



For Every Boy and Girl

Gracie and the Chickens

BY KATHARINE HOPKINS CHAPMAN.

MRS. GAINES called her little daughter to come see the dear little chickabiddies that had hatched out during the night. Gracie ran out in the yard, glad of anything to play with while Hugh was at school. For the last two years this brother and sister had studied under their mother, but this session Hugh was going to a "sure-enough" school, as Gracie would say. As they lived on a farm, with no other children near, this left Gracie very lonely.

And even when Hugh was at home he seemed changed, for he thought himself much wiser than his sister now, and had heard the other boys say that it wasn't nice to have a girl following a fellow all the time. So while Gracie always looked forward eagerly to Hugh's return from school, she was sometimes very much disappointed. Therefore, she welcomed these fluffy little chickens with great pleasure. Mrs. Gaines had a basket into which she wished to put the four little chicks that were already out, so the chicks would not trample them while the other eggs were hatching. But neither the hen nor the chickens knew that Mrs. Gaines meant only kindness to them, so the chicks hid under the mother's ruffled feathers while she fussed and pecked at a great rate.

One by one, however, Mrs. Gaines got them all in the basket, covered them with an old shawl and then took them into the kitchen, where it was warm.

"And now, Gracie," she said, "we must pip them and give them something to eat."

"Pip them? What is that, Mama?"

"Look here," answered Mrs. Gaines, holding up a little yellow fellow, "don't you see that rough place on the end of his bill? That is to help him peck his way out of the shell, but if it stays there it sometimes grows so large that the chicken can't eat well; so it is better to pip them while they are young—just this way," she added, as she pulled the little hard tip off with her finger-nail.

"Ah, Mama, please let me do the others?" begged Gracie.

"All right, but be very careful, for they are tender little things at first."

Gracie carefully pipped two more yellow ones, but the last one was dark gray.

"That little fellow is pure Plymouth Rock," explained Mrs. Gaines.

Gracie spent the morning coddling them, moving them nearer or farther from the range, according to its heat, and covering them up again and again.

When Hugh came from school Gracie could hardly wait for him to finish his dinner before taking him out to see her new companions. She explained the pipping process with great pride, and picking up the dark one said, just as her mother had: "This one is a pure Plymouth Rock!" though she hadn't much idea what that meant except that it was nice.

"You mean a Puritan of Plymouth Rock?" corrected Hugh, who was anxious to show off his knowledge of history.

"Oh, yes, of course, I suppose I meant that," consented Gracie.

But their mother who had come in just in time to hear this last, soon told them the difference between the Pilgrims and a breed of fowls; still the dark chicken was called Puritan Plymouth Rock, which was soon shortened to Puritan Plym.

"Have you looked under the hen to see if she has hatched any more?" asked Hugh, after his mother had finished.

"No," said Gracie, timidly. "I can't look under her, she—she bites!"

"Oh, pshaw! come on, I'll look," cried Hugh, grandly. He did look and didn't cry even when the old hen pecked him—but boys' hands are so tough! He found six more yellow chicks out of their shells, so Mrs. Gaines thought it best to take the hen off the nest, put her in a coop and give her all the chickens before night.

During the bright sunny days that followed, the anxious, busy hen and her brood of downy darlings helped Gracie pass a part of every morning pleasantly. Perhaps it was because Puritan Plym's name and color were so easy to remember that he was her favorite. Then, too, he was so full of life and ready for adventure.

The hen was in a coop, in and out of which the chickens could easily run, while she watched for danger and gave many warning clucks.

There was one place that interested Puritan Plym more than all others. That was a large water-trough, used by two little pigs in the next yard, which was only shut off by a wire netting.

Still Puritan Plym longed to see into that mysterious trough. Didn't the ducks swim around in there like it was the nicest, safest place in the world?

"But they have webs on their feet," argued Mrs. Hen. Puritan Plym looked down at his long, skinny toes, and sighed.

One afternoon when Mrs. Hen had scratched and clucked and warned and scolded until she was tired, she settled down comfortably while the little yellow chicks cuddled about her or climbed her back to catch any stray bug or fly that bothered her.

All this was too tame for Puritan Plym, so he ran back and forth, hither and thither, and ever nearer to that forbidden trough. Finally, when the pigs stretched themselves out for a nap, he could resist no longer.

He squeezed through the wire netting, ran to the trough, and after several trials he reached the rim. When he looked into the clear, cold water, he was surprised to see another chicken—a dark-gray of about his size—already there, so he said "cheep-cheep" most politely. Receiving no answer he said "cheep-cheep" again more sharply, and then decided to peck that fellow who would not answer.

But just as he leaned over, those monsters, the pigs, arose with grunts and snorts, Puritan Plym lost his balance and fell headlong into the cold, deep water.

Mrs. Hen, who had just discovered her disobedient son, began to cackle, the pigs began to squeal with pleasure at the thought of tender chicken for lunch, and poor Puritan Plym was splashing wildly around trying to keep his head above water, when Gracie ran out and soon saw the trouble. After what seemed an age, but really just as soon as Gracie could unlatch the gate and reach the trough, she drew out the half-drowned chicken.

Then she ran with him to the back porch, snatched up one of the dish towels cook had washed out and hung there to dry, and rubbed and wiped him well, but he still shivered and shook. Then she put him down in the sun thinking he would run to his mother and get warm under her wings, as she was clucking him to do. But his trembling legs refused to carry him, and he sank down shaking until "his teeth chattered" as Gracie afterward told Hugh.

She could not see her favorite die without another effort to save him, so she hunted up the old shawl, wrapped him snugly in it and took him in the kitchen. But the fire was out and the range almost cold, so

she put him inside the oven which was just warm enough. Puritan Plym snuggled in the shawl and soon changed his trembling squeaks to grateful murmurs. Gracie was about to leave him when she noticed the cat watching him hungrily, so she closed the oven door, leaving only a crack for fresh air.

She was just starting into the house to tell her mother all about it, when Hugh called her to get up behind him on the pony and go for a ride. She was afraid to keep Hugh waiting, so she climbed up quickly, and they jogged around until sunset. They were down in the lot petting the pony after their return, when Gracie happened to notice smoke pouring out of the kitchen chimney.

"Oh, Hugh! Puritan Plym!" she cried in dismay, "do you think cook took him out?"

"No," shouted Hugh after Gracie; "no, I'm sure he's baked by this time."

But Gracie flew on and when she burst into the kitchen, too breathless to ask, she opened the oven door and out hopped Puritan Plym, who had just found out that warm things are nice, but hot things are horrid. Soon he was safe and sound under his mother's wings once more, telling her how horrible it felt to be bathed and baked, and promising he would never do it again.

Vain Little Patty

BY GRACE MACGOWAN COOKE.



UNT Jinsey was dressing the Randolph children for Sunday-school, and Aunt Jinsey was in a bad humor. America, the junior nurse girl, was off to-day, and the old woman had the work of both to do. Little Patricia made a dozen trivial errands into her mother's room to view, in the long mirror, her stiffly-starched skirts and primly-tied blue sash.

"You dest like one dese hyer peacocks," the old nurse grumbled. "You gint study 'bout nothin' but spread out de tail o' yo' coat an' walk up an' down."

Gentle little Patty was so unused to reproof that her lip trembled as she replied, "Well you said my mamma was the most beautiful bride you ever dressed, and you're always telling me to try to be like her."

"Huh!" snorted Aunt Jinsey. "dat's a gray horse o' nother color. You wait tell you git to be a young lady, an' bein' beautiful will be yo' business. Tain't so now. Chillens ought to be good an' keep dey se's clean—an' dat's all what dey need. You dest like de foolish peacock—tryin' to hurry yo' time."

Yet the old negress looked ruefully at the tearful little face. "There, now, you had old Aunt Jinsey!" stormed Pate. "You made my sister cry—and I just hate you."

"Lawdy, chillen!" placated the old woman. "Aunt Jinsey ain't mean to make anybody cry. You be good little ladies an' gentlemen, an' I tell you 'bout de foolish peacock while we all gittin' to de church house."

Reminded of her promise in the carriage, Aunt Jinsey began: "Once 'pon a time dey wuz a young peacock, an' he went to a neighbor's house an' seed some mighty fine ol' birds spreadin' out dey tails an' struttin' up an' down in de sunshine. He look' at dese hyer fine birds, he did, an' he stretch 'round see is he got any tail—an' he ain't got much. Den he run straight home to he mammy, an' holler:

"Make yo' farewells to me, mammy; 'case I gwine up to de big house to tell de cook to wring my neck an' put me in de pot!"

"Mammy Peacock mighty put 'bout by dis. 'What all dis foolishness?' she say. 'Dat cook up dar likely 'nough to kill you widout yo' axin' her.'"

"Oh, mammy, an' oh, mammy!" say dat young peacock. "I been over t'other side de hill. Dar I done see peacocks wid great tails like fans. Dey spread dem fans out in de sun, an' every eye in de feller look at me. Den, mammy, I try to spread my tail—but I ain't got no tail to spread. Oh, Mammy Peacock—Mammy Peacock! I wisht I wuz dead. I don't look one speck better dan what you does—an' I wisht I wuz dead!"

"You knows, honey," explained the old woman, "dat de peahens ain't so fine lookin' as de peacocks. But dis kind o' talk make ol' Mammy Peacock most monstrous mad. She give dat young peacock a slap side de jaw. 'You don't look better dan what I does—heh?' say Mammy Peacock. 'Well,' she say, 'how much better does you want to look dan yo' own hatched mammy?'"

"Hit's all right for you," say de young peacock, sorter dodgin'. "You dest a hen, an' has to be like you is. But I wants to look like dem big peacocks—or I wants to die. I is try, an' I is try, to look dat-er-way an' I dest can't. So now I gwine up de hill an' tell de cook to kill me."

"Mammy Peacock give dat boy a taste o' her slipper—she done see young birds ack dat-er-way before now. 'You go to scratching up de ground for worms—dat's yo' business in dis world. You quit tryin' to look like anybody but yo'self. Yo' tail will come when hit come,' she say."

"Well, den, dat young peacock tuck to scratchin' for worms an' waitin' on his mammy, an' he plumb fertigt all 'bout tails an' sich like foolishness."

"Course he knowed dat his feathers wuz growin' long an' bright; but he put in his time scratchin' for worms, an' tryin' to git de corn 'way from de other fowls, like his mammy told him to do, an' larnin' all kinds o' good peacock manners."

"Now mind dis part de tale, Miss Patty, hyer—dis what I want you to study 'bout."

"One day dat peacock went over to dat same neighbor's crosst de hill once mo'. Hit wuz a fine day, an' he feel right good. When he seen de other peacocks, he commence to spread he tail an' strut, dest like dey was doin'. Den dem other peacocks holler out together, 'Oh, ain't he fine! Hyer come de king o' peacocks to visit us!'"

"He wuz shore 'nuff des de finest bird dat ever had 'peared in dem parts fo' er long stretch. Hit took time to make him in all his glory—but, no wuth while peacock ain't growed in er minute nohow. Des memorize dis, sweetie—peacocks, ter b's puffeck, has des got to be patient and do des exactly dem things dat makes the feathers come out de bestest."

"Hit dest dat-er-way, little gal. Ef you leave off thinkin' 'bout yo' looks in dese days an' times, an' goes to work an' does what yo' ma an' Aunt Jinsey tells you to do, wedder hit's lessons in de book or keepin' yo' face an' hands clean, some day you gwine be dest like dat young peacock—you wake up an' find dat you is de queen o' beauty—dest like yo' ma shore wuz when Jinsey pinned on her weddin' veil."



"GOOD LORD, LOOK AT DE HOU-OU-USES!"

WHEN JINNY LEARNED TO SPEAK

The ancient and honorable donkey who had carried little Patricia Randolph in her babyhood was to be superseded by a Shetland pony, bought for Pate, the second child.

"Never mind, Jinny," little Isabel comforted the disconsolate-looking animal. "Never mind, honey," presenting a big bunch of sugar-cane, which was promptly accepted. "I loves you. I'll love you when the Sheltie comes, even if nobody else don't."

Jinny ate the sugar-cane, then solemnly raised her big head and brayed for more. It was a trick the children had taught her; but, with a pony in prospect, it seemed to them a rather uncouth one.

"That's why I dislike her most," Pate said scornfully. "She makes such an awful noise." Pate was to have the pony, you remember.

"Dat dest what de Man say after he go an' teach his Jinny to speak," giggled America, the nurse girl.

"Oh, is it a tale?" asked the children. "Tell it to us." For America's stories of animals were a standing form of diversion with the Broadlands children.

"In de early times," America opened, "plumb back dar in de beginnin' days, jinnies ain't had no speech. De Man he own one, an' he say to de Woman, 'My jinny work, an' my jinny pull de plow; my jinny tote me forth an' back; she eat reg'lar, an' she drink reg'lar; but she carry a mournful countenance, an' she ain't never spoke for to tell me her ruthers. I wusht my jinny would find a voice.'"

"Now, in dem days, hit dest like hit is dese days an' times—de old Woman got mo' sense dan de old Man. She say to him, 'Ain't you always complainin' 'case I talks too much? Better let well enough alone, an' be glad dat yo' jinny, ef she ain't speak to pleasure you, also ain't speak to dis-pleasure you. You git her to talkin', she might not be so easy to hush ez I is.'"

"Oh, you?" say de ol' Mar. "You allers talkin' 'bout yo' ruthers an' my failin'—'course I ain't got no use for yo' speech. But my hoss he nicker, my cow she bawl, my dog bark when he please, my cat mew when she displease, and I wants my jinny to find a voice—I does.'"

"De Man study an' study 'bout dis hyer business, an' he all de time believin' dat ef de jinny was right surprised she'd speak out. De old Man an' de Woman live in de mountains, whar neighbors is few an' fur between; he make up he mind dat he gwine carry his donkey to town, an' ax de doctors can dey give her a voice."

"De old Woman spoke ag'in dat; she said her say: an' yit she ain't persuaded him to give it up. So he tuck an' tuck him a load o' sich truck as grows in de

mountains, an' hauled hit down to de town. De last night he camp in de woods, an' by sun-up he come out on de hill-top—an' dar was de town—de fust town dat jimmy ever see! She stand on top de hill an' look at hit. She flop her years forth, an' flop her years back. She look, an' she flop; she flop, an' she look.

"Speak up," say de Man. "What you studyin' 'bout? How you likes de town an' de looks o' hit? Speak up, my jinny. Ain't nary soul 'bout to hyer ye but dest me—speak out yo' mind, my jinny!"

"Den de jinny find a voice. She say, dest like dis"—America threw up her head, rolled her eyes and intoned solemnly:

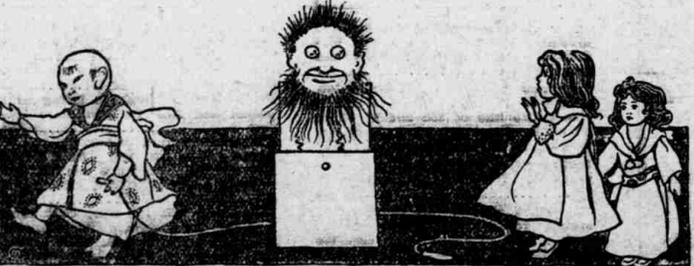
"Good Lord, look at de hou-ou-uses! Good Lord, look at de hou-ou-uses! Good Lord, look at de hou-ou-uses! Look at de hou-ou-uses! Look at de hou-ou-uses! Look at de hou-ou-uses! In town—in town!"

The little Randolphs shouted with laughter. "That's what our jinny says," Isabel confirmed; for America's loud bawling tones had given a very funny imitation of a donkey's bray, the final "In town—in town!" being grunted out exactly as the donkey always closes his speech.



"BETTER LET WELL ENOUGH ALONE," SAY DE OLD WOMAN.

"Dat dest what all jinnies been sayin' from dat time on," America agreed; "but the Man ain't like it, now he got it. He dest like Marse Pate. He say he wusht his jinny hadn't found her voice. An' de Woman, she say—'I done told you so!' dest like she do dese days an' times."



Some little dolls played by a box And touched a little hook. The lid flew back, a man popped up With a horridiferous lool!



"OH! AIN'T HE FINE!"