

choice spirits, (no offence is meant to the promoters of the Maine Law.) But "shanty" is a strange name for that place where you luxuriate. In my time, a shanty was a place as innocent of chimney, door, window, or floor (save some hewn bass-wood slabs perhaps,) as Paul De Kock's and Reynolds' books are of decency, or common sense. If you would wander in my direction, I could show you a place of the kind, wherein a friend of yours lived near twenty years syne, and that a remnant thereof is still left, proves that elm logs are not bad material for house building. Such a shanty as your's, transplanted to the *real* backwoods, would gain the reputation of having been built by some rich gentleman, who was able to pay the highest price for flour and pork, and likely to let out some fat contracts in land clearing. By-the-bye, I had some advice to give you about these kind of "jobs," but forgot it; never mind, the loss is small; and as your shanty, seems a snug box for an old man to spend an hour in, and your company somewhat of the funniest, I say you may expect at one of your "sederunts," to meet with your casual contributor, the "old settler."

R.

THE CHRONICLES OF DREEPDAILY.

No. IV.

TOUCHING THE SECOND COURTSHIP OF THE DOW-
AGER LADY SOUROCKS, AND THE ISSUE THEREOF.

AFTER Lady Sourocks had given the mitten to Beau Balderston, as recorded in the preceding chapter of these most veracious Chronicles, she, to a great extent, sequestered herself from the din and blandishments of society. Whether this resolution was come to in consequence of wounded pride or a damaged heart, I must leave to the determination of the learned. But, if I might hazard a conjecture, I should say, that, considering the ripe senectitude (as Mr. Paumy hath it) of the dame, Cupid had little to say in the matter. The truth is, that the notions of equality imported from France, along with lace and fancy soaps, had worked an unwholesome change upon the manners of the rising generation of Dreepdaily, prompting them to dispense with the respect which they had been wont to pay to the gentry. Time was, when the appearance of her ladyship on the Main Street, was the signal for a universal dropping of curtsies and doffing of Kilmarnock bonnets. Now, however, she could hardly show face, without being greeted with jeering interrogations about

the health of her ancient admirer, coupled with titling inquiries as to whether the wedding-day had yet been fixed.

In these circumstances, it was not much to be wondered at, that the scandalized dowager should withdraw herself as much as possible from a world which had been turned upside down; or that saving and excepting her periodical visits to the kirk, she was seldom seen beyond the precincts of her mansion.

The leading proportion of her time was devoted to antiquarian pursuits, and to the arrangement and cultivation of her museum, on which she set no small store.

This said museum, which had been accumulating for upwards of twenty years, was the wonder and pride of the whole country-side. Many opined that there was not its equal or marrow within the boundaries of the three United Kingdoms, not even excepting the host of curiosities in the Glasgow College, about which the student lads of Dreepdaily and its vicinity made such a boast.

As my duties made me, in a manner, a member of her ladyship's establishment, I can bear witness that fame had not exaggerated the multiform marvels of her museum.

It boasted of a specimen of everything rare and anti-deluvian, whether in nature or art. Touching the former, her ladyship's presses (cabinets she called them) and shelves were crowded, chock-full, with what might be denominated the "stickit" or spoiled handiworks of Nature, or productions which she had fashioned in moments of whim or eccentricity. There could be seen cats with two tails,—sheep with three legs,—owls sporting bats wings,—and toads covered with feathers, like black-birds. The store of warlike weapons, of the olden time, might have armed a whole regiment, and the ancient coins provided them with a day's pay in advance.

Then as to books, you would have been ready to make affidavit, that their owner had got the plundering of some of the convents or monasteries in the days of the Reformation! The very smell of them, as Dr. Scougall often used to observe, was enough to inoculate an ignoramus with learning! I much question whether the Moderator of the General Assembly, who composed his sermons in Hebrew, and wrote his dinner invitations in Greek, had read even the title-page of a tithe of them.