

and charming by the freshness and purity of his diction, and the novelty of his subject, Father Finn won at the outset of his career as a novelist, a popularity which is not likely now to desert him; provided he turn a deaf ear to the voice of the Siren, and refuse to be coaxed or forced by hungry publishers into the grave error of writing too much. His achievement has no parallel among Catholics in English Literature. He not only cleared a way for himself, but peopled his dominions with new beings. Fiction is founded on contrasted characters. Father Finn has caught up contrasting elements of boy life and grouped them with ingenuity and power. He has composed the prose epic of our Catholic schools and colleges. He has given us captivating pictures of boy life full of color and verisimilitude. In a word, to use the striking language of one of the Muses of the *Boston Pilot*, he is "the discoverer of the American Catholic boy," the Columbus of the Catholic ocean of youth.

I confess to a willingness to dwell on the hyphenated words by which Father Finn has been frequently designated—priest-novelist. The ideas they awaken are by no means disinteresting. At one time the novelist was looked on with distrust in every rank of society, and while the devout did not hesitate to call him a child of Belial, and a host of other unpleasant names, even the charitable deemed him a representative of worldly-mindedness. Indeed, in certain obscure sects, the writer of prose fiction still retains this vague, fabulous, reputation of wickedness, and the commentator on novels and novelists to whom I am indebted for these remarks, Mr. Cordy Jeaffreson, tells us that shortly before he published his book, he was not a little amused with reading a "broad-side" posted on a wall by some society for the promulgation of the Christian virtues, which warned all good people to avoid the company of "play-actors, infidels, scoffers, novelists, and all other followers of impious callings." The teachers set their faces against the novel and Dr. Arnold of Rugby berated Charles Dickens, much as Aschem railed Boccaccio, but with infinitely less reason. This evil fame died out, however, before the genius of Scott and Thackeray, and Dickens, and Read, and Lever, to say nothing of the novelists who were also clergymen of the church in which Chadband and Stiggins were shining lights; such, for