

“If I don’t take care of these chickens, father, I’ll never ask you to let me try again.”

“What chickens?” said my brother crossly, observing that my father was inclined to try me; “better not count on eggs before they’re hatched, nor after neither, if you have anything to do with them.” Upon this he took his departure.

“William is too bad,” said I, as if to smooth away any impression left upon my father’s mind by his remarks; “I can take as good care of the chickens as he; and I’ll let him see, for once in his life, that he is mistaken.”

I noticed a singular smile flit over the countenances of my parents as they interchanged glances.

“Ah,” thought I, “they, too, have little faith in my promises. Never mind, I’ll let them also be disappointed in me for once.” They would have been happily disappointed, indeed, should I accomplish anything I had undertaken.

Full of eagerness, I awaited the arrival of my father at night, in hopes of then beholding the famous eggs that were to produce the chickens, by which my character was to be redeemed from its present disgrace. At last the sun sank behind the western hills, and with its setting came my father, bearing a large covered basket in one