

are already three-quarters full of dockweed and dead cats.

Look at the population, too! People go on increasing and multiplying as if they never intended to leave off. Hundred and hundreds of people are coming into the world who have no right to be born. The world is as full as it can hold already, there is positively no room for any more. There was nothing like the number of children to be seen about the streets when I was a boy as there is now. I have sometimes half a mind to ask those lubberly boys that I see about the streets, what right they had to be here; but perhaps they would make me some impertinent answer, for they swagger about as if they thought that they had as good a right to be here as any one else. They should be ashamed of themselves for existing to the manifest inconvenience of gentlemen and ladies to whom they are exceedingly annoying.

Look at the reform bill, that sink of innovation, to speak metaphorically; that climax of novelty, that abominable poke in the ribs of our constitution, the destroyer of all that is venerable. Its opponents have been accused of talking nonsense against it. Very likely they have talked nonsense, for they have been so flabbergasted at the innovation, that they have not known what they have been saying.

If things go on changing at this rate for the next hundred years as they have done of late, we shall scarcely have a relic of the good old times left. The weather is not as it used to be when I was a boy.—Oh! those were glorious old times when we had sunshine all through the summer, and hard frost all through the winter, when for one half of the year we could bathe every day, and for the other half could skate every day. There is nothing of that sort now. If a man buys a pair of skates in the winter, it is sure to thaw next day; and if a boy buys a pair of corks one day, there is sure to be a hard frost next morning. There is nothing but wet weather all through the winter, and no dry weather all through the summer. Formerly we used to have an eclipse or two in the course of the year, and we used to look at it through smoked glass, and very good fun it was, only it used to make our noses black, if we did not take care to hold the glass properly. If we look into the almanac for an eclipse, we are sure to see that it is invisible in these parts; and even if it is visible we can never see it, for there is always cloudy weather. I scarcely know any thing that is now as it used to be when I was a boy. Day and night have not quite changed places, but night and morning have. What used to be Sunday morning, when I was a little boy, has now, by strange mutation, become Saturday night. I wonder why people cannot dine at dinner-time as they used to do; but every thing is in disorder, a wild spirit of innovation has seized men's minds, and they will do nothing as they used to do, and as they ought to do. Things went on well enough when I was a boy; we had not half the miseries and calamities that one sees and hears now. What an absurd

and ridiculous invention is that nasty, filthy gas? The buildings where it is made look like prisons outside, and like infernal regions within; and there always is some accident or other happening with it: people have their houses blown up, and it serves them right, for they have no business to encourage such now-fangled trimmery. The streets used to be lit up well enough with the good old-fashioned oil lamps, which were quite good enough for our ancestors, and I think they might have done for us; but any thing for innovation! I must confess I like to see the good old greasy lamp-lighters and their nice flaring torches, they were fifty times better than the modern gas-light men with their little hand lamps, like so many Guy Fawkes.

And what harm have the poor old watchmen done, I wonder, that they must be dismissed to make room for a set of new police men and blue coats? The regular old legitimate watchmen were the proper and constitutional defenders of the streets, just as regular as the king is the defender of the faith, and a more harmless set of men than the watchmen never existed; they would not hurt a fly. Things went on well enough when they had the care of the streets.

But innovations are not confined to the land, they have even encroached upon the water. Were not London, Blackfriars, and Westminster bridges enough in all conscience? What occasion was there for Waterloo bridge? a great, overgrown, granite monster, that cost ten times more than it is worth. And what occasion for Southwark bridge and Vauxhall bridge? Our ancestors could go to Vauxhall over Westminster or Blackfriars bridge. But of all the abominable innovations, none ever equalled the impudence of New London bridge. It was not at all wanted. I have been over the old one hundreds and hundreds of times. It is a good old bridge that has stood the test of ages, and it ought to have been treated with respect for very antiquity's sake. As for people being drowned in going under the bridge, nonsense! they would never have been drowned if they had done as I did—I always made a point of never going under it: and besides, if people are to be drowned, they will be drowned elsewhere if they are not here.

Talk of innovation, what can be a more outrageous innovation than steam-boats? They have frightened the fish out of the river already, and if they go on increasing as they have done of late, they will frighten the fish out of the sea too; and I should like to know where all the fishes are to go then? We shall be in a pretty mess, if they all come ashore. Besides, the sea is obviously made to sail upon, or else what is the use of the wind? And if we have nothing but steam-boats, what will be come of the sail-makers? People in these revolutionary times care nothing about vested interests. I hate innovation. I hate every thing that is new. I hate new shoes, they pinch my feet; I hate new hats, they pinch my forehead; I hate new coats, they put me in mind of tailor's bills. I

hate every thing new, except the New Monthly Magazine and I like to hear of the editor rejecting my articles.

Devoted to Select Fictions, Sketches from Biography, Natural and Civil History, Poetry, Anecdotes, the Arts, Essays, and interesting Miscellany.

HAMILTON, FEBRUARY 11, 1836.

*The Closet.*—We have reached our haven at length, and cast hope's anchor once more on the bed of futurity's ocean. And shall we be again dragged from our moorings? Prudence forebode it! The sky-winders with which we have been battle-doored into the darkest clouds—the sweeping thumps by which we have been racketed along, from pillow to post—the dizzy whirls with which we have been spun around by those who have made it their boast to toy with us—all these “shivering shocks” have so bewildered our brains that we should doubt the reality of our present situation, were it not for the repeated assurances of kind and attentive friends who trip as cautiously into our little cage as if they dreaded upsetting it, peering as inquisitively as though entering the gallery of fine arts, and venting the first impulse of surprise with “So you are here!”—or, “This is the Casket office!”—“or, perhaps, forgetting alike the weather and the irritability of genius, reminding us of the mortifying necessities which pushed on the event, with—“Ha! moved again.” Such unremitted hunches and hints have inspired us with a degree of something like confidence and security, though we are still, for all the world, in the very temperament to paint a day after the ball.

But at last the gossiping train have all satisfied their caprice, and left us to reconcile our perplexity by communion with Solitude. This is our natural element—the peculiar bent of our childhood. We could never profit much by the intercourse of society, nor the instructions of a second person. When a school-boy, we were sometimes put to the nonplus by the ambiquity of an arithmetical problem, and such extremes would push us into the yawning presence of our tutor; but, alas for the credit of his inseparable companion! we always forgot every word from the former, as soon as uttered, and avoided the more lasting impressions of the latter by nodding to keep up appearances; and finally retired to our bench and solved the enigma alone. So have we grown up, with our insinative nods, yeas, and amens, while the only real commerce which we carry on with society is by our agents, the *three necessities* and the Press.

But now to the point. To say that we have been in some confusion is needless. To apologize for the many brittle promises which we have lavished upon the public, would be too much like looking over a large bill of rotten corks, &c., where we had had the misfortune to trip up a dining-table sagging beneath its load. But *Prudence* be our motto in future—not forgetting the “*Nec desit ju-*