

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

A TEACHER'S LIFE.

CHAPTER FIRST.

LIFE AS A PUPIL.

My earliest recollections date from my fourth year, when a pupil of Miss Martin's. That worthy lady then wielded the sceptre in the vicinity of the Post Office. Her reign, however, must have been a mild one, for I can remember being often permitted to amuse myself, in school hours, standing on a chair behind her, and remodeling her coiffure. But she could punish too, for as I write, visions of sundry boys stretched on their backs on the floor, with upheld slates, rise before me. Miss D——, also figures in my memory amongst my earliest teachers, and also Miss Aspinall, whose success as a teacher of dancing will long be remembered in Quebec. Her balls for the exhibition of her pupils were very *recherché* affairs. When a mite of five or six years of age, I figured in one given to her scholars, at the Castle of St. Lewis, (the site of Durham Terrace) under the patronage of Lady Aylmer, when we executed the "Minuet de la Cour," the Crown Dance, the Polish and Quadrille Mazurkas, with waltzes, etc., *ad libitum*, very much to our own satisfaction, and doubtless in the highest style of the art. The present Countess of Errol was one of Miss A——'s best pupils, and shone conspicuously on the occasion. Some years after retiring from the profession, Miss A—— married Mr. P—— of Montreal. She died a few months ago, at an advanced age.

In my sixth year, I was placed as a day scholar at the Ursuline convent. It was then the best school in the city for girls, and as an educational establishment, I think it has never been surpassed. Preceded the following year by practice on the piano at home, the hours of attendance, from eight o'clock, A. M., to five o'clock, P. M. fell rather heavily on so young a child. Very diminutive in size, I believe I was the youngest and smallest of the many hundreds, perhaps I might say thousands, who had ever passed those ancient portals. Reserved, quiet, and rather studiously inclined, the cloister life attracted me powerfully. The black-veiled nuns, with their dark flowing robes, the long and silent corridors, with their low,