

sacrifice depends on the value of what is sacrificed. Yesterday I was a nobody, to-day I have a reputation to keep up. My gaining the Berthier law-suit has brought me into notice and assured me a future competence. A marriage has been proposed to me that would place me in a far better position than I have ever dreamed of occupying, and I may consider this position as being actually mine since I have but to say the word for it to be so in reality. I have decided on sacrificing all this and have now come to ask you to admit me into your Company as a novice."

"You must apply to the Father General of our Order for he alone can give permission to re-enter the novitiate after having once left it."

"I would wish to leave for Rome this evening."

"I will not longer oppose your wish. I will give you a letter of recommendation to our Fathers at the Gesu. Go in peace, my son. You have been put to the proof and you have not been found wanting: you will make a good and worthy religious."

(To be continued.)

A NEGLECTED ENGINE.

It is certainly very unfortunate that the Catholic press of the country has constantly to complain of the neglect and indifference of the Catholic public. Such complaints naturally lay in the importance and influence of the religious press in the estimation of non-Catholics. A Catholic journal that frequently has to turn aside from the chief purpose of its existence—the enlightenment of the masses and the protection of their interests—to bemoan a paucity of resources and lack of interest on the part of those whom it designs to benefit, is plainly labouring at a marked disadvantage. The weight of influence that attaches to the strong utterances of a religious paper depends very largely upon the amount of its moral and substantial sympathy and backing as indicated by its subscription lists.

Unless an editor, who is conscientiously striving to promote the high mission of Catholic journalism, knows that his efforts are heartily seconded by those who should have an equal interest with himself in the achievements at which he aims, his work is the merest drudgery. His labour is thrown away, and, as far as any good purpose is served, he might as well talk to the wind as to set down his words which are begrudgingly paid for by a handful of people, who subscribe for them out of a vague sense of duty, but never remove the wrappers.

This seems to be the experience of too many of our Catholic papers, if we can judge by their tone in speaking of the indifference manifested by Catholics within their respective bailiwicks.

What is the cause of this neglect? And what is the remedy? These are questions that have been suggested as a vital subject for consideration by the coming Catholic Congress.

It is easy to conceive what a disagreeable task it must be for our journalistic friends to give vent to these complaints. It is more difficult, however to understand what good is accomplished by them. The people who read them are not the ones for whom they are intended. To complain of the indifference of the delinquents to those who are not deficient in interest themselves is manifestly useless. But how to reach the delinquents is the main thing. It cannot be done through the medium of the paper itself, that is evident, for they don't get it, and probably wouldn't read it if they did. There is only one way to get the matter before them in such a way as to rivet their attention—the method successfully adopted by Protestants—through the personal offices of the clergy. When our bishops and priests exert themselves as Protestant ministers do in behalf of the popularity and influence of their religious press, we may begin to hope that this country will possess a Catholic press worthy of the name and importance and extent of the great American Catholic body. Not before. If the mission of the Catholic press is really what it is claimed to be, and what various Popes and dignitaries have proclaimed it to be—a powerful adjunct to the work of the Church—it is certainly entitled to the fullest measure of encouragement and assistance that the clergy

can give it. If "a good Catholic paper is a perpetual mission in a parish," as the present illustrious Pontiff affirms, it is plainly incumbent upon pastors to foster it in every way possible and to exert themselves to raise it to its proper place as their own best and strongest aid in carrying on the work of the Church.

If the mission of the Catholic press recommends itself thus favorably to so wise and sagacious a judge of ways and means as Pope Leo is universally acknowledged to be, it is difficult to see what better incentive the clergy could have for extending its power and influence.

The Protestant papers are liberally supported by the laity, mainly because the preachers have created an atmosphere favorable to them by constant and substantial encouragement. The preachers have been quick to discern the utility of bringing the strong influence of religious literature of this kind to their aid, and have succeeded by dint of settled convictions as to its usefulness in engraving it as a conspicuous and permanent feature upon their system of church work.

It is a very common remark that this is a reading age. Everybody reads. Periodical literature of one kind or another finds its way into nearly every household in the land and is universally devoured.

It needs no argument to demonstrate that this is not by any means an unmixed blessing. If great harm is done, as is pretty generally conceded, by the dissemination of trashy and pernicious literature, it is clear that the only antidote to this poison is to be found in the circulation of pure and healthy reading matter.

Parents are primarily responsible for the evil effects of vicious literature upon their children. But responsibility does not cease with parents. The responsibility of pastors, intrusted with the moral safe-keeping of their flocks, lies in the necessity for earnest and untiring efforts to overcome this evil influence of dangerous literature, and to substitute for the vile rubbish that insidiously contaminate the lives and morals of the young, good and wholesome provender for the soul and intellect. The most effective way to discharge this serious duty is to promote the development of a sound and healthy taste for proper literature among the masses—not a trivial task, but one that is indispensable to the ultimate success of all religious teaching.

How does the zeal of our clergy correspond to the importance of this grave duty? Certainly, if the one was at all commensurate with the other, the complaints so frequently made now by worthy Catholic journals of the indifference and neglect on the part of the laity, would soon cease, and we should have a press worthy of our religion and country.

Here, at least, is one instance in which Catholics might safely and profitably imitate Protestant example—in supporting and making their press one of the strongest levers of religious power and influence.

A RELIGIOUS ORDER DEVOTED TO PUBLICATION WHY NOT?

Man has been said to be what he eats; he may much better be said to be what he reads. Both because he is likely to read the things to which his natural inclinations tend, and because his reading will surely germinate and develop inclinations similar to itself. It is the old maxim, "*Noscitur a sociis*," raised to double power; for what is the company which holds so intimate communion with us, which we permit to reach so unreservedly into our inmost thoughts, to approach us at such unguarded moments, so frequently, so freely, as the company of the silent page which we believe will not reveal the secrets it has surprised in us, the hidden delectations, the unspoken assents to a superiority of which we have no conscious jealousies?

That this is in its way a reading age need not be emphasized. The modern printing press has transformed the world into a vast reading-room. The worthlessness of much of that reading has furnished the theme for declamation falling into impeachment of the habit itself, and into censorious comparison of the present with more idyllic times, when the masses had scarcely other literature than that of "leaves and running brooks." God, however is the only one who can correctly