

have to buy food for them. Hadn't figured on that. And she thinks it's rather early for them to begin laying just yet. She says, too, that at least three of our hens are so old that they're probably past the laying stage. That old Irishwoman who sold us the hens is a fraud. I've a mind to call some day when her husband is out and tell her so.

*April 17th.*—Got a dollar's worth of corn and shorts for the fowls, and filled the hungry brutes up to the neck. They're laying a little better. Got two eggs yesterday and three to-day. The business is going to pay, after all, though there does not seem to be as much in it as I thought there was.

*April 26th.*—Hens settling fairly well down to business, considering the advanced years of some of them. Getting about twenty eggs a week. At twenty-five cents a dozen that's about forty cents. Food costs about half that.

*May 2nd.*—Have just discovered to my intense disgust that eggs are selling retail at fifteen cents per dozen. Really, it does not pay to keep fowls.

*May 4th.*—Hens not keeping up to the mark at all. There is a considerable falling off in the supply of eggs, as we are only getting one or two a day now. Two of the creatures are acting in an absurd manner, sitting on the nests all day. They seem to be trying to lay, but we get no results. Wonder what ails them?

*May 5th.*—Mrs. Jimpsecute, who seems a perfect encyclopædia of hen lore, says the hens want to set. They shan't do it! We bought them to supply us with eggs, not to breed chickens. I have routed them out about a dozen times to-day, but they will persist in their ridiculous course.



### A BRIGHT STAR.

MANAGER OF TANK PLAY (*to the Star*)—"There's been no rain nor snow in this town for six months. Can't get any water to fill the tank for the Shipwreck Scene. What's to be done?"

STAR—"You'll have to step before the curtain and announce that owing to unfavorable weather we are compelled to omit the Shipwreck Scene."



### ON THE RIALTO.

FIRST THESPIAN—"There is old Ruskin, the tragedian."

SECOND THESPIAN—"Why does he always look so melancholy?"

FIRST THESPIAN—"My boy, that's his conception of himself."

*May 6th.*—One of the setting hens has gone off somewhere, and is probably setting in some vacant lot. The other has carried her point. We have concluded to let her keep on setting, and have supplied her with thirteen eggs. What contrary creatures hens are, anyhow!

*May 9th.*—Just had a visit from our neighbor, Bilderkin, who came to complain that some of my hens fly over the fence and scratch up his garden. What a pernickety old buffer he is! Says he'll kill them if I can't keep them in. Spent two hours this evening hunting the \_\_\_\_\_ hens all round the hen-house to catch them and clip their wings. Confound Bilderkin for a fussy old nincompoop! Wish I'd never started a hennery.

*May 10th.*—The setting hen hasn't as many eggs as she started in with and has a worried and anxious expression. Could only find eight eggs under her. Where can the rest have gone? Is it possible that in so short a time the chickens could have hatched and gone off somewhere?

*May 11th.*—Mrs. Jimpsecute, on being consulted by Maria, says the eggs must have been eaten by rats. Only six left now, and the hen quite worn and haggard. Must have the cat sleep in the nest nights if the hen will let him.

*May 12th.*—Hen wouldn't let him. She pecked at him viciously and he clawed at her, and in the scuffle two more eggs broken. What a fool a hen is!

*May 18th.*—Old Bilderkin madder than ever, chasing my hens all over his lot and using language of a kind shameful to listen to. It seems they now crawl through a hole in the fence. Told Bilderkin he might go there himself, and threw a stone at his dog. Must hire a man to tighten the fence.

*May 22nd.*—The other hen which went off to set has been found setting on a couple of large pebbles in a fence