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### MARIAN'S FORTUNE.

GEORGE HALLOWELL, of Elmsborough, died at the age of eighty, worth £100,000. People generally thought he had lived a very long time, but they could not deny the fact that he had improved the time, and got together a very respectable fortune.

Early in his manhood he had married Estelle Cleaves, the daughter of a poor actor; the same incongruity of taste or temper—nobody knew which, for Hallowell kept his own secrets, and death long ago had sealed the lips of his wife—had separated them after about ten months of married life.

The wife had gone forth nobody knew whither, and Hallowell had lived on, a sour, crusty and monotonous life in the old home where he was born, and where before him were born his grandfather and father.

He never went into society, he received no company, he had no friends, and it was a great wonder to whom he would give his property when he was dead.

And when the announcement came that the old man was gone, everybody picked up his or her ears and the wonder grew.

Three old servants—nearly as old as himself—a man and two women, had always been with him, and constituted the only family he had.

The old male servant was named Gilbert, and in his hands Mr. Hallowell had left his will.

The funeral was largely attended by the whole neighborhood; and, at its close, Gilbert requested all those interested to remain and hear the will read.

Of course, in a matter like this, everybody was interested, and old Gilbert had a good audience.

Lawyer Secors read the will. It seemed to have been drawn up a year before for the testator. Divested of its formalities, it bequeathed handsome life annuities to each of the three servants, two thousand pounds to each of the two churches in the village, two hundred pounds to the support of Jim, a large striped cat which the old man held in high regard, and all the rest of the property,—houses, lands, stocks, and money, was bequeathed without reserve to Marian Esterly, the village school mistress.

The people were all stricken dumb with astonishment, and Miss Esterly was, perhaps, more surprised than any of them.

A few words in pencil, in old Hallowell's own handwriting, on the margin of the will, explained his reason for this disposition of the property:

"I have been friends with nobody," so ran the marginal reference—"and people have looked upon me as being destitute of the attributes of humanity, and it was my own fault. I make no complaint. Only one of all my towns-people has seen deep enough beneath the surface to surmise that old Hallowell might have feelings of his own, and she has never passed me by without a kind good day. And once when I passed by her little garden she gave me a bunch of pansies. One I loved in youth was fond of pansies, and I think of her always when I see them. And so, as Marian Esterly has treated me as if I had a soul, I bequeath to her the property which it has taken me a lifetime to gather, and may Heaven bless her in its possession.

All the villagers were jealous of Miss Esterly, and all thought she had been very well repaid for a few kind words and a bunch of pansies. But none could dispute old