

Angela's Business

mind, and he inquired with authoritative interest, artfully concealed: "How do you mean, exactly?"

"Well — I don't know — "

She looked at him, laughing a little, as if not certain how far she could say what she meant; but finding his gaze so extremely encouraging, she went on seriously: —

"Don't you think when a woman gets really wrapped up in business — and all that — she's apt to miss some of the best things of life?"

He might have laughed at the quaint deliciousness of that, to him, Charles Garrott. But he did n't.

"That's the great question your sex is working out, is n't it?" he said, carefully. "I don't suppose work — just moderate, useful occupation -- ever hurt anybody much, do you?"

"Oh, no! — of course not. That's just what I believe, too. I believe everybody ought to have work to do. But — all the work is n't teaching or going to an office — or being a public speaker — do you think so?"

"Oh, never. No, indeed."

She hesitated and said, laughing: "I know *I* find it work enough just keeping a house and doing the housework — and being a daughter and sister!"

It was at that point that Charles's purely conventional look altered, his inmost self pricking up its ears, as it were. And a moment later the simple girl said, in the naïvest way imaginable, what seemed immediately to stick in his scientific Woman lore like a burr: —

"Of course I have n't studied and read like Cousin Mary, but truly it seems to me that — just making a home is sometimes all the business a woman could possibly attend to. . . ."

He stood looking down at her in the strangest way, engrossed with novel reflections. She would have been aston-