

ed up by a kindly disposed-cobbler once or twice, but even then were in a deplorable condition, and his great coat was still a thing to be dreamed of on a cold winter's night. Running home as fast as he could from school one midday he noticed a little piece of paper whirling over, and over, and over along the pavement. Of course Johnny chased it, and clutched hold of it after a pretty good run, and then when he unfolded it he saw written on it (for he could read quite well) something about **five Pounds**, in large black queer letters.

Those two words had a strange fascination for him, and, with his eyes fixed upon them, he carried the paper to his mother.

"Lor, child!" she exclaimed, in a faint gasping way, "where on earth did you get this? It's a five-pound note!"

"What's that, mother?" asked Bob, eyeing her in amazement.

"Why it's five pounds, child," she replied.

"Five pounds!" echoed Johnny. "Oh, mother, how much does great coats, and frocks and jackets, and boots and shoes—?" Then suddenly he stopped short, for he guessed what his mother was thinking about. "It's a temptation; God forgive me, it is!" she said to herself in a low voice. Then sitting down, she questioned Johnny.

"We must find the owner of this money," she said, firmly. "It isn't ours, you know, Johnny, no more than if it was in the person's pocket that lost it. We might just as well put our hands in and take it out, as to spend it. 'T isn't ours at all, d'ye see, child?"

"Yes, mother," the little fellow replied wistfully.

Johnny's mother folded it up and locked it in her work-box. Then she went to one or two of the shop-people who knew her, and asked them to put in their windows that a bank-note had been found, and might be had by anyone who could describe the number written in the corner of it.

Although Johnny had told no one, it somehow leaked out, and he was tormented out of his life by his school-fellows. "If it's true, Johnny, as you've found five pounds, why don't you get some boots?" some one would say; and when Johnny replied that it wasn't his to spend, and his mother was going to give it back to the person who lost it, there would be a shout of derisive laughter, and many taunting remarks, intimating that the story was all a make-up, and so on.

But somehow these unkind remarks made Johnny feel the more disposed to uphold his mother, and whereas he had before felt rather doubtful whether God expected poor folks like them to be so very particular, now he felt that he would not spend that money on any account whatever.

Now, strange to say, no one claimed the bank-note; the papers tumbled out of the windows and were not replaced, for the shop-people had grown tired of seeing them there, but no inquiries were made, and the magical piece of paper with **five Pounds** printed on it, laid in Mrs. Goodman's work-box doing no good to anybody.

Towards the winter Johnny's mother fell ill, and there was a terrible to-do, for she was a widow, poor thing, and had no one but herself to keep her three little children. It went to Johnny's young heart to see her lying there so sick and ill, with no tempting food and no one to wait upon her except himself when he was home from school, for the other two were younger than he was. It was no wonder she did not get better, but it was very sad, for the rent was getting behind, and their landlord was a threatening sort of man.

One Saturday evening when things were very bad indeed, there came into Johnny's mind what he had quite forgotten.—the five-pound note. That would buy his mother all sorts of nice things and pay the rent, and clothe and feed them all, Johnny firmly believed. It was stupid of his mother to keep it all this time, he thought, for the owner couldn't

wait it, or he'd have come to fetch it. If he spent it his mother would not know until it was done, and how thankful she'd be for the nice things. He knew where she kept her keys, and he had a very great mind to open the box and take out the precious little piece of paper.

He went and fetched the key, and even put it in the lock, but when it came to that Johnny could go no further. His mother had brought him up so strictly never to do a deceitful thing, that somehow Johnny couldn't open that box. He had what he called such a strong "don't like" come over him that the key fell from his fingers, and he quite trembled at what he was doing. So Johnny's mother didn't have the nice things after all, the landlord came and made a noise, and the little boy cried himself to sleep, thinking what a nasty, bad world it was.

Next morning he dressed Bob and Liz very carefully and took them to church, having first done what he could for his mother. There was no dinner but bread-and-butter, so there was no need for any one to stay at home about that.

Johnny was very fond of church, and he soon forgot his troubles, what with the service and looking after the children. Bob was just learning to read, and of course he must have all his places found, and little Liz must have a book because her brothers did, and would have it opened fresh every time they did.

Now just behind them sat a lady, who watched with much interest the three shabby little children. And it chanced that outside the church door she came upon them again.

"There's goes Five Pound Jack!" cried out a boy who went to school with Johnny, and had come that morning to church with another boy.

Johnny fired up, and told the boy to mind his own business; then the other boy burst out laughing in Johnny's face, and scampered away, leaving Johnny crimson with anger and shame, for several ladies and gentlemen were looking very hard and suspiciously at the children.

"What did he mean?" asked the lady who had sat behind them.

"He means that I pretended I'd found five pounds, and that I'd told stories about it, and I ain't, for I never said nothin' about it; but it's quite true, for mother's got it now takin' care of it," stammered Johnny, between his shyness of the lady and anger at Joe Scott's rude behaviour.

"Do you mean to say you found five pounds?" the lady asked in astonishment.

"Yes, ma'am," Johnny replied, casting his eyes up and down her fur jacket, and wondering what it must feel like to be inside that.

"Well, how strange! when did you find it?" the lady asked.

"Near the 'ginning of the winter," Johnny replied.

"Well, I do believe that was mine," said the lady.

"It's all right, then; mother's got it safe at home," said Johnny, delightedly. "Won't you come and see her, ma'am?"

The lady readily accompanied the children, and found Johnny's mother very weak and ill. Mrs. Goodman was soon satisfied that the lady was really the owner of the money, for she had got written down in a little book some figures which were exactly the same as those in the corner of the paper Johnny had found. She had been going about to a great many different parts of London on the day when she lost it, so that when she found it was gone she had not any idea whereabouts she had dropped it. She quite concluded that it must have been in one of the shops in the city where she had been making purchases, and had never even thought of enquiring so near home.

All the while his mother and the lady were talking Johnny looked solemn and miserable, and when presently the lady praised him for his honesty he could stand it no longer.

"I nearly was taking it last night," he said, in a broken, miserable voice; and then he told them all the temptation that had come to him.

When he saw his mother's delight that he had not touched it, how pleased he was, and how sorry to think he should ever have thought to do such a thing. His simple story showed the lady a great deal that Mrs. Goodman would never have told her of the sad condition of the poor family, and as she was kind and good, she made up her mind that they should not suffer for their honesty.

"Look here, Johnny, my boy," she said, kindly. "I am going to take away that five-pound note because it belongs to me, and if I were to give it to you it would be like paying you for being honest. But I very much want a little boy to come and clean knives and boots, and if your mother will let you come directly after school you can have some tea at my house and then do your work, and you shall have two shillings a week to begin. I know I shall be able to trust you after this five-pound note."

Johnny's mother gladly consented, and the next day the little fellow went to his work. How happy he felt at being actually able to earn something every week!

When he sat down to his comfortable meal he wished his mother could have some of the plenty he saw round him, and this thought made him rather sad over his work. But when he was going, the lady of the house came down to him and put a basket into his hands, which he guessed directly had something nice in it. And so it had: nor was that the last that Johnny carried home.

At first he got on only poorly with his work, but by degrees he grew quick and clever, and then his kind mistress gave him more money.

She found him a warm coat too, and some boots, besides things for the other children, so that altogether, whichever way he looked at it, Johnny could never feel thankful enough that his mother had made him a really honest boy.

CLEVER BERTIE.

It was late August; if fruit was plentiful so also were the wasps, who are fond of it and of other sweet things. Little Bertie had often wondered what great tall people were so very frightened of anything so small; he saw them jump up from their seats, leave their pudding or pie (which he would not have done on any account), go into corners of the room—and all because a black and yellow wasp had come buzzing up to them! "It will sting!" that is what they told Bertie, but without succeeding in frightening him; indeed, it was only by watching him closely that he could be kept from touching the wasps with his inquisitive little fingers. And now a chance has come! The child is alone, and a wasp has settled on his plump rosy arm, but he is not going to cry or call. He knows that the spoon is sweet and sticky, and he is sharp enough to think he will offer it to the uninvited visitor—he does not know that his mother coming in at the open door is watching him, not until the wasp is busy in the sticky feast presented to it.

Then she calls him "Clever Bertie!" for every little thing done by this darling of hers is wonderful in her eyes, which see through the magnifying glass of love, the love which God has implanted within her for her children.

WHEN we are alone, we have our thoughts to watch; in the family, our tempers; in company, our tongues.

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