

LIFE PICTURES.

REVERIES AND REMINISCENCES

CHAPTER I.

MY NATIVE TOWN AND EARLY ASSOCIATIONS.

"The scenes of my childhood, whose lov'd recollection
Embitters the present compared with the past;
Where science first dawned on the powers of reflection,
And friendships were formed too romantic to last."

THE picturesque little town of Monaghan, in the north of Ireland is situated in a valley surrounded by hills which enclose two small lakes, and adjacent is the serpentine Blackwater river, whose banks are decked with shrubbery and covered with the primrose, cowslip and wild rose in the spring and summer months. In this pretty little inland town the writer spent the "sunny hours of childhood" and youthful days till he arrived at the age of fifteen years. St. Paul was proud of his Tarsus, and said it was "no mean city." The writer can use the same words in at least one respect. If Tarsus gave to the world scholarly and noble Paul, my little Tarsus gave to Australia a Governor-General, and to Canada a Lieutenant-Governor, a Chief Justice, a Bishop, several M.P's, professional men, merchants and farmers who were a credit to the country.

The writer was the third son in a family of ten children, consisting of seven brothers and three sisters. His father was a manufacturer of carriages and agricultural implements; he employed a number of men and did a profitable business. About one mile from the town we had a farm where we spent many of our leisure hours, exercising the five senses the Almighty endowed us with.

In the spring and summer mornings we "arose with the lark" and proceeded to our little demesne where the sense of seeing was gratified by taking in at a glance the clear blue sky and rising "orb of day" or a whole landscape, with its hill, dale, wood and waterfall. Of hearing by the music of "the feathery songsters" who warbled notes of praise to their Creator. Of taste, by the gathering of berries and other wild fruits, which grew in abundance. Of smell, by the aroma of the hawthorn blossom, sweet briar and flowers which bespangled the fields. And of feeling by the "invigorating and bracing air, and having our little feet (which were sometimes uncovered) washed with the sparkling dewdrops" which glistened in the morning sun.