

## Angela's Business

thoroughly "womanly girl." Few authorities enjoy denying the ripe sum of their own best thinking. But a later remark of Mrs. Wing's took a much deeper twist in his mind.

"Really," she said, slowly and dubiously, following a pause, "I have but one fault to find with Donald's choice, and that is — well, frankly, Angela seemed to care so little for Paulie and Neddy Warder. . . . And Donald was such a goose over them, dear boy."

As he did not see his way clear to replying to that, "I hope you're mistaken, ma'am," Charles merely smiled vaguely, and said nothing. But what he thought, on the delicate implication, was nothing about Angela at all — only that Donald had been rather less of a goose over Paulie and Neddy than Mary Wing had been. . . .

Then the sitting-room clock ticked for a space, while Mrs. Wing communed with herself. And Charles, gazing out into the park, waiting for his friend, thought how it was that a young woman's work — even an extraordinary young woman like Mary — always suhtly lacked just that ultimate touch of grim seriousness which justified the "fierce hackings away" of a man. For, as an abstract truth, there was positively no such thing as a Permanent Spinster: and women who were not spinsters, and normally desired Paulies and Neddies of their own, could not possihly fulfill their longings without serious complications to themselves, then and thenceforward. It was no human or escapable "tyranny" that had made Woman, to this degree, to her glory or her disaster, forever the victim of her sex: and, by the same token, fixed the final responsibility for the economic support of the family upon the shoulders of the predestined and uncompromised provider, Man. . . .

Yes, then and thenceforward . . . Could you, for example, imagine Mary Wing — who had had chances to marry before