

for the inspection of his brother, and great was his brother's admiration.

"What may be their value Peter?" inquired Paul.

"Between ourselves Paul," replied Peter, "I would not part with the lot under a thousand guineas?"

"A thousand guineas!" ejaculated the student in surprise, "do you say so?"

"Yes, I say it," answered the painter with importance—"look ye Paul,—observe this bridal party at the altar,—see the blush on the bride's cheek, the joy in the bridegroom's eye—is it not natural?—and look at the grouping!—observe the warmth of the colouring, the breadth of effect, the depth of shade, the freedom of touch!—now, tell me candidly as a brother, is it not a gem?"

"It is certainly beautiful," answered Paul.

"I tell you what," continued the artist, "though I say it who should not say it, I have seen worse things sold for a thousand guineas."

"You don't say so?" responded the astonished student, and he wished that he had been an artist instead of a scholar.

"I do," added Peter, "and now Paul, what do you think I intend to do with the money which this will bring?"

"How should I know brother?" returned the other.

"Why then," said he, "I am resolved to pay off the mortgage on our father's property, that the old man may spend the remainder of his days in comfort."

Paul wept, and taking his brother's hand said, "and if you do, the property shall be yours Peter."

"Never brother!" replied the other—"rather than rob you of your birthright I would cut my hand off!"

The pictures were again packed up, and the brothers went out in quest of the Secretary to the exhibition, in order to have them submitted to the Committee for admission. The Secretary received them with politeness; he said he was afraid that they could not find room for so many pieces as Mr. Donaldson mentioned, for they wished to give every one a fair chance, but he desired him to forward the pictures and he would see what could be done for them. The paintings were sent, and Peter heard no more of them for a week, when a printed catalogue and perpetual ticket were sent to him with the Secretary's compliments. Peter's eyes

ran over the catalogue—at length they fell upon "No. 210. *A Bridal Party—P. Donaldson*," and again, "No. 230. *Dead Game—P. Donaldson*," but his name did not again occur in the whole catalogue. This was a disappointment, but it was some consolation that his favorite piece had been chosen.

Next day the exhibition opened, and Peter and Paul visited it together. The "Bridal Party" was a small picture with a modest frame, and they anxiously sought round the room in which it was said to be placed, but they saw it not. At length, "here it is," said Paul—and there indeed it was, thrust into a dark corner of the room, the frame touching the floor, literally crushed and overshadowed beneath a glaring battle piece, six feet in length, and with a frame seven inches in depth. It was impossible to examine it without going upon your knees. Peter's indignation knew no bounds. He would have torn the picture from its hiding-place, but Paul prevented him. They next looked for No. 230, and to increase the indignation of the artist, it, with twenty others, was huddled into the passage, where, as Milton saith, there was

"No light, but rather darkness visible."

Or as Spencer hath it—

"A little gloomy light much like a shade."

For fourteen days did Peter visit the exhibition and return to the lodgings of his brother, sorrowful and disappointed. The magical word SOLD was not yet attached to the painting which was to redeem his father's property.

One evening, Paul being engaged with his pupils, the artist had gone into a tavern, to drown the bitterness of his disappointment for a few moments with a bottle of ale. The keenness of his feelings had rendered him oblivious, and in his abstraction and misery he had spoken aloud of his favourite painting the *Bridal Party*. Two young gentlemen sat in the next box; they either were not in the room when he entered, or he did not observe them. They overheard the monologue to which the artist had unconsciously given utterance; and it struck them as a prime jest to lark with his misery. The words "Splendid piece yon *Bridal Party*!"—"Beautiful!"—"Production of a master!"—"Wonderful that it sold in such a bad light and shameful situation!" fell upon Peter's