wing, and returned to her task. She turned the eggs over and over again, and each time a little chicken had commenced to open the shell from the interior, the mother helped it with her beak, and, whenever it had fairly left the shell, she covered it with her feathers.

Louisa observed all that, and, quite surprised, she asked herself who could have taught the little chicken to chip the shell, and the mother to open it afterwards with so much patience and cleverness?

Very soon the whole twelve chickens were out of their shells. The mother still sat upon them, however, for some hours, as if to give them time to accustom themselves to live out of an egg. But at last the hen rose, collected all her little ones round her, and stepped out of the nest.

The shoemaker had thrown out some grains of corn and bread-crumbs, and Louisa saw the hen stoop, take them in her beak, and place them before her little ones, as if she were telling them to eat. And the chickens really commenced to eat, as if they perfectly understood their mother.

The little girl was astonished more and more. She would have liked to ask her father how it happened that the hen seemed to understand her little ones so