

nate people to my side of the question. I should say our side, for of course Marion is one with me in the matter. You see, I am a rich man, Wilfrid—really a rich man, and I naturally wish that Marion should be made as happy as possible. I do not think she would be as happy as possible if she were in England with me, with a nice place in the country, and a town-house, and most things that money could bring her, if she knew that her father and mother were out here living a life which, although they have admirably adapted themselves to it, is yet very different to that to which they have been all their lives accustomed.

“Now, owing to this absurd freak of my aunt in making me her heir when my income was already five times as much as I could spend, I have the nuisance of a large landed estate on my hands. There is a large house upon it which I suppose Marion and I will have to occupy occasionally; and there is another house, which is known as the dower house, and which is a very snug and comfortable abode. Now, it is quite clear that I am the last sort of man to look after an estate. It would worry me most out of my mind, and would be a perpetual annoyance.

“What I propose is that your father and mother shall come home and take possession of the dower house, and that your father should act as my agent. Living on the spot, he would be able to keep an eye on the tenants, receive rents, and that sort of thing, and still be able to devote a considerable portion of his time to his favourite pursuits. I should have the advantage of having an agent I could absolutely rely upon, and Marion and I would have the comfort of having her father and mother close at hand. It would be a little lonely for you for a bit, Wilfrid; but you are nearly nineteen