

MY PET CHICKEN.

When I was a little girl, my father one day gave me a young chicken. It had lost its mother, and was running about in great distress, chirping loudly, and vainly trying to find its way over a stone wall that surrounded the garden. The old hen, with the rest of the brood, had strayed away across a pasture-lot, to the edge of a wood, and a hungry hawk had pounced upon them. At least we thought that must have happened, for we afterward found some of her feathers and two or three dead chickens in that part of the field. The little one, of whom I am telling you, was the only one that escaped. Probably she hid away, or ran for life, when the hawk came swooping down, and at last got back near the house, where she was found by my father.

I was greatly pleased with my pet. I will remember how my father and mother laughed when I tried to cluck like a hen to call the chicken to me. I had no brothers or sisters to play with, and this made me think more of my chicken. It was something alive, I said, which I could take care of and love. I soon found an old basket in the garret, which I partly filled with feathers, in which my pet might nestle and think herself safe under her mother's wings. Mother gave me plenty of milk-curd and finely cracked corn to feed her with, and I took a nice little china saucer from my playthings to feed her from; for I said she should be a little lady chicken.

Very soon she recovered entirely from her fright, and in a few days she began to grow famously. I named her Brown Betty, as her feathers were dark coloured. I used to call her "Bet," and she soon learned her name, so that she would run to me whenever I wanted her.

Most persons think that chickens knew very little. I have heard them say, "as stupid as a hen," but I learned from playing with Betty that they may be taught many things. When she was about half grown, I used to have rare fun in making her work for her dinner. Sometimes I would fasten an ear of corn to a string, and let it hang above her reach, so that she must jump up to pick off the kernels. She would do this in a very amusing way; first, walking round and round it, looking at it with one eye, then with the other, and then at me, as if to say, "How can

I get at it?" Then she would commence jumping for it, and very soon pick enough for breakfast. I wanted very much that she should learn to play horse with me. I therefore tied a string around her leg, to try and lead her, but she was so frightened she flew around in a very ridiculous way, and made such a squawking, I was glad to take off the string. It was some time before she would come near me again, and I gave up the idea of teaching her that trick.

The following year she had grown to be one of the handsomest hens on the place. She was turned out to run with the other fowls, but she did not forget me. She would always run to meet me, and I usually rewarded her with some crumbs or kernels of corn. One day as I was in an out-building, I heard her well-known voice, and on looking around, discovered that she had made a nest in the same old basket that was formerly her bed. The feather had been left in it, and it exactly suited her purpose. I did not disturb her, and before long she commenced to sit. In about three weeks she led off a fine brood of chickens, and came marching directly into the house, as though she wanted me to see her beautiful family. They were, of course, properly cared for.

Not long after this she was engaged in a very curious adventure. She was scratching for her chickens near a wall at some distance from the house, when suddenly I heard her give a terrible cry; and as I looked that way, I saw a hawk darting down, and ran with all my might to save poor Betty from the fate which had befallen her mother. I should probably have been too late, but just as the hawk was almost upon her, a hungry fox sprang over the wall, and so frightened the hawk, that he darted away as quickly as he had come. The fox, seeing me, also took to his heels, and thus poor Betty was saved. After that I had her safely shut in an inclosure nearer the house, and she lived to a good old age. Her memory is one of the pleasantest recollections of my childhood, and the pleasure I have had thinking of her has taught me that kindness, even to animals, will be well repaid.

TAKING MEDICINE.—If persons who are obliged to take offensive medicine would first take a bit of alum into the mouth, they then can take the medicine with as much ease as though it were sugar.

(RECITATION.)

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS
FOR A SCHOOL EXAMINATION.

The long-expected, hoped-for, and yet dreaded time has come. We who have so often been taught to be seen and not heard, to keep silence in presence of our elders and listen to their superior wisdom, have now to appear before you and deliver words to instruct the mind, stir the heart, and win applause. Can you wonder at the lively flutter of our pulses, the trembling of our tongues, or, it may be, the failure of our voices? Many a man who can face the music of roaring cannon and rattling musketry is struck dumb in presence of an audience, and though our tongues do not refuse to move, yet you will need to exercise charity for our faults and failures.

Who can claim to be a perfect orator? It is easy to repeat words, but to inspire them with living fire, so that they shall melt prejudice, arouse lethargy, stimulate to action, and burn their way into the very soul, oh! this is indeed a work demanding the highest gifts. We pretend not to have gained such power, but only to have entered the course where such triumphs are to be won. We are learning to wield the weapon which has overthrown states, moved armies, and revolutionized the world. Your smiling faces assure us that these our first efforts will be regarded with kind consideration.

If there be any differently minded, who have come to inspect us as they would examine poultry on sale, solely to discover blemishes, allow me to say we are not the only ones on trial at this time. Criticism in this case is a game in which two sides may take part. It requires no little art to be a good listener. He who laughs when the sentiment calls for tears, who applauds where the sense is tame, or who goes to sleep at any time on such an occasion, has not learned the first principles of the business of an audience.

Philosophers tell us that were there no organs of hearing there could be no sound, and I think it equally true that there can be no successful oratory where there is no sympathy among the listeners. I pray you, therefore, be as attentive to your proper parts as we hope to be to ours, and I assure you we shall be as kind in our judgments as you are lenient in your criticisms. Let smile respond to smile and