

any act of violence, they suffered him unrestrained to indulge his misery. For several weeks he thus continued alternately melancholy or outrageous, until one night in the latter end of July, when the neighbouring cottagers were awakened by the loudness and horror of his shrieks. For a while they continued violent, then grew fainter, and at length sunk in total silence. Early the following morning a fisherman arose to examine a kelp-kiln which he had lit the night before, when the shocking spectacle of the half-consumed maniac met his sight. The wretched sufferer, while wandering on the projecting ledge of a steep cliff, had missed his footing, tumbled down the precipice, and rolled into the blazing kiln, which burned at the base of the rock! His mutilated remains were enveloped in a piece of sail-cloth, and buried in a little green recess at the foot of the precipice from which he fell. The verdure of this spot is rendered more lively by being contrasted with the grey tints of the surrounding rocks; it is adorned by sea pinks and other marine flowers, and on no part of the romantic shores of Antrim does the traveller of taste* feel emotions more varied, or sensations more interesting, than on the spot where heaves the Madman's Grave.

Ballycastle. L.

For the *Belfast Monthly Magazine*.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE LINEN LAWS.

IT is observed in the Commercial Report of November, that the quantity of coarse linens brought to Dublin for sale in the preceding month was not large.

It is to be feared the quantity will be less in a short time, which is principally occasioned by the deficiency of the linen laws; every person must be astonished when he knows that a piece of linen can be forfeited for being forestalled; yet the law suffers flax-seed to be bought up by the opulent, and held over for a high price, as was the case last-Spring; that alone has had a material effect in making the linen scarce. Many of the farmers, and more of the low-

*Should such a traveller happen to meet this account, and wish to visit the spot it commemorates, it will be shown him by any of the cottagers, at Ballycastle-quay, on inquiring for *Port-na-Gree*.

er classes were led to believe that seed would not be had at any price; consequently part of the lands usually left for that crop, were sown with other seeds; it followed that a quantity of flax-seed was left unused.

If the spirit of monopolizing had stopt there, it would not have had so material an effect as was generally thought, great quantities of old flax, being in the country; but a number of avaricious men have stepped forward and raised the raw material to so great a height, that the poor and industrious can have little for their labour; and those unfeeling people (they cannot be otherwise termed) very industriously report that it has been shipped to England, &c. for the vile purpose of raising it yet higher.

It is to be hoped the linen-board will take this case into consideration, and make a law as much in favour of the poor spinner, as they have done for the linen buyer, who is very active in having any forestalling of linen punished, yet can overlook the practice of hoarding up flax. Gentlemen of landed property in the North of Ireland, would find it their interest to put a stop to the practice of forestalling flax or flax-seed (if possible) as it is by the profits of the linen manufacture, their rents are chiefly paid.

A FRIEND TO THE LINEN TRADE.

For the *Belfast Monthly Magazine*.

TABLE-TALK.

(Continued from Page 195, No. III.)

AS Mr. and Mrs. Revel are personages of some importance, and the notion of the *conversazione* originated with them, a formal announcement of them was needful. The other characters will unfold themselves sufficiently in the course of the conversations, with the exception of Dr. Sowerby, whose peculiarities require some explanatory introduction. He had in early youth been remarkable for unbounded inquisitiveness of temper: this is a disposition, which in children, affords the doating parents great delight, and when the little dears can tell tales of the servants, and little master can pry abroad, and pick up stories for home, the hearts of pappa and mamma are enchanted,

The Dr's parents, however, thought rather differently, not that they endeavoured to suppress, but to direct this disposition. They conceived, and perhaps not unjustly, that such a temper properly directed, might lead to desirable attainments; they therefore substituted instructive toys, for the common run of foolish ones; in the choice of books, they were rigid in banishing from his little library, the celebrated stories of Cinderilla, the Good Little Boy that grew to be a rich man, and rode in his own coach, &c. and they endeavoured to procure for him such, as while they amused, would also instruct: and as they did not approve of the general strain of the thing called morality, with which such books as the above are stuffed, they were attentive to choose books of travels, or the lives of remarkable persons, written in a familiar style. In conversation with him they cheerfully and with readiness answered the questions he asked, treating him with attentive confidence; and by directing his inquiries, and informing him according to his degree of apprehension, they anticipated the instruction, that others gain from experience or study; so that while they are commencing an acquaintance with the first principles of general knowledge, he had begun to reason from them. Hence, without remarkable talents he made an early progress: when put to the different studies in a young man's course of education, he escaped all the disgust of bending his mind to a new course of ideas, and his acquaintance with the subject he began, though not profound, was sufficient to make his entrance easy, and his continuance pleasant. In the management of his feelings, his parents do not seem to have been equally judicious: he showed a great sensibility of disposition which they rather taught him to cherish, than correct. We may lament over this error in them, while it will, it is hoped, be admitted in some measure as an excuse, that the sensibility they cherished in him was that genuine feeling, which almost instinctively melts the heart of other's woe: which will not turn aside from the pathetic application of silent misery, while the mimic of this amiable quality would shed tears

over the fate of a self-ruined heroine of romance, and so exhaust its feelings forsooth, as to have none to bestow on real objects. In him the sight of misery, and the wish to relieve, were simultaneous; nor were his wishes confined to mere expressions; they were the source of kindnesses unnumbered, dealt to the widow and the orphan; the recollection of which, often softened the pain he felt, when "back-glancing memory" presented in fresh woe, the retrospect of miseries, through which he had hardly struggled, and which in the solitude of his closet, he often and involuntarily contemplated. That he had suffered thus, is no impeachment of the conduct of his parents; but the keen anguish which remained, the vivid remembrance of the past, the exacerbation of his spirit, which however showed itself but in words; these prove the danger, as well as unkindness of that system, which converts a man into a machine to be wound up by his feelings.

Doctor Sowerby was possessed of sound sense and acute discernment, refined by literature; he devoted himself to the study of medicine; a study, which, it might be thought, would be repugnant to feelings like his; it would have been so, had his sensibility been centered in self, but he would not flee from a wretched object, and deny the help he could extend, because his feelings were unable to behold such a wretched sight. His feeling was for others, and he therefore devoted himself to that profession. It might have been expected, that the degree of intercourse he had with the variety of characters to be met with at the university, would have aided his natural good sense in correcting the anticipating sensibility imbibed under the parental care, and have served as a corrective preparatory to his entrance on the great stage of the world; but the impression was too deep, and he remained, even after the sufferings and experience of a long life, singular in his character from the bias it impressed on him.

To those, who knew him, he was an object of affection and respect: at his entrance, the smile of welcome lighted up the countenances of the master and mistress: the children were anxious to croud about him....they shook

up the cushion...placed the arm-chair near the fire, and with zealous readiness took charge of his great coat, hat, and cane. To strangers he appeared stern and morose: depravity, whether titled or plebeian, had his indignant denunciation: in his philippics against the wickedness of man (and anger sometimes made him eloquent) he would urge the utmost punishment against a crime which the law awarded: but should the wretch, whom, when absent, he would thus sternly denounce, appear in sorrow or distress to plead his misery, and implore an aid, wrath was fled, the criminal was lost in the sufferer, and the Doctor's utmost strength was exerted in his service.

With such feelings and such a line of conduct the Doctor was not qualified to make friends. He could not curb his displeasure at the defamation and scandal which rang in his ears at every party, nor could he indiscriminately bestow his smile on worth and villainy; no better guide could be required to the estimate of character in a fashionable assembly, than his countenance. The chill of displeasure, or the warm smile of approbation was seen in his speaking visage, according to the persons who addressed him; and he scrupled not openly to express his disapprobation of what, he thought, was wrong. This, most of my readers, especially those of the favoured sex, will condemn; and certainly to judge of him by the rules of politeness, and (so termed) good manners, which now guide society, would be to expose him to certain censure. He would be found to transgress against the fundamental rule of politeness, which enjoins smiles and bows, and complaisance for all, and scouts, as gothic, the notion of discriminating in the choice of guests by internal worth. As to that maxim, which confers on the fair sex the royal privilege, that a lady can do no wrong, this he could not comprehend, for, as he often expressed himself, affectation, vanity, nonsense and slander did not seem to him the less so, because they were in the female character: he allowed, he said, the power of beauty, in giving additional lustre to virtue; but, in his idea, it only rendered folly more ridiculous, and vice more detestable by the contrast.

With such opinions it is natural to

expect, that he should be voted a *horrid bore*: the ladies could not bear his preachments, and the gentlemen found fault with his free condemnation of their abuse of time. With Mr. and Mrs. Revel he was always at ease; their intelligent, refined minds prized the subjects he discussed, and his enlightened manner of treating them; while their benevolence made due allowance for the peculiarity of his behaviour.

EVENING FIRST.

On one of those evenings of rational entertainment in which they so much delighted, the low state of conversation in this country, and its pitiful substitutes, cards, scandal, or the bottle, was mentioned as matter both of surprise and regret. "Why," said Mr. Revel, "should it be, that while the French and Italians have had the good sense to carry to perfection this rational and pleasing improvement of time, we should be so far behind? When we consider the incalculable value of time, we should be careful in the husbanding of it. *Nulla dies absque linea* should be our motto, and the intercourse of polite people in society is, in my mind, permissible only when the time of meeting is devoted to the discussion of some useful topic. So strongly am I impressed with this conviction, that I would deny myself the pleasure I find in meetings like the present, only that, thanks to Dr. Sowerby and my other good friends here, I think, I reap advantage from them."

Dr. Sowerby...Sir, I have often contemplated this matter, and have felt similar regret. The character of the Irish people now ranks high, we have become known, and have proved our value by our rise in the estimation of other nations. John Bull himself, has been compelled, however reluctantly, to admit, we possess some wit, some talent, some genius; indeed he could not deny this with a good grace, when he considers, that his own affairs have been in a good measure conducted by Irishmen. And I cannot help saying I feel pleasure, as an Irishman, in having lived to see the* slander of that

* From thy Bœotia though her power
retires,
Mourn not, my Swift, at ought our realm
acquires. PUNCIAD, I. 23.

licensed libeller, Pope, so completely proved a mere slander.

I am gratified at seeing just homage paid to the merits of my countrymen in literature and arms. Yet this only makes me the more displeas'd with the present state of...no conversation, I must call it. Whenever I pay a visit, my spirits are fairly jaded with listening to the fashionable jargon: I seldom understand what I hear, and often I fruitlessly endeavour to unravel the mystery, when I have made the needful inquiries I find it to be some nonsense, not worth the listening to.

Mrs. Revel...I fear Dr. I shall be accused of giving up the cause of my sex: but truth will prevail, and I am compelled to acknowledge their share of the charge; yet, may not some of the blame fall upon the lords of the creation? If a lady shows a desire for information, or any actual attainments of a literary nature, instantly there is as great an outcry raised against her by the gentlemen, as by the *fair traders*, against the interloper. And when the hue-and-cry, is fairly a-foot, the poor being is like the bat in the fable, denied by both parties, and forced to dwell by herself; this will be her fate, if she were as beautiful as Miss H****. Now Dr. you know admiration is gratifying to any of us, and can you expect a beautiful young woman will qualify herself by informing her mind, to become a perfect Gorgon among the young men, when she finds ignorance and folly, under the name of *simplicity*, will recommend her strongly. Whether similarity of dispositions and accomplishments be attractive or not, I shall not pronounce, but this case, which daily takes place, seems to warrant the idea.

Mr. R....(smiling.) My dear, you seem inclin'd to be severe.

Who knows how long thy transmigrating
soul,

Might from Bœotian to Bœotian roll.
DUNCIAD, III. 49.

Subjoined to which is the following Note.

Bœotia lay under the ridicule of the wits formerly, as Ireland does at present, though it produced one of the greatest Poets, and one of the greatest Generals of Greece.

Bœotum crasso jurares aere natum.
HOR.

Mrs. R....Pardon me, I wish to be just, I am fully sensible, not only of the defects, but of the vices of conversation; I wish for improvement, and I have endeavoured to hint where I think the reform should begin.

Dr. S....You are perfectly right, my dear Madam. Frequently, when I have seen the pretty creatures showing their white teeth, using those gestures that would best display a fine arm, a neck, and setting themselves off *voluntarily*, as the slaves in Turkey do, at the order of their master, when he puts them through their paces before the expected purchaser, I have felt my pity for them almost swell to tears. Need I say, my indignation has been equally excited on the other hand, when I considered the conduct of their male attendants. They whiffle about, talk nonsense, grin, and if they show any energy, it is only when they set their faces against any useful conversation. Females are accustomed to look to men as their superiors in information and understanding, and they will naturally think that right, which men approve. The blame, and a deep one, therefore, must justly rest itself, with its load of infamy on the male character.

Mr. R....My sentiments are so much in unison with your's Dr. on this subject, that as Mrs. Revel has, in the name of her sex, pleaded guilty, so shall I as the representative of ours. But yet, Dr. may not this matter be carried too far? It would be exceedingly difficult, perhaps impossible, to ascertain with which party this grievous blemish has originated; but we must all agree that the evil exists, and that the present prevailing notions, contribute to continue its existence; must we not also agree, in this, that though men are severely reprehensible for the unmanly way in which they endeavour to rivet the bonds of ignorance and worthlessness on the female character, the females are equally so, who as mothers and instructresses exert themselves to debase the mind of the pupil by directing its powers to the acquisition of things they call *accomplishments*, which the reasoning mind will denominate, in this use of them, *merc baits for sensuality?*

(To be Continued.)