

CHAPTER IX.

AUNT MARY'S BIRTHDAY.

THE day after the treat aunt Mary went over to Abbotsbury—that was the name of the town where we lived—to buy a great many things that we wanted; for Linwick was a very little village, a very little village indeed, with scarcely any shops in it but a baker's and a butcher's. The first day that we came to the village, Mrs. Tubbs told aunt Mary very gravely that we should get the best of possible meat in Linwick, because the butcher killed *himself* every week. She meant that he bought sheep and bullocks and fed them on his own pastures, and then killed them, instead of going to the next town to buy his meat as many village butchers do; but it sounded very much as if he chopped himself up and sold himself out in joints to the people once a week. Aunt Mary looked very funny when she heard this, but Mrs. Tubbs did not seem to see any fun in it at all.

So we were left to take care of ourselves for a