

sides, except for a small space in front, lower than the board on which the hive is placed, so as to carry the water to the ground. It should be fastened by a small rope or cord, binding it closely to the hive a little below the center. As hoods of straw put on, in the early part of the season, may by this time have become insufficient to protect the hives from rain and snow, it may be proper to renew them, and to use more straw for this purpose, than what was employed in summer. If the mouth of the hive has been considerably large, as it should be during the working season, it should now be diminished to a very small aperture. This will both prevent the entrance of vermin, and preserve the bees from excessive cold.

By these precautions, hives may be abundantly protected from the injuries of the weather. To such as may think that this is not enough to keep the bees sufficiently warm, I would remark, that it is not necessary they should be kept very close and warm. The bee, during the winter months, is naturally torpid, and if kept from wet and the action of the external air, is not injured by cold. Heat, on the contrary, is not proper for them for six months in the year. After the working season is past, the bees so long as they continue active, are daily diminishing the store which they have provided: and if by the warmth of the latter part of the season, or other means, they be not seized with torpor till about the beginning of November, they will have considerably encroached on that stock which should support them in spring, before they can collect honey in the fields. On this account, I should imagine, that it is improper to put hives during winter, into warm situations, as into houses, especially near where fires are kept; and that immediately after the bees have ceased working, the front of the hive should be turned toward the north, or at least screened from the sun. The sun sometimes breaks out very hot during fine weather in winter, or early in spring. This incites the bees to come forth, and perhaps fly abroad, in consequence of which many of them perish. For

six months, therefore, the hive should be kept in a moderately cold situation, sheltered from the wind and sun; and should not be exposed to the beams of the sun at noon, till the weather has become mild, and some flowers have opened in the gardens or fields.

The better to protect the hive from storms, it should be fastened with cord to the board on which it is placed, so that it may not be in any danger of being overturned by the wind. Every thing should be removed from about the pedestal that might encourage the entrance of mice or other vermin, which might do injury to the hive. A. Z.

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*For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.*

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TABLE-TALK.....PROLEGOMENA.

WHEN a writer outrages nature in describing things which have no existence, he must necessarily expect to be neglected. Superior talent may bear him up for a while; he may, for a short time attract the attention of that numerous class of mankind, for whom the floating of a feather in the air has attractions as powerful as the crush of nations: but this charm will cease with the novelty of his production, and his talent will seem to serve only as an additional weight to accelerate his descent. In the most favourable case oblivion is his fate, and his only consolation then will be, that he has endeavoured to be of service in his day. This is likely to be my consolation, engaged as I am, in this hopeless task of describing non-entities. The full difficulty of my undertaking is present to me: for I am aware, that as with poets the "*Quidlibet audendi potestas*" is much limited, so in a much narrower space are prose writers circumscribed.

Why then, may it be asked, is such an undertaking volunteered in? why attempt to describe man, as he is not? to write what cannot please the present age, and what, from this very circumstance, must have a slender chance of reaching that posterity, which seems so much to interest you?

These are feasible objections; yet I feel encouraged by hopes which others might think slender, though to me they present inducement sufficient to move me to the trial.

My purpose is to sketch a few characters, of which the men shall be described as possessed of common sense, information, and politeness; the females, of similar qualifications, with the addition of that which highly adorns a woman, *modesty*.

Now it is well known, that none are in general more forward to assert their possession of valuable qualifications than those, who are *notoriously deficient* in them: and as people can pick up the *names* of virtues, of the *nature* of which they are totally ignorant, yet continue to talk of them with apparent interest, so I expect, that my representations shall in their garb of *words* fix the attention of those, who, unqualified, as *unwilling to examine* what is hid beneath, will rest satisfied with the sounds, and seeing esteem and reverence spoken of as the due tribute to those in whom such qualifications appear, they will, without hesitation transfer a portion of that respect to themselves, as their due.

The vehicle of this fancied tribute will consequently be favourably received for sake of what it presents, and thus a perusal will be obtained for that which in any other case would be thrown by with indifference or contempt. Such is my ground of hope, that I shall obtain a perusal: slender, I do confess, yet appearing to me, such as may justify an attempt.

It is now high time to introduce the *Dramatis Personæ*. The first I shall present to my reader, are Mr. and Mrs. Revel, who are in that rank of society, which has been pronounced the happy mean, as equally remote from the real miseries of poverty, and the factitious ones of wealth and high birth. They had had the unspeakable advantage of sensible and affectionate parents, who saw in its full demand, the duty of watching over their youth, and whose affection for their darling offspring was such, as to make the retirement from the world necessary for this purpose, no sacrifice in them. From such affectionate guardians, they early imbibed principles, which as they were fostered, expanded into blossoms, and ripened in their mature years, into the fruits of mental vigor and *well directed* sensibility. Their parents had been attentive to exercise them to a discriminating

inspection into the wants of the poor around them: when the reality of the unenviable claim was ascertained, relief was administered with a bountiful hand. This rendered them beloved by their inferiors, as their accomplishments and *mental* acquirements enforced the esteem of their superiors: thus beloved and respected, they moved in their sphere of life a rare instance of sensibility, distinct from the morbid sensibility of the novel-reader, combined with elevation of mind equally distinct from that elevation begotten from worldly rank, which only engenders pride and arrogance in the possessor.

A similarity of taste and feelings had mutually attracted them at an early age: a more intimate acquaintance attached them, and the final stage was marriage. At their outset in life, *when plans may be adopted*, they deliberated on the course they should follow: with a just preference for the enjoyments of retirement, they yet saw the necessity of conforming *in a measure* to the manners of those around them; they also felt that society and their children had demands on them, which could not be answered, in case of withdrawing themselves entirely. Their wish therefore was to steer between the extremes of misanthropic seclusion, and its fashionable opposite, which for want of a name, must be described by a circumlocution, it is, the never being in one's own house, except on one's own night, and the being better acquainted with the concerns of other people's families than one's own. This living for the sole purpose of filling up the roll of a rout or drum-muster, and neglect of the important duties, springing from the various relations of domestic life appeared to Mr. and Mrs. Revel an absurd perversion of the purposes for which their talents and situation in life adapted them. They therefore resolved on acting so as if possible to reconcile their domestic satisfaction and employments with the maintenance of a polite intercourse with those in whose sphere they moved.

This plan required much address and delicacy. Their discernment could not always pass unheeded, the follies and absurdities of those they conversed with, nor could their justness of sentiment always allow them to palliate what was blame-worthy, while at the

same time they would put a kind construction on the errors of weakness or ignorance.

Mr Revel, though polished in his manners, and refined in his sentiments, was, notwithstanding, so far unfashionable as to think, that the slang of grooms and training-boys, was not of the first rate interest, nor the politics of the race-course, so well deserving of notice as those of Europe, in the present interesting period of 1808. He thought too, that a well supported concert, was rather more harmonious, than the yelping of a parcel of brutes; and he went so far in this unmanly taste, as to find more satisfaction in some literary discussion with an intelligent friend, than in the roaring, riotous conviviality of the heroes of the hunt, whose argument is a broad assertion, supported by a "I'll bet ten to one upon it," and their main amusement *handi-capping*. He did not think a strict attention to his household expenditure in any wise unbecoming; nor did he, with mean vanity seek the coarse and servile adulation of grooms and hostlers, by lavishing his money on them. That this did not proceed from niggardliness, was evident from the promptitude with which his purse was opened at the call of indigence. With respect to his tradespeople, his rule was, not to remain long in their debt: his mode of dealing was, *ready money, or short credit*, and both in practice and in conversation he condemned that dangerous sentiment of "generosity before justice" so insidiously set out by Sheridan, in his *Charles Surface*.

In these opinions, so far as they concern a female, Mrs. Revel perfectly coincided: while in those things, which particularly concern her own sex, her notions were as little fashionable as his. She did not think crowds and squeezing the only objects worth living for: her conduct proved this; for she avoided as much as possible the risk of suffocation or pressure; and was heard to express much more satisfaction in a fire-side *tete-a-tete* with her husband. With her children her aim was to give them every indulgence in her power, so long as she observed, they were not made pettish or capricious thereby: against this she provided by beginning early and accus-

toming them to needful restriction; and her experience, she said, enabled her to pronounce with certainty, that observation in children begins much sooner than is generally supposed. Some with whom she had conversed on this subject, maintained, that it is useless, nay, injudicious to begin to correct a child in any way before the age of four or five; as it does not begin to reason sooner, and that it is impossible otherwise to become acquainted with its natural temper.

To this she replied, that restriction, or even correction in a mild degree will be sufficient, when applied while the passions are feeble; that children reason sufficiently for this purpose at the age of eight or ten months, that if a good artificial temper can be put into the place of, or grafted on, the natural temper, it is so much the better, and that correction, delayed till the passions of the child have been strengthened by indulgence, becomes at the advanced age an arduous and painful struggle, in which the child, much as it may reason, will scarcely be persuaded, that parental affection can have any share.

On these principles she proceeded, and though the eyes of her dear friends were open to spy out some miserable effects of such misconduct, they could not observe any thing sufficient to fix blame upon: on the contrary, it was generally observed, that Mrs. Revel used less correction with her children, than most mothers around, while she possessed fully their confidence and affection.

The offspring of this amiable couple were two sons and as many daughters: the former were at an early age transferred to the care of the father, the daughters continued their studies under the inspection of their mother. The opinions entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Revel on the subject of education were as singular and as much at variance with the generally received notions, as those on other subjects: but the mention of them shall be deferred till a more convenient opportunity.

Thus far we have described characters, such, we fear, as are so rarely to be found, that we apprehend, we shall be accused of presenting, "what

never was, nor is, nor e'er shall be." But partiality has not blinded us to their defects, which originated in the infirmity of human nature. In endeavouring to keep the middle way, as they trod a narrow path, all their discernment aided by upright intention, was insufficient to keep them always steady. They would sometimes be hurried away by complaisance to their guests into a participation in the tale of slander; would wing the shaft of ridicule, and by doing so, sometimes add credibility to a malignant falsehood. Mr. Revel has been known to waste at a card table, or at a noisy club dinner the hours, he would rather have passed with his beloved family, where the scene was occasionally varied and enlivened by the visit of some person justly respected for talents and information.

Mrs. Revel too on some occasions has been known to act at variance with her feelings, and in compliance with fashion, to crowd into a room a number of people she scarcely knew by name, and whom she could not have esteemed on a more intimate acquaintance: at those times too, she has been drawn into a style of dress, which, though modest in comparison with that *authorised by fashion*, however, gave her pain in the reflection.

It must appear by this delineation, that while the visitors and acquaintances of such persons were numerous, their intimates and friends must have been few. In those admitted to the latter favoured distinction, they required information, mental refinement, benevolent feeling, and rectitude of principle. The possessors of these qualifications were admitted to the most winning confidence, and treated with respect, even though they could not make so elegant a bow as Mr. \*\*\*\* nor trifle away a whole evening with such success as Beau \*\*\*\*, nor display such white teeth as Captain \*\*\*\*. If the diamond was polished, they were the more pleased; if not, they were too discerning to throw it away, or to undervalue it.

In consequence of this out-o'-the-way mode of thinking, persons were numbered among their private and preferred visitors, who would have been laughed at as odd mortals by the coterie-kings and queens. Such beings would not

have known sequences from pair-royals, and would have been more puzzled to distinguish between trumps and honours at whist, than a grey headed politician to divide the *expedient from the right*. As to the faculty of whispering soft nonsense in the fair one's ear, so enviable, because of the certain introduction it furnishes to the favour of the fair, they were totally unqualified for it, by having obstinately conceived and supported the notion, that conversation should be an interchange of instruction.

Their disapprobation of round games, questions and commands, &c. had excited some ridicule; to them, they said, the sight of masters and misses arrived at the *YEARS of discretion*, and set down to such games was painful; but they were laughed at for their pains, as these sports in the judgment of those who practise them, were *vastly funny*.

In my humble opinion however, our friends were to blame for endeavouring to decry such amusements: for it is unjust to condemn a man for pursuing those enjoyments, which are most suited to his taste and capacity, and in this case we know "the sports of children satisfy the child."

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To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

SIR,

YOUR Commercial Reporter, for the month of September, has become the panegyrist of paper money, singing its praise above gold, *even above fine gold*, and he ventures to predict great benefit to our trade, by a general circulation of paper, and asserts that when notes become general, guineas will bear no premium, or at most a very trifling one; for he says that in England where guineas and notes are taken in payment without distinction, there is no premium on gold; but any person who has attended to our Parliamentary discussions for some years past, must be of a different opinion, particularly to the report of a committee appointed to investigate the financial difficulties of Ireland: it appeared in evidence, before that committee, that 2½ per cent. was given in London to procure gold: the unfavourable ex-

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