

PAPERS BY A RECLUSE.

No. 1.

There are various motives which impel a man to write. One individual is incited by a thirst for fame; another by a distant and too often a delusive prospect of wealth; a third grasps his pen under the influence of that Bridewell siren, necessity, who has lured him to the task by the irresistible strains of "Nothing to eat;" a fourth is seized with the Cac. Scrib.*; a fifth is actually engaged by the publisher; while a sixth claims the public ear under the conviction that he has something to say. To which of these circumstances the world is indebted for the literary advent of the writer of these papers, he deems it not its business to inquire, nor his to confess, albeit some allowance is due to a curiosity excited by the sudden appearance of a professed recluse in full hermitic costume upon the stage of busy life—but hark! he speaks:—

I crave thy sufferance, O reader, while I presume to discuss

THE WORLD AS IT IS.

By which comprehensive term I mean simply, the world as it appears to a recluse.

By virtue of my character, I claim an entire freedom from the strictly conventional rules of society. I shall therefore pursue my investigations in my own way. I shall impale man upon my insect pin, and peruse him as I would his lesser brother for whom the instrument was originally designed. I shall flit from subject to subject, and from gayety to gravity, as my whims prompt me. I claim to enter wherever the doors are thrown open to the public—nay, I claim the right even to stand amid the juveniles, and admire the tempting delicacies of a candy shop, provided that I stand in nobody's way. Having thus stated my postulates, I proceed at once to transgress a very ancient rule, by beginning at the beginning, with a glance at the condition of our common and beneficent *mother Earth*.

Though not yet presenting decided signs of senility, the old lady is by no means so youthful as she has been. By the most moderate calculation, she has been a worthy member of the planetary household for nearly six thousand years; while there are not wanting those who assert that she may justly lay claim to a far more venerable age—that the period to which her infancy is commonly assigned, is in reality that of her first season after formal presentation at the Solar Court, and that she had previously passed through a long and gloomy nonage in the nursery and shortfrocks. In what way this discovery has been made I leave to the reader's own powers of investigation, simply remarking in this place that the mode of calculation usual with a certain class of traders will not apply here, from the absence of the organs commonly inspected; unless

* Scribbler's itch.—*Printer's Dev.*