

THE CUSTOM OF THE COUNTRY

than she had been willing to admit: they made her ballroom the handsomest in Paris. But something had put her out on the way up from Deauville, and the simplest way of easing her nerves had been to affect indifference to the tapestries. Now she had quite recovered her good humour, and as she glanced down the list of guests she was awaiting she said to herself, with a sigh of satisfaction, that she was glad she had put on her ruhies.

For the first time since her marriage to Moffatt she was about to receive in her house the people she most wished to see there. The beginnings had been a little difficult; their first attempt in New York was so unpromising that she feared they might not be able to live down the sensational details of their reunion, and had insisted on her husband's taking her hack to Paris. But her apprehensions were unfounded. It was only necessary to give people the time to pretend they had forgotten; and already they were all pretending beautifully. The French world had of course held out longest; it had strongholds she might never capture. But already scceders were beginning to show themselves, and her dinner-list that evening was graced with the names of an authentic Duke and a not too-damaged Countess. In addition, of course, she had the Shallums, the Chauncey Ellings, May Beringer, Dicky Bowles, Walsingham Popple, and the rest of the New York frequenters of the Nouveau Luxe; she had even, at the