

"Oh no, Aunt Hatt, but Georgie's heart is in the concern, and when pay-day comes he thinks it so manly to go round with a can of whiskey helping to serve the men. Then sometimes some of the hands won't drink unless Georgie takes a little too. They think a pile of Georgie, so they do. They say he has a heart large enough for a king. But, oh! Aunt Hatt, the fighting, and cursing and swearing that they have sometimes, ma! it is awful!"

"But, Jack, does his mother know that he frequents such places?"

"Perhaps she knows something about it, but he is such a favorite with all the men at the mill that every one tries to shield him, and hide his faults. And the old cook won't hear of him going home till he is as sober as a judge."

"Well, Jack, you ought to talk to him in a friendly manner about it."

"So I did, aunt. I had a long talk with him once, and he listened attentively; then he turned round to me and said: 'Jack, I won't thank you for that speech, for I heard it all before, from my cracked aunt.' Then he walked off in high temper. So, that is all the news I have to tell you."

"I am very sorry, indeed, to hear such news; and now just stop, Jack, till I tell you something. Your intended uncle will be here in a few days, to take away his Lucy. Perhaps, I may have to go home to mother, for she can't live alone. How will you like that, my boy?"

"In some ways I would like it very well, and in some ways I would not."

"In what way would you like it, tell me?"

"'Cause, replied Jack, sometimes, when pa and ma, are out we could get up a fine game, only you won't let us make a noise. You always watch us so. Tell you what, we don't like it a bit. I would like you far better, Aunt Hatt, if you were not so cross."

"Well, Jack, you are very candid, at any rate; but can't you help, or teach me to be better natured?"

"No, indeed, aunt, me to teach you! You're too old. You could not be taught now. So, as ma says, we must just bear with you. But, still, I would not care about you going either, for everybody knows that lame aunts are a useful institute, for they are always in the house, when everybody else is out, or wanting to go out, and you are real handy to sew on a button, or tell me where to get my lunch. Oh! here's Ned. Ned, Aunt Hatt is going away, to stay, perhaps."

"You're not tho', are you? said Ned, "If you do go you'll be sure to come back, when we want you to stay with us, won't you? And I'll be your little boy, Aunt Hatt."

Kind reader, I had almost forgotten the time-honored custom. I will now introduce you to my friends. Grandma Barton, as she was usually called, lived in a neat little stone cottage of her own. She had two daughters unmarried. One well up in years. She was the aunt Hatt, already mentioned, and had lived with her brother James for years. She was almost a cripple. Lucy, the youngest,