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S. HICKS, Court Street.

"Beggar My Neighbor."

By MARTHA M'CULLOCH-WILLIAMS.

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"Five—nine—eleven—thirteen." Miss Gatty counted anxiously, surveying her flock of hens. "I can't make out any more—but, dear me, the creatures fidget so—then they're all exactly alike."

Again she counted, again, yet again. The tale was still the unlucky thirteen. Miss Gatty looked worried. Well she might. The hens were not her own, but held in trust for her absent sister.

That, however, was less disquieting than the potentialities behind possible runaways. Since the missing three had not come to the feeding call, it was clear that they were either dead or in duress. Either state meant the same thing—trespass upon the Lalor lawn and strawberry beds. The Lalor es-

SHE WAS SOBBING—HARD, DRY SOBS.

tablishment loomed big and imposing 200 yards away, but that was no distance at all to active foragers such as White Leghorns. Moreover, there had been trouble before—trouble which had left a residuum of strained relations between the big house and the cottage. The cottage was almost the Gattys' sole possession, albeit there had been a time when everything in sight had been Gatty land.

"I don't know what to do. Susanna would go look for them," Miss Gatty said to the clothes post, her sole support and confidant. "I suppose I ought to do it, but then how can I? Those Lalors are so new and so rich they'd insult me—why, they weren't even afraid to be nasty to Susanna. Actually the woman told her she had no business to keep hens if she couldn't afford wired runs for them—as though we hadn't a right to keep anything we please on our own place. But I do wish they'd stay at home. And I wish Susanna were here. That's selfish. She is having a fine time at quarterly meeting and, patience knows, she goes seldom enough anywhere."

Miss Gatty was slender and pale and pretty if she had turned thirty. She had appealing brown eyes and slim hands, taper fingered in spite of house and garden work. She loved the garden. Indeed, it had been her salvation after she had worn herself to a shadow wrestling with primary scholars. She did not in the least mind hens there. True, they scratched and pecked and wallowed mightily, and her garden was, in fact, chaotic. Flowers grew indiscriminately cheek and jowl with vegetables.

Notwithstanding she understood how aggravating vagrant hens might be to more orderly gardeners; also that with strawberries ripe the flock was a besom of destruction. Those at her feet, having eaten their breakfast to the last grain, began straying lightly and as they walked preening themselves. Watching them narrowly, she saw suspicious scarlet flecks upon more than one white breast. They had certainly been at the Lalor berries. She put her hands up over her head, thinking hard.

It was 8 o'clock of a lovely June morning. Birds sang riotously all about. Miss Gatty listened to them and said, nodding her head toward the hens: "I do believe all this comes of going against nature. If you had broods like the birds you'd be too busy feeding them to go hunting mischief."

"Humph! They'd be worse than ever. I say thank the Lord there are no squalling keepers to whoop them up. If there were—well, I'd have to move, that's all," a gruff masculine voice said behind her. Miss Gatty turned as though shot. What she saw confronting her evoked a strangled cry of dismay. A tall man stood glowering at her and swinging militantly a bunch of headless white hens. "I've brought back your property, not being a thief," he went on. "Now, let me pay you for the satisfaction I had in wringing their necks. Let me also warn you the rest will go the same way as sure as they cross my fence. Here, take the money. If $5 is not enough"—

"Will you please to go away—instantly?" Miss Gatty said, actually stamping her foot. "Keep your money—keep the poor chickens too. Maybe they will pay some part of your damages"—

"Thank you. But I'm not in the poultry line—neither restaurants," the man said, flinging the dead hens at her feet. A fleck of blood flew upon Miss Gatty's faded frock. Noting it, the man said awkwardly: "Please excuse me. I've been acting the brute. But those berries were my pride"—

"You had a right to—do as you did," Miss Gatty panted. "Only—please go away! Go quick!"

She spoke stooping over the hens. The man looked at her, close enough to see two tears plash down on the corpses. He ran incontinently from the sight, but not altogether cravenly. Inside five minutes he was back with a basket of fine, dewy, scarlet berries. Miss Gatty had vanished. So had the slain. He walked around to the back door searching for her without finding. Being a determined person, he stepped boldly inside. Miss Gatty sat in the prim dining room, her head buried in her arms beside the old mahogany table. She was sobbing—hard, dry sobs. The intruder half turned as though to run away again, but thought better of it, stepped forward and set down his basket in front of her with a resounding thump. As she sprang up startled he said in an embarrassed voice: "Maybe you don't know who I am. My name's Lalor"—

"But I did know it. You should not be here," Miss Gatty panted. "Your wife"—

"Thank you, but I haven't got a wife—not yet," Mr. Lalor said, with a grin. "You must be thinking of my sister-in-law. Fanny keeps house for me, but she hates the place and wants to leave. I think I'll let her—and see if I can't have peace—and neighbors. Don't you think we ought to be neighbors? I do. So I've brought these," pointing to the berries. "Won't you give me some radishes to take home for my luncheon?"

"To be sure, I'll be so glad!" Miss Gatty cried, springing up, quite forgetful of tear stains, and darting toward her dear garden. She meant to go alone, but Andrew Lalor was right behind her. Long before the radishes were chosen they had buried all grievances, past, present and to come. Before he left she had told him all about Susanna—Susanna, who was the youngest, but had so much a wiser head on her shoulders. All unconsciously she had told him many other things—things that set him meditating and smiling all the way home. Once or twice, too, he blushed and gnawed angrily at his mustache, muttering: "Lord, to think that I offered her money! Took her for a quarrelsome old maid! It's going to take time to live that down, but I'll do it as sure as I'm six feet two!"

Susanna stayed on for a whole week. Quarterly meeting had turned out to be the beginning of a revival, but Miss Gatty did not mind in the least.

"You must not worry thinking I am lonely," she wrote. "I am quite too busy, keeping the hens as they should be kept. And really I am finding out that we have very good neighbors."

Susanna puzzled over that last sentence, at least until she came home to find Mr. Lalor established in the privilege of keeping ward over the foragings of the White Leghorns. Her eyes twinkled comprehension as he shook hands on presentation. He caught the twinkle and answered it boldly with: "Please may I have your sister Helen? I knew it would do no good to ask before you came home."

"Why, yes; I think you may," Susanna said, the twinkle deepening. "But do you think it is quite fair—this way of playing beggar my neighbor?"

"You're really responsible. Your hens have taught me to take what I want regardless of bounds," he flung back at her. Susanna laughed outright and answered honestly, "If they really did it I'm mighty glad."

"Society dropped the De Lacys because they had a skeleton in their closet I understand?"

"No—because they didn't keep it there."

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The answer is that "Golden Medical Discovery" is a most potent alterative or blood-purifier, and tonic or invigorator and acts especially favorably in a curative way upon all the mucous lining surfaces, as of the nasal passages, throat, bronchial tubes, stomach, bowels and bladder, curing a large per cent. of catarrhal cases whether the disease affects the nasal passages, the throat, larynx, bronchia, stomach (as catarrhal dyspepsia), bowels (as mucous diarrhea), bladder, uterus or other pelvic organs. Even in the chronic or ulcerative stages of these affections, it is often successful in affecting cures.

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Dr. Pierce's Pellets, small, sugar-coated, easy to take as candy, regulate and invigorate stomach, liver and bowels.

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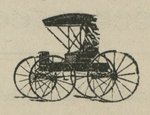

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CHESTERTOWN, MARYLAND

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