

THE INTERMEDIARY.

By Mrs. Herbert.

Concluded from last week.

"Half-past eleven and the wife not back yet!" Oliver had enjoyed the unwonted solitude. He had propped up his latest work against the lamp, and read himself with keen appreciation during the whole of dinner. It was luxury not to have his chain of thought interrupted. But half-past eleven! Suppose a man had wanted to lock up things and go to bed, after an exhausting day's work! Some women might be authors' wives from now till doomsday and yet never discover what authors were. True, he had said, "Don't hurry back." How literal some women were!

A quarter to twelve and "Ting-ing-ing!" The exasperating screech of an electric bell tore through the silence.

Oliver went to the flat-door and braced himself to receive apologies.

"Thank you, dear," said his wife, and entered with a subdued air of having "seen life." "I've had a wonderful evening!"

"Oh, you have!" Oliver stared at her. Her eyes were shining with their brightest blue. Moreover, they were free from their usual burden of melting adoration. They looked over his head with a studied abstraction. She was certainly a pretty woman. On reflection, he drew her towards him and kissed her. She received the attention absently. "A wonderful evening!" she murmured.

"Let's hear about it, then," said Oliver, indulgently.

"Not tonight," she answered, sweetly; "don't you think it sometimes spoils things—cheapens them, you know—even to talk about them to any one?"

"Oh, just as you like. I'm sleepy." And Oliver lit his candle in a huff.

The next morning it all came out. Mimi had taken her—dear Mimi to think of such a treat—to the Bayswater hall. And there she had listened to the finest lecture she had ever heard in her life, by the greatest living novelist of the century. He had read aloud from his own works, and Lily was going to get them, one and all, to read herself. They showed you what novels ought to be! This last with spiteful "intention."

Oliver listened grimly. It was just like Lily to talk of "getting" Blank's works, when there was a bookstall in the study entirely devoted to Blank. She could read them to her heart's content, and he wished her edification—and understanding.

Oh, she thanked him! And would her get her out a volume now?

"Hang it all, can't we get over breakfast first? They're upstairs! And here's a whole shelf of press cuttings. Listen to this polished, scholarly style; isn't it charming? 'Although Mr. Oliver Lambert's present work may be fit for little else it is useful as throwing a more favourable light on his former production, reluctantly condemned by us some six months ago. We had honestly believed the standard then reached to be Mr. Lambert's lowest. The publication of "Renee the Queen" has, we confess, somewhat shaken our opinion. It reveals the even lower depth to which a man of some pretensions, however small, to the title of novelist can sink, when he gives a few months' careless attention to develop a conception which might well have taken years of the best work of one of our writers of repute.' Isn't it delicious? isn't it sweet? The penny-a-lining blackguard!" Oliver was not above venting vicarious abuse on his "peli-can."

No superfluous lifeblood, in this instance, was forthcoming. Lily murmured something inaudible, and poured herself out some more coffee. He exploded again.

"So clever, the smug journalist—probably some simpering fool of a woman! So easy, isn't it, to give 'years of the best work,' when you happen to need a trifle like the second-best pay every other week or so! How would you take it, I wonder, if I acted like 'one of our best writers'? No more bonnets—no more 'little evenings'—eh?"

He snorted and paused. Surely she would come round the table and intercept his bacon with her apologetic kisses, her protestations that "she didn't matter—it was only Oliver! and how spiteful! and how unjust! and how vulgar!" No; there she sat like a stone! Of all intelligent, sympathetic women!

"It naturally doesn't interest you," he said with enormous politeness. "I beg your pardon for reflecting literary matter upon you!"

Now she was going to irritate him with tears.

She smiled loftily, then sighed a little. "If you'd only heard Mr. Blank last night!" she said; "he read out some perfectly awful reviews he'd had. And such absurd offers from publishers! prices you would hardly look at."

Oliver stooped for his table napkin, and in so doing confided to the floor his heartfelt wishes for Mr. Blank's enduring future.

After breakfast he prepared to meet the usual plaintiff request: "May I stay with you a little time while you work? I won't interrupt you, darling, I promise!"

Lily followed him to his study door. "Would you mind just handing me down Mr. Blank's first book?" she asked. "I want to take them all in their proper turn as they come."

He gave it to her, and she tripped away and shut herself up into the drawing-room, taking her kitten for "comic relief." Oliver banged the door with surprised impatience for a man just relieved of a grievance. How many times had he not found her pretty, irrelevant presence, with its concomitants of crackling newspaper or clicking knitting-needles, an intolerable check to composition! He settled to his desk, and in about three quarters of an hour found himself reading out an extract to a listener who was not there and pausing for an admiring verdict that did not come.

Lunch time brought another surprise. Oliver had been wont to sit down to his mince and mashed potatoes with an air of fine abstraction, and moving lips; to answer his wife's artless remarks with grunts more or less articulate; and to balance his morning's MSS. against the dish of the moment until the prop was forcibly removed from it by an awe-struck "general." The sight of Lily, mutely seated, burning to talk, had always afforded him a vicious pleasure that he mistook for irritation. Today behold, on her side of the table, a solid structure composed of the water jug, a vegetable dish, and Mr. Bank's most ponderous volume! Oliver was regaled with neither marriages nor births. His wife helped him absently and sparsely to potatoes, returning at once to her study of the "really great writer."

It was Oliver's custom to take a stroll after lunch in Kensington gardens, combining exercise with the "thinking-out" of literary schemes. Lily was graciously permitted to accompany him, on the strict understanding that she was by no means to risk interrupting a "train of thought" with irrelevant matter. On this wonderful day he was sent forth unfettered and alone. His wife had a call to make. No, it couldn't wait. If dear Oliver wouldn't mind pouring out his tea just for once. Oliver took his stick and left the house with a curiously-irritated feeling.

His walk even was a failure. It happened to be one of the last days of a late autumn that had "thrown back" to summer again. The garden trees were full of rich tinting; the garden seats held each its pair of lovers. Oliver dimly felt that even an "interruption" in the shape of a lovely wife of four-and-twenty would not be altogether unwelcome. His solitary tea increased the unexpected feeling of desertion.

But at night came the climax. Oliver was by no means at heart so truculent as his conversation. Moreover, he was barely twenty-five. Consequently, it was not long before he began to feel stirrings of remorse at the thought of his complainings of the day before. Giving the poor little woman away like that! It was a beastly shame. He ought to be kicked. He began to make resolutions. Half her stupidity came from nervousness—he frightened the little thing! He would try to be gentle—to draw her out more. That very night he would read her out his last pathetic chapter, and hear that it was "too sad—she had never heard anything so sad. But how beautiful!"

She came in rather late, and had very little to say of her doings, he thought. When dinner was over, he settled down beside her and cleared his throat.

"I'm going to read you out something, Kiddy," he said kindly.

Lily laid down Mr. Blank with ostentatious reluctance.

"Oh, thank you, dear," she said; but don't you think sometimes, when one's reading something else—especially something good—one doesn't quite want to mix things?"

Oliver got up and looked at her. "I think I shall take a run into the country for a week or two," he said.

It was a crude form of retaliation, but it answered its purpose. Lily flung Mr. Blank to the other side of the room and herself into her husband's arms.

"Don't go! don't go! Oh, Oliver!"

"And you don't really like Bank's stuff better than mine?"

"Darling, as if I could! I couldn't have kept it up beyond today to save my life! And you don't really say all those things about my 'gushing' when you go to see that horrid Mimi?"

"Darling, as if I could!"

A CARD.

We, the undersigned, do hereby agree to refund the money on a twenty-five cent bottle of Dr. Wills' English Pills, if, after using three-fourths of contents of bottle, they do not relieve Constipation and Headache. We also warrant that four bottles will permanently cure the most obstinate case of Constipation. Satisfaction or no pay when Wills' English Pills are used.

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Chas. A. McKeen, druggist, Woodstock, N. B.

Was War Necessary?

George T. Angell of Boston is editor of Our Dumb Animals, and he does not believe in war. In a late issue he writes:

Hard-working Farmers.



DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS

help a farmer to work and keep his health—take the ache and pain out of his back and give him strength and vigor.

Mr. Isaiah Willmot, a retired farmer living at 138 Elizabeth St., Barrie, Ont., said:

"I have been a sufferer with kidney trouble and pain in the small of my back, and in both sides. I also had a great deal of neuralgia pain in my temples, and was subject to dizzy spells. I felt tired and worn out most of the time. Since taking Doan's Kidney Pills, I have had no pain either in my back or sides. They have removed the neuralgia pain from my head, also the tired feeling. I feel at least ten years younger and can only say that Doan's Kidney Pills are the most remarkable kidney cure, and in addition are the best tonic I ever took."

Laxa-Liver Pills cure Constipation.

We are asked to give our opinion in regard to the two wars in which our nation has been recently engaged, and we do not hesitate for one moment to say:—

(1.) That we believe with James Russell Lowell that unnecessary war is murder.

(2.) By the testimony of the President of the United States and his Secretary of the state [now ex-Secretary], John Sherman, the war about Cuba was entirely unnecessary.

Congressman Bottell of Maine, in his address to our Massachusetts Club on Oct. 22nd last, said: "That he had personal conference with President McKinley day after day, and that if Congress had left the matter to the President, he would have secured everything wanted in Cuba "without the sacrifice of one drop of American or Spanish blood."

Ex-Secretary of State Sherman said in the Boston Herald of Sep. 4: "It was unnecessary for us to go to war with Spain. I had several consultations with the Spanish minister on the subject, and we could have adjusted difficulties without the loss of our blood or treasure. Why, we had progressed to that stage that I could have arranged a treaty by which Spain would have retired peacefully from the island of Cuba. The blood of our men who went forth under the impulse of the moment to defend our flag is upon the heads of the men in Congress who brought on the war and all of its consequent sufferings."

(3.) Upon this and other confirmatory evidence we believe the war about Cuba unnecessary, and as a consequence we believe it was murder from beginning to end—murder of our own soldiers who died in consequence of it—murder of the poor fellows compelled [by drafts into the Spanish armies] to fight and die there—and murder of the tens and perhaps hundreds of thousands of Cuban men and women and children who because it have died a most terrible death by starvation.

(4.) We believe this war against the Filipinos totally unnecessary, unjust, unjustifiable, and so we believe this war has been, up to the present time, simply and only murder—as before of our own soldiers and "murder of the people whom they have been sent out to kill.

We believe the verdict of posterity on both these wars will be—murder.

Rheumatism Can't Exist

When the kidneys are kept healthy and vigorous by the use of A. W. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills. It is uric acid left in the body by defective kidneys that causes rheumatism. Dr. A. W. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills make the kidneys strong and active in their work of filtering the blood, and thus remove the cause of rheumatism. One pill a dose, 25 cents a box.

Judicial Purchases.

In New York, Tammany hall received in 1890, \$10,000 from its candidate for the Superior Court in the city of New York, says Frank Gaylord Cook in the June Atlantic; in 1891, \$6,500 from its candidate for the Supreme Court, and \$10,000 from its candidate for the Court of Common Pleas; in 1892, \$5,000 from its candidate for the Court of Common Pleas; in 1893, \$5,000 from its candidate for the Court of General Sessions, and \$5,000 from its candidate for the Supreme Court.

The contribution need not be called the purchase price of the office. It is enough to state that its payment is evidently obligatory upon the candidate by reason of his acceptance of the nomination. Being under obligation to his party for one of its most honoured gifts, he manifests his gratitude by becoming one of its most generous supporters. Even in his office his zeal does not flag. He participates in party councils, and takes the stump in political campaigns. The faithful servant and generous supporter of his party, he is rewarded with a renomination at the end of his term.

Laxa-Liver Pills have become the ladies' favorite cathartic. They act without any griping, purging or sickening, and if persisted in for a time cure habitual Constipation.

FOR SALE.

The subscriber offers for sale another fine litter of pure bred Yorkshire pigs. They were farrowed on 28th March, "and there are more to follow." Price low. He also offers for sale or to exchange for horse or stock, a new or second hand buggy. J. McCREADY, Jacksonville, N. B.

Wool Growers! NOTICE.

We have decided to go out of the Retail business, and from this date until the whole of our retail stock is disposed of, we will sell at a discount which will make it of special interest to you to buy from us.

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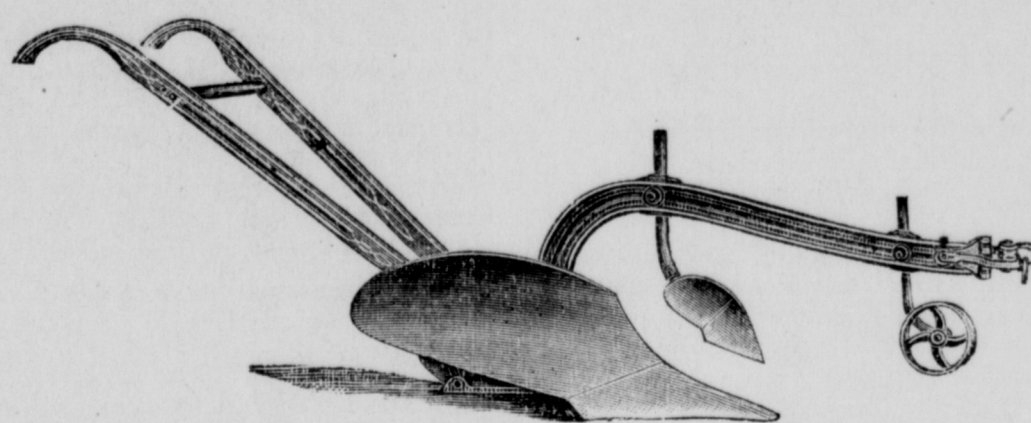
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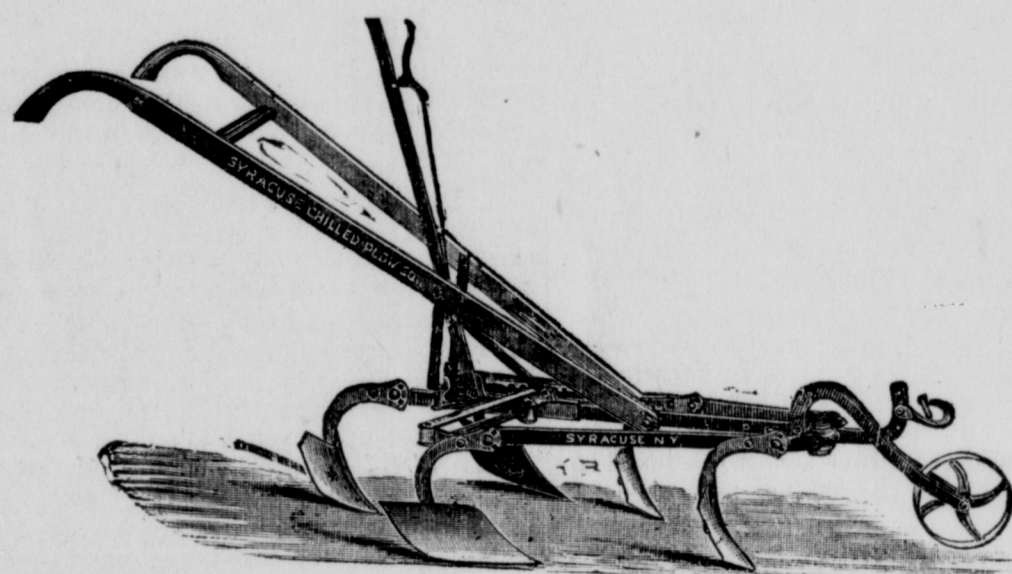
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All Harrows made by us this year have Finest Oil Tempered American Teeth. Each tooth is thoroughly tested where made and at our Foundry.

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CONNELL BROS.,

Woodstock, N. B.

May 11th, 1899.

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