

that Lucia would be much better there than shut up in London. The fact that London was in its glory at that moment made no impression on him.

"That is just it," he said, when this was suggested to him. "I want to get it settled and bring her back to enjoy herself here a little before the season is over."

It seemed, indeed, pretty evident that the present state of things could not last long; there was no reason why it should, and nothing but the bride's preparations to delay the long-desired wedding.

The Wynters came about nine o'clock. Mrs. Wynter instantly recognized Maurice. Her daughters had speculated enough about her mysterious visitor that winter night, to have prevented her forgetting him, if she would otherwise have done so, and the state of affairs at present was very soon evident as an explanation of the mystery. When the party separated for the night, Mrs. Costello and Mr. Wynter remained in the drawing-room for that consultation for which he had come, while his wife and daughter stayed together upstairs to talk over their new relations before going to bed.

Mrs. Costello, as briefly as possible, made her