



THE EDITOR'S SHANTY.

SIDERUNT XII.

[SCENE:—*The Shanty. Major and Laird sitting crooning over the fire.*]

MAJOR.—What weather! rain, rain, rain. Where is it to end? Did you ever see anything like it, Laird? Oh! there is another twinge. Hang it, man, throw on another log.

LAIRD.—Whisht, whisht, Major, ane wad think that ye're 'na ower gratefu' for the meercies o' Providence. The saft weather, though a wee bit cauld, will bring on the grain noo buried in the earth, and the grass and flower o' the forest will rejoice in—

MAJOR.—Drat the grass and forest flowers! A week's fair weather and genial sunshine would do more for the fields, and man, 'oo, than all last month's storm, and wind, and rain, and frost, and—

LAIRD.—Haud now,—frost?

MAJOR.—Frost, as I live! and *May* more than half gone. [*Enter Doctor.*] I'll leave it to the Doctor.

DOCTOR.—And what are you two old fogies fighting about, now. The weather, I'd bet a pound, to judge from your positions over the fire.

MAJOR.—Yes, this infernal, cold, damp, raw and blustering weather. We had frost last night, had we not, Doctor?

DOCTOR.—I cannot say, considering I am not an early riser, but an application to the Observatory—

MAJOR.—I can observe well enough for myself. I was up at day break, and the puddles were covered with ice.

DOCTOR.—Then, Major, you are, doubtless, right; but the weather is a stale subject to talk upon, and I have a little story that I hope will interest you while supper is preparing.

MAJOR.—Let us have it by all means, or our sederunt will be most barren; there is nothing, positively nothing going on at this unhappy season of the year, when the wind and rain and fog and damp combine to render man—

DOCTOR.—Stop, Major, for pity's sake. I have been delighted at lately witnessing another instance of the liberality of our publishers in furnishing the public at a moderate rate, with specimens of art, which a few years ago were exclusively the property of the wealthy. I have been inspecting a painting which blends the historical with the poetical, and while intently examining the work, I fancied I could read the whole tale the canvas would portray.

LAIRD.—An' what might it be?

DOCTOR.—It is a painting illustrative of fashionable life. To the right may be seen a large and handsome house, decorated externally with unusual magnificence. This house, now, I would suppose to be occupied by some rich personage, who, after serving, for many years his king and country, retires, on the death of his wife, to this his habitation, accompanied by his secretary, who assists him in winding up his public affairs. The statesman, for so I will call him, has a young and beautiful daughter of "sweet seventeen," as all heroines of tales are; the secretary, who is also good-looking, clever, witty, but poor, meets our heroine and falls in love. It is not to be supposed that the father would countenance any such proceedings, either on the part of the secretary or of his daughter, and to avoid the possibility of such a catastrophe he dismisses the secretary on the completion of his duties. But it is too late, they have seen each other and declared their mutual passion.

LAIRD.—Puir things!

DOCTOR.—But, before going further, I'll des—