

426 The Dream and the Business

a sparkle which would make the dullest hour brilliant. He had never maintained that inconsequence in a woman was abominable. Some amount of it was surely necessary to a woman's character.

"Let me tell you what is in my heart," she suggested.

"By all means."

"Unless you yourself want to talk—for a change. Do you?"

"Now you ask me—yes. They always say that if a marriage can go on happily for ten years, one can feel safe. But during those ten years there are certain to be some bad times. I think we have reached one."

She nodded, and she did not interrupt him.

"I fell in love with you at sight," he went on, "there is no question of that. I never pretended not to care for women. I like them. Some men can get on perfectly without them—at least, so they tell me. But I cannot. I enjoy their society; I admire them; they interest me. I will go so far as to say that, for me, life would be intolerable if I had to spend it wholly among men. To philander about is silly and effeminate—at least, that is my idea of effeminacy. To marry and to have my home and my wife, is simply a law of my being. Had I been a poor man, I must have married just the same. I never cared for flirtations and the like. I have had love affairs, of course, but only when I thought I was