

Angela's Business

Dr. Flower had done. Romantic males, with their poor opinion of the worth of a woman, might hope for true domesticity; true maternity; but in their hearts they had thought all along, with a wink, that "possession" was enough. It was "what a woman was for."

But in that they were mistaken. Possession was not enough. Being a female was not enough. Great heavens! — thought Charles Garrott, and muttered as he strode. . . . What a shame, what a staggering waste of rich human potentiality, to classify and file away one half the world as only "*marital rights*!"

Was n't it about time to stop all this? Was n't it time for modern writers to pull away the rosy veils and let the Angelas meet themselves — while they could still do something about it? Did n't it lay up needless future misery to go on deceiving helpless women into putting a preposterous overvaluation upon the mere possession of their sex? Lastly, and above all, was n't it a colossal libel on all womanhood to accept the strut and mannerism born of this deception as the true essentials of "womanliness"?

Womanly! . . . Why, womanliness was a prime human quality, integrally necessary to the work of the world — a great positive quality, not a little passive one, productive, not sterile, of the spirit, not of the body. Womanliness was the mother and guardian of great social virtues: of a finer and deeper emotion, of more sensitive perceptions, of a subtler intuition of the sources of life, of an all-mothering sympathy, a more embracing tenderness. Womanliness had no more to do with the light bright plumage of the mating-season than a waxed mustache had to do with being a soldier.

There was a time, he understood well, when the fact of womanhood had implied substantialities: when being a wife