

"Perhaps they should have known better," corrects the teacher.

"I think it was too bad!" exclaims Millie.

"I s'pose he eat 'em right up," remarks Patrick meditatively.

"What should Patrick have said, Louise?"

"I suppose he ate them," amends that proper little girl.

"Yes. Now, Patrick, suppose you try again."

"I suppose he ate them," repeats the boy, imitating exactly the intonation of his small critic. It being impossible to discover from his perfectly serious countenance, whether this was unconscious or intentional, the teacher concludes to ignore it altogether, which she does by resuming her narrative.

"Now just about this time the geese thought that they would go down to the pond to get some nice grass; and there was the papa-goose and the mamma-goose, and all the little—" writes; "Goslings!" chorus the children.

"After they had walked a'long a little way, they thought they heard a queer—" writes; "Noise!" said the class; "and they stopped to—" writes; "Listen!" pronounce the class; "and they could hear the fox going 'Yow! yow! yow!' and all the ducks going 'Quack! quack! quack!' 'We must go and see about that,' said the papa-goose. So the mamma goose called to the little goslings to follow, and they too all went up the fox's hole."

This announcement creates quite a sensation, one tender-hearted little girl exclaiming "Oh, dear!" as the teacher makes it.

"But Mr. Fox," resumes the narrator, "was very polite, and bowed to them, and said, 'Good-morning, Mr. Goose; and 'Good-morning, Mrs. Goose; and how are all the little goslings? Walk in.' So they went in and sat down and began to—" writes, "Talk!" respond the chorus.

"Very soon the papa-hen and the mamma-hen, and all the little chickens who were out looking for—" writes, "Bugs!" pronounce the children, "heard a queer noise," continues the teacher. "Let's run—" writes, "Home!" Call the children, "says the mamma-hen," goes on the narrator. "'Don't be a coward,' says the papa-hen. What is a coward, children?"

"One who's afraid at nothing."

"Anybody that's afraid all the time."

"Anybody that's afraid when there isn't anything to be afraid of."

"I should think so. Now when the papa-hen said 'Don't be a coward,' the mamma-hen said, 'What shall we do?' 'Go and see,' answered the papa hen, so they called all the little chickens and down they went, directly into the fox's hole."

"What a lot!" exclaims a small boy, who is so intensely interested that he speaks his thought unconsciously.

"But the polite old fox met them at the door, and he said 'Good-morning, Mr. Hen; Good-morning, Mrs. Hen; and how are all the little chickens? Do walk in and take a seat;' and they went in and sat down and began to talk. By and by the turkeys, who were out hunting—" writes; "Grasshoppers," pronounce the children; "happened to come along this way. There was the papa-turkey, and the mamma-turkey, and all the little turkeys, and they heard this curious noise, and they wondered what it could be, and before they knew where they were going, there they were—inside the fox's house. Mr. Fox was just as polite as ever, and held out his—" writing.

"Paw to shake hands," read the children; "with them," adds the teacher, "saying as he did so, 'Good-morning, Mr. Turkey; Good-morning Mrs. Turkey; and how are all the little turkeys? Take some—" writes; "Seats!" respond the children; "and let us have a little conversation.' What is conversation, Julia?"

"Talking."

"Yes; so the ducks went 'Quack! quack! quack!' and the

geese went 'Cackle! cackle! cackle!' and Mr. Hen went 'Cock-a-doodle-doo!' and Mrs. Hen went 'Cut-cut-cut-ca-dada!' and the little chickens went, 'Peep, peep, peep!' and the turkeys went 'Gobble! gobble! gobble!' and the fox went 'Yow! yow! yow!' and just think what a noise they made!"

"Pretty soon the sly Mr. Fox slipped out the—" writes; "Back-door," read the class; "and went around to the—" writes; "Front-door!" call out the children; "and put a great heavy—" writes; "Stone!" chorus the listeners; "up against it," goes on the narrator, "so that they couldn't get out if they wanted to. Then he came in at the back-door, and locked it, and put the—" writes; "Key in his pocket," read the children hurriedly. Then he went back into the company-room, and told all the ducks and geese and hens and turkeys and their babies that he hoped they would have a—" writing, "Good visit!" read the class; because when it came—" writes: "Dinner time!" breathless exclaim the children; "he should"—slowly and impressively—"pick out some of them to—eat."

"Oh! oh!" sigh the children.

"Isn't that dreadful!" cries out a little girl.

"I just wish I had a gun and I'd kill that fox!" blusters an excitable youngster.

"I guess they wished they were home then," says a little fellow who has evidently experienced that desire himself when overtaken by trouble.

"Oh, don't they get away, teacher?" calls out a sympathetic little woman appealingly.

"We will see. When the old fox had said this, he went off up—" writes; "Stairs to bed!" read the class; "and they did feel very badly, as you say, and began to—" writes; "Cry!" is the responsive chorus. "Yes, and that made a great noise, and the farmer, up here in his house—" pointing toward the sketch,— "heard it, and came to the door and looked out. See him!" drawing a perpendicular line in the doorway to represent that individual.

"But the noise kept on and even grew louder; then he said, 'That is my poultry in trouble somewhere; I must go and find them.' So he took down his gun and called his dog, and started out. He went to the yard, but there wasn't a duck, nor a goose, nor a hen, nor a turkey there, then he went to the pond, but they weren't to be seen there either, and the noise was very loud and seemed to come from under the tree. So he began to dig."

"But just then he happened to see the stone," continued the teacher more rapidly, for the excitement is getting to be intense, and most of the children are half out of their seats in their eagerness to hear the *denouement*; "and he gave it a great pull,—and—out came all his ducks, and hens, and turkeys, and geese, and all their babies!"

The little ones are dancing up and down and clapping their hands by this time, so the teacher waits an instant for their joy to subside, then continues deliberately: "Last of all comes Mr. Fox, to see what was happening to his house, when the farmer lifted up his gun and shot him—dead; and that was the end."

TEACHING READING.

During the day, at different times and at different places, we heard,—well, perhaps one hundred children read. Not one poor reader among them all! In one case we heard each child in a certain room read. So distinctly were the words spoken that we lost not the sound of one. That the child had a thorough understanding of what he was reading was evident by his placing the emphasis upon just the word in the sentence which would bring out the