

the Germans love to call "a story-teller by the grace of God," a born story-teller. He is one certainly destined to occupy a principal place in the republic of letters. His works show everywhere a beautiful adequacy of art, whether by intense care in every minute detail, or by a happy faculty for naturally telling a lively story, or, what seems more likely than either, by an uncommonly delicious blending of acquired art and natural faculty. It has been well and usefully remarked, that we often talk of spontaneous inspiration as if genius had nothing to do but let works of art flow out of itself as water runs from a hydrant, by simply turning a faucet. This is not the way genius works; the germ of the masterpiece does, I grant you, come spontaneously, no one knows how nor whence; but, to make this germ grow, to make the inspiration assume a worthy and organic shape, takes work. It is perfectly and pleasantly evident that while the author of whom I am endeavoring to produce an honest estimation, did not lack inspiration, he received his gift as he would an angel, and spared no pains to cause it appear at its best in the impartial eyes of the public.

Search the whole broad realm of English letters to-day, and I have yet to learn that as much as the foregoing can be truly averred of more than a half-dozen writers. The thought delights me, that chief among this mere handful of choice spirits is one who is not only a Catholic, but a priest; not only a priest, but a member of the greatly maligned and misunderstood Order of Jesus, or as a fanatic of our defunct Equal Rights Party would probably call him, a *Jesuite*—the Reverend Francis J. Finn.

This highly gifted priest was born at St. Louis on October 4, 1859. It is supposed that he served some time as a journalist, but he gave up the calling, and entered the Society of Jesus on March 4, 1879. He was ordained priest in 1893. He was Professor in St. Louis University and in St. Mary's College, in Kansas; and he is now Professor of English Literature in Marquette College, Milwaukee. For these biographical facts, which though few, tell perhaps all we, the public, have a right to know about the private life of any author, I am indebted to a brief sketch contributed by Dr. Maurice Francis Egan to "Catholic Book News," the advertising pamphlet of Benziger Bros.

Lucid in arrangement, thoughtful, abounding in pleasantry,