

Breaking up a Settling Hen.

"Timothy, that air yellow hen's settin' again," said Mrs. Hays to her son, one morning at breakfast.

"Well, let her set," remarked Timothy, helping himself to a large piece of cheese, "I reckon I can stand it as long as she can."

"I do wish you would try to be a little equinomial to cheese, Timothy; I've cut the very last of my every day lot, and it's only the first of May. And now as soon as you've done eating I want you to go out and break up that hen. She's setting on an old ax and two bricks now."

"I hope she'll hatch 'em," returned Timothy.

"If she was set now, she'd hatch the fourth week in May. It's a bad sign; something allers happens arter it. Stop giggering, Hellen Maria, by the time you get to be as old as yer mar, yer'll see further than you do now. There was Jenkins' folks their grey top-knot hatched the last of May, and Mrs. Jenkins, she had the conjunction of the lungs, and would have died if they hadn't killed a lamb and wrapped her in the hide while its warm. That was all that saved her."

With such a startling proof of the truth and the omen before him, Timothy finished his breakfast in haste and departed for the barn, from which he soon returned bearing the squalling biddy by the legs.

"What shall I do with her, mother? She'll get on again, and she's cross as bedlam; she skinned my hands, and would be the death of me if she could get loose."

"I've heer'n it said that it was a good plan to throw 'em up in the air," said Mrs. Hays. "Aunt Peggy broke one of setting, only three times trying. Spose'n you try it."

"Up she goes, head or tail!" cried Tim, as he tossed the volcano skyward.

"Laud-o-massy," exclaimed Mrs. H., "she's coming down in the pan of bread that I set out on the great rock to rise!—Tim, it's strange that you can't do nothing without overdoing it."

"Down with the traitors, up with the stars," sang out Tim, elevating biddy again, with something less than a pint of batter hanging to her feet.

"Good gracious me, wuss and wuss," cried Mrs. Hays, and Tim agreed with her, for the hen come down on the well polished tile of Esquire Bennett, who happened to be passing, and the dignified old gentleman was the father of Cynthia Bennett, the young lady with whom Tim was seriously enamored.

The Squire looked daggers, brushed off the dough with his handkerchief, and strode on in silence.

"Yes, but it's going up again," said Tim, spitefully seizing the clucking biddy and tossing her at random into the air.—Biddy thought it time to manifest her individuality, and with a loud scream she darted against the parlor window, broke through, knocked down the canary cage, and landed plump in the silken lap of Mrs. Gray, who was boarding at the farm house.

Mrs. Gray screamed with horror, and starting up, dislodged biddy, who flew at her reflection in the looking-glass with an angry hiss. The glass was shattered, and down came the hen, astonished beyond measure, against a vase of flowers, which upset, and in falling knocked over the stand-dish and deluged with water a pair of drab colored velvet slippers which Helen Maria was embroidering for her lover, Mr. James Henshaw.

Helen entered the room just as the mischief had been done, and viewing the ruin she at once laid it to her brother Timothy. She heard a step behind her, and the unfortunate hen she flung full into his face. There was a smothered oath, and the hen came back with the force of a twenty-pound shot.

Helen was mad. Her eyes were nearly put out with the feathery dust and dough, and she went at Timothy with a true feminine zeal. She broke his watchguard in a dozen pieces, crushed his diekey and began to pull his whiskers out by the roots, when suddenly she remembered that Timothy had no whiskers to pull out by the roots. But when she came to look closer, she perceived that the man she had nearly annihilated was not Timothy, but James Henshaw.

Poor Helen burst into tears and fled into her chamber, the usual refuge for her roines; and James, after washing his face at the kitchen sink, went home, sternly resolved never to marry a woman with such a temper as Helen Hays had.

The hen, meanwhile, who is the heroine, returned to the barn to establish herself on the ruin of her nest, determined to set if the heavens fell.

Mrs. Hays soon discovered her, and she having heard that dipping in water would cure "broodiness," she set forth for the brook with the fowl in her apron.

Mrs. Weaver, an old lady of very quarrelsome temperament, who resided near, and was at a sword's point with Mrs. Hays, was just coming to the brook for a pair of water, and spied the yellow head of the bird peeping out from Mrs. Hays's apron.

"There!" she exclaimed, "Now I've found out what puzzled me to death night about a week. I've found out where that yellow pullet has gone to. Mrs. Hays, I allers knowed you was a wicked desatful woman, but I didn't think you'd steal."

"Steal? me steal? who are you talking to, Mrs. Weaver?" said Mrs. Hays on her dignity.

"I'm talking to you, madam, that's who I'm talking to! You've stole my hen what I got over to Uncle Gillies, and paid for in sennegers. She's a real Dorking. Give her to me right here or I'll use force."

"She's my hen, and you touch her if you dare!"

"I'll show you what I dare!" yelled Mrs. Weaver, growing purple, and seizing the ill-starred fowl by the tail, she gave a wrench, and the tail came out in her hand.

The sudden cessation of resistance upset Mrs. Weaver's balance, and she fell backward into the brook, spattering the mud and astonished polliwogs in every direction.

She was a spry woman, and was soon on her feet again, ready to renew the assault. "Give me my hen," she cried, thrusting her fist into Mrs. Hays' face, "you old hag and hypocrite you!" and she made a second grab at the bird.

The hen thought it proper to show her colors, and uttering an unearthly yell, she flew out of the covert square into the face of Mrs. Weaver, which she raked down with her nails until it resembled the pages of a ledger, crossed and re-crossed with red ink.

Mrs. Hays caught a stick of brush-wood from the fence.—Mrs. Weaver did the same, and a regular duel would probably have been fought if the bank had not suddenly gave way and precipitated both the indignant women into the water.

They scrambled out on opposite sides, and the hen sat perched in an apple tree and cackled in triumph.

The ladies shook themselves, and by consent went home. They have not spoken since.

The hen disappeared and was not seen until three weeks afterwards, when she made her appearance with eleven nice yellow chickens. She found some other fowl's nest and had set in spite of fate.

But although not "broken up" herself, she broke up two matches—for Cynthia Bennett was not at home the next time Timothy called, and Henshaw never forgave Helen for having such a temper.

NEVER.—Never tip your beer to a fine lady, and pass a poor widow without seeming to see her.

Never pass an aged man or woman without making a respectful obeisance, unless you house is on fire.

Never break your neck at all to bow to a "sweet sixteen," with a flounced dress, who is ashamed of her old fashioned mother, or to a strutting collegiate who is horrified at his grandmother's bad grammar.

Never keep a boy to black your boots and attend to the stable while you frighten your wife out of the idea of keeping a nurse for the twins, by constantly talking of "hard times."

Never converse with a lady with a cigar in your mouth, or smoke in anybody's company without apologizing for the same.

Never remind people of personal deformities, or of the relatives who have disgraced them.

Never leave a letter unanswered, and use the stamp which was enclosed to you to "reply with," on a letter to your own sweetheart.

Never ride in a fine carriage and keep a score of servants, while your widowed sister trades along on foot, and toils for her daily bread.

Never wear a finer coat than the merchant you owe for it, or the tailor whom you have not paid for the making.

Never wound wantonly, the constitutional nature of an invalid; or by rude jests and sarcasm send a blush to the temples of modest merit.

Never jest with a single woman about the anxiety of all women to be married, nor tell your wife you married her because you pitied her lonely condition.

COLORS JURYMEN IN BOSTON.—The Boston Commonwealth says: "It is an interesting fact, and an evidence of the progress of the age that in the Superior Court of this country for criminal business there is, this term, one colored jurymen, and in the Superior Court for civil business, first session, one, and in the second session of the same court there are two. No objection is made to them. This is the first term of these courts where colored men have been put on the juries, although in a recent term of the Supreme Court in a trial for murder, as we have recorded, there was one who served."

What is the difference between an auction and sea sickness! One is a sale of effects, and the other the effects of a sail.

Poor Caudle said he dreamed that he had an angel by his side, and upon waking up, found it was nobody but his wife.

A paragraph has been going the rounds concerning an old lady who has a moustahe on her lip; to which a hateful cotemporary adds that it is not uncommon for young ladies to have moustaehes on their lips, but it is rarely that they grow there.

One of our exchanges, in noticing the presentation of a silver cup, to a cotemporary says: "He needs no cup. He can drink from any vessel that contains liquor, whether the neck of a bottle, the mouth of a Demijohn, the spile of a keg, or the bung of a barrel."

It is said to be dangerous to be working with a sewing machine near a window when there is a thunder storm. It is also dangerous to be working near some sewing machines when there is no thunder-storm.

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Civil Engineer, Surveyor and Draftsman.
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Executor's Notice.

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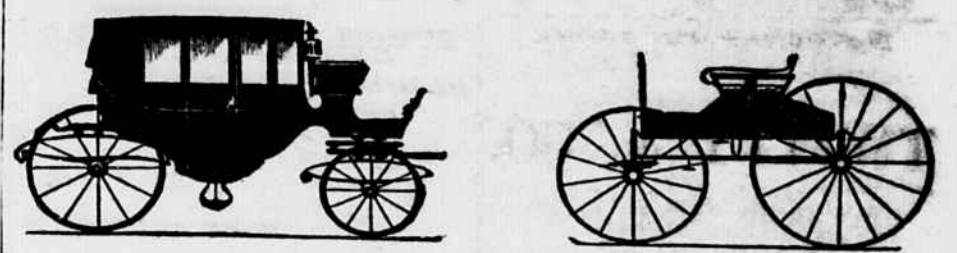
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