

## THE LIFTED VEIL

to tackle our own; and when we're driven to see the futility of that course we give up trying to do anything."

"And yet my whole object is not to think of myself at all. If I could only forget myself—"

"A plant might as well try to forget the ground, or a bird the air. Oneself is the most interesting of all subjects—and one of the most legitimate. We can get away from everything but that; and since we can't get away from it, isn't it wise to make the best and the most of it?"

He was sorry that just at this minute Endsleigh Jarrott's good-natured red face could be seen peeping round her shoulder, with the question as to whether Mrs. Gildersleeve had heard what had happened to his big machine when driven by a drunken chauffeur. Bainbridge listened to part of this adventure in the hope of recapturing his companion, but as the minutes went by without any such result he found himself forced back again on the society of Miss Galloway. With a pang he recorded the fact that his feeling at the change was like that of a man who returns to the humdrum of home after a strange and exciting journey.

During the rest of dinner he talked little. He went so far as to drag in Reggie Pole, so as to keep Mary Galloway engaged while he should be free to follow his own thoughts. He wanted to register his impressions of the last ten or fifteen minutes, to engrave them on his memory as ancient historians cut their inscriptions on rock.

Without making the admission in so many words he felt this meeting to be one of the three or four notable events in his experience. It was to nothing said or done that this conviction was due, but to causes over and above his power of analysis. With no one else whom he had