

translated from the French, especially the *Légendes de l'Autre Monde*, by the well-known legendist, J. Colin de Plancy. In selecting the legends and anecdotes, I have endeavored to give only those that were new to most English readers, thus leaving out many legends that would well bear reproducing, but were already too well known to excite any fresh interest.

In the poetical section I have represented as many as possible of the best-known poets, from Dante down, and some poems of rare beauty and merit were translated from French and Canadian poets by my daughter, who has also contributed some interesting articles for the historical portion of the work. As may be supposed, this book is the fruit of much research. The collection of the material has necessarily been a work of time, the field from which the gleanings were made being so vast, and the selections requiring so much care.

As regards the legendary portion of the work, whether prose or poetry, the reader will, of course, understand that I give the legends precisely for what they are worth; by no means as representing the doctrinal belief of Purgatory, but merely as some of the wild flowers of poetry and romance that have grown, in the long lapse of time, from the rich soil of faith and piety, amongst the Catholic peoples of every land—intensified, in this instance, by the natural affection of the living for their dear departed ones, and the solemn and shadowy mystery in which the dead are shrouded when once they have passed the portals of eternity and are lost to mortal sight. Some of these legends, though exceedingly beautiful, will hardly bear close examination in the light of Catholic dogma. Of this class is "The Faithful Soul," of Adelaide Procter, which is merely given here as an old French legend; nearly connected with Purgatory, and having really nothing in it contrary to faith, though in a high degree improbable, but yet from its intrinsic beauty and dramatic character, no less than the subtle charm of Miss Procter's verse, eminently worthy of a place in this collection. The same remark applies more or less to some of Colin de Plancy's legends, notably that of "Robert the Devil's Penance," and others of a similar kind, as also T. D. McGee's "Penance of Don Diego Rias" and Calderon's "St. Patrick's Purgatory"—the two last named bearing on the same