

THE LIFTED VEIL

expression was as full of undecipherable meanings as a page of a book printed in an unknown tongue.

"So we've met at last," he said, easily.

"Yes, at last," she echoed. "I suppose it had to happen some time."

"The wonder is that it wasn't long ago."

Her reply was faint. "Yes, I suppose so."

"Leslie and Maggie speak of you so often," he laughed, "that I'd begun to think of you as a fictitious character—a sort of invisible companion such as children talk about."

The shadow in her eyes seemed to him like that which comes across a pool when a cloud passes overhead. "I've been a good deal abroad." She added, before he could respond to this, "I shouldn't have come home now if war hadn't broken out."

"Do you like it so much over there?"

"It isn't altogether a matter of liking. I've—I've other things to think of. Besides, I've lived so much in England and France that I'm at home in those countries—and in Italy."

"But more at home here?"

She evaded this question. "If I had been able to do any good I should have stayed in Paris. I wanted to. It was dreadful to be told by every one that there was nothing I could do, when so much needed to be done—and to know they were right."

"Why were they right?"

"For the reason they gave—that there was nothing I could do. I couldn't nurse or sew or undertake anything that some one else wouldn't have done better." Her voice became both eager and wistful, as she went on, "Tell me, how do people set about doing good?"

He was so absorbed in noting that quality in her face