

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN.

CHAPTER I.

HIS YOUTH.

RICHARD BRINSLEY BUTLER SHERIDAN was born in Dublin, in the month of September 1751, of a family which had already acquired some little distinction of a kind quite harmonious with the after fame of him who made its name so familiar to the world. The Sheridans were of that Anglo-Irish type which has given so much instruction and amusement to the world, and which has indeed in its wit and eccentricity so associated itself with the fame of its adopted country, that we might almost say it is from this peculiar variety of the race that we have all taken our idea of the national character. It will be a strange thing to discover, after so many years' identification of the idiosyncrasy as Irish, that in reality it is a hybrid, and not native to the soil. The race of brilliant, witty, improvident, and reckless Irishmen whom we have all been taught to admire, excuse, love, and condemn—the Goldsmiths, the Sheridans, and many more that will occur to the reader—all belong to this mingled blood. Many are more Irish, according to our present