

advance made since the good old days when it required nothing but a church and a pulpit in it. We still believe in fighting modern artillery with bows and arrows. We know it is the business of the clergy to explain or defend the great truths of religion, natural and uspernatural, and we go on to argue, most blindly and illogically I always think, that it is not the business of anyone else beside the clergy; and even the clergy themselves are frequently misled by this idea. So we feel a sort of indignation, when in addition to our already pressing burdens, we are asked to give material support—that is, to pay definite sums of money—to pay our writers on a decent, if not an adequate scale.

We have all heard of Victor Hugo's famous saying about the cathedral and the printing press: "This will make an end of that"—the press will be the church of the future. I am not now concerned with what is false or misleading in that prophecy; but we are all very much concerned with what is true in it. What do I ask for Catholic writers? Recognition, first, as exponents of saving truths, religious, philosophical, scientific, political and social. Recognition from their own; and, with recognition, honor and support. All this we could give, were our fifteen millions at home and abroad of one mind in the matter.

We have had, and still have with us, contemplative orders, preaching orders, missionary orders. Why should I hesitate to avow that the Catholic writer, who lives worthy of his own vocation, is at once a contemplative, a preacher and a missionary. But in what colors shall I print the prospect—how speak of the future of our Catholic writers? Can I hold out any hopes that they will win that honorable place and rewards, to which, I believe, they are entitled? Were I to argue simply from the record, I should feel by no means hopeful. There has been much earnest work done which has had small recognition, and that little when the great public has given the signal; but seldom before. On one side, happily, the prospect is cheering. I need not enter into names, whether of the books or those who have written them. But I do know that Catholic ideas, and *ideals*, are making a way for themselves outside the limits of

Catholicism; and that while so many of us are careless and indifferent, there is a stir, an agitation, a return to principles and practices which for centuries were held in contempt.

The layman of to-morrow will be trained in our schools, the priest in our seminaries. If literature is to flourish, the roots of it must be planted in both these wide fields. Would it not be a grand thing, if from the beginning it were submitted on all hands that the career of a Catholic writer is not only honorable, but worthy of reward? It can be made such only by the multitude of Catholic readers, willing and even eager to accept what the Catholic writers offers to them, and prepared to pay a price for what they take. Persons in authority can do much—the Hierarchies of Great Britain, Ireland, the United States, Australia—what could they not do if they thought it advisable to stir in the matter. We, the priests and laymen, the men and women of the Catholic community, if we but try, can in time do something.

I conclude that we require, first, a Catholic Treasury in prose and verse, for our elementary schools;—a primer of Catholic literature;—second, a higher course for colleges and seminaries, which should fairly judge modern literature, and exhibit the spirit of our own; and lastly, as the shortest way to this consummation, and access of members to our literary societies. Numbers are not wanting to us, nor material resources, not talent, nor industry in those who possess talent. Why then should we fail? But if we are to succeed, I affirm that literature must be recognized as a sacred calling, with its own place and prerogatives, and a befitting sustenance.

Oscar Wilde once said of George Meredith: His style is chaos, illuminated by flashes of lightning. As a writer he has mastered everything except language; as a novelist he can do everything except tell a story; as an artist he is everything except articulate.

Mr. James Francis Hogan's new book, *The Convent King*, recently issued in London, is a veritable romance of real life. It is the first complete account of the eventful career of Jorgen Jorgenson, one of the most remarkable adventurers of the