

THE LIFTED VEIL

"You'll do me a great favor, sir, if you consider me as having given my reply."

The response was disconcerting. "Which leaves a woman who may be innocent under suspicion. Have you thought of that?"

Once more the clergyman was obliged to choose his words. "Suspicion is chiefly in the mind of the person who suspects. It's something we can control, even when we can't altogether get away from it."

"Do you want me to understand that I *can't* altogether get away from it?"

"I want you to understand nothing whatever—from me. Your source of information is elsewhere, if you must have information."

"It's not a question of what I must have, but of what she wants me to know."

"Then she's at liberty to tell you. As it is, one of two things strikes me as wise. It would be better either for you not to press the matter further, or for her to take on herself the responsibility of making her own confidence."

The Canadian responded with some exasperation: "I don't want to press the matter further, the Lord only knows; and yet now that the question has been raised. . . . You see," he went on, in another tone, "it might not be right for me in my situation to go it blind. If I tell you the circumstances you'll understand how the matter stands with me."

Bainbridge expressed his willingness to listen to anything his visitor chose to impart.

"My father," the latter stated, "was a well-known Canadian banker. The banking profession is a more important national institution in our country than it is in this, for reasons that I sha'n't attempt to go into. I was