

"I don't think I will send him, ma'am; there is something wrong with him. Besides being so clownish and homely, he is weak-minded."

"Mrs. Barton saw the poor boy's lips quiver, so, with great presence of mind, she took a hamper and gave it to the boy, saying, as she did so, 'I will see about that. Will you fill this with chips for me before they get too wet?' Quickly he ran for them. Then turning round, she laid her hand on Mrs. Walsh's shoulder, saying, 'I am surprised at you. Oh, how could you make that heartless remark before your child? Why, if he were not weak-minded, it is enough to make him so. Depend upon it, those words will eat like a canker in his memory while he lives; and, as for coarse visage, can he help that? You ought to have care and sympathy for him. Depend upon it, my good woman, education, with a careful training, helps to improve even the countenance. By your keeping him in the background, as you are doing, you just foster shyness; until, by-and-bye, it will grow to insanity. Never show partiality to your boys. Give them an equal chance, for, how do you know but your good-looking, clever boy may turn out a scape-grace, and this weak-minded one may be chosen of God.'"

"Oh! Mrs. Barton, I never thought that I was doing wrong."

"Then," replied the other, "it is time you thought and acted too."

Just then the door was opened gently, and the boy entered with a basket of chips, and shyly set them down.

Mrs. Barton patted him on the head, saying, "What a fine lot you gathered. You are a clever lad, and I see no weakness about you. Would you like to go to school?"

"Yee'm," he said, in a whisper. "Then, Mrs. Walsh, you must send him. He will soon show you what a boy can do."

"And so, Mrs. Lunt, you think it is the same young man, this Cliff, and that he and his father have taken ship for Europe?"

"Why, yes, Mrs. Burney; you see my husband, Ben, works about the station some, and he saw and heard the old gentleman telling that a troublesome law suit required their presence at home. He had wound up this business, or left it to others to do, I don't mind. I hope they will stay there, for they are a bad set."

"What is the matter with the little girl? She seems very ill."

"Yes, ma'am, it is Mr. Barton's motherless child. She has been sick some time. First it was worm fever, but now it is inflammation of the membrane of the lungs."

"Mrs. Lunt, I have some herbs at home might give her some relief. If not, it would do no harm to try."

"Oh, I would feel so much obliged to you."

Soon, nurse Burney, went and returned, bringing Gussie with her. The herbs were tried without effect. The poor sufferer was sinking fast. It's constant cry was, "Walk with Tottie. Sing ful Tottie." Out of one arm into another, it was all the same; "Walk ful Tottie. Sing ful Tottie." It was no easy matter, when the heart was full, to walk and sing too.