

There never was such an ill-tempered, cross-grained old man in this world as Dunstan Read. He lived alone in a square red-brick house in the middle of a desolate field; the garden around it had fallen into a dreadful state, no gardener had entered it for many years, it was full of tall nettles and of long, straggling, unrunned bushes. The windows were grimed with dust, the money chest was cleaned within the miserly old man; but the most miserable-looking object in the place was Dunstan Read himself. His face was withered and wrinkled like a piece of yellow parchment; his shabby clothes hung loosely upon his skinny limbs, his great shaggy eyebrows lowered like two heavy lids over his sunken eyes. He lived quite alone with an old man, who was almost as old and as grim as himself, and who cooked, and swept, and washed for him entirely without assistance from any female whatsoever. It was Mr. Read who had inherited the property, and he had inherited it with the whole race of womanhood. The sight of a petticoat was odious to him; the sound of a woman's voice made him shudder. His servant had strict orders never on pain of instant dismissal to address one of his orders in his house. It was currently reported of him that for twenty years he had not exchanged one word with a living woman. He was looked upon as a hardened old miser by the people in the neighborhood, and there was not a man, woman or child for miles around who would not cross over to the other side of the road sooner than come face to face with this ill-favored and sour-visaged man. But Lottie Harfield, from the end of her father's garden on the sunny hillside above the village, used to sit and look down pitifully and sorrowfully upon the gloomy red-brick house in the valley below, where old Mr. Read dragged out his unlovely existence. She was the softest-hearted, gentlest little thing in the world, with child-like, clear blue eyes, and tuffs of yellow gold, and she had an innocent fearlessness about her that seemed to belong more to the childhood she had left behind her than to the womanhood upon which she had fairly entered. She had always a kind word for every body, and when she heard people talking of that dreadful miser Read, and telling stories of his bad heart and evil nature, she would sigh pitifully, and say: "Poor old man! it does turn people sour when every man's hand is against them. Perhaps he is not so bad after all."

carried 'em out. I should have stood on my head if she'd let me. She had laid them with her. Then Lottie took a brief survey of the chamber in which she found herself. She was too true a daughter of a scientific and well-bred man to attempt any tidying or dusting of those dirty bed-room looking papers. Her profession as in her father's study at home. But somehow her fairy touch went round the room and brightened it. She straightened a ruffled chair cover, put back a useless stool into its place, wiped the pens and laid them in their own racks, then she opened a window and let a little fresh sunshine and balmy summer air into the mustiness of the stiflingly close atmosphere. In making her little rounds she glanced, without touching them, at the books and papers, and she made the discovery that they were all on one subject—chemistry. She did not of course understand quite what branch of the science it was that Mr. Read was studying, but evidently he was engaged in some deep researches, and he was very cheerful and hopeful. "I knew the man was not so bad as he was painted," she said to herself, joyfully. "A man with one absorbing taste or pursuit has always a vulnerable point. I shall get at him somehow, I think."

Then she sat down in the one comfortable arm-chair in the room—Mr. Read's own particular seat—and waited for his arrival. Well, she had to wait a long time. The day was warm; a bee hummed drowsily in through the open window; there was a faint smell of well-tanned leather in the air, and presently Lottie fell fast asleep in old Dunstan Read's leather-covered arm-chair. That was how he found her, when, quite unprepared for any such marvellous discovery—having left himself into the hands of his servant, and then, when he awoke, he found her in his study, sitting in his study, and waiting for his arrival. Well, she had to wait a long time. The day was warm; a bee hummed drowsily in through the open window; there was a faint smell of well-tanned leather in the air, and presently Lottie fell fast asleep in old Dunstan Read's leather-covered arm-chair. 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That was how he found her, when, quite unprepared for any such marvellous discovery—having left himself into the farmers should learn. The farmer should study the laws of concentration. He should learn how to concentrate his crops into the best paying articles. Does he consider that butter, cheese, beef, pork and mutton represent only a certain amount of grass, hay and grain that he has produced? He should be selling the raw commodities, he can, by putting them into these articles, get much better returns for his products. His study should be how to transform the raw products of his farm into something that is concentrated, and that will bring a command price in the market. By condensing it, little freight has to be paid, and that much will be saved. A farm is not only a farm; it is, or should be, a factory for changing the raw products into articles of general consumption that have a command price in the world over—that are of the best quality, that keep well and sell well, and brings prices that will pay well for the skill, labor and capital employed in producing them.

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