

married life. I see so few who are really happy in this relation, —I mean happy as I should wish to be. You seem to come nearer to it than any one else. Don't you ever ——”

“Quarrel?—no, not often, now. We had our breaking in. I believe it must come to all, sooner or later.”

“Do tell me about it, will you, Annette?”

“Yes, if you are very desirous of it. You may learn something from it.

“I was a romantic girl, as you well know, Kate. Some few friends I had, whom I loved dearly; but these friendships did not quite satisfy my heart. Something more it craved. I hardly knew what, until I loved my husband. When we were first married, I used sometimes to ask myself, ‘Now, do I find in this life all which I expected to find? Am I as happy as I thought I should be?’ My heart always responded, ‘Yes, and more so.’ With us the romance of married life—if I may call it so—held on a long time. For my part, I was conscious of a pleasurable excitement of feeling, when we were together. I enjoyed riding and walking *alone* with him. The brightest hours of the day were those in which we sat down alone together, to talk or read. For a long time I felt a general restraint in his presence. I liked to be becomingly dressed, and to feel in tune. When dull, I made an effort to be social and cheerful, if he was present. I had a great fear of getting into the way of sitting down stupidly with my husband, or of having nothing to talk about but the children and the butcher's bill. I made a business of remembering every pleasant thing which I read, or heard, or thought, to tell him; and when all these subjects were exhausted, we had each of us a hobby we could ride, so that we were never silent for want of something to say. Thus we lived for a year or two. I was very happy. I think people were often surprised to see us continue to enjoy each other's society with so much zest.

‘But there was this about it. As yet I had nothing to try me. We were boarding, I had no care, and his tenderness and interest were a sovereign panacea for the little ails and roughnesses which must fall to us in our best estate. But this could not last forever. He became more and more occupied in his business, and I at length had a house and baby to look after. Then, for the first time, our mutual forbearance was put to the test. Hitherto we