

more than they once did, and to be *au fait* on a number of topics which would require years of study if drawn from books. For such men and such requirements the magazine or newspaper is the one great essential. In such a publication we find concentrated and reduced to the most appreciable measure, all of that knowledge on any subject necessary to a fair comprehension of at least its general scope of character.

In proportion to the influence of the periodical press, and the recognition and acceptance thereof by the people, should be the care exercised in promotion and preservation of the wholesomeness of its teachings. This is positively true from a Catholic and Irish standpoint—not that we would make Literature sectarian or in a cosmopolitan community limit its sphere to a nationality; but that as the tendency of modern encyclopedists is to undermine faith on the one hand and trample out patriotic aspiration on the other, it should be a duty to set up a safeguard against contaminating compromises in religion, and supply an antidote to the poison in political matters so freely dealt out by the enemy. It was once tritely and truly declared by Rev. Dr. Hecker of New York that "we are numerous enough and strong enough in all religious, literary, and scientific matters to suffice for ourselves." There is no reason in the world but our own spiritual indolence, and the torpidity of our consciences, why we should feed on the unwholesome garbage provided for us by the humanitarianism and prurieney of the age. We are able to have a general literature of our own the production of genuine Catholic taste and genius if we will it; our means are ample; the government and civil institutions place no obstacles in our way. Our Catholic community is large enough and contains readers enough to sustain as many periodicals as are needed. What is true in the religious sense is true in the national, and while we heartily join in the aspirations of a healthy Catholic tone in the publications read by Catholics, we would, with the same heartiness, advocate and labor for an Irish tone in publications patronized by Irishmen. On this point there is no

room for compromises. There must be a defined policy in a periodical if its teachings are designed to instruct, to advocate, or to defend. The "chip in porridge" is an old illustration of inutility, either for strength or flavor in the household economy. Now, there are two conditions necessary to effectiveness in the mission of the periodical press—One, the national spirit and religious fervor of the Irish Catholic community; the other, the fitness of the representative publicist who undertakes to guide the project. The first we hope to see developing itself as intellectual food worthy of acceptance is presented: the second will, or ought, in great degree depend upon the first.

From the modernness of the literary profession its votaries have no rank—no recognized professional place in society guaranteed by diploma; they are only certificated by the ability which they can make felt before their readers. There is no Guild of Literature to give authority by sealed instrument. The French and other European nations are in advance of us. The designation *Homme de lettres* is as well understood as *Avocat* or *Medecin*. But by what name shall we call a man in this country who derives his livelihood from literature which is likely to be understood. Some journalists by profession are merely so by accident; they are rarely educated to the life as to a permanent and profitable employment. When a man has failed in other lines it is supposed he may safely retreat upon editorship as an occupation requiring neither capital nor more than very meagre abilities. And this, perhaps, may be taken as explanation or excuse for the somewhat sweeping charges urged against Catholic journals some time ago in a New York Catholic publication. "The editors and publishers of Catholic Journals" it says "edit and publish them as a lawful business, and very naturally seek the widest circulation possible. To secure that they necessarily appeal to the broadest and therefore the lowest average of intelligence and virtue of the public they address." If a tittle of this allegation be true it is time to remove the reproach by remedying the evil.

And the first step to a remedy is a