

THE LIFTED VEIL.

the elder of the two sons, and succeeded my father in the business. He was already in a big way of doing things when the expansion of Canada, which began in the middle nineties, gave him further openings. He was a philanthropic, public-spirited man, not unknown in the United States—"

"I recognized your name, without having anything exact to connect with it."

"That is, you recognized my father's name. He was created first a K. C. B. and afterward a baronet by Queen Victoria, not long before she died. That's how it happens that I've a handle to my name, when I've done nothing to deserve it. But it's not wholly to the point. What I want you to see is that I can give my wife a good position—one in which she'd have, within reason, brilliant opportunities."

"I can quite understand that."

"And," he pursued, not wholly with ease, "just as I like to feel that the position is good enough for her, so I want to be sure that—you mustn't think me fatuous or an ass!—I'm not a very young man any longer and my situation as head of the family obliges me to think of it!—so I want to be sure—to be awfully crude and put it into very plain language!—that she's good enough for the position. Do you see?"

He had reddened as he continued to speak, though Bainbridge was too deeply interested to notice it. "Wouldn't that depend to some extent on what you mean by good?—and good enough?"

"What does any one mean? I suppose I'm thinking of the usual thing."

"The usual thing," Bainbridge repeated, ponderingly, "doesn't take us very far, does it?"