

scoundrelly Yorkshire schoolmaster, the lowest and most rotten of his species, to cite the words of Dickens, and presently the life of the author was beset by every villainous schoolmaster in Yorkshire. "One worthy, he had reason to believe, has actually consulted authorities learned in the law, as to his having grounds on which to rest an action for libel; another has meditated a journey to London for the purpose of committing an assault and battery on his traducers; a third perfectly remembered being waited on, last January twelvemonth, by two gentlemen, one of whom held him in conversation while the other took his likeness; and, although Mr. Squeers has but one eye, and he has two, and the published sketch does not resemble him (whoever he may be) in any other respect, still he and all his friends and neighbors know at once for whom it was meant—because the character is *so* like him." Dickens had to withstand an amount of this sort of thing. It was no use his explaining that the picture was composite. It did not avail his affirming that no special scamp was meant. Remonstrance on the ground that it was a class and not an individual that was aimed at counted not the worth of "the snows of yester-year." Dickens had drawn a true picture of a scoundrelly schoolmaster, and every scoundrelly schoolmaster deemed himself the original of the sketch. Then, the master, to whom our friend of the *Catholic Register* resorts for not entirely apt comparisons, changed his mode of action. Instead of further explanation Dickens shut his lips hard and only relaxed them to assign his unreasonable tormentor to an unmentionable clime, more sultry than Canada in July, which is presided over by a namesake of the author of "Copperfield," an act which I should be sorry to repeat in the present instance, although the brawny youth who sways the destinies of *The Register* has acted very like a Yorkshire schoolmaster. While I must be excused from explaining away the article that raised the gorge of my Western friend, an article which I am vain enough to believe is (barring a few misprints) sufficiently explicit and opportune to be understood and appreciated by

every Catholic not oppressed by much more than ordinary denseness, I would be very sorry to consign the angry scribe to Tartarus instead of Toronto. The worst I wish this certainly estimable and presumably very young personage is that he may live on and thrive where he is, and not fall a prey to diphtheria, or the measles, the twain deadly enemies of juvenility.

This little magazine is not, and never was intended to train journalists. If by any chance, however, one of The Owl's brood should adopt Catholic journalism as a profession, I hope he will not be blind to the terrible examples of total editorial depravity which now threaten to make the Catholic journalistic calling a proverb and a by-word; that he will not constitute himself the champion of dunces, frauds and cheats; that he will either produce what he uses or not neglect to pay for what is contributed to his columns; that he will not steal poetry from the "Boston Pilot" and prose from every quarter of the universe; that he will not allow a petty local jealousy to prompt him to belittle and abuse praiseworthy and inoffensive institutions; that he will not fail to credit the Catholic people with some little intelligence and discrimination; in a word, that he will not be what some of those who unduly doubt even the possibility of his existence plume themselves on being, but that, on the contrary, he will always and everywhere deport himself as a conscientious christian and scholarly Catholic should, that he will make it a point to set up high intellectual standards, that his mind will be fertile enough to conceive, capacious enough to contain, creative enough to originate and send forth, fresh and vigorous in the full bloom and maturity of exquisite expression, the thoughts, which will be suggested to it by the religious, social and political problems of the day, that he will refrain from beating the air with wild and whirling words when the individuals who befoul his profession are righteously assailed, and that he will go to his till, be it never so near empty, to pay for the literary matter he uses and scorn to batten on the brains of better men than himself.