to laugh at Maurice, because I was only an ignorant country girl."

She spoke very slowly and timidly; but Mrs. Costello began to think she was right. It would be as well that the future mistress of Hunsdon should have some little introduction to her new world, to prepare her for "by-and-by."

Next day came two letters for Mrs. Costello, as well as one for Lucia. The first was from Lady Dighton full of congratulation, and pressing her invitation; the other, from Mr. Wynter, announced that he, his wife, and daughter, would be in London next evening. Next evening was Saturday, and Maurice also would be there, and would of course spend Sunday with them; so that they had a prospect of plenty of guests.

Maurice, however, arrived early in the day. He had established himself at a neighbouring hotel, and came in quite with the old air of being at home. He made a little grimace when he heard of the others who were expected, but contented himself by making the most of the hours before their train was due. He found an opportunity also of conveying to Mrs. Costello his conviction that Hunsdon was very much in want of a lady to make it comfortable, and