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by-and-by twenty little yellow ducklings came out one by one, and, after shaking themselves, set off home to the poultry-house, where there was a nice warm bed for them on the floor, just under the perches where the hens used to roost.

Neither Tommy nor I were very clever at counting them, for they ran in and out amongst each other so, I am sure there seemed to be a great many of them. Tommy said there could not be fewer than six-and-twenty, and, as we walked all round the pond and looked into all the reed-beds and no more came out, we thought they were all right. Mrs. Tubbs, however, was not to be cheated so easily as we were. She went to the poultry-house to count them, and found there were only twenty. Six of them had played truant, and gone and hidden themselves amongst the flag-leaves, or paddled out into the orchard to steal a game of play after the others had come to bed. I daresay they thought it was very fine fun, but Mrs. Tubbs would soon make them think differently. *She* had enough to do and enough to look after, without having her time wasted by hunting up runaway ducklings.