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## “CRITICISMS.”\*

By DR. SHAEFFER,

Secretary of Apostolic Delegation.



WHEN we speak of critical knowledge of the author's literary work, we usually fancy that the office of a critic is not our own, that it is necessary to be a professional critic if we wish to pronounce an opinion upon the merits or demerits of a book or writing of any kind, and consequently that we must unconditionally follow the dictates of public opinion or of some professional critic. This is a mistake. We may not all be able to examine minutely into the grammatical correctness or beauty of diction of a writing, but we are all able to accurately judge, by standards to which we are accustomed, if a book offends against the moral order, if its general trend is against religion, and particularly if it contains anything against our holy faith, if it is intelligible, thought-provoking and truthful. It is true that even in this work a certain method is to be observed, and I hope to be able in the future to address you more fully on the subject.

\* Appeared in the *St. John Monitor*.