

**THE LITERARY LIFE  
AND OTHER ESSAYS**

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The literary life and other essays by P. A. Canon Sheehan

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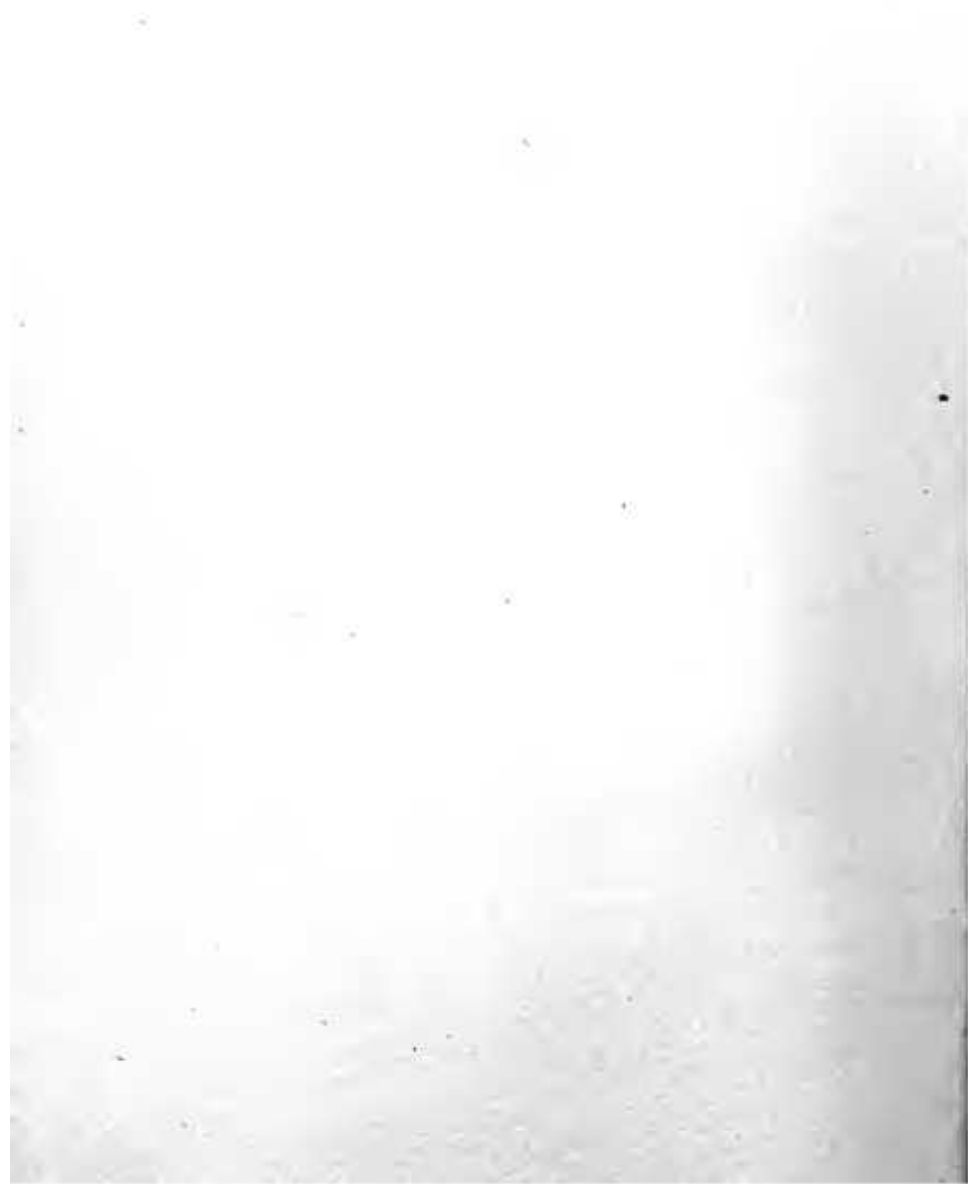
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## PREFACE

CANON SHEEHAN needs no editor's introduction, even to the present generation, though it has lived to see an Ireland vitally different from that so affectionately described in his reminiscent essay, "The Moonlight of Memory"—as different, perhaps, as that rather unheroic epoch was from the time of Sarsfield. That essay and another, "Lenten Time in Doneraile," in which he tells of an aspect of our national life which is splendidly unchanging, were written only a year or two before his death. The rest are of much earlier date. The papers on literature were delivered as lectures some thirty years ago. The political and religious essays are for the most part the work of the same period of Canon Sheehan's life, and any topical allusions in them explain themselves. 1896 is the date of the admirable but discarded preface to "The Triumph of Failure," which was itself first published in 1899. "The Dawn of the Century" was delivered as a lecture in 1904.

In editing this work I have taken no liberties with the manuscript beyond some trifling alterations in punctuation. The editor of a posthumous work is always faced with this difficulty, that he must pass some things, be they many or few, which he feels sure the author would not have allowed to remain as they are: here and there a little roughness or infelicity of expression which would pass unnoticed, or, indeed, be perhaps not out of place in a lecture, must consequently find its way in a permanent form into the published work of a writer who has made for himself his own high place in Anglo-Irish literature. This cannot be helped; but it is only fair to Canon Sheehan's reputation as a finished writer of English to remind the reader of the form in which these essays were left by their author. And, indeed, it is perhaps remarkable that the number of these evidences of lack of care and polish is so few.

E McL.