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HOME KEEPING HEARTS

By Charles W. Barrell

Imprisoned for ten years on circumstantial evidence, Robert Colton's motherless daughter, Mary, is brought up by skinflint Squire Jedediah Tead and his stern wife. Mary worships the father she has never seen, and when he is at last freed, he goes straight to her.

For his and Mary's keep, Tead (a distant relative) gives Robert work on his creamery, the only one in the district. To be freed from Tead's tyranny, the farmers plan a cooperative creamery, a plan Tead plots against by bribing the cow inspector to pronounce the farmers' best cattle unfit.

Tead is also chairman of the school board and appropriates funds voted for repairs. He is again running for office, but he is publicly denounced on election day by Robert, who rises above the fear that his disgrace will become known to Mary when Tead's miserly running of the school endangers the lives of Mary and the schoolteacher, Laurel Stewart, whom Robert loves.

Tead loses the election, but continues his plot against the farmers, which Robert overhears. He warns the farmers in time to save their cows and then rescues Tead from drowning in a vat of milk, wherehe has been thrown by the inspector, with whom he quarreled.

His close call with Death brings about a change of heart in old Tead, and he promises Mary that he will clear her father's name and put him in charge of the creamery. Three home-keeping hearts-- Mary's, Robert's and the schoolteacher's-- are made happy.

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