

All who have already had the privilege of reading any of the previous editions, whether in periodical or book form, of "The Land of Leix," "The Legend Lays of Ireland," "The Legend of Kilronan," or who have become acquainted with "Lageniensis" through his other productions, either in prose or verse, will be sure to welcome with renewed pleasure this collection of his poetical works.

Those who have not yet had this good fortune, especially those of Irish origin, who love to hear of the old tales and legends, and to learn more of the poetry and history, the biography and romance, of the land of their fathers, will find, we think, in these poems, and in the wealth of historical, biographical, and topographical notes, with which they are illustrated, a real fund of enjoyment and profit.

As most of the pieces in this collection, and some other works from the same pen, appeared originally under the *nom de plume* of "Lageniensis," that title is retained in this edition, though the author's identity has long been publicly known, and is avowed by himself in the dedication and elsewhere in the present volume. We are at liberty, therefore, to give his real name, and think we shall gratify many of our readers by stating a few facts of his personal history, which we have learned both from his books and from the information of his personal friends.

"Lageniensis" is another name for the well-known Irish and American patriot, the Very Rev. John Canon O'Hanlon, "the Irish Alban Butler," as he has been justly styled, from his *magnum opus*, "Lives of the Irish Saints," of which eight large volumes, enriched with copious and erudite notes, have already appeared. A long list of his other publications will be found appended to this volume. His literary activity and industry, involving, as they do, a great deal of careful study and research, and carried on for the most part while attending to the exacting parochial duties, at first of curate and afterwards of parish priest, in a populous Dublin parish, are indeed marvellous. It is interesting to learn that a large proportion of the poems in the present volume were composed, and some of them first published, over forty years ago in this country, where the author spent about eleven years, several of them in missionary work as a priest of the diocese of St. Louis, and two or more as professor in its theological seminary. In consequence of ill-health he returned to Ireland in 1853, where a little rest and the invigorating air of his native Laoighis (pronounced Leeish-Leix, Queen's Co.), happily effected a speedy restoration. Since then he has labored in the diocese of Dublin, where he is at present a parish priest and Canon of the Cathedral Chapter, having been appointed to this latter office by Archbishop Walsh. He is a member of the Royal Irish Academy, and has been a particular friend of his fellow academicians, the great Irish scholars, O'Donovan and O'Curry. We may add that it is mainly to his efforts that the Irish capital is indebted for the superb statue of Daniel O'Connell that graces its chief thoroughfare. His zeal overcame all obstacles and kept up the enthusiasm of the friends of the movement until the project was carried to a successful completion.

Father O'Hanlon's chief title to fame will undoubtedly be his hagiological labors. The present very acceptable volume shows indeed, we think, that he might have attained very high rank as a poet had he devoted himself to poetry as he has to biography and history ; but we are glad that he has apparently given to poetry only his recreation, and bestowed his most serious labor in the cultivation of his chosen field, the "Lives of the Irish Saints."

Of this great work, four volumes (September to December) remain yet to be completed. We do not know how far he has advanced in the preparation of his materials, but trust that, notwithstanding his already advanced age he will be able to command the time and labor necessary to finish the work, and sincerely hope that he may be spared to see its happy completion.

---