

"I saw it was rough before it got dark," answered Miss Stewart.

"It's very antallizing, isn't it? I can see Rossmore so plainly from my place, and yet I have been more than half an hour in getting here to-night;" and he looked at his watch.

"You are my nearest neighbor, as the crow flies, you know."

"I wish I were a crow, then; no, I don't think I do—the sable-winged bird has so many bad qualities."

"Oh, the poor crows!" laughed Leonora.

"They are a noisy, quarrelsome set; bad neighbors to my mind—bad to eat—and bad for the wheat."

"I must confess I like to hear them caw, and see them veering about in their mysterious fashion among the old trees."

"That is because you are young and romantic," said Mr. Biddulph, smiling, and looking admiringly at Leonora's face with his gray eyes, in which there was much thought and some sadness. "And do you still like your wild eyrie up here?" he added.

"I love Rossmore—I have always loved it. I used to come here, you know, when I was a little child, with my mother. I remember Colonel Biddulph so well, though we seldom saw him."

"I scarcely knew my uncle; but he was a grim old man."

"He was rather a misanthrope, was he not? Yet he must have been very kind to think of me as he did."

"He hated the world and its crooked ways, or the world hated him. We are apt to become sour when we are disappointed, don't you think?"

"I have not been disappointed yet."

"No; it's a bitter draught—bitterest of all to be disappointed in one's self."

Leonard looked up with interest in Mr. Biddulph's face, but his eyes were cast down.

"I intended you," said Leonora, a moment later, with that soft blush of hers which made her so lovely, "to take my cousin, after the Scotch fashion—Mrs. Fraser, of Airdlinn—in to dinner this evening; but only the young people are here. Therefore——"

"May I take my neighbor and hostess?"

"If you like."

"I more than like. Being the oldest man in the room, except the parson, I have been indulging in certain grue-