

What did Edison invent

“Lady Laura, I do wish you joy, with all my heart — but that will not make all things pleasant. I came up here to ask you to be my wife.” He went up from Saulsby to London on that day, and found himself quite alone in Mrs Bunce’s lodgings. I mean not only that he was alone at his lodgings, but he was alone at his club, and alone in the streets. July was not quite over, and yet all the birds of passage had migrated. Mr Mildmay, by his short session, had half ruined the London tradesmen, and had changed the summer mode of life of all those who account themselves to be anybody. Phineas, as he sat alone in his room, felt himself to be nobody. He had told the Earl that he was going to Ireland, and to Ireland he must go — because he had nothing else to do. He had been asked indeed to join one or two parties in their autumn plans. Mr Monk had wanted him to go to the Pyrenees, and Lord Chiltern had suggested that he should join the yacht — but neither plan suited him. It would have suited him to be it Loughlinter with Violet Effingham, but Loughlinter was a barred house to him. His old friend, Lady Laura, had told him not to come thither, explaining, with sufficient clearness, her reasons for excluding him from the number of her husband’s guests. As he thought of it the past scenes of his life became very marvellous to him. Twelve months since he would have given all the world for a word of love from Lady Laura, and had barely dared to hope that such a word, at some future day, might possibly be spoken. Now such

a word had in truth been spoken, and it had come to be simply a trouble to him. She had owned to him — for, in truth, such had been the meaning of her warning to him — that, though she had married another man, she had loved and did love him. But in thinking of this he took no pride in it. It was not till he had thought of it long that he began to ask himself whether he might not be justified in gathering from what happened some hope that Violet also might learn to love him. He had thought so little of himself as to have been afraid at first to press his suit with Lady Laura. Might he not venture to think more of himself, having learned how far he had succeeded? “You will promise, won’t you?” she persisted, in a whisper. “It’s only ‘in case’—just that I needn’t worry myself.”