

other flowers that were put in a jar on the table. When they left, the little room looked quite different; for Ethel had enjoyed helping to clean the room, and make her old friend more comfortable and happy. When her father heard how his little girl meant to spend her money, he looked pleased and said that he would keep the purse filled, as long as it was used for such a purpose.

It is nearly a year since then, but Ethel still goes to visit her old woman, who loves to see her little comforter, and the little shell purse.

Grandma's Girls and Boys.

(By Glen Catherwood.)

I wish—I wish (said Grandma Gray)

That little boys were always good

That little girls, so fond of play,

Would help their mothers when they should.

I wish all boys would be polite,

And all the little girls were neat,
That all would try to do the right,
And all had tempers that were sweet.

How very pleasant life would be

If every wish of mine came true!
It can be done, you must agree—

And all depends, my dears, on you!

—Dew Drops.

Speckle; The Best Mother Hen.

Speckle was just the 'dearest old mother-hen that ever lived.' So Mrs. Emmett had said many times, and when the brown hen was caught in the barbed-wire fence and left ten little brown chicks without any one to take care of them, every one said: 'Give them to Speckle; she will be just as good to them as their own mother.' But where was Speckle? First Allen called her, then Bessie went to look for her; at last Mrs. Emmett herself went to the chicken-yard and called; but no Speckle came. Several days passed, and still she did not come, and the children began to talk about poor old Speckle, for mother said, 'Something must have happened to her.' One morning, about three weeks later, Allen rushed into the house,

calling: 'Mother! Bessie! Come quick and see Speckle.' Bessie reached the door first, and there, sure enough, was Speckle, and with her twelve of the cutest, downy little chicks that you ever saw.

It was hard to tell who was the proudest and happiest that day, Speckle or Allen or Bessie.

When night came the mother-hen took her babies off across the field, and Allen followed to see where she went. Just in the edge of the meadow he found a cosy nest completely hidden in the tall grass, and watched Speckle as she gathered her twelve babies under her wings.

One morning as Speckle led her little family across the field for breakfast something seemed to be wrong. The air was dark and thick, and there was a strong smell of smoke. When they reached the farm-yard Bessie and Allen, instead of running to meet them, were climbing rapidly into a waggon with the rest of the family, the barn-doors were all open and bars down, while horses, cows and pigs were running round in a frightened way. The chicken-yard gate, too, was open, and the chickens running and flying as fast as they could go. As the white rooster passed her Mother Speckle asked him what was the matter. He stopped just a minute, and said, 'Why, haven't you heard? The prairie is on fire! Farmer Emmett has taken all the family across the river. That is where we are going, and you would better come too.' Then off he flew.

'A prairie fire,' thought Speckle. 'I wonder what that is. But my babies could not walk to the river even, much less run. I guess I will take them back to the nest, for I can keep them safe there.' The chicks did not want to go, for they had not had their breakfast, but Speckle kept calling them, and slowly she walked backed to the meadow. But this time the smoke made it so dark that the chickens were glad to cuddle down safe and snug under their mother's wings.

The fire came nearer and nearer. Speckle could hear the grass crackling, and tucked her wings down more closely over her babies. Then there was a rush of the flames, and they swept suddenly over the place

where the nest was hidden. Just then the wind turned and it began to rain.

That afternoon Farmer Emmett drove back expecting to find everything burned up. When he reached the top of the hill and saw that the fire had not touched his house he turned right round and went back for Mrs. Emmett, Allen and Bessie. They were very happy to come back to their home, but soon the children thought of Speckle, and ran across the meadow to see if her nest, too, was saved. They found the burned body of the dear old mother-hen. When they lifted her tenderly from the nest the babies were as safe and happy as could be. Not one little feather had been burned. Bessie gathered them all up in her apron and took them to the house. When she and her mother were fixing a place for them Allen came up with a box in his arms, saying: 'I think a mother hen that will sit and be burned to death to save her chickens ought to have a funeral as much as any other hero.' 'So do I,' said Bessie.

If you look under the old apple-tree you will find a little mound, and at the head a smooth board on which is printed, 'Old Speckle,' and under it these words, 'The best mother-hen,' and Allen will tell you that that means that she died to save her babies.—'Australian Spectator.'

A Morning Prayer.

Keep my little voice to-day;
Keep it gentle while I pray;
Keep my hands from doing wrong,
Keep my feet the whole day long;
Keep me all, O Jesus mild,
Keep me ever Thy dear child.
—Waif.

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