

A LIBEL MYSTERY.

Continued from 1st Page. After receiving from Nellie all the consolation and encouragement of a heart which believed because it hoped and hoped because it loved, Fred drove off to catch the 11.15. Upon reaching Stillwich he, with some difficulty, found out the address of Briggs Bros, since, as his own story might have told him, it was a brand-new firm. Having sent in his card, he was shown into the inner office, where the senior partner—a gentleman with a face as thin, keen, cold and cutting as a Sheffield blade—said, with preternatural sharpness: "Well, sir?"

"On the following afternoon Mr. Maynard called at the office of the leading solicitor in Stillwich and sent in his card, in the hope that his name might be possibly and favorably known to Mr. Sykes—as indeed it was. He was at once shown into Mr. Sykes' room, where he explained his business in a few words. "You're in very bad hands, very," pronounced Mr. Sykes, unhesitatingly. Briggs is every bit as big a rogue as the story describes him, though there is some doubt whether he did the precise bit of rascality it attributes to him. His old master, Northrop, who charged him with stealing and patenting the process he had spent his life in discovering and perfecting, was found dead on the line—his head cut clean off—whether by accident or suicide no one could say. The jury gave him the benefit of the doubt. Then the suit dropped as his family had neither money enough nor evidence enough to go on with it. He was supposed to have made away with his papers as well as with himself. My own idea is that Briggs stole the papers when he stole the patent, and that the loss of them led to poor Northrop's suicide. Be that as it may, Briggs Bros. have such a name in Stillwich that they have everything to win and nothing to lose by a lawsuit, which will only serve to show that there was no evidence against them and to put a substantial sum in damages into their pocket. "Then there is no chance of his accepting apologies from the papers which printed the story?" Mr. Sykes shook his head. "Not the slightest. He wants the thing on and he's secure of damages and costs."

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Reference:—Thos. Fysha, Esq., Manager Bank of Nova Scotia.