

Angela's Business

We have a society organized on the agreeable assumption that every woman, at twenty-five or thereabouts, finds herself in possession of a home, a husband, and three darling little curly-headed children.

Stimulated a trifle, he would thereupon sharpen up his pencil and charge forward a few sentences, as now: —

Slipshod people never test such old assumptions against actuality; they cling to what their grandfathers said, and call their slipshodness conservatism. So (like ostriches) they avoid the fact that there are three large and growing classes of women who simply have no relation to their comfortable old theory. I refer, of course, to the classes of Temporary Spinsters, of Permanent Spinsters, and of Married but Idle — childless wives living in boarding-houses, for example. Let no Old Tory conceive that he has disposed of the Woman Question until he can plainly answer: What are all these various women to do in their fifteen waking hours a day?

Following which, he lit a cigarette in a moody manner, and sat frowning at the back of the head of his relative and secretary, who was clacking away all the while on a second-hand typewriter near by.

It will be contended that some hesitancy was fitting enough to the writer's thesis, Woman having raised perplexities in the bosoms of philosophers from the earliest times on. But perplexity did not happen to be the trouble with this philosopher, Charles King Garrott. These sentences Mr. Garrott so apathetically set down were the ancient commonplaces of his mind, the familiar bare bones of special researches long holding a unique position in his life. The dull General Public, with its economic eye, might yet rate him merely as a private tutor, formerly of Blaines College; the relative and secretary there might judge him only a young man of an unmasculine thin sedentary quality, who mysteriously gave his youth to producing piles of strange stuff that all had to be copied out on the typewriter. But, in the privacy of his own soul, Charles