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57. DONNELLY, ELEANOR C. PAPERS. 1873-1898.

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DONNELLY, ELEANOR C. PAPERS. 1873-1898. 96 ITEMS.

This collection includes letters to Miss Donnelly from priests and Bishops throughout the United States in answer to her requests for facsimiles of episcopal seals.

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57. DONNELLY, ELEANOR C. PAPERS. 1873-1898.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Miss Donnelly enjoyed an esteem that no other Catholic writer ever attained here. Her friends often called her "The Poet of the Pure Soul". She drew many devotees by her personality as well as her pen. Her uncomplicated faith guided her through life.

The cultured Donnelly household was a popular gathering place for Authors, as well as for prominent visitors to the city. The household was presided by Eleanor's physician father, who encouraged the children in their particular intellectual interests. Two sisters, both teachers, translated German and French books into English, with a preference towards sermons and the lives of the saints. Eleanor's brother attained success as a novelist, who initiated the famous Shakespeare-Bacon controversy. Eleanor with no formal education shared their enthusiasm for literature. Her first poem "A Little Girl's Hymn to the Blessed Virgin," appeared in print when she was only nine years old. Her first editor was Father Edward Sorin, C.S.C., of The Ave Maria magazine in 1865. He gave much encouragement to Eleanor whereby every Catholic magazine vied for contributions from her. She edited the Augustinian magazine "Our Lady of Good Counsel" for a while. The Catholic Standard & Times employed her as associate editor and published her material for years.

Although Miss Donnelly wrote most types of literature except novels, the same moral tone pervaded everything. Yet with the pious sentimentality, her juvenile tales and biographies proved their most attractive feature. Her two biographies "Memoir of Father Felix J. Barbelin, S.J. (1886) and the "Life of Sister Mary Gonzaga Grace of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul (1812-1900), had an antiquarian appeal.

A recent estimate of the number of Miss Donnelly's books is eighty-five, most of them small volumes of lyrics. She possessed great facility with language. She succeeded often enough to merit some of the accolades heaped upon her. Some of her most enthusiastic admirers insist that Longfellow and Tennyson paid her the supreme compliment of borrowing from several of her pieces.

Archbishop Ryan asked her to write an ode hailing the centenary of the diocese; Pope Leo XIII thanked her for her poems celebrating one of his jubilees. She could always produce an apt lyric for any occasion to stir the hearts of her audiences. There is something exceptionally chaste in Miss Donnelly's religious verses which makes her inspiration fruitful of a decidedly refining and elevating influence. Miss Donnelly belongs to Philadelphia, and we have reason to be proud of her.

Although a half dozen women writers came along with Eleanor Donnelly, most of them failed to attain national reputations, such as she brightened the Philadelphia Literary scene.

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<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	
1	1	1873-1895 Individual letters to Miss Donnelly from Rev. Jos. M. Arden S.J. Xavier Barbelin S.J. Mrs. Frances Drexel, Sr. Mary Agnes Gubert, Most Rev. James Donnelly, Rt. Rev. Eugene O'Connell, M. A. Sadler, Eliza Allen Starr, Chas. Warren Stoddard and the Tabernacle Society.
1	2	1873 Three letters from Very Rev. Dr. P. E. Moriarty O.S.A.
1	3	1881 (?) Letter from Most Rev. P. A. Neno, former Father Geil, O.S.A.
1	4	1889 Letter and seal facsimile from Rt. Rev. M. O'Farrell, first Bishop of Trenton.
1	5	1873 Two letters from Dr. James O'Connor later Bishop of Omaha.
1	6	1887, 1894, 1895 Three letters from Most Rev. P.J. Ryan, Archbishop Phila.
1	7	1885-1886 One letter and circular letter from Rev. E. Sorin C.S.C. Notre Dame University.
1	8	1873-1877 Four letters from Edward J. Sourin S.J.
1	9	1895, 1898 Three letters and seal facsimile from Rt. Rev. J. L. Spalding, Bishop Peoria, Ill.
1	10	1883 one letter from Very Rev. Maurice Walsh, diocesan adm.
1	11	1876, 1880 Two letters from Bishop Jas. F. Wood
1	12	1898 Letters received by Miss Donnelly from Bishops or their representatives in specific dioceses in answer to request for facsimiles of their seals.
1	13	1882 Letter to Archbishop Wood from Miss Donnelly asking permission to dedicate forthcoming music book to him; letter to Dr. Middleton on the obtaining of the seals requested.
1	14	Collection of seals.
	15	M-1031 E - Bound manuscript book of Confederate prisoners held at Johnston's Island