

exposure of the innocency of the simpleton was calculated to afford to all present was disturbed at this juncture by the entrance of Mr Keelevin.

"I'm glad, gentlemen," said he the moment he came in, "that I have found you here. I think you must all be convinced that the investigation shouldna gang farther. I'm sure Mr Walter will be willing to grant a reasonable consideration to his mother for her care and trouble in the house, and even to assign a moiety o' his income to you, Mr George. Be counselled by me: let us settle the matter in that manner quietly."

Pitwinnoch winked to his client, and Watty said—

"What for should I gie my mother ony more? Hasna she bed, board, and washing, house-room and chattels, a' clear aboon her jointure? And, I'm sure, Geordie has nae lawful claim on me for ony aliment. Od, Mr Keelevin, it would be a terrible wastrie o' me to do the like o' that. They might weel mak me daft if I did sae."

"But it will be far decenter and better for a' parties to enter into some agreement of that sort—don't you think so, Mrs Walkinshaw?—rather than to go on with this harsh business of proving your son an idiot."

"I'm no an idiot, Mr Keelevin," exclaimed Walter, "though it seems to me that there's a thraw in the judgment o' the family, or my mother and brother would ne'er hae raised this stramash about my capacity to take care o' the