

PAPERS BY A RECLUSE.

No. 7.

I am tired of this nineteenth century. It may be all very well, by way of variety, to have one's nervous system now and then shaken up by the occasional occurrence of something new; but this interminable pop—pop—popping of novelties on all sides, like the explosion of fire crackers on an American Fourth of July is intolerable. Here is one genius who has discovered the North West Passage; there another who has demonstrated the combustibility of water (hydraulic candles will, doubtless, at no distant date, light the coal gas innovation to its last resting place); and still another who, diving deep into the ocean of nature's mysteries, has brought up a new and improved method of marking shirts. Miss Columbia, fretting at the stupid obstinacy with which her poor dear mamma, Britannia, persists in retaining for her own use the little property known as "the Waves," has determined in a fit of envy, to acquire for herself, on the principle of squatter sovereignty, an exclusive right to the dominion of the Winds; indeed, had it not been for a few trifling accidents and impossibilities, our newspaper publishers might ere now, have enjoyed the opportunity of urging their numerous readers, by means of flash advertisements, respectable certificates, and bought-and-paid-for editorial recommendations, to patronize the great Atlantic ærial line of puff-packets, as affording the shortest, easiest, and most direct passage from the new to the old world.

Not to speak of the other mammoth monstrosities of our age—railroads, steamboats, electric telegraphs, &c.—I need only direct any man's attention to the various articles of his personal and household arrangements, to convince him of the restless and unsatisfied condition of the world around him. Every button on his clothes is patented. He pulls off his patent-leather boots by means of a patent boot-jack. He sits upon his patent-bottomed chair by his patent-folding dining table, and eats his patent-softened beef with his patent knife and fork, and munches with a set of patent teeth a slice of patent loaf cut by a patent bread-slicer. But these things are trifles. *Colum ipsum petimus stultitia.* Gentle reader, if thou art of the good old school, and hast not been bitten by any of the mad dogs of Neosophy, what thinkest thou of the century which has produced Joe Smith and the Book of Mormon; what of the century which has seen tables, articles of a proverbially staid disposition, and which were never known to indulge in any thing beyond a "roar," suddenly become frisky, and cut capers that would do credit to Harlequin; what of the century in which the dead are summoned to the presence of the living to reply to the dread question, How many blue beans make