

so unceremoniously. I feel assured that Miss Lucy will join us, as she is not one of the riding party."

Isabel assented, and Arthur went in search of Lucy.

Lady Ashton followed him, and remonstrated: "You know you were to be one of the riding party, Arthur."

"Impossible, my dear aunt. After what has passed, I can't do less than devote my time this morning to the service of Miss Leicester."

"Nonsense; she is 'only a governess.'"

"So much the more would she feel any slight."

"You talk absurdly," she returned with a sneer. "You can't take her alone, Arthur. I will not allow it."

"My dear aunt, I am much too prudent for that. Lucy Mornington goes with us."

"But who will ride with Mary?"

"Oh, you must get her a cavalier, as you did a horse, I suppose," he returned carelessly. "At all events, I am not at her service, even though no other be found;" and he passed on toward Lucy, regardless of his aunt's displeasure. And he carried the day in spite of her, for she put in practice several little schemes to prevent Isabel going. But Lady Ashton was defeated; and Isabel remembered this morning as the only really pleasant time during her stay at the Park.

Lady Ashton was greatly perplexed as to how to procure a beau for Mary, and, as a last resource, pressed Sir John into service; but as he was a very quiet, stately old gentleman, the ride, to poor Mary's great chagrin, was a very formal affair.

On the last evening of her stay at Ashton Park, Isabel was admiring the beautiful sunset from her window, and as she stood lost in reverie, someone entered hastily and fastened the door. Turning to see who the intruder might be, she beheld a very beautiful girl, apparently about fourteen years of age, her large eyes flashing with anger, while her short, quick breathing, told of excitement and disquietude. "I have had such a dance to get here without observation," she panted forth. "Please let me stay a little while." And before Isabel could recover from her momentary surprise, Louisa had thrown herself into her arms,