

I was sitting one evening in my study, holding communion with myself; and before I was aware of it, I became so fully absorbed in reflections on the past, and conjectures touching the future, that every other consideration was excluded. My history, especially the itinerant portion of it, passed before me in a very orderly and precise manner. Indeed, it seemed to me as if the various occurrences thereof had arranged themselves into a regular series, and were doing all they could to attract attention, and acquire importance. They passed by, as I have said, at a steady pace; regularly following each other; but at the same time changing their forms, and altering their aspects, like dissolving views, or shifting scenes. These circumstances affected me a good deal,—they impressed their variegated image upon my mind, and prompted me to trace the effect of their operation in these familiar sketches.

I was born in the parish of Saint Mark, in the ancient city of Dublin, on the 24th of June, in the memorable year of Our Lord, 18—. Here, then, at the very dawning of the narrative—almost as soon as it commences to breathe, it acquires distinction from the fact, that I was born in troublous times: and that I am “a citizen of no mean city.” My parents were Roman Catholics, and in that commu-