous assembly of the Apostles, began his teaching.

I have discussed a long period of time, in which there is not only the pleasure of remembering so many excellent men, but there are many other things, too, which can delight pious minds. We can see that God cares for His Church, since He later gave it such excellent leaders and made His presence clear by manifest evidence. We can see that the authority of His teaching is confirmed by heavenly deeds. It is most useful to consider these things. Those excellent men of whom I have spoken not only gave judgment in the law-court, but many of them had assemblies of avid listeners, to whom they explained the law and the divine promises – shown clearly by the stories of Elias, Elijah, John the Baptist and Christ.

The Jews uphold the institution of Moses by choosing seventy elders (as it is written in chapter eleven of Numbers [Numbers 11:16]) to remain for all posterity. Later this became the assembly of most learned men that they call the Sanhedrin, having adopted the Greek word *synedrion* [assembly]. Whatever kind of assembly it was, it is obvious that the prophets were surrounded by assiduous crowds of listeners. The Apostles, who had seen this custom preserved by John the Baptist and by Christ, also continued it themselves. It is certain that John the Apostle had his own disciples in Ephesus, who consecrated themselves wholly to teaching. Polycarpus was among them, who went on, for about fifty years, to spread the teaching received from John with success in the Church of Smyrna. His disciple Irenaeus diverted the streams of teaching into Pannonia and Gaul.

It seems that there were such schools wherever there was a larger number of churches – the famous ones of Antioch, Alexandria (where Origen used to teach) and Byzantium (Gregory of Nazianzen writes that Basil taught there). It is certain that in the beginning the seminaries of the clergy were nothing other than assemblies of teachers and students. I believe that even in Germany, before Attila, medium-sized schools were attached to the churches, for Irenaeus and Epiphanius cite evidence for the German churches. This shows that the Gospel was quickly spread in Germany and that some study of the Scriptures was going on in this country. We can also read that Lucius of Cyrene, a disciple of Paul's, first taught the Gospel by the Danube in Augusta Tiberina (which is now called Regensburg). It seems that he arrived there with the Roman troops who were occupying

Raetia. The Gospel illuminated the people of Strasburg and Cologne through the teacher Maternus, a disciple of Peter. Eusebius witnesses that the former was brought up at Arles; Clement of Metz called him to the knowledge of Christ. They say that Marcus, a disciple of Paul, came to Mainz as a young man.<sup>4</sup> The ancient monuments of the church at Passau by the Danube give testimony that he delivered public speeches at Vienna, which was the seat of the bishop of Nuremberg before the foundation of the seminary at Passau.

When such great and wise men came to Germany and Gaul, they undoubtedly had great concern for studies, so that the Gospel would be transmitted to later generations by men who were correctly appointed and properly taught. Later, in barbarous times, when the wars between the Vandals, the Huns and the Franks gave rise to great devastations, the old schools were overturned. Nevertheless, what remnants of the Church there were could not make do without writings.

Therefore seminaries and monasteries were founded again, and when learning was neglected in the seminaries, because they were occupied with affairs of kings and courts, the task of teaching was transferred to the monasteries. When these were burdened with ceremonies, they could not at the same time sustain the tedious and difficult task of teaching. Therefore the universities originated, in which the study of the Scriptures was stimulated as far as possible, but the restraints of discipline were greatly relaxed.

It is sufficiently clear from this historical recollection both that the schools were always joined to the churches, and that the light of the Gospel is extinguished without erudition. For that purpose, it is proper that wise rulers unite the churches and the universities by their care. Without any doubt it is the ruler's highest duty to retain the knowledge of God among men. Our erudition serves this great task. Therefore let the ruler take care that the universities flourish with their true ornaments – with teachers who are intelligent, erudite and distinguished by virtue and sagacity, who both understand the method useful for rhetoric and perform their duty faithfully. These the princes shall support in safeguarding discipline – for without the authority of those above, discipline cannot be upheld.

<sup>4</sup> Lucius of Cyrene is recorded as one of the members of the Church of Antioch in Acts 13.1. Maternus, first bishop of Cologne, is known to have attended the Council of Arles: Eusebius, *Ecclesiastic History*, x.18. Clement of Metz, first bishop of Metz, probably sent from Rome in the third century. Irenaeus refers to a Christian community in Mainz in his *Against the Heretics*, iv.2.

The faithful teachers should also be given decent wages. Excessive opulence is not to be desired, because the attachment to wealth obstructs studying and fosters extravagant living in the idle. Moderate means are called for, because teachers cannot have time to spare for their task if they are forced to look for a living for themselves and their families elsewhere, and also because poor students have to be fostered, so that the Church may not be lacking in ministers.

It is a great mistake to imagine that ministers can be carved from any wood, and that the teaching of religion can be grasped without erudition and without long training. First, the mode of prophetic and apostolic speech has to be known. Consequently the ancient languages have to be learnt, and the entire method of composing a speech has to be known. For this purpose good teachers need the reading of the ancient writings, literary exercises and also time. After that greater toil follows.

The Church has its own wisdom, placed above human judgement. It has the devil as its enemy, who attempts to smother the truth, and there are many small minds who, out of effrontery, ambition or envy (*philoneikeiai*), corrupt the true ideas. Therefore in all ages there have been the most violent disputes in the Church. However, for the explanation of the major controversies one needs not only a ready mind and a certain knowledge of the sacred books, but also the art of disputation, fluent speech and a knowledge of history, antiquity and judgements of the past. He who upholds the propagation of the truth needs to have investigated and discussed all these things at length and to a great extent. And it is not sufficient for someone to occupy his mind with them on his own; ideas need to be compared, the judgements of many others need to be heard, and errors have to be corrected, for at times *deuterai phrontides* (second thoughts) that are more accurate bring us back to the right path. On the other hand, nothing is worse, or more pernicious, than to argue hotly against the truth – like some who are less ashamed to persevere in their error than to correct and change their erroneous opinion.

Well then, we have investigated the truth by these studies to a great extent and at length, in our own mind and, by discussion, with others, because the opinions that we intend to reveal to the people – just like oracles or laws – have to be chosen with long and careful deliberation. For this reason the ancients wanted there to be assiduous performance in the schools, and they established disputations, so that the students would become used to this organising of opinions, and also, by this exercise, would acquire the



art of discussing and the ability to explain. By what method could this possibly be done in a more delightful way? (And I do not even mention its usefulness.) What is more pleasant than to hear from a learned man what he thinks about the greatest things, and with what relevance and propriety and finally with what modesty he relates them? For impropriety in discourse is to be avoided, and so are obscurity and confusion; and, finally, one also has to steer clear of untimely humour.

We are born for the mutual communication of speech – and why? Is it only for reciting love stories, or for disputing with other guests at a banquet, or for talking about contracts, buying, selling and similar things for the accumulation of money? No, but without doubt so that one may teach others about God and the duty to be virtuous. Therefore the debate on these excellent things should be the most agreeable to good minds. Certainly this our assembly, which has to be prepared for leading the Church, should love that comparison of excellent things most.

No one hands an oar to someone in a small boat if that man has not learnt to row. No one can cultivate<sup>5</sup> fields without a guide – not to speak of other, more complicated, skills. How much less could one who has not learnt to do so be an interpreter of heavenly teaching and a leader of the Church? It is necessary that every child and every old man know the general sense of the heavenly teaching, and it can be grasped in a short time, but not for nothing do we read in Dionysius that the Apostle Bartholomew said that the Gospel is both long and short. The general sense can be communicated in brief, but the knowledge of divine things must become clearer little by little, through meditation on, and comparison of, the words of the Prophets and the Apostles, for all the pious, whether they have erudition or not. This cannot be done without reading and interpretation and, as I said above, extensive and varied teaching is necessary for interpretation.

Christ orders the learned scribe to disclose the new and the old. He does not want the scribe, i.e. the teacher, to be uncouth and untrained, but He wants him to be educated and developed in advance in the Church, and steeped in the true and salutary teaching.

Furthermore, Paul often repeats the following precept: he enjoins us not to disregard reading, and to choose one who is apt not only for teaching, but also for the defence of doctrine. How many things do these two tasks involve? What erudition, what industry, what sagacity, what moderation and what intelligence are required for teaching with lucidity, for uncovering what is

<sup>5</sup> Reading *colere* for *colore*.

concealed, for casting light on what is obscure, for adjusting the method of teaching to the grasp of the inexperienced and the experienced, and for being of use – as Paul says [Romans 1:14] – to the wise as well as to the foolish?

Then even more difficult is the defence of religion, in which it is necessary to bear in mind the quarrels of all ages, to reveal snares, to refute sophisms, to remove the disguise of false convictions and to make clear and fortify the true opinions. No one can do these things without a great variety of skills and without erudition.

It is even more astonishing that, as Paul says, we can find hope from the consolation of the Scriptures [Romans 15:4]. Does hope shine then in the letters and in these written records? Some Anabaptists say that this utterance is truly absurd, but Paul says so with great discernment: hope shines in the everlasting God Himself. Paul links us to God, who made Himself manifest in His voice, which he wanted to be recorded in writing by the Prophets and the Apostles, so that the testimony may exist forever. In this He wanted us to recognise the concealed will for reconciliation, which cannot be understood by the keenness of human wit.

There are many reasons why God made a link between us and this testimony. So whenever the mind begins a prayer and seeks God it should not only think of Heaven and of the creation of the world – in order to remind itself of their maker – but it should at the same time also bring to its attention the sayings of the Gospel. It should reflect upon the Son of God, who made Himself manifest to us and who made promises of reconciliation, and it should say: I invoke you, omnipotent, everlasting and living God, eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who made yourself manifest because of your boundless goodness, and called through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: Hear this! Maker and preserver of all things, with your equally eternal son, our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, have mercy on me because of your son Jesus Christ, whom you wished to be a victim for us. Sustain, help and renew me with your Holy Spirit, sustain and preserve your Church and the states that offer hospitality to the wretched churches.’

This form distinguishes the Christian prayer from the pagan, the Jewish and the Muhammadan prayer. It is necessary to understand this distinction, to hold it up as a model and to drive it home constantly – and, indeed, it cannot be explained without erudition and the comparison of opinions. Therefore God wants the Scriptures and the good arts to be always fostered in the Church, and He protects the schools in an astonishing way, so that

learning may not be extinguished altogether. He wants us all to listen to the Church as to a teacher, as it is conveyed very neatly in the history of Samson: 'If you had not ploughed with my heifer, you would not have found out my riddle' [Judges 14:18].

We have learnt the Gospel from the people of Israel, as it was spread among the nations by the Apostles. God has always given a succession of teachers to the Church, and He has wanted continuous witness to his teaching. Therefore the rulers and states and we ourselves, who perform the task of teaching, declare that the preservation and spreading of learning is the highest of all human achievements, and each one strives in his own place, so that the schools may flourish and be honoured.

The ingratitude is most reprehensible by which we neglect and scorn God's great generosity towards us and His great gifts, when God in His boundless goodness and compassion made Himself manifest and imparted to us His concealed will from His heart, practically attested in these written records, in order to give us a share of the eternal good by that very voice and by these tokens. Let us give thanks to God for stirring our most illustrious prince's heart, so that he desired his churches to be taught with sagacity and led in accordance with the truth, and the study of the Scriptures to be restored.

By its example the most distinguished senate of this town, too, benevolently embraces and furthers the University; although the latter possesses many honours, it has nothing greater or more divine (if one is to judge truthfully) than the possession of this teaching. Indeed, only that city is to be considered upright in which the understanding of God and the knowledge of the other honourable arts are added to the political system.

However, in some way it also depends on us to make this possession a lasting one. The universities should be aristocracies, as the beehive is for the bees; let each one perform his duty correctly, let us teach what is useful, let us join our activities good-naturedly, let us help one another, and let us preserve general harmony by philosophical moderation. Let us think of ourselves as living in a Christian, or at least human, community, and let us not rejoice in the brutality of the Cyclopes, in which, according to Euripides [*Cyclops* 120], 'no one listens to anything from anybody' (*akousi ouden oudeis oudenos*). Do not let ambition fan competition among different ranks, or among the professors, but let private desires take second place to the common good. Let public peace be preferred to private passions.

When I consider and desire this, I am always reminded of Pliny's story about the two goats [*Natural History* VIII.76, 201f.]: when they met on a bridge so narrow that there was not enough room for one to pass next to the other, they made way for themselves in an extraordinary fashion. For one lay down on the bridge in such a way that the other could step on its body and walk across it. There are many cases in which, if no one yields to the other, great upheavals occur necessarily. We need to understand these examples for the state and rein in our impulses.

Some go wild because of works and honours, others because of party politics, when it would be much more righteous to restrain oneself and to heal the rifts by moderation of the mind, just as those she-goats yielded to each other. If we do so, God will support our schools and studies – for He demands faith in doing one's duty as well as care in safeguarding harmony, and He promises great prizes for each virtue.

You will remember the Gospel parable in which Christ praises the servant who applied his talent well. [Matthew 25:21–3] And the psalm about harmony says: 'For there the Lord commanded the blessing' [Psalms 133:3]. What example does Christ command us to imitate in washing the feet of His disciples? Not servitude, but a virtue dear to God, namely to bear private injuries, the avoidance of which would harm public order.

Let us impress this upon ourselves, and let us accustom ourselves to these true and philosophical duties with the diligence in which we can sense God, who will protect the school all the more because of our moderation.

Let us lay this before ourselves and before others, in order to impress on ourselves as well as others that the schools are necessary for the conservation of piety, religion, civil order and also for the administration of the state. The truth must be told in either case: if men can be moved, in order that they embrace it and live – lies are death and their father has always been a murderer – or, if they do not embrace it, in order that there be some evidence of their incorrigible impropriety.

What, I beseech you, is the future shape of kingdoms or states without erudition or teaching of the Scriptures? There is no need for argumentation; let us just cast a look at those places in which learning once had a home, where the schools even now retain these scholarly titles, but abuse them for promotions in rank and the achievement of honours. We can see how much turpitude is apparent there all the time. They accordingly begin to be held in contempt by their own members and by those outside them, and gradually they crumble and fall in ruins. Their ignorance and

uncouthness increase, though, so that in some places they lean towards destructive evils, calling down upon themselves grievous ruin. For those who rise against the truth and against Christ can in no way prevail, but, as one says, they rush with horns against bronze. Their bad example should move and admonish us to grant safety to schools both in the state and in the Church of Christ.

There are many proud-hearted people who, once they have advanced to honours and have found a place in the light within the state, quickly forget from where they have risen. It is certain, though, that no other esteem or fame can carry men higher than those of doctrine. But what perversity possesses some, so that they despise the rank of scholars as being humble and are unjust towards them as towards an enemy, or at least they neglect them as though they were strangers? And what about some others, rich and well-to-do men, who were once slaves to superstition; what do they do now that the truth of religion has been revealed to them? They repay their benefactors as snakes would, and, having acquired freedom, they abuse it for the indulgence of their desires.

There are still some schools left in Germany; these assemblies of priests, already wavering before, are ready to fall under their bulk. The monks have almost sunk into oblivion through their obtuseness and ignorance and through ridiculous superstitions. The schools themselves in some places are barely supporting themselves, elsewhere they lie deserted. I dread to say, because the prognostic is so sad, what will ensue when even these are destroyed.

Therefore let all of us, of all ranks and positions, harmonise our minds and our wills, let us join together our work and studies, and support each other by mutual duties. For just as otherwise no community can flourish and endure for long, so the civil administration and that of schools cannot be torn apart and divided without danger to the state. Let the princes and cities defend, cherish and protect the scholars, and lift them up, or rather exalt them, by their generosity. Let the scholars honour, increase, adorn and celebrate the princes and cities. Let them provide for the courts, the senate and the palace, and for the foremost churches ministers who are good, useful and distinguished in doctrine and piety.

God will approve of this joining together, and He will favour and promote our efforts, studies and work therein, guiding it all towards the praise of His holy name and towards the increase of the Church of Jesus Christ. I pray with all my heart through the Son as mediator that He may preserve

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the remains of His Church at a time when the world is in such commotion, and that He may protect pious studies in this university and elsewhere. Amen. I have spoken.