

PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

THE Lectures and Essays here given to the public are among the finest efforts of the genius of HENRY GILES. None of the contents of this volume have ever before been published in book form. The many thousands who had the privilege of hearing Mr. Giles discourse on "Spirit of Irish History," "Irish Wit and Humor," "Irish Character, Mental and Moral," "Ireland and the Irish," "Irish-born Citizens," "Irish Emigration," "Daniel O'Connell," or "John Philpot Curran," will be glad of the opportunity of having those noble Lectures by them for frequent perusal. So, too, with the Essays on "Doctor Doyle," "Oliver Goldsmith," "Gerald Griffin," and "Wit and Humor in Scotland," written for a Boston periodical; many will be pleased to have them in a more permanent form.

The beautiful Lecture on "Catholic Art and Protestant Culture," new to most readers, will be found one of the most admirable essays ever written on a similar subject. It is probably one of the finest specimens in our language of that particular style of writing. "The Cost of War," written during and in relation to our own disastrous but, happily, successful war, was read in New York and other cities by a friend of Mr. Giles, after the gifted author had become unable to travel or to appear in public. This Lecture was, we believe, the last production of his brilliant and prolific mind.

This volume is invested with a mournful interest, from the fact of its being revised by the author in his sick room, if not in his sick bed. Some of its contents have already delighted thousands, as they are destined, we trust, to delight thousands and tens of thousands in the after time, when the bright spirit from which they emanated shall have winged its way to other spheres. They are among the latest flashes of a genius that may shine no more as once it shone—of a mind prostrated by much suffering, and darkened by much tribulation. Nevertheless, they will be found not unworthy of the brightest days of their author's earlier life.

NEW YORK, May 21, 1869.