

He that had Received the Five Talents.

work wi' him, and it's just play wi' me. But it's a kin' o' play that I wadna like tae gie up. It doesna dae a body ony harm, and I canna help thinkin' that it does me gude. Sometimes when I'm working among my pansies in the simmer gloamin', and I see their bonny een turned up tae me, I feel amaisht as if it was my ain bairns that were lookin' at me sae kind-like. But,"—and the honest mechanic checked himself as if he had allowed sentiment to carry him too far—"that 'minds me that it was ane o' my ain bairns—oor Geordie—I was wantin' tae speak tae ye about. Will ye no step in, and gie us a crack for a wee?"

"I would have been very well pleased to stop and enjoy a talk wi' you; but I promised to be at the manse by eight o'clock, and I don't like to keep the minister waiting."

"Weel," said the smith, "if ye dinna object, I'll tak' a walk doon tae the manse wi' ye; and we can talk about Geordie on the road. Just wait till I put on my coat."

And the smith, who had been cooling in the evening air the feverish heat of his over-worked arms, turned with a quick step into the cottage, and re-appeared in few seconds dressed for the road. The subject on which he wanted the schoolmaster's advice