

# WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY.

PROGRESS! FREE THOUGHT! UNTRAMMELED LIVES!  
BEAKING THE WAY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

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NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 8, 1873.

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MESSRS. DE ROTHSCHILD AND THEIR  
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Also, make telegraphic transfers of money on Cali-  
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**VERTIBLE 7 PER**

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The Books and Speeches of Victoria C. Woodhull and Tennie C. Claflin will hereafter be furnished, postage paid, at the following liberal prices:

The Principles of Government, by Victoria C. Woodhull .....	\$3 00
Constitutional Equality, by Tennie C. Claflin .....	2 50
The Principles of Social Freedom .....	25
The Impending Revolution .....	25
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#### REVERBERATIONS FROM THE COUNTRY.

When the bombshell of November 2 was discharged into Plymouth Church, we did not anticipate that it would waken echoing thunders from the country. Indeed we rather anticipated from that quarter an almost universal, though silent, condemnation; though, in the event of a certain course on the part of the individuals involved, a violent condemnation. The endeavor to attain by indirection, what it was afraid to attempt in a straight-forward movement for vindication, has however accomplished the thorough rousing of the country press. That which the city press has ignored, has risen, prophetic like, to the vision of its less conventional country contemporaries. They see in the charge of obscenity an invasion of the freedom of the press, while the city press has endeavored to fool itself into the belief that it is only an endeavor in the right direction to rid the city of a paper which deals in, to them, unpalatable truths and facts. But the muttering of the clouds, that were confined to the city, begin to roll back upon it from the country, in no mistaken tones, presaging the approach of the real storm, with its drenching and purifying torrents. As evidence of this we present this week a few selections, and we shall, from week to week, continue to show the self-important, self-righteous and, in their own esteem, the all-powerful city editors, the great, the fatal mistake they have made, in refusing to speak upon the real merits, the vital issue, of the persecutions directed against us, and simply because we are women. Had we been the editors of some one of the great dailies, the last one of our contemporaries would have joined in raising a storm that would have long since swept over the city and washed out its disgrace:

[From the Ohio Statesman, Columbus, January 13, 1873.]

Again, not long since, two sisters, who publish a paper in New York city, charged, through the columns of that paper, that a certain wealthy banker had seduced young girls from the country, who were under his protection, and afterward boasted of what he had done; and, also, that a certain eminent divine had been guilty of adultery with different members of his church. These charges were made without the use of one vulgar word or obscene reference further than was necessarily forced by the subjects. At once they were arrested and thrown into jail, and the immaculate Oakey Hall, Mayor of New York, the United States and State officers, Sheriffs, and the officers of the Young Men's Christian Association vied with each other in the strife to punish these two women, by seizing and destroying their papers and by preferring all kinds of charges against them; and the judges upon the bench and the grand jury seconded all their efforts.

Now if this banker and eminent preacher had charged these two women with being common prostitutes, through the columns of a newspaper, using the same language, does any one suppose they could have been arrested, much less sent to jail? Would the Young Men's Christian Association, Oakey Hall, the Sheriff, and the United States officials have rushed to get warrants for them, and suppressed the paper as an obscene publication? No matter who these women were. What they did in the present case is all that can be legally considered. The New York Herald published the same that these women had, but no Young Men's Christian Association, no Mayor Hall, no Sheriff or United States officials moved to suppress it or arrest its proprietors. Must the law be invoked only against the weak? Can the rich and powerful charge crime against the weak with impunity while the latter are awarded imprisonment for a like act against their social superiors?

Good government can mean only that the rights of the weakest, poorest, lowest and most depraved—those who are the worst endowed, physically and morally—are just as sacred as those of the citizens who are the most richly blessed with all that goes to make them loveable and powerful.

[From the Democrat and Chronicle, Rochester, N. Y.]

Mrs. Woodhull is again in jail, and there is every prospect of her remaining there a good while. Whether she is to have a fair trial on any of the many charges preferred against her, remains to be seen; but it is evident that if she gave bail in a hundred cases there would be a hundred more to trouble her. She is to be deprived of her personal liberty at all hazards, and the sooner she makes up her mind to support this species of unpleasantness, the better. There is a chance, however, that the futility of the warfare now waged upon her will react in her favor. It will soon begin to look like persecution, and if there is a spectacle that can make the Ameri-

can public indignant, it is that of a persecuted woman. The account of Mrs. Woodhull's adventures on Tuesday night is interesting. The lady was determined to deliver her lecture, and she did. She successfully dodged a score or more of policemen, and, reaching the platform, flung off an elaborate disguise, made a vehement speech, and then read her lecture to the end; after which she was carried off to jail. There was something very dramatic in the affair.

[From the Mahoning (Pa.) Vindicator.]  
WOODHULL-CLAFLIN, ETC.

That the circulation of obscene literature in the mails had been prohibited by an act of Congress, was, perhaps, known to but few; the act having remained a dead letter upon the statute-book, until recently brought to light by an emergency in the city of New York. Two women, who had been persistently and repeatedly libeled and slandered—following the example of their neighbors of the press of New York and elsewhere—presumed to engage in the business of libel, too, as it is alleged.

But the persons libeled were not women, but men; and not only men, but respectable men; and the libelers women of "no reputation," as alleged, and "believed by nobody." But yet there was a general alarm, the emergency was fearful, and the press sounded the alarm in libelous denunciations of the women; "it was an infamous libel and believed by nobody."

The judiciary of the United States was invoked and came to the rescue; the courts of New York were brought into requisition, the women seized and lodged in Ludlow-street prison.

But still their was apprehension of danger; the women had a press, and while this was free, respectability did not feel safe; consequently, a warrant was issued by the Mayor, and the press seized, when the alarm partially subsided, and the people felt safer. In the meantime the women are held to answer in the United States Court, for circulation of obscene literature in the mails—though the alleged obscene literature is written in chaste, good language, and, to pure minds, not obscene at all—and to answer in the courts of New York for libel, and in a civil suit for damages.

And why this alarm, and this unusual proceeding, the judiciary of the United States, and of the State of New York, and the combined power of the press brought to bear against those women for publishing an alleged libel when the press generally teems with libel from day to day, and from week to week? The answer is plain. It is a combined and pitiful movement to persecute those women for opinion's sake—for publishing views on the social question not in accordance with popular sentiment.

Our constitutions, both State and National, guarantee liberty of speech and freedom of the press; and must these guarantees be disregarded and evaded for the purpose of suppressing the publication of erroneous or unpopular views? The people of New York may be badly frightened, and the press may quietly acquiesce, but the suppression of error is but a poor pretext for such a proceeding, for the liberty of speech and of the press consists in liberty to speak and publish error, and this alone; for no one will oppose the publication of that which he believes to be truth, and consequently no necessity for the right of publishing truth to be guaranteed; hence the guaranty is for error and error only, which oftentimes is afterward found to be truth.

And in view of the fact that so many important truths—on the subject of liberty, freedom, right—have been suppressed as errors, in the ages of the past, and those who promulgated those truths persecuted, imprisoned or put to death, is it not time that persecution for opinion's sake should cease, and truth be free, whether popular or not? And although a free and independent press in the city of New York may seem to be dangerous, yet the suppression of heresy, error, unpopular sentiment, by force, can only be done by sacrificing the freedom of the press, and the liberty of speech, and taking a long step backward into the barbarism of the past. Can we afford to do it, or to have a precedent established, leading in that direction?

[From the News and Reporter (Muskegon, Mich.), Jan., 1, 1873.]

Mr. Editor: "A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first and said, 'son, go work to day in my vineyard.' He answered and said, 'I will not; but afterward he repented and went. And he came to the second and said likewise; and he answered and said, 'I go, sir,' and went not."

"Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him the first. Jesus saith unto them, 'Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go before you.'"  
—Matthew 21st, Chapters 28th, 29th, 30th and 31st verses.

This parable of the Saviour's beautifully illustrates the fact that those who make the most outside show of goodness and honesty, are the least to be depended upon. Christ had the plainness of speech which prompted him to tell the Pharisees of old that publicans and harlots would enter the kingdom of heaven before them. Modern Pharisees, in their actions, if not their words, are every day making the same verdict, that the obedient son was the one who made the promise, though he did not move an inch toward the vineyard where labor was awaiting his hands. It is barely possible that Woodhull and Claflin may yet arrive safely at Heaven's wide open gate, leaving a few at least very far in the rear, who are now loud in their condemnation of their peculiar doctrines. "By their fruits ye shall know them" was a very expressive declaration, by the same author of the parable of the two sons, and by its spirit, but a few would stand the test of a construction too literal.

[From the Weekly (Visalia, Cal.) Delta.]

It seems to us that the United States authorities in New York city are getting over-nice in regard to the matter of transmitting what is termed obscene literature through the mails. Newspapers in all parts of the land have teemed for years with vile quack advertisements of that foul and obscene nature which should have excluded them from every family; yet they have been uniformly admitted to the mails,

When Victoria Woodhull brought her charge against Beecher and the man Challis, she did it in good language. If the charge was false, it was simple slander; if true, there is no justice in keeping her incarcerated upon a charge of polluting the mails. It looks to us like an arbitrary stretch of power for the purpose of screening influential parties and dodging the real issue. The first arrest has been followed up by another—of George Francis Train. Train is a visionary enthusiast and bigot; but, we submit, there is no just ground for his incarceration for the publication and transfer through the United States mails of mere select passages of Scripture. We quote the following from the *Bulletin*:

"Though George Francis Train had to become President he has accomplished the next dearest wish of his heart—in getting into an American Bastille. Train has been issuing here, recently, his little weekly, called *Train Lique*, which he started originally at Omaha. The last copy fell into the hands of Anthony Comstock, whose self-chosen mission is to stamp out obscene literature, and who has succeeded in convicting more offenders than any of his predecessors. Train was arrested at his residence, up town, last night, and went peaceably to Mercer-street Jail, where he spent the night. The number of his paper seized is the fifth published in this city. It consists mainly of Train's letters of condolence to Woodhull and Claflin while in prison, and denunciations of the Bible.

"For some time past, Train has been busy upon a volume with which he threatens the public, bringing together all the coarse words and phrases of the Bible narratives admitted by the translators. He has deemed the present an opportunity to put his beastly work in print. He claims to have no religious belief, and holds that there is nothing after death; that man is only an animal and must share the fate of the animals;—a very natural idea for Train, which argues self-knowledge at least.

"This morning he was arraigned before Justice Boardman. He appeared in court fashionably attired, with hair wildly tumbled. A crowd of about twenty of his eccentric friends were present, including a lank female, carrying a flag of the Internationals. Train plead 'Guilty' to publishing an obscene paper, providing, he said, his Bible quotations are obscene. The justice was about to enter his plea of guilty, when Train saw his blunder and pleaded 'Not guilty.' He was then consigned to the Tombs, without bail, as he didn't want any bail. His assistant, a young man named Nichols, was also committed, in default of \$500. Train boasts that this makes the thirteenth time he has been in a Bastille."

[From The Record, Dundee, N. Y. Jan. 16, 1873.]

WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY.

Victoria C. Woodhull and Tennie C. Claflin, after having been incarcerated in Ludlow-street Jail in N. Y. four weeks, are now at large again on bail, and have issued another number of their weekly of which we have received a copy. They were imprisoned for violating a U. S. law by sending obscene papers through the mail, and for publishing a libel. Since their liberation they have reprinted their obnoxious copy and now offer it for sale, in large quantities. We have read their so-called wicked sheet, and perhaps are dull of apprehension, but we are at a loss to determine where, or in what the obscenity consists. They may be guilty of sending out a libel, but we cannot see the other crime. We look upon their treatment as unjust, impolitic and cowardly, and directly calculated to render them popular, and should they succeed in sustaining their statements, charged as libelous, it will strike a hard blow upon some popular men and still more popular theories, and do more to spread their theory now claimed so pernicious than their paper alone could have done in a decade of years.

The false charge of obscenity shows cowardice or guilt, or we have mis-studied human nature for half a century; and this charge will rest on the heads of those who used it as a subterfuge or accommodating hiding-place.

[From the Commerce (Mo.) Dispatch.]

WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY is again on our table. Their arrest and uncalld-for persecution in New York has given them more strength and called out more sympathy than anything else that could have been done. We think they make good their charge of the existence of a general moral cowardice. They have much more sympathy with the public than is manifested.

[From the Seymour (Ind.) Times, January 9, 1873.]

OUT OF JAIL.

Mrs. Woodhull and Tennie C. Claflin are out of jail, and have recommended the publication of WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY. The number for December 28 will well repay perusal. That these women have been shamefully persecuted admits of no doubt. Every unprejudiced mind must admire the heroism with which Mrs. Woodhull began to unmask the immorality practiced in New York, under the cloak of religion, so-called. Perhaps no class of people are so thoroughly given over to licentiousness as the sleek and well-fed clergy, especially those of our larger cities. Their opportunities are great, and their facilities for covering up their iniquities are equally great. Beecher and divines of his intelligence and ability, of course, have no faith in the humbuggery they preach, and they are "religious" merely because it leads to popularity, wealth, position, and the gratification of the sensual and other appetites of animal nature. The most shameful immoralities in organized society are committed under the cloak of "religion;" and Mrs. Woodhull has done well to commence tearing away the veil just where she did. While her doctrine of free love as a leveling of the marital rights and a return to the condition of brutes, is to be abhorred, she has yet done society a service by adducing evidence, if more were wanting, to show that "religion" is not virtue and morality, but only a cloak to cover up vice and immorality. No sensible person who has read her story can doubt the verity of Mrs. Woodhull's "Beecher-Tilton Scandal," as it is called. It carries the evidence right along with it, and the falling back of Beecher upon his dignity, and



refusal to put in a denial, are the strongest evidences of guilt. When parties are charged with immorality, the crime specified, "the place where," "the time when," and the witness who saw, all plainly set down in plain print, a dead silence on the part of the parties of the first part, is a poor vindication of injured innocence. We are glad to see that Mrs. Woodhull has commenced skinning just where she left off to go hastily to jail.

[From the *Republican, Kokomo, Ind.*, Jan. 10, 1873.]

Truth crushed to earth will rise again,  
The eternal years of God are hers;  
But error, wounded, writhes in pain,  
And dies amidst her worshippers.

Despite prison bars and the threatening frown of an injured (?) public sentiment, the Woodhull sisters have again begun the republication of the WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY. They say jails have no terrors for them, although six weeks in Ludlow-street Jail, and now prosecuted under a criminal indictment with the prosecution backed up by all the vast wealth of Plymouth Church, to save the reputation of their sacred (?) leader, they are still bold and fearless, and naught can longer keep the hypocritical cloak around the whitened sepulchres of that sin-reeking city but the conviction and sentence to imprisonment for life of these women who "will tell the truth though the heavens fall."

Their paper is about the size of the *Christian Union*, edited by H. Ward Beecher, and in general appearance very much resembles that paper, but when once you compare the reading of the two you will find a vast difference.

An attempt to read the *Union* will cause us to sleep more readily than a dose of opium, while the sleepest man in the world would forget all about being sleepy before he read a half column of the editorial in the WEEKLY.

They strike out boldly against the present social system, and upon every point they are extremely radical.

Their paper is well worth the price charged for it, even though you don't indorse its sentiments (which we are free to admit we do not in all particulars), yet you all want to know what is going on in the world, and this question of social reform is now becoming one of the questions of the age, and sooner or later it will have to be met, and if wrong, to be crushed; while if right, to triumph.

One of our city papers some time since took occasion to say it was not fit for family circulation, and the U. S. Government has been invoked for its suppression, hoping thereby to save the reputation of certain lofty divines therein attacked.

It may not be fit for circulation in families, but, when a child, were furnished a school-book containing much more trifling and obscene passages than we ever saw in the columns of the WEEKLY, and that book is now to be found in almost every house in the land; and while a hypocritical cry is raised against the WEEKLY, not one word is said about the obscene, and absolutely revolting and vulgar stories recorded in xvi. chapter of Genesis, xix. chapter of Genesis, and also in the xxxviii. and xxxix. of the same book, xxii. Deuteronomy, the first 25 verses of xi., 2 Samuel, besides in hundreds of other instances.

If to tell the truth it requires sayings that are parallel in vulgarity with those above cited, who should complain?

[From the *Public Opinion, Lafayette, Ind.*]

A WRONG IS A WRONG, NO MATTER WHO COMMITS IT.

During the free-love excitement in New York, created by the arrest and imprisonment of Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull and Miss Tennie C. Claflin for the alleged publication of obscene language in their WEEKLY, the New York *World*, in referring to the matter, mentioned Mrs. Woodhull's opinion and advocacy of sexual equality, which brought from her the following reply, which we are not afraid to publish in the columns of the *Opinion*:

"A brutal reference to our imprisonment is followed by a degrading fling at equal sexual morality, conveying the idea that by it we mean, all women shall degrade themselves to the level of the *habitués* of Greene and Houston streets. Honesty and candor ought to be manifest in the discussion of all questions by a journal of the pretensions of the *World*, but when the editor wrote the article in question he knew he was neither honest or candid, and that he wrote it from the standpoint of bigoted prejudice to cater to an ignorant public opinion. He knows we mean by sexual equality that men and women who consort together should be held to the same standard of morality. A woman who lives in Greene street is equally as moral as a man who visits her there; and the man is equally as immoral as the woman. He knows that we mean that a man who frequents houses of ill-fame has no more right to the *entree* of respectable society than the women have who inhabit such houses; that if women are ostracised because they have been so unfortunate as to resort to a life of prostitution for a livelihood that the men who furnish them their livelihood should also be ostracised. No! We would have no woman—nor for that matter, no man—degraded below her present position; but we would have all women who are now degraded by so-called prostitution, raised to the dignity and position of the men by whom they are prostituted. Does this proposition touch the *World*, that its editor squirms so fearfully under its application? If the shoe fit, wear it! and if it cause you to flinch, we shall know your feet are tender. That's all!"

We indorse every word contained in the above extract, so far as they discriminate between right and wrong, and have not the slightest aversion to publicly acknowledge the same. Like Mrs. Woodhull, we believe and maintain that the inmates of a house of ill repute are no worse or more degraded than their visitors, and that the visitors are no better or more respectable than the inmates; and we hope the day is not far distant when the lines of distinction will be more justly and honestly drawn, whether the revolution be inaugurated by Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull or some other less objectionable reformer.

[From the *Weekly Record (Aledo, Ill.)*, Jan. 15, 1873.]

Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull, recently discharged from custody, was again arrested on Thursday evening, at the close of her lecture, and consigned to prison. The cause of the second arrest is not assigned. The first arrest was alleged to have been made in consequence, of obscene language uttered through the columns of WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY. A minute examination of that sheet failed, to elicit anything that, in obscenity, would compare with the filthy details of divorce trials, published day after day in city dailies, and never noticed by public officials. The paper however, did contain some grave charges against parties occupying high positions, who had hitherto sustained unblemished reputations. The charges were made with great minuteness, and gave the names of four persons who, it was alleged, were conversant with all the facts. The witnesses were all creditable. A simple denial of the charge, on their part, would have stamped it with indelible falsehood. It has not been made, the people are left to judge, not between Mrs. Woodhull and the parties whom she charges with heinous crimes, but between those parties and witnesses who could controvert those charges, if untrue, but have not.

After Mrs. Woodhull's release, the WEEKLY was revived. Though not amenable to the charge of obscenity, it did repeat, with even more minuteness, its former charges; and the question becomes pertinent—Was Mrs. Woodhull arrested for making and repeating those charges? If so, the parties who caused her arrest have made an egregious blunder. Her arrest and incarceration in prison will not confute the charges. On the contrary, it will cause thousands to read them, comment upon them, and believe them, who would never have heard them had they been distinctly confuted in the first place and the author of them left severely alone. As the case now stands, it looks as if Mrs. Woodhull had been imprisoned for daring to expose crimes committed by persons claiming to be oracles in religion and morality.

[From the *Republican*, Jan. 9, 1873.]

VICTORIA C. WOODHULL.

The United States Government, through its courts, has just engaged in a business so small, contemptible and dirty, as to nearly, if not quite obliterate its proud record of the last ten years. Vic. Woodhull is a citizen of the United States, is editor of a woman's rights paper, is strong minded, and, so far as we ever heard, is a virtuous, married woman. In her paper of Nov. 2 she had a tremendous article about Henry Ward Beecher, accusing him of improper intimacy with women, etc. Of course we presume Mr. B. is innocent and that the charge is a libel, but Mr. B. has not denied it, and refuses to deny it. This is his privilege, and as the case was one between Beecher and Woodhull it was clearly left for them to fight out.

And right here is where the courts have disgraced the Government. As Mr. Beecher would not do anything about it, they sent a stool-pigeon to buy some papers and get them mailed from the office. Then the P. O. clerk opened the package, and a warrant was sworn out against Woodhull for circulating obscene literature through the mails! This charge was preposterous, but the U. S. Commissioner held her and her sister in \$8,000 bail! Knowing that she must be acquitted, the U. S. Grand Jury rushed in and indicted her so as to prolong her imprisonment. The U. S. District Attorney said that Mr. Beecher was a man whom the U. S. Government was bound to vindicate!

At the same time her paper was suppressed by main brute force, and the U. S. officers who took the girls to jail sat in their laps on the way!

Now, when it is remembered that these outrages were all perpetrated by United States officers in the name of the Government, and in behalf of Mr. Beecher who refused to do anything in his own behalf, we submit that the Government has been disgraced, deeply disgraced, and that it is the duty of the President and of Congress to inquire into these high-handed outrages and remove the stain from our proud record.

If Mrs. Woodhull had been a negro she would not have received such treatment, and if Mr. Beecher had been a poor white man, there would have been no hot haste on the part of these officials to "vindicate" him.

The Government has got into a dirty mess in suppressing a paper in New Orleans, which, with the unlawful suppression of the Woodhull paper, makes it necessary for somebody to bring the United States out of these disgraceful squabbles.

[From the *Weekly (Nebraska City) News*.]

THE TIMES WE LIVE IN.

Our nation has just passed a Presidential campaign the most bitter, vicious and malignant in personalities, of any ever known in this country. May it never be repeated.

But in the midst of all this confusion comes a more startling sensation, like a thunderclap out of a noon-day sky. Five or six weeks ago Mrs. Woodhull and Miss Claflin, the Wall-street banker women of New York, publicly charged the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher with licentious practices. The charges were published with the most circumstantial particularity, and all New York was startled as if Gabriel's trumpet had sounded, and the Day of Doom was already flaming in the wind. Mrs. Woodhull named Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Tilton, Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Mrs. Paulina Wright Davis (wife of ex-Senator Davis of Rhode Island) and Frank Moulton of New York, as her authorities for the charges which were, in substance, that Mr. Beecher was the father of some of Mrs. Tilton's children.

The two women were arrested and put in jail, not for libel or slander, as would seem the proper course of law, but on a charge of sending obscene literature through the United States mail; and their paper, called WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY, was seized and destroyed wherever any copies could be found, by United States marshals, even to searching the mails for it.

The universal sympathy of the people was with Mr. Beecher

as against the supposed female slanderers. And we avoided mentioning the case, or even publishing the telegraphic reports in regard to it, from day to day, supposing it to be a "nine-days' wonder," that would blow over in smoke and disappear. But now the women editors are out of jail, and have not only resumed the publication of their paper, but reiterate the charges, and have also reprinted the suppressed edition which caused all the excitement before. And the strangest part of the whole affair is, that, although it has been the leading topic in legal, social, clerical and commercial circles for a month past, not one of the witnesses named by Mrs. Woodhull, nor Mr. Beecher himself, has published anything themselves, or given any testimony in court to confirm and reassure the popular feeling that the charges are utterly preposterous, and must be false.

The newspapers are now discussing the case from this new situation of affairs, and demanding some positive, emphatic and distinct public assurances from all six parties implicated—Mr. Beecher, Mr. and Mrs. Tilton, Mrs. Stanton, Mrs. Davis and Mr. Moulton—that Woodhull and Claflin lied, or else public opinion will surely begin to run the other way. For, as the case now stands, it has ceased to be a mere private scandal, and become a matter of national interest, in which every clergyman and every professing Christian has a personal concern.

If Mr. Beecher is guilty, he is not entitled to any more sympathy or favor than the most obscure preacher in the land. If he is not guilty, and the charges are but the crazy chimera of the Woodhullian brain (as we sincerely hope they are), he owes it to his friends and the public, if not to himself, that he stand no longer on his dignity, but give us some positive testimony to back our ready belief in his innocence. A plain, plump, unqualified statement by the five or six persons whom Mrs. Woodhull names as her authorities, certifying that her whole story is false, slanderous, malicious and devilish, to the best of their knowledge and belief, would settle the whole question at once so far as public opinion is concerned. And then the law could easily take care of the rest. And we unite our voice with others in calling for such a clear-cut statement.

[From the *Pittsburg (Pa.) Herald*, Nov. 21, 1872.]

THE NEW LIBEL LAW.

We have looked up the law under which two women, residents of New York, are to be tried for an offense against the United States in libeling the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher.

Every intelligent man will see that there is nothing in this law to justify this proceeding under it, and the arbitrary and oppressive way in which the pretended jurisdiction was exercised, the large bail demanded—\$8,000—for what is classed as a misdemeanor, enlist for women entitled to no sympathy in their characters the feeling that ought always to be enlisted for persons who are illegally oppressed. The law is as follows:

"Sixteenth Section, Act third, March, 1865: No obscene book, pamphlet, picture, print or other publication of a vulgar and indecent character shall be admitted into the mails of the United States. Any person or persons who shall deposit or cause to be deposited in any post-office, or branch post-office of the United States, for mailing or for delivery, an obscene book, pamphlet, picture, print or other publication, knowing the same to be of a vulgar and indecent character, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and being duly convicted thereof shall, for every such offense, be fined not more than \$500, or imprisoned not more than one year, or both, according to the circumstances and aggravations of the offense.—11 Brightly 495.

[From the *Pittsburg (Pa.) Herald*, Nov. 21, 1872.]

WOODHULL & CO.

To the student of human nature one of the funniest as well as the most instructive features in development is the manner in which money modifies moral and intellectual progress. Something new and startling is conjured up within the boiling brain of a devotee, he promulgates his doctrines to the world, his teachings are condemned, himself abused, and very often he is made to suffer martyrdom by the Church or State. Socrates was poisoned because he condemned the corruptions of his age. The great Nazarine was crucified for preaching a new gospel; Galileo was chained for his daring discoveries in astronomy; Bunyan pined in a dungeon for heresy, and so we might add scores who have suffered because they dared to think and speak in advance of their age. In all these battles, money has played a conspicuous part from the proffered bribes to Socrates, the thirty pieces of silver that Judas got, down to the last dirty greenbacks that Woodhull and Claflin didn't get.

When reform inculcates a great truth, opposition nor prison bars cannot stay its progress. Money, which is almost ever on the side of wrong, may, it is true, temporarily impede even the advancement of truth itself, but the hour rolls round when in the fullness of time the right stands forth in all its strength and glory. When error, with its plausible sophistry, attempts to palm a great wrong upon mankind, under the pretentious garb of reform, this same unerring instinct of popular right gravitates toward truth.

But in the popular haste to be furiously just, we think they have overlooked an important element in the great scandal. That fact is, that the Beechers and Tiltons, and Woodhulls have been sailing together in the same boat, confidantes, and co-laborers in their great, so-called, reform. As no one is a hero to his valet, neither is it supposed that a Beecher or a Tilton is a hero to the impressible Victoria. Now these great men have been the interpreters and defenders of many of the peculiar isms.

If Woodhull & Co. fall out among themselves, it is nothing to us; it is only "dog eat dog." When thieves quarrel, honest men will get justice. On the whole, we think that the press is too partial. They have righteously cried out against the women, but let them ring a warning about the ears of men that shall be heeded.



[From the Kokomo (Ind.) Democrat.]

"THE BATTLE RENEWED."

WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY, of the 28th ultimo, is before us. It is replete with the story of their imprisonment in Ludlow-street Jail, calls for pecuniary aid, sympathy, etc. It contains in toto the suppressed Boston speech of Victoria C. Woodhull. It is still defiant, and calls upon Mr. Beecher to investigate the charges it has made against him. This is their first issue since November 2, the time of their incarceration. They are determined to continue the publication of the WEEKLY. Their bonds for the various indictments amount to a quarter of a million dollars. Whatever of principle they may lack, surely ability is not wanting. Their persistency in adhering to their line of policy, in the face of such gigantic opposition, is heroic in the extreme. Whether they be correct or not, they surely will be classed with the world's remarkable women. Perhaps it is not strange that Mrs. Woodhull should so formidably and bitterly fight the present marriage system. For years she saw nothing but the nether side of conjugal life.

[The Seaside Oracle.]

WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY, for December 28, is received. Its editors evidently do not propose to be permanently "suppressed"—a fact we are pleased to chronicle. The freedom of the press is the matter in question, not the characters of Henry Ward Beecher or Luther C. Challis. If those gentlemen have been libeled by the statements in the WEEKLY they have ample protection guaranteed them by law, and they must prove their own cases before the proper tribunal. As to the "obscenity" of the number of the paper which they are accused of sending through the U. S. mails, and which our Government censors deem it their duty to exclude therefrom, we can only say that, having attentively examined the publication, we believe the language of the publishers' counsel none too strong when he says: "If it were held to be obscene then the transmission through the mails of the Holy Bible, the works of Lord Byron, or any edition of the works of Shakspeare" [not to mention Smollett, Fielding or Rabelais, or even our leading city dailies containing "police intelligence" or Mrs. Beecher Stowe's book about Byron] "would be liable to the same objection and the same penalty." The prospectus of the WEEKLY will be found in our advertising columns.

[From the Northern Vindicator, Estherville, Iowa, Nov. 16.]

THE GREAT SCANDAL.

"A great deal of talk was occasioned this evening over the arrest of Woodhull and Claflin. The proceedings against them were taken by one Challis, a well-known broker, for the publication of a most villainous attack on a number of the leading clergymen of New York city and Brooklyn. Many others are mentioned by name and implicated. The article occupies more than a dozen columns of WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY. The edition of the WEEKLY not yet sent out, together with the books and furniture of the office, were seized. Col. Blood was also arrested as an accomplice in the libel. The penalty for sending obscene publications through the mail is one year's imprisonment and \$500 fine. Mesdames Woodhull and Claflin, when arrested, were in their carriage prepared for flight, a large number of copies of their publication being in the carriage with them. The U. S. Commissioner decided to admit them to bail in the sum of \$8,000."

The above Associate Press dispatch is a partial account of the alleged offense committed by Mesdames Woodhull and Claflin in publishing a slander against Mr. Henry Ward Beecher and other notorious personages, of New York, and of their arrest and imprisonment for the same. They were tendered bail by one of the wealthiest men of the nation and refused it, asserting that they were martyrs, and claiming that they were persecuted for uttering truths which were of importance to the people.

No one who has read, in detail, the circumstantial accounts of Beecher's liaisons and the can, without they are blinded by bigotry or corrupted by fear of a falsely manufactured public opinion, deny or refute the reasonableness or verity of the statements.

Believing as we do, from present knowledge, in these things which have been made public by Woodhull and Claflin, we are impelled by our fearless manhood, whatever others may say or whatever may be the consequences to us, to applaud the brave and noble deed done by these women for humanity and the cause of virtue and right.

Has it come to that pass in America, under a free government, that it shall be declared a crime, and persons are to be denounced as harpies, to be persecuted and imprisoned for exposing rottenness, corruption, licentiousness and villainy in high places? And because the unpleasant truths are laid bare and great men fall, is it a sufficient justification for the newspapers of the country to pounce upon those who are instrumental in exposing to the light the deeds, dark and damnable, of men who have assumed high, moral and sanctimonious characters to themselves?

We denounce the law, if law it be, and the persons who use such a law, as will muzzle the press, as it was done in the case of WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY. One of the sacred and fundamental rights of the people of this Government is unscrupulously trampled under foot by the vampires of a licentious and corrupt metropolis, and every newspaper in the land is imperiled if this course is to be upheld.

We detest the free-love dogmas of the Woodhull family and others of their ilk, and deem them, in that, fanatics and extremists; but we place them ten-fold higher in the scale of right and virtue than the hypocritical villains who secretly believe and practice what the Woodhulls, conscientiously and with such masterly ability, preach. Nor do we believe that there is any danger to be apprehended from such persons as the Woodhulls, or that there is any fear that free-loveism will ever prevail. They are wild agitators, and just such are needed to expose the rottenness of rotten people. We believe the honest republican sentiments of the masses will

sustain their brave warfare upon licentiousness, wickedness and crime, and that their ultimate triumph over their persecutors is sure, we have all faith. If a sword is required to lance the festering sores of the social body, by all means let it be unsparingly used, and we care not who wields it, so only that it is wielded well.

With all her vagaries and heresies, we rate Victoria C. Woodhull as a remarkable woman; as being, in ability, one of the leading minds of the age; and some of the powers which she has manifested are stamped with the signs of an unmistakable inspiration from supermundane spheres.

[From The Word, Princeton, Mass., December, 1872.]

In pronouncing Beecher and his church, "husband and wife," at their late silver wedding, the officiating bard seems to have indulged not entirely in poetic license; for facts accumulate tending to show that Mr. B. is promiscuously married to an indefinite number of his fair members. If a history of Mr. B.'s life, and that of L. C. Challis, a New York broker, is "obscene literature," as a member of the New York Young Men's Christian Association seems to affirm, the obscenity itself should be proceeded against, not the surgeon attempting its cure. This question as to that of libel, under charge of which Woodhull and Claflin and Col. Blood are now in jail, is simply one of evidence. Mrs. Woodhull's articles were a clear, chaste and direct statement of facts, as she viewed them; and a thousand times less objectionable, on the score of obscenity, than the matter which the press is continually throwing off. In arresting her on such a charge the United States Government has stooped to do a mean and diabolical act, which every Federal official, from the President down, should be ashamed of. Whatever Mrs. Woodhull's views upon social reform or other questions may be, every friend of impartial liberty should now stand by her; for in her person the freedom of the press and the freedom of the mails is struck down.

Mrs. Julia Ward Howe has joined the pack of male hounds now baying on the track of a more virtuous woman than herself. In the course of her malignant tirade she makes a side thrust at Tilton, thereby admitting to be true what she loftily assumes to be false. Julia should learn her lesson better. In attempting to cover up the questionable character of the reverend ex-President of the American Woman Suffrage Association, she shows that she does not object to sin, but to its being found out. Ah, Julia, respectability covereth a multitude of sins!

[From the Sharp-shooter, Washington, D. C., December, 1872.]

THE WOODHULL AND CLAFLIN SCANDAL—THE LESSON THAT IT TEACHES.

The latest New York sensation, wherein Mesdames Woodhull and Claflin, and Messrs. Tilton, Challis *et al.* figure, is being considerably discussed by the press of the country.

We have not read the full report of the affair, but from what we have read we feel bound to say that the arrest of Mrs. Woodhull and Miss Claflin on the grounds of sending through the mails obscene literature is an unwarrantable and cowardly act.

If the statements made by them regarding the gentlemen (?) of Jim Fisk proclivities are true, why should not they be accorded the privileges of other journalists in bringing the hot-blooded gentry up to the bar of public judgment?

If these chaps must buy characters, let them in the name of common decency look somewhere besides in a criminal court for a place to purchase. Such places have no legal right to be turned into repair shops for the patching-up of worn-out and morally rotten characters. If these men have been libeled and slandered, let them like men seek redress in the proper courts, and if guilty of the acts charged against them, let Mrs. Woodhull, or "any other man," prick them with the journalistic pen to her heart's content.

[From the Gaston (Pa.) Weekly Argus, Wednesday, January 22, 1873.]

We have waited patiently for several weeks to see what the so-called leading newspapers of the country would say in praise of or in condemnation for the suppression of a certain newspaper known as WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY, by the imprisonment of the two women who publish it. The facts of the case are: Victoria C. Woodhull and Tennie C. Claflin are sisters, who at one time were engaged as brokers in the city of New York. They are the most advanced among all in the "Woman's Rights" movement. They hold no enviable reputation with the general public, who possibly know very little about them and the doctrines they teach. They next ventured to print a newspaper in which to advocate their peculiar notions, which, if we understand some of them correctly, are to place women on precisely the same level in society that men occupy, or to make the sexes equally responsible for any violation of the laws of propriety and decency. In order to illustrate the advantages possessed by males to debauch women, without any injury to themselves, they alluded to Mr. Luther C. Challis, and spoke of his seduction of several girls. They also presented—with an array of evidence which may be false, but has not yet been denied—the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher as a most lecherous libertine. If these charges against Messrs. Challis and Beecher are untrue, the women, who do not deny their authorship, certainly deserve to be brought before the bar of justice for wantonly libeling these two men. We do not believe that publishers are privileged to libel citizens, and whenever they do so they should be held strictly accountable for their actions. The right of the innocent person to be shielded from the vindictiveness or malice of the printer must and dare not be disregarded, and we have no sympathy for those who are mulcted in heavy damages for venting their spleen on unoffending people, when the prosecution is properly brought before the rightful tribunal.

When the newspapers containing the damaging statements against Messrs. Beecher were issued the procedure against these women was to us in rather a singular manner. They were not persecuted by the individuals whom they had held up to public contempt. Mr. Beecher and that

gentleman's friends have not seen fit to notice in the remotest way, publicly, the two women, Mrs. Woodhull and Miss Claflin. But a fellow named Comstock, a self-appointed censor of all publications, was brought forward and he made complaint before the U. S. Commissioner against the two women named for sending through the U. S. mails an obscene and vulgar newspaper. Although not a word appears in the paper that is not every day met with in any of the large dailies, the Commissioner holds these women in custody upon the absurd charged lodged by Comstock. We have no care for the women other than as they represent the entire press of the country against any self-constituted judge of what is vulgar. As we are opposed to indiscriminate and unwarranted attacks in newspapers we are also opposed to this stab at what we have been boasting styling the "Liberty of the Press." The law which prohibits the transmission through the mails of any vulgar or immoral publication may be proper and right, but we can see no reason why that law should be enforced against the publisher of a newspaper by parties who have been libeled, when the laws of the state in which the grievance is committed are ample to meet the case. It looks to us like an innovation which would arouse every printer in the land. A newspaper in which offenses are characterized in sentences that can be easily understood stands in daily danger of having some mandarin individual make affidavit that it is vulgar. A great many of our contemporaries make light of this matter. We do not. It is another step against the liberties of the people. One of our standing boasts, "Liberty of the Press," is ours no longer, when, in the opinion of any single person, the contents of a paper are not exactly moral or high-toned, and should therefore be suspended and its publisher imprisoned. The strong hand of the United States Government is felt too often in Commonwealths where the local laws are all sufficient to protect the citizen in all his rights, and these continued and off-repeated manifestations of its power are of a plan to make our people indifferent to the aggressions of a government which may soon be Republican only in name. The press of the United States should speak in no uncertain tones against this infringement of a right which may be taken as a precedent for still greater outrages. Let us not, as printers of independent newspapers, look with indifference upon the suppression of any journal by a means which shields the persecutor from an investigation of the facts as set forth in the offending print.

[From the Louisiana State Register, January 17.]

In the arrest and imprisonment of the publishers of WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY on the charge of sending obscene matter through the mails, the United States officers in New York strained at a gnat after having swallowed a camel. The charge upon which the arrest was made consisted in this: that the publishers of the WEEKLY directly charged the Rev. Mr. Beecher with having committed adultery with the wife of Theodore Tilton. The authors of the charge name their witnesses and challenge contradiction, and they justify the publication upon the ground that the parties they implicate in this free love affair are and have been engaged in denouncing them for their free love sentiments. Mrs. Woodhull says that Mr. Beecher is a practical free lover, in its worst form, while engaged in casting shame upon those who support free love in its highest and most acceptable phases.

But to the point: Because Woodhull and Claflin published statements about Mr. Beecher they were arrested for distributing through the United States mails obscene reading matter. Did the marshal who made the arrest ever read the *Day's Doings*, the publication known as *Saturday Night*, the *Police Gazette*, the *New York Sun*, or any of the other daily newspapers printed in the metropolis? The matter contained in WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY was mild and innocent compared to the stories that are circulated through the court reports of the daily press in New York, Cincinnati, Chicago or St. Louis. And especially is it modest compared to the scenes and incidents that are printed and distributed through the *Day's Doings* to all parts of the country. It is not proper, we admit, to justify one wrong by pointing to another, as we have done in this case; but we submit to the impartial sense of the reading public if the offense of Woodhull and Claflin has not been severely punished considering the number and enormity of the other offenses of a similar character that were being committed at the same time in a line of publications calculated to reach and corrupt people capable of being corrupted. The WEEKLY had its readers among that class of people who were not likely to be perverted by its errors, if errors it contained; and yet this paper was suppressed while the real organs of obscenity, that reach the readers who are capable of being taught vile lessons by vile pictures and vile stories, were left to be distributed by the mails without obstruction. The officers engaged in this matter evidently swallowed a camel while pretending to strain at a gnat.

[From The Times, Quincy, Mich.]

Plymouth Church, N. Y., and its pastor, seem just now to be the exciting topic on which the press throughout the country are indulging in all manner of comments. The pastor of that church stands charged by Mrs. Woodhull as an adulterer of many years standing, and that the church is the nursery of vice and licentiousness. The response to these charges was, first, prosecution before a U. S. Commissioner for circulating through the mails obscene literature. This failing as a quietus, resort was had to the State courts. Mrs. Woodhull was arrested and incarcerated in Ludlow-street Jail some four weeks, when bail was accepted and she resumed the publication of the Woodhull & Claflin paper, giving therein an account of the proceedings had against her. A subsequent arrest has been made, and Woodhull is again held in "durance vile."

The object of her enemies seems to be to silence her tongue. We see no direct, authorized denial of the charges of licentiousness preferred against Beecher in the Woodhull-Claflin paper by any of the parties interested; their war policy seems to be rather "Fabian" than Frederick—they fight



shy. Their batteries are heavily shotted with insinuations, threats and innuendoes, but they shun the bayonet thrust. As the matter stands, Woodhull, though in prison, has largely the advantage. She fights openly and free; her position is in the open field, while her foes cowardly skulk behind their defenses and discharge their pop guns through the embrasures.

We have a choice in the truthful result, and that choice would be for the benefit of society and the honor of the human race, that the charges against members of Plymouth Church be shown to be false; not because we have any partiality for any one of the individuals concerned. The moral standard has been outraged by either false accusation or by immoral action. We are aware that a perverse education, custom and license often lead men into error and the commission of wrong as defined by the moral standard, which is the naked principle of right and as we find in Mr. Beecher's familiar lessons or lectures a frequent allusion to 'Christian morality, we are at liberty to apprehend, that that standard recognizes the course of conduct charged by Woodhull as consistent and proper, especially as we see such an alarming prevalence of licentiousness among the class similarly educated. However this may be, we leave it to the judgment of an unbiased public. Morality is despoiled, by the use of an adjunct in connection with it. Woodhull's great crime is a profession of "free love," the advocacy of a doctrine that is generally interpreted as an entire disruption of all legal restraints on the intercourse of the sexes, granting the fullest license to the free exercise of the baser passions, which calls forth the earnest, indignant pleading of Mr. Beecher, against her demoralizing doctrines. Yet, strange as it may seem, this same Mrs. Woodhull, the free lover, stands before the world's tribunal as public prosecutor for immoral and licentious conduct, this same strenuous advocate and teacher of Christian morality.

In practical illustration, Mrs. Woodhull occupies in practice the position of Beecher by profession, while Beecher, in practice, descends to the plane of Woodhull by profession.

Our knowledge of the case is limited to that which we glean from the public prints, and what may be the final end of the matter we cannot pretend to divine; but, from present appearances, Woodhull is far in the lead on the inside track. One or the other of the parties are wrong, and justice demands a thorough investigation, that the innocent be justified and the guilty punished. If there be any better standard by which human action should be measured than the moral it does seem that eighteen hundred years experiment should have developed it.

#### THE SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

The press of other and important matter has prevented the publication of a very large amount of comments, gleaned from the public press, upon the action of the United States Courts, in charging us with obscenity. Whether these comments have been favorable, denunciatory or otherwise to ourselves, almost without exception they have perceived and exposed the animus that prompted the prosecution. None of them see in it any desire to purify our journalistic literature; but in some manner they all catch at the true purpose—to shut our mouths—and by so doing to be able to stifle the exposures of revered citizens. We shall, although late, continue to present the Spirit of the Press upon the subject as space will admit:

[From the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Nov. 15.]

#### HOW A GROSS SCANDAL HAS BEEN HELPED BY A GROSS BLUNDER.

Nearly three weeks ago two women of bad reputation published in New York charges referring to Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Mr. Tilton and other persons in New York and Brooklyn. Very shortly after the appearance of the article the women, Woodhull and Claflin, were arrested and thrown into jail by the Federal authorities by the covert procurement, there is reason to believe, of a foolish Plymouthite, on a charge of sending obscene matter through the mails of the United States. They demanded immediate trial, and it has been refused. They remain in custody untried and without promise of a speedy consideration of their case. This action was exactly calculated to do gross injustice to the distinguished persons with whose names they had taken liberties. It rendered the otherwise scornful inattention of the public to the matter impossible by compelling its observation of an extraordinary proceeding. It neither allowed the women to substantiate their assertions nor allowed those they affected to refute them. It imported all the pomp and circumstance of Federal action into a theretofore localized scandal, making it national. The mode was as arbitrary as it was complicating. It compelled a measurement of the matter by the means taken to meet it. Those means were not usual or popular. This people jealously resents the discrimination of officials against any mailable matter they are under bonds to transmit, knowing that the sanctity of correspondence of any kind between citizens by mail cannot safely be left in time of peace to the decision of any public officer. Examination of the words in which the abomination was clothed does not seem, in the meaning or intent of the law, to show them to be obscene. A grossly ignorant and monstrous statement was volunteered by the Federal Attorney mismanaging the case. He said that it was the business of the United States Government to protect the reputation of its citizens. What that man seems not to know would fill an immense volume. This is no more the business of the United States Government than it is to feed and clothe its citizens. The Federal Attorney exhibited an ignorance that was unexpected and a proposition redress as impossible as unsolicited. He is foreclosed from looking at anything but the obscene or non-obscene character of the article, and whether it was mailed or not. The Government and the women are the only parties to the case he is allowed to know. Of the truthfulness, untruthfulness, libelous nature or justifiableness of the article he is precluded from even taking cognizance. But his assumption and the arbitrary proceeding itself smack of a spirit the community

disrelishes with all its might. The action to them seemed from that time to be more than untenable. It seemed to be, and to be intended as, oppressive. Not that folks had sympathy or respect for the women; but they have both sympathy and respect for human rights. The violation of those rights in the case of bad people makes precedent for their violation in the case of good people. To-day it is a free lover. Tomorrow the victim may be an honorable man or woman. Law protects only when it is no respecter of person. Thus all the proceeding amounts to the proportion of an outrage which is also a menacing usurpation.

What is the retroactive effect of this bungling and self-defeating course on the public mind with reference to the distinguished parties involved? The effect is not such as any real friend of them and of the causes of morals and religion likes to think of, or can help thinking of. A scandal which might have fallen dead has been by Federal action preserved to public attention and curiosity. It is in all circles the subject of remark. The vilest and the purest comment on it, each in his way, but both, thanks to Federal interposition, without the power to find all notice denied it or proper notice of it divulged. The perverted proceeding disseminates the worst impressions. Silence would at first have been accepted as a negative of the whole charge. Pending persecution, and lacking prosecution, the public now construes silence variously. The low thrust the tongue in the cheek. The refined shrug their shoulders. The world converts its ridicule into credulity. The way out of this wrong lies through frankness, promptness, the State courts and out-spoken truth. The innocent and aggrieved parties should withdraw themselves from the false position in which Federal patronization has placed them. The diversion of the case from its proper channel has swollen it to artificial but immense proportions. It should be reduced to its proper volume of a vulgar, incredible calumny. That cannot be done by pressing against the women a non-sustainable offense, which remits the gravamen of their charge to the pot-house, the parlor, the club, to all the world for a jury, and which denies that jury alike all plea and all evidence, except such as has been furnished by the article itself. Meekness, forbearance, silence, inaction, have run their course in this case. The status and character of none of the parties are more involved now than the interest of morals and religion, that protest through every avenue whereby public sentiment reaches public journals against the great wrong done not only to those interests, but to one of their most distinguished representatives by reason of circumstances an explanation of which he and his friends should demand of those concerned.

[From Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, Dec. 7.]

But now it happens that these people have been placed in a position to give them real consequence. They have been arrested by the United States Government and thrust into jail on the charge of circulating obscene literature through the mails. What is obscene literature? It is the duty of the press to expose all villainy and corruption, as well in high as in low places. There is no man or woman so exalted as that he or she, by sheer force of character, can muzzle the press. Obscene literature or art is that sort of vile thing which is palpably obscene, either as grossly filthy language or lewd pictures. A newspaper charge of adultery, or fornication, or rape, even if made in detail, is neither uncommon nor "obscene." It may not be in good taste always to publish criminal accusations in detail, yet, when they are deserved, to arraign such men or women is a duty which the press owes to society; and to furnish illustrative sketches of such, is the prerogative of a necessary department of journalism; and the brighter the social position of the accused, the stronger rests the obligation to expose the guilt. What the Claflins and Woodhulls and Bloods have done to-day in Beecher's case, may be done by the best of our newspapers (perhaps mistakenly), on the highest ground of motive, in some other case, to-morrow.

Shall the United States power, therefore, be invoked, under the plea of obscene literature, to suppress the freedom of the press; to assume a jurisdiction which does not belong to it; to usurp the administration of justice, which belongs to the States only, and so establish a most dangerous precedent, not only of Federal usurpation, but that of a powerful combination on the part of the Government with, so to speak, privileged persons, to crush out, in the comparison, a weak newspaper or citizen because it or he has subjected itself or herself, in the discharge of a duty, to the hostility, say, of any great man, or of any corporation, whether ecclesiastical or otherwise? Of course, without any personal reflection on Mr. Beecher, we ask, Are we to understand that the Federal Government, in addition to the numerous instances of lately assumed powers outside of the provisions of the Constitution, also intend to revive the oppressive and muzzling provisions of the old British statutes of "Scandalum Magnatum," by which the "great men of the realm" enjoyed a special immunity from investigation into their personal conduct?

This is precisely the precedent which seems to be established in the Beecher case. Wishing to punish, and desiring to keep Mr. Beecher entirely out of the legal muddle, his friends have gone too far. They have aimed a blow at the dearest rights of society. It was for Mr. Beecher either to have remained silent or to have contradicted the charge formally. Else, like any other citizen, he should have invoked the Law of Libel.

Another thing which we dislike in this case is, that it has assumed too much the form of an *Inquisition*. All the facts should have gone to the public. Woodhull & Co. have a right to public opinion, and public opinion depends on the press. It is in this way—i. e., by making an invidious exception of them—that this crew have been so managed, as (through their case) to become subjects of real importance—indeed of first-rate importance.

As to the Law of Libel, that belongs to the States, and the United States Government must not be permitted to frame any pretext to usurp it—such a pretext as that of suppressing such mail matter as does not please it! The Law of Libel must not be left wholly to the construction of a court.

In the matter of libel, by the Constitution of the State of New York, the jury are expressly made the judges of both the law and the fact; and the truth may be given in evidence for the defense, with justifiable motives.

Public opinion—a jury, in other words—must have to do with the enforcement of such law. A jury cannot acquit or convict a party unless permitted to pass on the facts of a case. It will not do to say that, the libelous matter proven, the jury have nothing to do but to return a special verdict of such fact, and leave the rest to the court. The libelous intent is the gist of such cases, and this construction must not be taken from a jury. But if our newspapers are made so timid of the Federal Government armed with the Obscene Literature club on the one hand, and the strict Lord Mansfield construction of the Law of Libel on the other hand, that they dare not do their duty toward enlightening public opinion in all cases against the right of trial by jury, assaults on the press are the wedges of despotism.

And whatever may be said in derision of trials by jury, yet, in such cases as those of libel, or of circulating obscene literature, one fact is palpable, and that is, if an alleged libel or obscene publication does not strike twelve laymen as libelous or obscene, it is perfectly evident that the charge falls to the ground; for an *incomprehensible* libel, an *incomprehensible* act of obscenity, is an impossibility.

To hamper the press by such precedents is to strike down public opinion, which is the foundation of the system of trial by jury.

[From the Brooklyn Eagle, Nov. 5, 1872.]

#### THE SCANDAL AND THE BLUNDER.

The Eagle is receiving not a few letters all the time on the matter which has come to be called the Woodhull and Claflin case. They readily classify themselves, numbers treating of one phase of the case, numbers of another. Considerations of space and judicious selections generally lead to the selection of specimen communications of each of the kinds into which they are divisible. The most thoughtful of these epistles bear directly upon the Federal interference in the matter properly between individual citizens of this State. All of such epistles heretofore have been in condemnation of that Federal proceeding. Our correspondents have been unanimous in regarding the action as inadequate, misleading, confusing, abortive, illegal, oppressive, and plainly pursued against the women not because of their publication *per se*, but because the publication took liberties with the names of prominent people. The cause we have championed is the right of all citizens to a speedy trial for what they have done, and not for what they have not done. These women mixed themselves up with powerful parties, and that is the reason why the "Government" deals with them. The proceeding against them, whether meant or not, operates as a subterfuge. The offense they are charged with committing against the mails of the United States, but really the mails of the people of the United States, is contemptible in contrast with the great wrong they have done citizens who are prevented by this Government interference alike from redress and vindication. Nor has the Government once closed the mails to matters quite as shocking, not even to the identical matter reprinted and sent broadcast by other publishers. It is the offenders, and not the offense, that is the rub; and not because they are offenders against the mails, but because they are offenders against prominent people. Whether innocent people are conscious or not of any danger to their own liberties has nothing to do with this case. Dangers are generally a surprise. They generally assert and erect themselves unawares. When they come in the form of usurpation, they nearly always pounce upon infamous people like these, and the case becomes a precedent. But the grounds of the action have nothing to do with the character of the publication. Our renewed protest against the proceeding is that it reposes the liberties of all the press in the keeping of Federal functionaries. It also casts off the accused from pleading that justification which they would have were their charges true instead of false. Suppose the charges were true? It would then have been a duty to bring them to the light. Yet the Government could just as well have arrested the publishers in that case. It is a bad law which makes it just as easy to arrest people who print the truth as people who print lies. The sooner these women are withdrawn from the sympathy their present persecution invests them with, the better for the cause of liberty, sound morals, and the persons wronged.

[From the Brooklyn Eagle, Nov. 7.]

#### THE SCANDAL AND THE BLUNDER AGAIN.

Mr. Comstock writes a letter to the Eagle to-day. He is the plaintiff against the Claflin women in the Federal proceeding as to them. The notoriety of the women and the extraordinary character alike of their publication and of the proceeding against them, have withdrawn from Mr. Comstock as plaintiff that degree of notice which his connection with the case would have otherwise received. Mr. Comstock insists that he preferred a suit in a State court, and that he in vain sought to get District Attorney Garvin to proceed, in his official capacity, in a suit for the suppression of the article on the ground of its obscenity. The District Attorney not taking up the case, it appears that an Assistant Federal District Attorney, who believes that it is the duty of the United States to protect the reputation of revered citizens, had no legal hesitation in doing what the County Prosecutor did not see a way clear to do. The statute on which the proceeding independently and disinterestedly initiated by Mr. Comstock is based, reads larger than the astute mind of the Assistant Federal District Attorney at first suggested. It allows of the fine and imprisonment of all who mail not merely obscene, but also any vulgar, indecent or immoral matter, or matter marked with any such, or with scurrilous and "disloyal" devices. That penal consequences are set against mailing any matters which the Federal authorities may think, or affect to think, are of that character, notwithstanding they may not be of that character at all, is a not over strong statement of the effect of the statute. It shows that without having generally known it, the people of this country are living under a law more narrow and oppressive than any people with a



written constitution ever lived under before. Our objection to the proceeding goes even further. We can discover no intention on the part of the authorities to try the women at all. The seeming disposition indefinitely to incarcerate them without trial is discernible. Moreover this Mr. Comstock has not procured the arrest of a hundred and one editors who have sinned against the statute as much as these women have. The other editors are strong. These women are weak. Besides, the whole proceeding whips the devil round the stump. The Federal proceeding puts a premium on not getting at the truth of the case, puts a premium on shutting up the distinguished people so greatly wronged from all vindication of themselves. It is as inadequate as it is persecuting and short sighted. If the libels they print were true, then most certainly they ought to have been printed. Being untrue, it is a folly to persecute women who deserve prosecution, especially when those who also offended in like case against them are not even disturbed. The parties concerned cannot too soon withdraw themselves from the false position in which the irresponsible action of the more zealous than sensible Comstock has placed them.

[From the Sunday (N. Y.) Mercury, Jan. 12, 1873.]

#### THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AT WAR WITH A WOMAN.

For the second, third, fourth or fifth time, Victoria Woodhull has been arrested, thrown into prison, and liberated on bail, on the charge, repeated as many times, of sending obscene literature through the mails. If the charge is true, and can be maintained by proof, the proper way is to proceed to trial and convict her. But that "this great Government of the mightiest Republic the world ever saw" should repeat from day to day its sledge-hammer attacks upon this woman—already in a sorry plight from numerous libel suits—smacks very much of an attempt at shooting cockroaches in a kitchen-closet with a ten-inch Dahlgren gun. It does not seem right, in any view one can take of the matter, that the whole machinery of the Federal Government, with its courts and marshals, should be placed at the beck of a man who has, somehow or other, chosen it for his private business to deprive this woman of her liberty. The whole proceeding has all the elements of a mockery, gratifying to no one but him who, "solitary and alone," has set it in motion. The woman herself and her character have nothing to do with the underlying principle. She has rights under the law just as sacred and inalienable as any one, and to trample upon them wantonly is no less a wrong than if the victim were the purest and most righteous among us.

[From the Sunday Mercury, Jan. 13, 1873.]

#### THE WOODHULL AND CLAFLIN PROSECUTION.

At the last hearing of this notorious case before the United States Commissioners, the prosecuting counsel made a significant admission. He said that he did not put in question the truth of the article for the alleged obscenity of which the two women are put upon trial. If the truth of the article be not denied, it is admitted. How can it be obscene to speak the truth and prick the bubble of mock morality and expose crime and licentiousness by tearing from it the hiding mask of self-righteous respectability? It is only through such truthful exposures and by threatening all vicious practices with the constant presence of the sleepless eye of an independent free press that the moral tone of society can be improved. The talk of obscenity in this connection is all bosh. The press will have ceased to be free and independent and fail of its imperative duty whenever, out of some mawkish regard for the sensitiveness of prudes, it shall abstain from denouncing every degree and form of crime as it finds it, or from speaking of it in pure and unadulterated Anglo-Saxon.

The following communication was furnished to the morning dailies, but none save the *Star* had the moral courage to publish it:

LUDLOW-STREET JAIL, CELL 11,  
N. Y., November 30, 1872.

To the Editor of the *Star*:

To the few friends in the city who have had the perception to see the animus that led to our present arrest, and souls and brains large enough to offer the means of relief, we tender our grateful thanks; but to those pretended friends whose cowardice has closed their lips and the fountains of humanity within them, we simply say: We pity you.

We were incarcerated as prisoners of the United States, for sending obscene literature through the mails. We are guilty, or we are not guilty. We have our rights, and shall maintain them in spite of all "Star Chamber" proceedings and threats of "railroading" us to Sing Sing. We were entitled to an examination; we did not have it. We are entitled to a trial; it has been denied us. Four weeks have we remained in duress, preferring to endure its indignities rather than by our own act to release the United States from the responsibility incurred through the mistaken zeal of its officials in their desire to protect the reputation of "revered citizens." We were not cast into the Bastille for alleged libel of those citizens—but our broker's office was broken up; our private letters and papers stolen by the police without legal authority; our private residence searched, avowedly to obtain private property; our trunks rifled of their contents, and those in possession of them brutally insulted; our letters opened in the Post-office; the mails overhauled for WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY; our paper suppressed; our personal liberties, our inalienable rights grossly violated, and while in prison we were insulted by the minions of our persecutors, with the menace that we "were condemned before arrested;" these, all these, for printing our obscene paper, which is not obscene, and which the authorities and the press know is not obscene.

But in spite of these outrages upon public and private justice and rights, perpetrated under cover of law, the press—the great fountain of public opinion—has not only not dared to open its columns to denounce them, but has actually hounded on their perpetrators, and, dipping its pens in bitterest gall, vomited upon us all the opprobrious epithets of the language. Is there no conception of the meaning of

these things? To-day it is two weak women who are menaced. To-morrow it may be the magnates of the press. The next day the people themselves of a so-called Free Country. Five thousand newspapers stand or fall with us; nevertheless, we have been left to fight the battle alone, our contemporaries standing either as active participants against us, or as silent observers.

This outrage is the first step of our all-powerful administration—which, having been re-elected to a second term, is already bidding, not only for a third term, but for a life tenure—to establish its despotic heel on the throat of the press of the country. Will that press will the people—silently permit such an inquisition, as is foreshadowed to become fixed upon the ground now occupied, from which it may move to further encroachments—to higher-handed outrages? If so, then indeed did our Fathers and Brothers bleed and die in vain! But these things cannot, must not, shall not be accomplished. They who are quietly sleeping on the verge of the volcano's crater, lulled by the "All's well" of servants turned masters, will be aroused by the mutterings ere the explosion comes, and rush to the rescue of their imperiled liberties.

VICTORIA C. WOODHULL,  
TENNIE C. CLAFLIN.

P. S.—1 o'clock P. M.

We have just returned from the District Attorney's office, where we went to sign our accepted bail bonds.

But we did not sign them. We were warned in time of what we anticipated, from the numerous threats that had been made. A gentleman, a stranger, whispered in our ears, while in the office, not to sign the bonds, since if we were released from Ludlow, it was arranged, that we should be re-arrested at once, taken to Jefferson Market, Justice Fowler to be conveniently absent so as to prevent the acceptance of the bail we were prepared to offer, and while incarcerated, as we should be, the prison was to be burned, we to be accidentally (?) left to perish in the flames; or, if rescued, to be killed by a selected mob.

Are the days of the Spanish Inquisition to be repeated in New York? Let the people answer!

#### THE HAUNTED SCHOOLHOUSE AT NEWBURYPORT, MASS.

[From Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper.]

Against natural doubts in relation to supernatural appearances, etc., there is accumulating a mass of curious testimony; and there has recently occurred in Newburyport, in the northeastern part of Massachusetts, a series of manifestations which seem to add something to the weight of evidence. These manifestations take place in a schoolhouse. The building is of the "district" type, being one story in elevation, with an ordinary shingled pitch roof. It has four windows of common size, fitted with green blinds on either side, and the entrance-door, at the end, opening upon the street. The house is surrounded by half an acre of bare, gravelly yard, and it is in the midst of a neat and populous neighborhood, about a third of a mile from the principal street of the town.

For the past two years the school has been taught by Miss Lucy A. Perkins, a young lady of exceptional wit and intelligence. She is of a somewhat nervous temperament, but only enough to distinctly relieve her from a charge of apathy. Without being disposed to ascribe what she says and hears to the influence of malign spirits, she is too keen and sensitive to permit the troubles to take place without strenuous and well-directed attempts to discover the secret.

The previous teachers had experienced annoyances similar in character, but they had all been of lesser force and importance.

Since she first took charge of the little community, the disturbances have steadily increased until they have reached their present semi-tragic character. They began in the usual way; knocks were delivered with more or less frequency on the floor, walls and ceiling, and upon the furniture of the schoolroom. The teacher for many months calmed the fears of her pupils by intimating that the noises were the result of natural causes, but the troubles gradually became so great that the impression went abroad that the schoolhouse was haunted.

The attention of the older people was not generally attracted to the reputed phenomenon until quite recently, and it seemed that as the excitement arose, the trouble and hubbub augmented correspondingly.

The most common disturbance which now agitates the school, is a violent pounding which seems to be upon the floor, walls and ceiling, and which varies in power from the strong to the prodigious. It commences when the school first opens, and on some occasions it continues without intermission for the whole session, two hours and a half. At other times it comes at irregular intervals, beating now a slow and measured, and now a rapid volley of deadened blows in the aisles, wainscotings and closets. At still other times the blows subside into simple, sharp knocks, which, like the louder sounds, have a roving disposition. In the garret there seems still another sort of noise of the same class. It seems that something is being continually thrown upon the ceiling of the schoolroom, and this manifestation is interspersed with sounds resembling the driving of nails and the dropping of boards; and so closely are real sounds imitated, that all who have heard them invariably recognize them. It is not infrequent that the volume of blows is so great that the recitations of the scholars are interrupted, and the teacher obliged to await the pleasure of the powers that be before proceeding with her lessons.

The schoolroom is ventilated by means of a circular aperture in the centre of the ceiling, which aperture may be covered and uncovered at will by means of a trap-door, two feet square. This is managed by the teacher, by the use of a cord, which descends into the schoolroom, and which is commonly fastened to a small cleat nailed to the moulding of the window-frame, in the centre of the partition. The opening and closing of this ventilator seems to be a matter of special aggravation to the genius of the garret, for the attempts to rise the trap are frequently resisted. On one day in October

Miss Perkins pulled the cover up in the usual way, and fastened the cord, as she was accustomed to do, by winding it, sailor-fashion, about the strip of wood. She had hardly done so when the ventilator was slammed violently down and the cord unwound. She again raised the cover, and it was again closed. Determined to circumvent her enemy, she tied a large knot in the cord, and, after drawing it down for a third time, she pressed the knot into the cleft made by the side of the cleat and the swell of the moulding. The knot was unconquerable. The cord was violently pulled and stretched in the mysterious efforts to loosen it, but the teacher's device was too effective, and the attempt soon ceased.

Upon the teacher's desk are two bells of different sizes, one of them (the larger) being comparatively new, while the other is an old one. The latter is frequently rung by the unseen hand, while the new one is never touched. Within three weeks the children who were playing "soldier" in the yard were called to school by the ringing of this bell, which they instantly recognized. While they were clamoring at the door of the empty schoolhouse the teacher appeared, coming down the street. It was a quarter before the hour for opening the school, and the incident betrayed the spirit for once in a facetious mood.

A more empathic exhibition took place one afternoon in the passage, upon which five doors opened. One of these, the street-door, is supplied with an ordinary mortice lock, which was fastened as usual, with the key on the inner side. Another door, the one leading to the cellar, has, besides its latch, a common iron bolt, which, when shut, is very secure. The remaining doors have no locks, mere latches and turn-knobs, which, however, answer the purposes for which they are intended, and are in good repair.

On the day in question Miss Perkins closed one of the doors, which was open, but it immediately flew back again, as did another which had been tightly closed, one after the other, but they at once flew open, together with the remaining three, and all five swung to and fro upon their hinges. Perplexed but not daunted, the teacher attempted again to accomplish her object, but she was similarly defeated. No sooner would she secure one door and hasten to the other, then the first would open again, in spite of her efforts. She then pushed the cellar-door to, with difficulty, and threw the bolt into its place, and at once seized another. But the bolt was pulled sharply back and the door flung open with such violence, that it struck an iron coat-hook and was indented by it.

As these strange doings became known in the community, visitors began to throng the school; and their presence was valuable, for the reason that they were enabled, by their unprejudiced minds, to give a more severe scrutiny to the modes and character of the disturbances. But no solution was offered in any case, and the presence of an unexplainable force was admitted as proved.

On one memorable day, the teacher, annoyed beyond endurance, exclaimed:

"Why do you make such a noise? If you want anything, why don't you ask for it in a proper manner? I am tired out with your behavior!"

Silence instantly ensued, and presently several light knocks were mysteriously delivered upon her desk, as if in token of acquiescence. The school was thus left in quiet for the remainder of the day.

There are two phenomena more impressive than those that have been detailed, and which are as fully attested as the others. One of these is a seeming attack of atmospheric currents upon the building. Several scholars protested at the same time that they were prevented from studying by a rush of air which made their ears sing and their heads ache. The teacher, on investigating the matter, discovered that there was circling rapidly about the room over her head a strong breeze, which was gradually gathering in concentric circles toward the open ventilator, and with a loud, rushing noise.

After it had been apparently swallowed in a vortex, it resumed its activity, but in the reverse order—that is, the wind circled outwardly from the centre, until it reached the limits of the ceiling, when it whirled round and round with great force. All the time there had been no agitation in the air outside; the day was perfectly calm.

Another phenomenon, even more extraordinary than this, consists of the illumination of the entry as if by strong sunlight. The glare is to be seen through the window in the partition by all the scholars while sitting in their seats. It is uniform in its strength, and does not appear to proceed from any one particular point. It is naturally more vivid on stormy days when the sky is overcast, and the appearance a prolonged one, lasting at times for hours. On two or three occasions this spectacle has been varied and heightened by a vivid electric glitter, which shoots from one end of the passage to the other, resembling the action of "chain-lightning."

Up to this point the writer has described manifestations of a character (with one exception) which might possibly be accounted as the results of partially understood, but still natural causes; yet there would still be enough of mystery left to please the most practical.

The one exception referred to is the case in which the cellar door was drawn back. This act seems very clearly to involve an intelligence plus the force; and it is of such combinations that people hear and read with the strongest protests.

Besides the disturbances already described, it seems that apparitions of various descriptions have tormented the institution, and it is these that have made it famous.

As long ago as the early part of last spring the pupils of the school began to call the teacher's attention to people who seemed to be standing in the entry. Now and then a child's hand would be raised, and he would point to the window, saying, with unmistakable conviction: "There is a boy out there;" "There is somebody looking in."

These incidents became more and more frequent, but it was a long time before the matter-of-fact mistress permitted herself to be disturbed by the new form of annoyance. She succeeded for a while in calming and persuading her children,



on one pretext and another, and she left no means untried to convince herself that what the children beheld were but the reflections of their own figures in the panes, or the practical jokings of some mischievous child. But her efforts in both directions presently came to naught, for the appearances were so vivid and graphic that even her ingenuity failed to account for them.

The most frequent manifestation was the whitish shape of a child's hand and arm, which seemed to be pressed hard against a lower pane of the window in the partition. The fingers were slender in shape and waxen in color. At other times the whole arm to the shoulder would be exhibited, and with undeniable distinctness. In all cases the arm was bare and its shape was attenuated. The most terrifying object seen up to the first day of November was the pale face of a boy, which frequently peered in at the window, and fixed its eyes immovably upon the scholars in their seats.

The appearances became more and more frequent, and there was a corresponding increase of the tumultuous noises and agitations. In the garret there seemed to be a number of men at work hammering, walking about, and now and then dropping their materials and utensils. Sounds of conversation were also clear. There seemed to be three voices—one deep and harsh, another high-pitched, and the third querulous and complaining. On one occasion only was there an intelligible utterance, and this was coupled with a rather forcible expression—"Hang it, where's my hammer?"

The climax of this long series of visitations and troubles was reached on the date previously suggested—the 1st of November. All day long, from early morning till the middle of the afternoon session, the customary disturbances were in full force. By long experience the fears of the boys had become somewhat deadened, and the furious uproar now afforded them rather more amusement than terror. While in the middle of the recitation, a general alarm from the whole school was raised. The face of the boy was again staring in at the window. A lad named Lydston, who was at the head of the class, looked into the entry, and at once exclaimed: "There is a boy out there!"

Miss Perkins hastened into the passage, and beheld what Lydston had discovered, standing at the further end. She approached it hastily until within six or seven feet, when she became impressed with its true character, or, rather, with the fact that the figure was not substantial. She describes it as representing a boy of twelve or thirteen years of age, slender in body, and with a pale face. He was dressed in brown clothing, and had his arms partially folded, with his left hand somewhat projected as if to receive something. His face, though pinched, had a pleasant expression. His eyes were blue; his hair was of a yellowish white, such as is common among the fishermen's children in that part of the town, and it was cropped off at the back of the neck, and was disarranged upon the top of his head. About the neck was a bandage of considerable width.

When Miss Perkins discovered that she was encountering something unreal, she faltered, and, being partially overcome, she seized the coat-hooks beside her shoulder for support. At this moment the figure of the boy started from its position in the corner beside the window and advanced toward the door opposite to him, which led to the garret stairs. It opened of itself, and he passed through, followed by Miss Perkins, who attempted in vain to seize him. He advanced up the steep stairs, closely followed by the intrepid girl. Midway up she stumbled over a brush, and when she again raised her eyes the figure was standing at the top, looking fixedly at her. In this interval it had changed somewhat—its dress, which had apparently been composed of jacket and pantaloons, had given place to a grayish black, which still retained the distinct outline of its form. Miss Perkins hastened on, and the figure retreated. When she got to the landing above, it was but a few feet in advance of her. She ran toward it, but as she did so it began to lose its shape and to disappear. She made so vigorous a grasp at it that her finger nails cut the palms of her hands; but she seized nothing. The figure sank beneath her feet with a tremulous motion, and, with its eyes still fixed upon the fainting teacher, it wholly disappeared.

Her account of this extraordinary incident is circumstantial and intelligible. The boy Lydston is a lad of the speculative and observant type, and his description of the appearance, as well as that of his mates, bear out in every particular the story told by the mistress.

On the succeeding Friday, this vision was again seen, at about the same hour in the afternoon. Miss Perkins followed it with even more resolution than before, but it disappeared from her sight, when midway up the stairs. The expression of its features, in both cases, though pleasant at first, became sad before they faded away.

Between these two dates, Miss Perkins encountered a new terror. Up to the same day in question, the voices which had been heard from time to time in the garret, had been with one exception, muffled and indistinct. This exception I have described. They now manifested themselves in a fresh manner.

One afternoon when the noises had been unusually loud, and the influences especially active, there issued from the teacher's end of the schoolroom a loud and coarse tone, which seemed to echo at the further end, but with a laugh, instead of a diminished voice of its own character. This was frequently followed by a similar duet in the garret above, where it was repeated several times. The scholars, astonished at the novel visitation, sat in frightened expectancy. Miss Perkins saw the necessity of allaying their fears, if possible, and she asked which of them would go into the attic, to see if some one were hidden there.

One of the largest boys declared himself ready to go, provided the teacher would accompany him. The expedition was then arranged, and the two armed themselves with sticks, and proceeded up the stairs. They nearly reached the centre of the garret floor, when from behind them the laugh again arose, with twice its former significance. It was low, cold and jubilant. The teacher, for the first time in her long experience with all these unnamable terrors, felt a

thorough sensation of fear. She pursued the sound, when it was repeated in another quarter, and now and then laid lustily about her with her stick. But as she struck the roof and the chimney, in her efforts to bring down her enemy, the laugh rose higher and higher, until the place was alive with the chilling sounds.

The teacher and the boy, convinced that nothing was to be discovered, and being filled with dread, left the spot; and as they descended the stairs, a perfect triumph of sounds pursued them until they re-entered the schoolroom.

All the accumulated wisdom of the school committee, the town officers, and hundreds of foreign visitors, have not abated the phenomena in the smallest degree; and it seems that the history of this schoolhouse must take an undisputed place with that of the celebrated Wesley Parsonage of English renown.

Naturally enough, the Spiritualists have been quick to appropriate these manifestations as proofs of their peculiar principles, and the "circles" have received an extraordinary impulse; but if the troubles serve to bait the scientists into a new examination of kindred circumstances and annoyances—why, then—"an' then we'll give them ear."

#### RESOLUTIONS.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

To Victoria C. Woodhull and Sister, in Ludlow-street Jail, New York City:

At a meeting of friends, held November 7th, at 241 North Eleventh street, Philadelphia, it was resolved to send to you an address expressive of our feelings in this, your trial hour. Realizing that the progress of nations has been mainly through the martyrdom of individuals, we would say that no new thing has happened you.

A few years since the venerable Abner Kneeland was imprisoned in the City of Boston, Francis Wright was stoned and driven from city to city, and still more recently John Brown was executed, for moving in advance of public sentiment, and expressing truths the world was not prepared to receive. Whatever may be said of your course in the paper, it must be apparent to all that you are under the influence of an arrogant power which cares much more for victims, than for the protection of those whom they charge you with having injured.

We feel that the sacred cause of freedom of speech and of the press (which is far more dear than life on this plane) has been rudely assailed in your persons; but we are confident that you are accomplishing a much greater work to-day than ever before. The dungeon, and even the scaffold may become the grandest pulpit that the world has ever known.

The position you occupy is an index of the condition of society which you have so earnestly labored to reform, and whatever may be the result, there can be no doubt that good will come out of this, and the onward march of civilization and the true freedom in social and political life will be promoted, however severe may be the test for all, even the most progressive minds.

We believe you know where the real source of strength lies—in the consciousness of your own rectitude, and a firm reliance upon God and his ministering spirits, who are ever near you. The following hymn, composed by Miss Williams while suffering imprisonment in Paris, may be expressive of your feelings and add to your consolation:

While Thee I seek, protecting power,  
Be my vain wishes stilled;  
And may this consecrated hour,  
With better hopes be filled.

Thy love the power of thought bestowed,  
To Thee my thoughts would soar;  
Thy mercy o'er my life hath flowed,  
That mercy I adore.

In each event of life how clear  
Thy ruling hand I see;  
Each blessing to my soul more dear,  
Because conferred by Thee.

In every joy that crowns my days,  
In every pain I bear,  
My heart shall find delight in praise,  
Or seek delight in prayer.

When gladness wings her favored hour,  
Thy love my thoughts shall fill;  
Resigned when storms of sorrow lower,  
My soul shall meet Thy will.

My lifted eye, without a tear,  
The gathering storm shall see;  
My steadfast heart shall know no fear,  
That heart shall rest on Thee.

With feelings of propound sympathy for you in this hour of trial, we are truly your friends,

Anna M. Meixsel,	Sarah M. Buckwater,
Anna M. Balwar,	Henry T. Child, M. D.,
D. S. Cadwallader,	634 Race st.,
Adelia Hull,	Caroline H. Spear,
Della Estella Hull,	Jacob L. Papsom,
Christina Robbins,	Hannah Jetlow,
G. D. Henck,	John M. Spear,
J. Q. Henck,	Charlotte M. Crowell,
M. H. Henck,	David J. Stansbery,
Horace M. Richards,	Fox Holden.

PROVIDENCE, R. I.

At an informal gathering of Spiritualists the following resolutions were read and adopted by them:

WHEREAS, Several of our Government officials (doubtless induced by the glare of the rich man's purse—the owners of which, having received a just expose of hypocritical and licentious conduct, enacted under our present marriage laws) have violently seized our friend and co-worker, Mrs.

Woodhull, and thrust her, with others, into Ludlow Jail, whose sole offense has been that, in her zeal and earnestness to probe to the very marrow the hollowness and rottenness of the present condition of society, she has been led to cite a few prominent samples of delinquencies.

Resolved, That we, lovers of truth and humanity, do extend our heartfelt sympathies to our beloved sister and her friends, thus outrageously dealt with in this our Republican Government of the nineteenth century.

Resolved, That as we believe Sister W. to be actuated by pure, high-toned, moral and enlightened religious sentiments, moreover by a love for consistency in those several elements, in editing her WEEKLY NEWS, to suppress which, such a shameful attempt has been made, unparalleled since the Garrisonian times—we will ignore such a boon as justice by our laws, until freedom of speech and freedom of the press—which they fully and confidently promise to every citizen—can be obtained by her.

Resolved, That the course taken by our judicials in waiving an examination, when assured by her counsel that she was fully prepared for the same, bears facial evidence of a "quaking among the dry bones," caused by conscious guilt.

Resolved, That of the thousands of the WOODHULL & CLAFLIN WEEKLY which have been eagerly read heretofore with both pleasure and profit for their talented, rational and reformatory matter, no one copy has been sought after with greater avidity than the last issue; more, doubtless, for its daring to attack where our officials are oftener bribed to silence—"Wickedness in high places"—even the sanctuary, where, Luther-like, she has torn the veil aside which obscured its hidden mysteries, thus giving the unorganized portion of the community a telescopic view of what appeared to them the starry way to the "gate celestial," as it savored strongly, however, of the scavenger's pathway.

Resolved, That none but an angel's pen could have equaled the chastity and refinement with which the disclosure was made or clearly portrayed. Although we daily find similar exposures in the common walks of life, made by our secular papers, and those without regard to individual tastes or feelings, yet until Sister W. moved upon the strongholds it had never occurred that they were rank with obscenity. Surely Victoria, thou, for thy knowledge—wherein there is might—art now in Ludlow Jail; but time will speedily wing its way onward, bearing with it a light so powerful and penetrating that those who now judge thee with minds befogged, shall agonizingly wince and writhe at their own inhuman stupidity. Furthermore,

Resolved, That our sister's zeal in a rich and wholesome reform shall be borne in mind, and that the genuine seed sown by her, will, we hope, through warmest sunshine and silvery showers, spring from its genial soil and eventually become a tree, so giant-like in its proportions and so lovely in its foliage that all will strive for a lodge 'neath its sheltering branches.

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be forwarded to our beloved sister and her friends in Ludlow Jail, by C. M. T. Com.

C. M. TINKHAM.

God of the morning, God of the eve,  
O grant us a hearing, our errors reprove;  
Nor let us go down, like the mighty of yore,  
With a foul incubus at our proud nation's core.

S. W. Kenyon,	Maria L. Ghirardina,
Ben'jn Cross,	E. W. Kenyon,
Allen A. Taylor,	E. M. Bolles,
F. Hacker,	J. C. Bolles,
	Committee.

WORCESTER, Oct. 17, 1872.

MRS. VICTORIA C. WOODHULL:

Dear Madam—As friends who believe in your truthfulness, and honor you for your courage in tearing the mask from the hypocrisy that seeks to shelter itself behind a powerful Church organization, we desire to send you our cordial greeting and sympathy in this your hour of need. We realize that the freedom of the press and freedom of speech are alike assailed and imprisoned in your person; that woman's emancipation from the pressure of unequal social and political power will receive an impetus if you triumph over your persecutors, and will be retarded for perhaps many years by your defeat; but we are reminded that your very name, dear madam, forbids the thought of failure, and believing that you, who have ever accorded to friend and foe alike, a place in the columns of the paper, that bigotry has learned to fear and sought to suppress, are an instrument in the hands of a wisdom that can bring to naught the malice of the enemies of freedom, and assure you that you have our most earnest prayers for your speedy release from your present trials, and our best wishes for your future success in the noble work you have undertaken.

Fraternally yours in true sympathy,

Mrs. Martha P. Jacobs,	Mr. J. W. Shirley,
Mrs. Susie H. Blanchard,	Mr. G. S. Adams,
Mrs. C. E. Leland,	Mr. Richard Bullard,
Mrs. Mildred White,	Lydia G. Phelps,
Miss A. J. Baldwin,	Mrs. H. L. Temple,
Mrs. Annie Sherman,	Mr. J. L. Adams,
Mrs. Emiline R. Dorman,	Mrs. Ruth E. Marble.
Mr. Edward H. Hammond,	Mrs. A. A. Reed,
Mrs. H. D. Waterman,	Mr. A. A. Reed,
Miss Mary E. Albert,	Mrs. Samuel Field,
Mr. A. M. Driscoll,	Mrs. Dickinson,
Mrs. Mary Sanders,	Miss Genie Dorman,
Mrs. Hellen S. H. Green,	Mr. Alfred Harris,
Mrs. J. P. Hammond,	Mrs. Mary M. Harris,
Mrs. R. A. Spaulding,	Mr. William H. Hill,

and many others.



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One copy for one year, - - - - -	\$3 00
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All communications, business or editorial, must be addressed,

*Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly,*

48 Broad Street, New York City.



NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1878.

## TO THE PRESS.

The course the Government has pursued to suppress the WEEKLY, and thereby to establish a precedent which, followed, may extend to any recalcitrant journal, having been most disastrous to us financially, we ask both friends and foes to extend us the journalistic courtesy to insert the following in the several papers under their control:

WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY, an Independent Journal open to the absolutely free discussion of all subjects in which human welfare is involved, and which is especially the organ of social reform, is published by Victoria C. Woodhull and Tennie C. Claflin (Woodhull & Claflin), at No. 48 Broad street, New York, upon the following terms:

One copy one year, - - - - -	\$3 00
Five copies one year, - - - - -	12 00
Ten copies one year, - - - - -	22 00
Twenty copies one year, - - - - -	40 00
Six month, half these rates.	

The WEEKLY occupies a somewhat remarkable, certainly a most exceptional, position in regard to its contemporaries, the reformatory, religious and secular press. Outside of some half-a-dozen journals, there is little contained in the public press which is of use to the editors either as news or otherwise. But we know that the entire press, while for the present mainly silent upon the great question that is now agitating public thought, is deeply interested in the main feature of the WEEKLY. Formerly when we were in better pecuniary circumstances than we now are, we sent the WEEKLY regularly to about one-third of the press of the country, and we are more than repaid by the modifications of public opinion upon reformatory questions which have indirectly resulted therefrom.

There are about six thousand newspapers and journals of all sorts in the United States. We want to send the WEEKLY to each of them; but this would be at an expense to us, for printing and paper only, of over ten thousand dollars, which we cannot afford. But we will furnish it to all papers that want it at \$2 per annum—our lowest rates for large clubs. This course suggests itself to us because we have already received numerous applications from editors for the best terms upon which we will furnish the WEEKLY to them. This is a small matter for individual papers, while the press, as a whole, would be a very mighty one for us to exchange with—one which its representatives cannot expect us to bear. If the WEEKLY were a political or religious or a literary journal merely, we should not presume to thus address the press, to which, in many instances, we are under great obligations; but it is exceptional, being the only advocate of social freedom in the world. And this, coupled with the fact, that momentous issues will be discussed in its columns during the entire year, is an excuse for this presentation.

## INSTRUCTIONS TO SUBSCRIBERS.

In writing to us persons should sign their names carefully, so that their need be no mistaking them; many come to us so carelessly written that one cannot decipher them.

Again, many persons neglect to include their State in the date; and if, as often is the case, the postmaster's stamp on the outside of the envelope is a mere daub, we are utterly in the dark about the location of the writer; unless, perchance, the town be an uncommon one, when we can guess in what State it may be.

The letter should also state whether the inclosed remittance is for a renewal or for a new subscription. Failing in this we are compelled to spend a large amount of time to determine it. In case any one receives two papers from this neglect, they should inform us at once, so that one may be discontinued.

## CLUB! CLUB!! CLUB!!!

We return special thanks to our friends who have so readily gone earnestly to work to extend our subscription list. We are daily in receipt of numbers of letters containing remittances for clubs. This is the way to show love for, and zeal in, any cause advocated by a special journal.

To all our friends, everywhere, we say, go and do likewise! The friends in every town and city should see to it that a club of five for every thousand people be immediately formed. We have said that we have wrought alone as long as we can. We now, want the joint efforts of all who believe in freedom in its full sense.

## A REQUEST TO OUR FRIENDS.

Since the newsmen in the country cannot obtain the WEEKLY through the accustomed channel—The American News Co.—many of them suppose the WEEKLY to be dead. Now we are aware there is a demand through this medium for a hundred thousand copies per week, which is suppressed by the refusal of the above mentioned company to furnish them. We ask our friends in all towns where there is a news depot, and especially the cities, to interest themselves sufficiently to call repeatedly upon the newsmen and urge them to order a supply directly from us. We are sending them regularly through the mail in packages to suit all customers; and where the newsmen are subsidized against the WEEKLY, we ask our friends to order weekly supplies to fill this demand. Hundreds of people would buy the WEEKLY from news agents and ultimately become interested in it, who, at first, would not subscribe. Perhaps there is no way our friends could do us so great service as in this way, and we hope they will press their news agents everywhere to order the WEEKLY direct from us, until the Great Monopoly—the American News Company—will consent to furnish it.

## TO THE READERS OF THE WEEKLY.

The sentiments of love and enthusiasm which we represented as coming to us from all directions still continue, and are largely accompanied by more material and, pardon us for saying so, at this time more necessary aid. Do not for an instant imagine that we would be the receivers of a single word less of approval, comfort and encouragement to continue to fight the good fight, than we hitherto have received, but that we would have those who express them remember that words merely will not enable us to publish the WEEKLY.

There are a large number of subscribers whose paid terms have expired. To these we would say, in the kindest, though most urgent words, that we have not discontinued the paper to them, believing as we did and do, since they have not informed us to the contrary, that they want it. Three dollars a year is a small sum for any family to expend for a radical paper, and from the smallest income would scarcely be felt; but when ten thousand persons on a single subscription list fall in arrears, the publishers must sustain their paper by other means than by looking to their subscribers.

We know that many of our readers, knowing how bountifully we have hitherto diffused the WEEKLY all over the world, think we can continue to do so, not stopping to consider our changed circumstances. We wish once for all to disabuse this thought. We cannot furnish the WEEKLY to such as do not appreciate it sufficiently to pay for it; and we, therefore, request, as a special favor, that, immediately on the reception of this number, every one who is in arrears will either renew his subscription or request us to discontinue the paper, remitting amount due to date.

There need be no hesitancy on account of the probabilities of our not being permitted to publish the WEEKLY. The country has not yet so far gone on the road to despotism as to make the absolute suppression of any paper possible. Political trickery and religious bigotry may continue to make use of too willing officials to annoy us, hoping by so doing to wear us out; but they will find themselves powerless to more than annoy. They have not the right upon their side; and to destroy, this is required. Hence we ask our timorous friends to put their trust, as we do, in the righteousness and rightfulness of our cause, and spring forward to its maintenance. It is never the enemies of a cause who kill it. It is always its hesitating and lukewarm friends. Let it not be said that the grand one for which we have the honor to labor died from such maladies. We say fearlessly and proudly, that if its friends do not fail in its hour of need, its enemies, though the most persistent, are nevertheless powerless.

We must be pardoned for also reminding each individual that he has no right to presume that everybody except himself will do his duty; and therefore that he may be excused. This is too often the argument, and too often a fatal one, since everybody is liable to make use of it, and all therefore fail, and with them, the cause in which they are really interested; after which they mourn its loss and too late their own delinquency. Each person should say: "Let those fail who may, I will do my duty."

Then let us not in future be under the necessity of devoting any part of our valuable space to urging the payment of subscriptions justly due. We do not ask any to take the paper who do not want it; but we do ask those who receive it to not expect us to furnish it to them at the cost of other subscribers, more mindful of us and of honorable dealing than themselves.

## EXPLANATIONS.

The course of events since our issue of December 28 has been such as to change somewhat the proposed character of our subsequent issues. We then intended to continue "The Progress of the Revolution," by detailing the examination in Jefferson Market Court, upon the charge of libel; but the suppression of our Boston speech, and the necessity of putting our side of the case before the public, made it necessary to occupy the space by that speech, to the exclusion of the examination. We have now concluded to still further delay it, and to print it just before the time in which we expect the case to come up in the Court of Oyer and Terminer for trial. This was necessary, also, because of the second arrest upon the charge of violating the United States mails by obscene literature. We have also been obliged to lay over "The Spirit of the Press"—a very important matter, since its voice comes to us from the country like a voice of thunder, in condemnation of the unhallowed persecution to which we have been subjected. Though the city press is thoroughly subsidized against justice, by the jackals of the street and the wolves of the church, the less formidable (though more honest) country press is speaking in such tones as must bring their city contemporaries to a realization of the folly they have committed, by keeping silence upon a most vital issue, from their fear of two weak women. Said the editor of a prominent and influential daily to a reporter who had made only a just report of our recent examination upon the charge of obscenity: "Why, if we should print that, it would show these women are being persecuted, and that would not do, since it would create sympathy for them." This tells the whole story. They will permit us to be hounded to death; the freedom of the press to be outraged by the suppression of the WEEKLY, and their prejudices against us will not allow them to see what a precedent they are permitting to be established, which may, at some future time, be used against them. Our friends and readers may rely upon a complete account of all the proceedings that have been (and that may be) had, from which to judge of the condition into which this Government is about to be precipitated. We have warned you of the danger; rest assured it is nigh, even unto your doors. Watch and pray, lest in an unknown hour it come upon you unawares.

## TO THE CHIEFS OF THE POLICE OF NEW YORK AND BROOKLYN.

There was once a time, in this country, when officials, equally with common citizens, were at least supposed to be amenable to, and in their official action, guided by law. This, however, so far as the police force of "these two cities" is concerned, seems to have gone by. From being the simple executors of the law and its behests, they have risen to the censorship of what literature shall be sold and bought by the public of its accommodating agent—the modern newsman. It is the business of this agent to supply the literary want of the public, keeping for its consumption what the demand indicates. But just at this point the police interfere and say: "We do not care what your customers want, you shall not keep WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY for their accommodation." Almost every newsman in New York and Brooklyn has been approached and intimidated into not keeping the WEEKLY; the more ignorant through fear of some unknown consequences, and the more intelligent through an unwillingness to be disturbed in their occupation. Now we publicly ask the chiefs of the police force, what instructions have been issued to the men under their commands, authorizing them to suppress the sale of WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY; and their authority for issuing such instructions, if they have been issued, and if not, the explanation of the interference and intimidations that for three weeks have been pursued against the newsmen of the two cities in regard to this paper?

It may be thought that public sentiment will sustain this high-handed outrage upon our rights, because we are women, and advocates of a cause which to-day is unpopular. But the good sense of the community is held in utter contempt when it is supposed that it will long countenance any such arbitrary attempt to control its reading. Officials, for their own sake, ought not to ignore the fact that fully one-half the people of this great city read our paper of November 2d with great avidity, in many instances paying five and ten dollars to obtain one. Can the police, without authority of law, safely presume to dictate to one-half the people what they may and may not read? It is a question for the heads of the police forces to seriously consider, whether they can afford to lend themselves to aid the Scavenger of the Young Men's Christian Association in his attempt to suppress our paper, and in so far to defy the public.

We here give notice, if this course continue, that we shall be forced to proceed by legal means to vindicate our rights; and we beg to remind even officials, that the time has not yet come when the law may be trampled upon with impunity even by the representative of the new order of Jesuits; and even if the objects aimed at are women, who have excited the thoughtless prejudice of a Pharisaical community.

We take pleasure in calling the attention of the city press to the "Reverberations" from the country. Paris may be France, but New York is not America.



## THE EFFORT AGAINST FREE SPEECH.

Through the last WEEKLY our friends were informed of the proceedings had in Boston, which resulted in deferring the delivery of my speech in the Music Hall to a more propitious time. Returning to New York, I at once secured Cooper Institute in which to deliver still another speech in review of the situation, in which my sister was to take part. Both of these speeches were published at length in the last issue. Knowing that the effort to suppress me in Boston was largely, if not wholly, to be attributed to the influence of Mr. Beecher's friends in the Young Men's Christian Association, I suspected they would renew their efforts to prevent me from speaking at Cooper Institute. No sooner had I announced my subject and the date for its consideration, than Mr. Beecher was engaged to speak the same night in Association Hall—the headquarters of the Young Men's Christian Association. Almost simultaneously the information came to me that Comstock was engaged to put up another job for my arrest, to culminate upon the very day of the lecture. I determined to circumvent this nefarious plot if it were within the range of possibilities. I immediately communicated with my friends, Laura Cuppy Smith and Anna M. Middlebrook, telling them of my suspicions and requesting them to be present to speak for me and my sister if we should be arrested. But I determined to speak myself. So on the morning of the day of the lecture neither my sister or I went to our office in Broad street, but sent instructions, if there were any suspicious movements, that I was to be informed at once. A little past noon, the scavenger of the Christian Young Men, who boasts that Mr. Dodge, of the firm of Phelps, Dodge & Co., who are charged with defrauding the Government a million, more or less, "backs him," marched into the office with two United States marshals, whom he seemed to command, and arrested Colonel Blood, but appeared terribly nonplussed when he found my sister and I were not there to welcome his lordship. I immediately received word of the movement, and knew that all the ingenuity I could command would have to be brought into play if I were to speak that night in the Cooper Institute.

It would be impossible for me to secrete myself in the building and to appear upon the rostrum at the proper time. Therefore I resolved to assume a disguise. Some willing friends assisted, and I soon presented the appearance of an old and decrepid Quaker lady. In this costume I confidently entered the hall, passing a half-dozen or more United States marshals, who stood guarding the entrances and warning the people that there was to be no lecture there that night—so certain were they of arresting me. But I passed them all safely, one of them even essaying to assist me on through the crowd. On the pretense of deafness, I gradually worked my way down to the stage and finally upon it, and just as Laura Cuppy Smith was announcing that she still believed I would appear, I suddenly advanced to the centre of the stage, and exclaimed, "Yes, I am here," and began speaking before having entirely cast aside my Quaker garb; so that the marshals who were on the platform would have to interrupt my speech if they attempted to arrest me then. They evidently saw that they had been baffled, and their guarantee that I should not speak, broken, and concluded that it would be prudent to permit me to deliver my address and arrest me afterward.

Of course I expected this, and having said my say, with as good a grace as I could command, I surrendered to them.

But Mr. Comstock had some satisfaction in getting it into all the evening papers that I was arrested and could not speak, and by the aid of the marshals turning people from the door, thus making my audience and receipts about one half what they should have been. But I doubt if I could have afforded to have bartered the effect that was produced upon the community for the additional pecuniary aid that would otherwise have followed.

Thus again has the wrath of the Jesuits been made to advance the cause of freedom. I am perfectly satisfied with the results of their cunning. I hope they are also satisfied, though that they are I very much doubt.

Again I say: "Go on, gentlemen. If you are not yet satisfied that 'it is hard to kick against the pricks,' continue to kick until you are satisfied. But permit me to give you fair warning. You are filling up for yourselves a measure of iniquity, the consequences of which you will some day be under the necessity of accepting; and which you will then, too late, bitterly bewail. You cannot kill the truth, and you forget that error is powerless when truth is left free to combat it." Which do you represent?

VICTORIA C. WOODHULL.

## THE IMPENDING DESPOTISM.

It is our duty, no matter how quietly the editors of other papers sleep on the verge of the volcano's crater, to sound the alarm of the threatening danger. We have said, and repeated it over and over again, that the movement of the United States Government against us, upon the charge of obscenity, for merely exercising the right that journals in this country have always exercised—the right to criticise the actions of individuals—is a movement against freedom of the press. But the sensibilities of the community are so blunted to this fact, by their prejudice against us, that they either fail to see the danger or they are willing to incur it, with the prospect of our being crushed by the movement.

In regard to the fact, however, there can no longer be any reasonable doubt, since the District-Attorney, speaking for

the Government of the United States, boldly declared, in his closing speech at our examination before Commissioner Davenport, that other journals, naming some of them, were to be proceeded against for doing precisely what we had done, thus plainly announcing and confirming just what we have said, that, to-day, it is only the WEEKLY that is threatened; to-morrow it may be any other journal; and the next day, all other journals opposed to the new departure of the Government, in the interests of the new Jesuitical Order—The Young Men's Christian Association.

This organization has, to-day, more influence and control over the weal of the country than all other orders combined. It was organized for a specific purpose, and that purpose has been steadily kept in view and advanced upon by every possible way. Surely the press of this country cannot be so blind as not to perceive what they intend. They mean the establishment of a God in the Constitution Government, with themselves as the authorized interpreters of the so-called Word of God—the Bible. At the Cincinnati Convention they saw the time had not yet come when they could openly show their hands, and, with all the cunning of adepts in political chicanery, they came together and talked, only, in open convention, but plotted extensively in committees and caucuses.

We are now prepared to go a step further, and declare that they intend to obtain such legislation as will permit them to control the journalism of the country, and thus to be able to suppress all organs of free thought that take antagonistic grounds to the infallibility of the Bible, the divinity of Christ and the personality of God. Call us insane, if you will; laugh at the prediction as you may, and treat it with contempt, as you do—we say they mean all this; and before five years pass, those whom we cannot arouse to a consciousness of the danger, will look back to this article and curse themselves that they did not heed the warning, and nip the movement in its incipency by rousing the public indignation at the unheard-of outrage that has been perpetrated upon us, at the instance of this new inquisitorial order, which, if its beginnings are to be considered as evidence, promises to surpass the Spanish Inquisition in its damnable movements and deeds of horror to suppress free thought.

With increasing strength will come the rack and the torture for all who dare to question their religion or their movements. Spiritualism especially must be eradicated from the country, since it destroys the very basis upon which their whole structure rests. Without the future Heaven and Hell their religion falls. They know this, and are preparing, as the slave-holders prepared, to either destroy or be destroyed. The District-Attorney also made another very significant announcement, more significant, perhaps, in its application, and more evident in its meaning than that to which we have already referred. He said that the Government would prosecute anybody and everybody for obscenity who should dare to explain the character of the Holy Bible by quoting passages from it to show that it is against their recently established standard for proper literature. This position, if maintained, will preclude the making of specific quotations from the Bible, since, if published at all, it must be published as a whole. We wonder if, as a next step, it will not be held to be obscene to read the passages from the Bible which it is said shall not be printed apart from it? Are the people so blind as not to understand what all this means? It means simply that the Bible, the God and the religion of the so-called Christian Church, shall not be questioned, and that if any one dare to presume to do so, he or, more expressly, she, shall be suppressed. And this Government, which was built upon individual freedom, lends its massive machinery to aid such a purpose!

To show that we do not overstate this matter, we have only to again refer to the extraordinary position assumed by the District-Attorney at our examination. He, at one fell stroke, leveled all previously laid down rules and standards of obscenity. The well-known law of obscenity is that a thing must be obscene upon its face, that is, it must be an obscene picture, or there must be words in and of themselves obscene. Against this well-established construction of law the representative of the United States Government offered the new construction, that anything, be it book, paper or what not, that, in the opinion of the Government, tended to demoralization, was obscene, and it was the duty of Government officials to suppress them. Now, of course the Christian Jesuits will hold that the WEEKLY is immoral, because it advocates social freedom, hence it must be suppressed.

But we shall see if this thing can be fastened upon the press of this country. If its members cannot see the danger to themselves, because it is only ourselves who suffer as yet, when it comes upon some one, of whom they do not stand so much in fear as to be blind to their rights, they will rouse to the appreciation of what is upon them, and hurl back the rising tide of religious despotism and forever crush the hydra-headed Protestant Jesuits in their attempt to establish themselves upon the necks of this people.

We promised to give in this issue the account of our examination before Commissioner Davenport upon the second charge of obscenity. But that official not having rendered his decision, we think it better to delay it, until a future issue.

We take pleasure in calling attention to the story of the "Haunted" School House, at Newburyport, Mass., to be found in another column.

## MR. BEECHER'S INITIATION IN FREE LOVE.

Mrs. VICTORIA C. WOODHULL, though a stranger to you personally, and though I am a member of Mr. Beecher's congregation in Brooklyn and have great admiration for Mr. Beecher, I write to you in behalf of fair play. I am cognizant of the following circumstances which it is possible may have an important bearing upon Mr. Beecher's convictions and belief in respect to what you call the "social question," and may therefore have an incidental bearing upon the statements you have made about him, and for which, in some manner, you have been made to suffer. About seventeen or eighteen years ago I was one of a company of persons who were invited to Mr. Beecher's house, one memorable evening, to listen to Mr. Stephen Pearl Andrews, who was to give an exposition of the doctrines of individuality and individual sovereignty.

We came together in Mr. Beecher's ample parlors at half past seven o'clock; the three parlors were filled between that hour and eight o'clock, by a crowd of ladies and gentle men, mostly of Mr. Beecher's church and congregation, but in part also invited from other congregations and from out of town, probably about eighty persons in all. Among the auditors were several clergymen, one, a particular friend of Mr. Beecher, from a Western city, and others from the neighborhood.

At eight o'clock Mr. Beecher called the meeting to order and made a short introductory speech which was, as nearly as I can recall it, to the effect that Mr. Andrews had recently published a book, called, I believe, "The Science of Society," or some similar name; that he, Mr. Beecher, had read the book; that it exhibited great talent and analytical acumen, and that it claimed to furnish social relations of great importance, affecting the whole moral and religious conditions of the world. He added that he had been so much impressed by the book that he had sought out Mr. Andrews and had had a private controversy on the subject. He said that the ideas contained in the book were either of the most immense value to the world, as the discovery of new truth, or that they were the most devilish heresies, tending to the destruction of all morality in the world; that he had charged upon Mr. Andrews a subtle and insidious attempt to undermine the marriage institution and all Christian morality; but that the replies which he had received from Mr. Andrews, while they had not convinced him or removed his objections, had satisfied him that the writer was a profound thinker in a new field of thought; and that as the result of their interview or interviews (I do not clearly remember whether he spoke of one or many) he, Mr. Beecher, had himself proposed to Mr. Andrews that he should come as if cited to defend himself and his doctrines before an assemblage of his, Mr. Beecher's, friends, whom he would convoke at his house for that purpose, to consist of the wisest and most discreet of the members of his congregation, and others upon whose judgment he relied and that Mr. Andrews should restate in their presence his whole doctrine of Individuality or Social Freedom, with the understanding that he was then to be cross-questioned, criticised and replied to by Mr. Beecher himself, and by any other members of the assembly.

After this introduction, Mr. Beecher placed an arm-chair in the middle of the first parlor, conducted Mr. Andrews to it, and requested him to proceed, without restriction or limitation, to make a full exposition of the doctrine of Individual Freedom and of the Sovereignty of the Individual, notifying him again that he would afterward be submitted to the most rigorous cross-examination and criticism.

Mr. Andrews then commenced and talked consecutively for, I should think, two hours and a half. I can make no attempt to repeat that remarkable discourse. I only remember it as one of the most lucid, impressive and eloquent speeches I ever listened to; every sentence in it was clear as a bell, both in its vocal enunciation and in the thought that was conveyed in the words. I never knew an audience so spell-bound in my life. The discourse dealt in the fundamental principles of human rights and human relationships. It said nothing directly of love between the sexes, nor of the marriage institution; it dealt, as I should say, with universal individual relations, or with things as they ought to be between man and man, man and woman, and between men and women and their children, in the world. It might almost be called an analysis of the social relations and the social conditions in what may be called a millennial world, and in respect to the moral principles upon which they would be based. It was altogether a wonderful discourse, and seemed to lift everybody present out of the mundane world into a higher and different atmosphere.

At about half-past ten Mr. Andrews announced that he had concluded, and was prepared to undergo questioning and criticism. The scene that followed is nearly indescribable. I never saw such eagerness in any company of people to call out more of expression from a speaker. The lecturer was fairly pelted and overwhelmed by a rush of questioning from every quarter. He quietly preserved, however, the position of a presiding officer, took up the various questions in their order, and replied to them in what seemed to be the most exhaustive and convincing manner.

Mr. Beecher finally took the lead in propounding the questions, and his object seemed to be to drive Mr. Andrews on to the most radical issues and consequences of the doctrines he had propounded. It was he who forced the discussion directly upon the love relations and the marriage-question, to which Mr. Andrews had not once directly ad-



verted. Mr. Beecher seemed resolved to drive him to the wall by deducing consequences so radical from the doctrines he had stated, that he would shrink from avowing them; but every time a thrust of this kind was made, Mr. Andrews quietly and frankly accepted the consequences and developed them still further into an unthought of degree of radicalism, pointing out the remedies for the supposed evils as resulting from the necessary workings of the principles themselves. The interest in the subject seemed constantly to deepen and increase until it became almost painful. Mr. Beecher said: "Do you see Mr. Andrews, that the consequence of this doctrine would be to dissolve the whole marriage institution?"

Mr. Andrews.—"I do."

Mr. Beecher.—"Do you mean that?"

Mr. Andrews.—"I do."

Mr. Beecher.—"And what then?"

Mr. Andrews.—"The replacing of marriage throughout christendom and the world, by higher and better institutions, in which every woman shall be maintained in freedom and in the utterly free and untrammelled exercise of her function of maternity, without being delivered over to the tyrannical whim or arbitrary control of any one man, who may be a brute, or a drunkard, or a consumptive, or in a thousand other ways utterly unfitted to assume the direction, and force upon woman the exercise of her responsible duty to the race."

This is the merest specimen of the nature of the discussion which took place on that remarkable evening in the heart of Mr. Beecher's church and congregation; the interest did not flag for an instant, and when we were finally called to our senses through some one who thought it time to adjourn, we were astounded to find that it was two o'clock in the morning. Not a man or a woman had left during these six hours of the most concentrated attention. I leave it for you and others to judge what may have been the effect of that evening's talk. For myself, I will merely observe that in many a sermon which I have listened to from Mr. Beecher, from that day to this, I have perceived a strong tinge of what seemed to me the same doctrine, somewhat diluted, which I listened to that night in its most concentrated form.

It is my impression that Mr. Andrews had not, at that time, announced to the world at large the distinct doctrine of free love so undisguisedly as he did not long afterward, but that Mr. Beecher detected the doctrine as the logical consequence of what he had published under the name of "The Science of Society," and was determined on this occasion to drag out of him the full expression of his more hidden thought. I should think from my recollection that it was not more than three or six months after this that the celebrated discussion on Love, Marriage and Divorce, by Stephen Pearl Andrews, Henry James and Horace Greeley, was published first in the columns of the New York Tribune and afterward, I believe, in book form. It was, I think, from the similar positions to those which Mr. Beecher that evening drew from him as laid down by Mr. Andrews in that famous discussion, that "free love" as a distinctive doctrine took its origin; and it seems to me, looking on as an outside observer, that it has ever since been diffusing itself very broadly among the more intelligent and even among the more moral and religious portions of the community, and that it is every day struggling up nearer to the surface for recognition as being in some manner foundational of the social order of the future. At any rate, you may, perhaps, perceive from the facts which I have related, some reasons why the statements which you have made in respect to Mr. Beecher's belief and mode of life should not have been regarded as anything so terrific in Mr. Beecher's church and congregation as they would naturally have been elsewhere in the more conservative world; for Mr. Beecher and the choice members of his church and congregation were in, so to speak, at the birth of the doctrine.

Simply and honestly I am myself persuaded from all my recollections, observations and reasoning on the subject, that a conviction was wrought and burnt in on the mind of Mr. Beecher by the profound analysis and clear statement of Mr. Andrews on the evening referred to, even though they may never have had any subsequent intercourse on the subject, which has greatly influenced and even controlled the subsequent teachings and life of our beloved teacher and pastor; and for one I have not felt authorized to criticise him. He will stand or fall before his own conscience and his God.

If circumstances arise to make it requisite, I shall be prepared to authorize you to give my true name to the public in testimony of the truth of this recital; but I presume that will not be necessary, as there must be at least half a hundred members of the church or congregation still living who were present the evening alluded in Mr. Beecher's parlors, and no one, I feel confident, who was present, has ever forgotten it. In the meantime I subscribe myself merely

SENEX.

#### THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Tweed, Ames, Wilson, Patterson, Dodge, Beecher. What an array of names! Tammany exploded; the Credit Mobilier exposed, implicating the Vice-President elect and the saintly Granite Patterson; the President of the Young Men's Christian Association, accused of fraud, and the Pastor of the most mighty Christian church in the country a hypocrite. What an array of circumstances! Well may the reflecting mind stand aghast, asking, "Watchman, what of the night?" when such an array of names stand connected

with such an array of circumstances; and well may it also ask if indeed republican institutions are a failure?

In reply to all this we answer that what we have called republican institutions are a failure, because they are not republican. Had our governmental structure been erected upon the republican principles laid down in the Declaration of Independence; had Freedom, Equality and Justice been the rules by which it was constructed, there could have been no possible chance for failure, since they are perfect principles upon and by which organization can be securely founded. Government, in its true sense, means simply organization, and were all people secure in their individual and inalienable rights; were equality of opportunity to exercise those rights zealously maintained, and were all these regulated upon strictest principles of justice, instead of their having been such an outgrowth of abominations as is presented to the world to-day by this country, we should have been a truly great and moral nation—an example instead of reproach to the rest of the world.

Now if we search for the proximate causes for all these disgraceful conditions, they will be found in the facts that the equality contemplated in the construction of our Government was merely for matters political, which meant, in fact, the transfer of power from the despotism of political rule to the despotism of the rule of wealth; and in the failure to recognize and ordain the social equality of the sexes. In these two despotisms are found the opportunity and the incentives for all the unrepugnant and immoral conditions existing, such as are illustrated by the names and circumstances at the head of this article.

So long as there is opportunity and incentive for individuals to acquire power by the getting of money, and thus of placing themselves above others less favored, so long will there be repetitions of Tammany and the Credit Mobilier; and so long as the inequalities of sex exist, so long will there be social irregularities and corruptions—sexual debaucheries, starvations, seductions, abortions and prostitution.

The remedy for all these false conditions is to establish not only religious equality, but also social equality—which includes political and sexual equality. To rouse the people to a conception of this is our mission, and the mission of the WEEKLY; and if in performing it we must endure all forms of persecution possible in the present, we shall not shrink from our duty. The paths of many reforms have lain through blood. We have no faith that this one will escape its baptism; but we feel called upon to say that we believe the bloodiest revolution the world has ever witnessed is about to come to this generation, as much more ferocious and merciless than the slave war, as its causes are more insidious and vital and fundamental than were the causes of that war.

#### SHALL THERE BE AN INQUISITION ESTABLISHED?

It is futile and criminal for the people of this country to longer endeavor to hug the idea to their hearts that we are a free people. Those who did so before the recent war were equally with those who perpetuated the war, guilty of its results; so, also, will those who attempt to delude themselves that "all's well" be guilty of the results that will flow from the present attempt upon the liberty of the press and upon free speech.

It is now fully established in every thoughtful mind capable of a decision regarding literature, that the WEEKLY of November 2, can by no even far-fetched rendition be considered as obscene. Even the District Attorney was driven from his position, that the Challis article was obscene, because he could point out no obscene word in it. No one can honestly say that either of the words, token and virginity, are obscene, and seeing this, the District Attorney was compelled to fall back upon the general tenor of the whole paper. During the giving of the testimony of the prosecution, it was distinctly announced that it was the Challis article that was the obscene part, and it was to this that the entire defense was directed. Imagine, then, how completely the prosecution somerseted, to so radically change their theory after the defense was closed, permitting no opening of the case upon the new assumption of general tenor.

We think our friends, when they read this, and learn that that issue, which contains the Religion of Humanity, is held by the United States Government to be obscene, will scarcely be able to suppress a smile of incredulity. The idea that that paper as a whole has a tendency to demoralize the community is so utterly absurd as to preclude the necessity of any argument to show it. Sum up the teachings of Christ, and we challenge the finding of anything in that whole paper that stands opposed to them, either in part or as a whole.

But the prosecution must needs do something to justify its action in bringing the suit, and, being unable to say that the words referred to were obscene, were obliged to fall back on the whole paper. We might in good faith question the honesty of this proceeding since Mr. Howe pressed it from Mr. Purdy that he had not read the paper. He did not even know what the Challis article contained, and was evidently surprised when Mr. Howe read it for the edification and instruction of the prosecution. If Mr. Purdy had not read and knew nothing of the tenor of the article upon which he based his original charges, how ridiculous for him, when he learned its character, to fall back upon the remainder of the paper, to which even his attention had not been called. We are very sorry he did not at first assume the whole paper to be obscene, so that Mr. Howe could have read it entire,

from beginning to end; since we doubt not, that since Mr. Purdy was astonished at the real meaning, the teachings and effect of the Challis article, he would have been still more so at the meaning, the teachings and effect of the paper as a whole.

But there is another reason for this change of base on the part of the prosecution, which, we have no doubt, if the fact could be ascertained, was the real cause, instead of what we have already assigned as a probable cause. All through this prosecution there has been exhibited the most intense desire that that paper, November 2, should not be re-issued. It will be remembered that on our first arrest, it was boldly asserted by the District-Attorney that the real object of the prosecution was to vindicate the reputation of a revered citizen. Mr. Purdy was wise enough to disclaim this by word of mouth, though, if we mistake not, this was, even with him, the real animus of the prosecution.

Now it so happened that during the day upon which he effected the change of base, he had had the opportunity of reading our issue of January 25, in which we stated that the November 2d number would be reissued, revised so as to exclude the words up to that time held to be obscene. In other words, the Beecher article was to be reissued entire. When this dawned upon the comprehension of the learned, though we must confess somewhat impervious, District-Attorney he must have seen that to suppress the Challis article, merely, would not accomplish the object he had in view, since that could be expunged, leaving the Beecher article "scot-free" to go upon its mission of instruction.

We make this suggestion in all confidence as the real explanation of the (to us) very unexpected change of front made in our very faces, which, in a military sense, is always considered a very dangerous operation, and only justifiable under the most extreme exigencies. We must conclude that the District-Attorney considered the exigencies of his case sufficiently pressing to warrant the change, of which, according to rules of law—not war—we were precluded from taking advantage. But since the rules of law do not extend to war, even in journalism, we feel at liberty to now do what we were precluded from doing in Court—to show the causes that first instigated and that have since maintained the prosecution against us for obscenity.

Mr. Purdy, for the United States, made another admission more fatal in its showing of what is intended to be done, than anything to which we have as yet alluded. He said that the United States did not question our right to publish the paper that we had published, but that they did not intend that the mails should be used to circulate it. A pretty pass indeed is this, that the public mails, instituted for the use of the people, and maintained by them, shall not be used by them to transmit what they require! The District-Attorney formally and in the name of the people announces to our readers that the government does not intend that we shall transmit or they receive the WEEKLY through the mails, and by implication the same to every other journal that falls under the displeasure of the government officials (for the time executing the people's laws), by the advocacy of unpalatable truths or by the publishing of some revered citizen's unwritten biography.

It is scarcely necessary that we pursue this argument further. The merest tyro in reasoning cannot fail to see the drift and meaning of all this. It means that the government intends to prevent the free discussion of not only the social question but also of the religious question. It means to cast its protecting shield round the Bible to prevent inquiry into its too evident character, and to prevent the agitation of social rottenness, and the advocacy of a new, a better and a more enlightened social order.

We call upon the press and the people to rise to the comprehension of this subject. What will our liberties be worth with a hampered press and a tied tongue, forbidding discussion upon reformatory ideas? But it will be attempted, and we trust that the people will not be caught unawares. We warned the several reformatory movements, immediately after the God-in-the-Constitution Convention of the necessity of organization to protect themselves against this rising despotism; but were met with smiles of incredulity and taunts as alarmists. Every step taken since then, by this Order, more clearly demonstrates their purposes, and the time when the final coup will be attempted is nearer at hand than any who perceive it can even imagine. Again we say to all, be not deceived into the belief that the movement against us means only the suppression of the WEEKLY. It means all at which we have hinted.

#### RESUME OF OUR PRISON EXPERIENCE.

For the instruction of our readers, most of whom, we have no doubt, deeply sympathize with us in all that we are called upon to endure; and that they may come definitely to know the system of persecution by which we have been pursued, we will now give a brief resume of our arrests and incarcerations. On the 2d of November we were arrested upon a complaint made before United States Commissioner Osborn, for circulating obscene literature through the mails, the literature charged as obscene being the WEEKLY of that date. On the same day, Colonel Blood was arrested on a criminal suit for libel, upon the complaint of Mr. Challis. He was confined in Jefferson Market Prison while we were secured in Ludlow-street Jail.

Our examination was set down for the Monday following our arrest; but this was prevented by the Grand Jury having in the meantime found an indictment against us upon the



charge, which prevented a hearing of the case in open court upon its merits, and resulted in our being remanded to jail, where we remained thirty days.

Colonel Blood had a preliminary examination on Friday and Saturday following his arrest, and was removed to the Tombs, being held for indictment upon the charge, though, according to the judgment of all who heard the examination, there was no evidence elicited to hold him. But to discharge him was not in the programme, since to let either one of the three free was to continue the issuing of the WEEKLY, which, instead of ourselves, was really the object proceeded against. We say it boldly now, because we have it from good authority, that if it had been at any time decided that the WEEKLY would never again be issued, from such time the persecution would have ceased.

Previous to our arrest, the enormous demand for the WEEKLY caused us to make very extended preparations for its issue and distribution, the expense attending which was all lost to us by the effect of the arrest upon the paper, which amounted, though it was not that in a legal sense, to a virtual suppression. We entered prison exhausted of all pecuniary means, and at times suffered from need of the commonest necessities of life.

And here we cannot refrain from again speaking of the debt of gratitude under which we are to our counsel, who came voluntarily to our relief, without which we should indeed have been for the time rendered *hors de combat*.

After a three weeks' residence in Jefferson and the Tombs we succeeded in obtaining bail in \$3,000 for Colonel Blood; but no sooner was he released from this, than he was again immediately arrested upon a civil suit for the same charge, and confined in Ludlow. We had gained one point: we were all together, and could confer as to our course.

Finding that we were not likely to obtain a trial in any reasonable time, and feeling that the time had come wherein another paper should go out to our readers to inform them of the truth of the case, which had not come to their knowledge by the ordinary methods of news, we concluded to obtain bail instead of remaining in jail until a trial was granted us. This we did on the 4th of December, in the sum of \$8,000 each. We were immediately arrested on the criminal charge for libel, and on giving bail for that in the sum of \$2,000 were arrested on the civil suit; but we gave bail on this also, in the sum of \$5,000 each, and were formally at liberty.

We have previously explained how the news of our arrest cut off the increasing tide of pecuniary aid; therefore, though free, we were without the power to move at once to re-issue the WEEKLY. Besides we had little heart to labor for the WEEKLY so long as Colonel Blood languished in jail. The amount of bail required to set us free, for the moment, exhausted our capacity for giving it, and it was not until the 14th of December that we were able to procure his release. He had scarcely issued from Ludlow Jail before he was pounced upon by an officer, re-arrested and carried to Eldridge-street Police Station, where he remained over night. This arrest was at the instance of his first bail, who had, by some means, been induced to surrender him. But the following morning, when it became known how the prosecution was pushing us, bail offered and he was released.

Our issue of December 28 convinced those interested in killing us off; that we were not yet dead; in fact that we renewed the fight as if with the intention of carrying it on to the bitter end. Therefore it became a matter of necessity to renew their efforts to stifle us. The arrest on the 9th, specially intended to prevent the Cooper Institute speech, though it failed so far as the speech was involved, served, as they imagined, to annoy and put us to expense—both of which were true; but it is also true that the facts brought forth upon the examination, which they could not evade giving us this time, much more than compensated for all we lost. It came to be generally understood that these prosecutions were stimulated and conducted mainly, if not wholly, to embarrass us financially, and to convey the impression among our friends that we should be unable to sustain the WEEKLY; but the results of the investigation, coupled with the readiness with which we furnished the required bail, \$5,000 each, exasperated them to a degree that scarcely knew bounds, and in their rage at this, augmented as it was by the appearance of our issue of January 25, and its immense sale in the streets of the city, by newsboys (a thing unknown of any other weekly paper)—they had all three of us arrested a second time upon the criminal charge of libel. This arrest was managed to occur late in the afternoon, so that there should be no judge upon the bench to accept bail, for the express purpose of giving them the satisfaction of knowing they had at last got us locked in the Tombs—which they had long been earnestly endeavoring to effect.

The District Attorney was appealed to in behalf especially of Mrs. W., who, being affected by heart disease, feared that the shock of being locked in a narrow stone cell in the Tombs might cause her to die suddenly of that disease. But he said that was none of his business. So to the Tombs we went, and passed a sleepless night; but, thanks to some kind protecting power, we were insensible to the horror of the surroundings.

The following day we obtained bail in the sum of \$1,000 each and \$2,000 for Colonel Blood; but, in the process, while meeting with as much general courtesy as we could expect, we encountered a person in some authority in the Dis-

trict Attorney's office, called Allen, who vented his bitterness by saying if he had been judge he would have committed us without bail. We coolly replied it was fortunate for him that he was not in position to thus disgrace the bench and the administration of justice—just as though any servant of the people has any right to discriminate for or against any person who comes within range of his executive duty.

But we have survived these arrests and imprisonments and still live to flaunt the WEEKLY and to defy our persecutors. And to-day we are a hundred-fold stronger, both in friends and means, than we were the 2d of November, when the war upon us first began. If our enemies like the results we hope they will continue. We can assure them that we are not dissatisfied with them.

But we have no idea that they will learn wisdom by experience, since we expect, and are prepared, for another arrest to take place at any favorable opportunity—late in the afternoon. Our readers must not be shocked, therefore, if they hear that we are again in the Tombs or in Ludlow. But we ask them to remember that it is their support alone that we now want to insure the regular issue of the WEEKLY, whether in jail or out, since we are now prepared for any and all emergencies.

#### PERSONAL.

In pouring over the masses of letters which are now brought by every mail, and which come up from great, generous, sympathetic souls all over the country, welling with love and enthusiastic approval for the earnest though humble effort being made, as we think, for the welfare of the great human family, I cannot keep back a feeling of sadness that creeps into my heart, because I feel all the sentiment expressed is not justly due to myself. I look up from the reading of them and see the large, blue, sorrowful eyes of her, who has so faithfully stood by my side during these three eventful years, yielding up all the younger years of her otherwise joyous life in devotion to the great cause to which we are both consecrated; and am sad that she, equally with me, is not enshrined in the freedom-loving hearts of the country. I know it has been mine to take the more prominent and forward positions that have brought me more specially to public notice, but when I think how much she has been to me, I know I could not have accomplished even the little that I have, had it not been for her precious assistance, for her unwavering support, for her indomitable courage, for her unyielding perseverance and for her boundless love for her sex, which commands every energy of her soul, causes her to sacrifice every comfort of life, to which others of her sex, almost exclusively, aspire, and which bids her do the "will of the spirit," no matter how flattering the opposite attraction may be. Younger than I am by a number of years, having less acquaintance with the sorrows and hardships of life, she has been the rounds of arrests and imprisonments with me, without a blanch upon her cheek or a tear-drop in her eye, and always defiant and self-sustained.

In the indignation that the persecutions which have their foundation in ignorance, bigotry and sectarian intolerance have aroused in our behalf; in the gratitude that is felt because there are souls which dare to defy them, and for all human kind, fight the battle of freedom; in the tender affection that comes in the hearts of the few from observing a self-sacrificing devotion to a cause which, apparently, brings nothing but contumely and public disgrace, this gentle, guileless spirit should stand pre-eminent, as more worthy than any other, because of its measureless preparatory experience.

My friends, I would not have you withdraw one iota of your love from me; but in enjoying it neither would I detract a single heart-throb from its rightful allegiance to her, who more than I, deserves it—from my darling, loving, noble-hearted sister Tennie, who, if I should be called upon to lay down my life, which I carry with the grasp of but a brittle thread, would take up the additional burden, and with it struggle on.

After calling this attention to my sister, I ought not to close without referring to another, without whom we had both of us fainted by the way-side—one who, content to accept the unappreciation of ignorance and self-assumption on the part of the great repressive public, has even been satisfied to toil on, unknown to honor and fame even in our own sphere, and often bearing the obloquy of events with a patience and spirit, more of another, than of this world. Years ago he said to me, as I wondered at his dislike of society: "Learn it as I have learned it, and you will wonder, not that I cannot endure it, but that I do not utterly loath it. There is no honesty in it, it is all a seeming, a mere external show, that some day will burst and fall in ruin; then, there will be work to do, and shall be there; but until then permit me to contemplate, rather than insist that I mingle with it." More firmly than any other person whom I have ever met is this soul established upon the eternal principle of life. All his actions are governed by this rule: Is this in and of itself right and just, and if it be, let it be done, and the results will take care of thousands. More foully bespoken, perhaps, than almost any other person so little deserving it, he never avenges a wrong, but says I cannot afford to interfere with the divine compensation of immutable law that renders to all things simple justice. When I say, that for three years, with no other aid than that rendered by him, we have conducted this movement up to its present position, some idea can be formed of the services he has performed.

But I am incompetent—words can never express what I would say either of my sister or of him whom I am honored in calling husband (though neither of us ever use the word in its legal sense) in explanation of what they have been to me. Ours is a trinity that is indeed a necessity to the work in which we are engaged, to which we are all equally devoted; and when those who look upon it sometimes wonder at its magnitude they should not forget that "we three are one" in spirit and purpose, and that in being this, lies all the strength we have.

VICTORIA C. WOODHULL.

#### OUR ANONYMOUS CORRESPONDENTS.

A day or two since, we inadvertently and abstractedly turned over the contents of a large drawer, having the capacity of a good-sized cart. Our attention was attracted from a conversation in which we were engaged, by some rather startling words that caught our eye. We say startling, and they were so, upon their face; but when we awoke to the realization that we were fumbling in the drawer into which we have cast unread all the labors of our anonymous correspondents for the last three months, the terror that might otherwise have remained with us, suddenly died out in our hearts, and we quietly replaced the letters and pondered over them.

And since we have introduced the subject to our readers, and perhaps excited their curiosity (for we have a very curious class of readers; that is, they are alive to know about this business), we may as well present some of the phases that we found in these letters, upon only a casual observation.

In the first place there are any number of letters from members of Plymouth Church, in which we are threatened by all manner of condign punishments if we do not desist from "taking the name of Mr. Beecher in vain." They also inform us that the agent of the Young Men's Christian Association has become the especial favorite of the clergymen of "these two cities," and that a purse of \$500 has already been made up for him, as a token of their appreciation of his services as the repressor of the obscenity and obnoxious (we wonder if it be not really in their own hearts, more the latter than the former) WOODHULL & CLAPLIN'S WEEKLY. This, we are also informed, will be supplemented by another and a larger evidence of continued appreciation on if he succeed in "shutting your mouths." Again, they tell us that if something do not rid the city of our presence, that there is a body of persons formed for the express purpose of accomplishing our destruction—hinting at even the taking of life. "A quarter of a million dollars are pledged to their service," and if this be not enough, as much more is ready to be devoted to the same "divine purpose."

Turning to the other side of the prosecution, we find equally as terrible fates in store for us. They are prepared, (so also is the other side, which we did not mention above,) to buy judges, juries, prosecuting attorneys, and whomsoever else it may be necessary to buy to secure our conviction. So confident are they that we shall be sent to Sing-Sing, or some other "place deserved," that they consider us as already convicted. Indeed they inform us that we were as good as convicted before we were first arrested.

It will be remembered that during the examination of Colonel Blood upon the charge of libel, Mr. Challis said he would spend a hundred thousand dollars to secure our conviction. It will also be remembered that a person high in Plymouth Church was reported by the *Tribune* to have said, "I will run them to the ground if it takes every hour of my life and every dollar of my fortune." Now it is legitimate to inquire, upon whom do these people expect to use their money if it be not upon judges, juries, or prosecuting attorneys? We merely call attention to these facts to show that there may be a reality behind their anonymous letters, which does not usually attach this class of things.

But we beg leave to inform the writers of them, through the WEEKLY, since that is the only way we have of reaching them that we are not in the least intimidated. Whoever is so rascally and so cowardly as to retreat to that method of procedure, is not to be feared by us. We are not of those who reject the adage that "truth is mighty and will prevail." But we believe in it and live by it, and in so doing we pass this heap of trash to which we have referred and leave it to be examined more carefully by others who have more time and taste for the job, than we have at present.

#### BEECHER, TILTON, BOWEN.

Our article in the last issue, under the same caption as this, caused a great deal of inquiry as to what could have been the contents of the letter, upon the possession of which a commission, composed of prominent members of Plymouth Church and Mr. Beecher's personal friends, sat. We expected, from information received from Mr. Tilton, that he would, before this, have told the story of that letter, which we assure our readers is a fearfully interesting one. We still hope Mr. Tilton will do so, since we know he can relate it with circumstances and details, and add illustrations which no one besides himself has at command. It has, however, been suggested by the knowing ones, that there are offers of a return to, and a life editorship in, the *Independent*; or, in lieu of this, the Brooklyn *Union*, complete, with types, machinery and all, to secure silence about the letter and its involvements. But the interested should know that, like the other story, it has been told too often, and to too many dif-



ferent individuals, to make the silence of one person, though he be a principal, efficacious.

For our part we do not think that Mr. Tilton can be purchased, and we shall not credit these rumors, unless they receive the confirmation that compels credence. In the meantime we wait.

[Written for Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly.]

#### AN APPEAL FOR THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS.

BY JOHN WILLIAM DAY.

"Here shall the Press the people's rights maintain,  
Unawed by influence and unbribed by gain!  
Here Patriot Truth her holy precepts draw,  
Pledged to the *Higher*—the *Eternal Law*."

Oh ye who trust in earthly law,  
Or gleaming bayonets in the fight,  
Know ye the deeper powers that draw  
Each nation on through slumb'rous night?  
First from its nucleus, pale and dim,  
The tribal star ascendant rolls,  
Outburning toward creation's rim,  
The cynosure of pulsing souls.

But wrong and ill like fire-mists play  
Around its zenith's glorious height;  
It stoops, o'er-mastered in Time's fray  
If swerves its path to folly light:  
If Power and Luxury and Crime,  
With ribald jest and mocking scorn,  
Drag down to vaults of centuried slime  
The lowly *Truth* in manger born!

Shall this our glorious nation set  
Where darkling Chaos heaves his wave?  
Shall Wrong, in her entangling net,  
The freeman's soaring mind enslave?  
Shall Freedom doff her cap of snow  
To own the Sinai Thunderer's sway?  
Shall Justice quail to whisp'rings low?  
And all the pampered few obey?

Come! speed Loch Katrine's fiery sign  
Columbia's hills and plains along,  
Till Northern oak and Western pine  
Shall trembling swell the slogan song!  
Up! Though no trumpet's blast arise—  
Though silent sleeps the rattling drum,  
Clothed in another specious guise  
Th' oppressor's close-ranked helots come!

Rise for *FREE SPEECH*! The hour is past  
When Logic's hairs may safe be rent;  
Discussion's right is downward cast  
Along the social firmament.  
Let Sin the charmed shibboleth speak  
Of titled arrogance and pride,  
And meek (?) Religion turns to seek  
Its voice from Reason's holier side!

Rise for *FREE PRESS*! Shall power outrank  
The honest thought that printed flies?  
Shall legal form and gold-piled bank  
Be found for aye the shield of lies?  
Let loose the printer's ink hand—  
The cloud whence swift-winged lightnings leap—  
No power of ill can light withstand,  
No falsehood bide its cleaving sweep.

Oh, brothers of the Press and Pen,  
The cause is yours as well as theirs  
Who braved embattled Error's den,  
And quailed not 'neath their weight of cares!  
*Not to applaud the views they hold*  
We bid ye face the Ol'garch's frown;  
Cleave for yourselves this serpent's fold,  
Slow strangling Freedom's old renown!

Ye rich, who trust in arms of law  
And bayonets in the coming fight,  
Know ye a suffering people draw  
Dark lessons from their blinded night?  
Hold! ere ye call their Sampson-arm  
Phyllis's Dagon sports to crown,  
Lest, stung to rage, they burst your charm,  
And hurl your domes in vengeance down!

Boston, Mass., January, 1873.

\* In allusion to the movement of the Protestant fathers, looking toward the marriage of Church and State by the formal introduction of Jehovah into the United States Constitution. The two estates—political and theological—are of different species; and the union of their representatives could be productive of nothing but monstrous births, worthless in themselves, but whose throes of parturition would shake from its foundation the fabric of our free Government.

+ Whatever may be the general opinion concerning the views enunciated by Mrs. Woodhull, it must be apparent to the journalists of the United States, that the establishment of a precedent which allows the suppression of any newspaper for the advantage of any church dogma, political party, social idol, or individual man or woman, is a danger which threatens all alike. The spirit which would fetter the press to the limits of the Old World system, is abroad in the land. It will not make its appearance in overt acts, but in the slow corruption of public sentiment on the subject, till it will be safe to enter into open proscription. The time to check the movement by a proper rebuke is now!

From Maine to California we believe the New order of Protestant Jesuits, called the Y. M. C. A., is dubbed with the well-merited title of the American Inquisition. Desiring to keep on the windy side of the law, we do not mean by this to assert that its leaders are like those of the Spanish institution of the same character. We should no more think of comparing Comstock, alias Beardsley, alias ———, with Torquemada, than of contrasting a living skunk with a dead lion.

"FREE LOVE."—This book was written to demonstrate the non-exclusive nature of conjugal love. It is admitted to be the deepest and strongest work on the radical side ever issued from the American press. Right or wrong, this subject is now destined to be discussed on all sides. The book, just mailed (postpaid) for 70 cents, in paper, and \$1 in cloth. Address Austin Kent, Stockholm, St. Lawrence county, N. Y. Write your address full and plain.

#### A FREE PRESS.

#### WOMAN'S REBELLION.

No BALLOT, No ALLEGIANCE.

BY A GAYLORD SPALDING.

Thomas Jefferson, the distinguished patriot, father of our primitive Democracy, advocated a free press as the chief corner-stone of our Government, for the defense and protection of our national and personal liberties. We have a proud army and navy and arsenals and forts, with soldiers and generals. But the press, unabridged and unshackled, is superior to them all.

Truth saves men; it is all potent; and the press is its organ. Can it be that the WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY is the only free paper on the American continent? I hope there are a few others; but the WEEKLY is surely the bravest of them all. It is like a thunderbolt from the clouds. It is stunning—overwhelming—irresistible. A free paper is a greater power and blessing to the country than its Presidents, Congresses or courts. Sooner let all these be suppressed than trammel the press.

Freedom of speech and press is with us a constitutional guarantee. But it is a dead letter. Nine-tenths of our editors are craven and servile partisans, knowing not the meaning of freedom. To their minds it is but an explosion of gunpowder; and they keep the people as stupid as themselves.

As free air is to physical life and health, so is free mind and speech to mental and moral development and perfection. There can never be too much freedom; but the mischief comes from cowardly and tyrannical attempts to regulate, restrain and silence the convictions and impulses of the human soul. That is the ugly feature of the press which demoralizes society and the world.

It is a fearful task to attempt to unmask the rottenness and corruption of Church and State, seated on a throne of wealth and popularity. There will be found a den of scorpions and hissing serpents, surrounded by a thick wall of Holy Bibles. There are in our very midst plenty of Wilkes Booths, prepared for awful deeds of desperation. May good angels guard the noble soul who would heroically and righteously expose sin in high places.

The name of Henry Ward Beecher is everywhere a household word. It is public property. The press has made it great and famous. But terrible charges now stand against his high reputation, sustained by credible testimony. What is to clear him but the same press which has so long been his grand bulwark? If not guilty, his friends can easily and readily make it plain to the public. But persistent silence is the hempen rope with which he will hang himself. May he live long and prove himself the manliest of men.

"Truth crushed to earth will rise again."

How? By suppressing free speech and print! Oh, the shades of Franklin and Hancock! Have we become a nation like France, with her cruel espionage and censorship! Shame on the wealth, dignity and pride of the rotten Denmark of New York. Shame on the bigots, hypocrites and narrow-minded magnates of the "Hub" and the mighty Commonwealth of Massachusetts. They disgrace themselves and belie all their pretensions to liberality and gallantry, while they call down upon their own heads a retribution of double damnation.

This instance of wicked persecution of two intensely devoted and faithful women is but a part of the grand programme for woman's emancipation. It will speed the glorious culmination. The words of Victoria Woodhull ring like bugle notes on the still air, and bring a responsive echo from all true and honest hearts. Their very bravery thrills the soul with the sublimest inspiration. Some editors, more rough than courteous, call her a "vile woman;" but the epithet applies with about the same justice as that other pretty word, "obscene." The common people, however, have a different estimation strongly in her favor.

That class of Spiritualists, claiming to be more orthodox, perhaps, decline joining hands of sympathy to ruffle the turbid waters of practical reform agitation. They seem to have a pride of their own, and prefer to "wait for the wagon." But what will the women gain in the end by refusing to co-operate? This is no time for prejudice, jealousy, or personal precedence or preference. It is a common cause. The woman question has become somewhat an earnest one on the public mind, and further parleying or dallying cannot wisely be tolerated. Congresses and legislatures have failed. Our high court of appeal must then be the people themselves, and our staff of accomplishment the printing press, free as the mountain winds.

I am impressed that the crisis demands a woman's rebellion, and that the present is the auspicious moment for its inauguration. Can such a movement be bloodless and effectual? The track of history has been stained with human gore in every effort at any radical social amelioration. But the heart recoils at the very thought of a sanguinary process. The negro was forced to wade the deep red sea to freedom and the ballot-box. But it is hoped that woman may wield harmless weapons only; that her conflict will be a moral one, and her victory a moral triumph. No blood but that of martyrdom, whose record will be one of honor to the persons caused to suffer.

Woman's rebellion must consist in assuming a position of heroic self-assertion. Let doubt and timidity no longer be indulged. Brave souls stand at the front, and all along the line; and those in the ranks have been sufficiently trained and schooled not to be now in a spirit of hesitancy in regard to the claims of woman—that she may demand recognition as an equal child of humanity.

What claim has man upon woman that he should immolate her on the altar of his baseness and passion? What does woman owe to him that she should willingly and forever submit to these things? Is she not sister, mother, wife? Bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. And does he not abuse himself by abusing her? Obligations exist only where rights are conceded and benefits are conferred. Government can rightfully control such only as consent to and have partnership in it. Consent of the governed is the basis. Woman, therefore, owes no allegiance. She is an outcast, unprotected and unprovided. By the law of Heaven she has a right to take what she needs and what she can get. There is no crime in whatever she may do, and no punishment can be deserved or justly inflicted, for she is amenable to no mere masculine law. It is sheer assumption.

Those women who smuggle goods from Canada are fully justifiable. All women may engage in the smuggling business with perfect impunity. No human law can arrest or judge them. Under the circumstances theft becomes a virtue, and any act is holy. Laura D. Fair could not be hanged for murder, because in her it was not murder. Such an execution would be a greater outrage than a hundred common murders. A bolt from the clouds should strike dead any man who should attempt it. Here, then, is the stand for every woman. No ballot, no allegiance. Let the voice be raised from Maine to California—No Allegiance! It is a divine and holy rebellion. Come, sisters, now is your time to stand up.

The ballot is the mighty leveler and the grand elevator. It will command potatoes and bread and fire for the shivering poor when mercury is forty degrees below zero. To every woman it will be a crown of queenship; a signet of personal independence and honor; an open sesame to the world's great treasure-house, and a passport of strength and advantage. To deny her that right is oppression and robbery most cruel, which reduces her to the scavenger and harlot's chance.

There is a divinity that shapes our ends. Great events of a nation or the world affect the destiny and result of things more than any single voice or pen, because they are the combined voice of Humanity, of God and of Nature. The result of the Presidential campaign just closed is one of sublime significance, not only to the contesting political parties, but to woman; and she may now breathe freer and indulge a livelier hope. It was a moral earthquake which agitated the poisoned atmosphere, irrecoverably scattering the element of old fog conservatism, of negrophobia and womanphobia. The more intelligent and progressive class are consequently left masters of the field, from whom woman may reasonably expect better treatment. Herself ever true and loyal to her country, let the country now be loyal and just to her. She may now march straight along with merry and vigorous step, boldly holding high the banner—No BALLOT, No ALLEGIANCE!

#### WHO SHALL JUDGE?

Near the end of the war, Mr. Secretary Harlan, of the Department of the Interior at Washington, moved by spasm of piety, removed the distinguished poet and philanthropist, Walt Whitman, for an office which he held in his department, on the ground of the obscenity of some of his poems. Having no appreciation of the legitimate license of genius to deal with the most delicate subjects, and, reading the sublimest passages of inspiration with the bleared ignorance of uncultivated stupidity, he thought it belonged to him, as the Young Men's Christian Association, through its pious agent, think it belongs to them to oversee the morals of the community, and he removed Whitman from office. Unaware of the fact that Rabelais, Montaigne, Hudibras, Sterne, Burns, Byron and Shakespeare himself, and fully a thousand other great poets and philosophers fill the libraries of the most refined people in all countries, and that their works abound in pictures and allusions which, in the mouths of vulgar people, would be vulgar and obscene, the pious Secretary made his ridiculous raid upon the most representative and characteristic of American poets.

Immediately, however, a storm of indignation arose. The Secretary of another department conferred on Whitman a higher office, and Whitman's literary friend, William O'Connor, wrote in defense a pamphlet called "The Good Gray Poet," which is the most exhaustive display of the freedom which has been accorded to genius in this direction to be found anywhere in literature. The work itself is a credit to the literary craft. We quote as follows:

If rising to the utmost cruelty of conception, I can dare add the calamities of genius a misery so degrading and extreme as to imagine the great authors of the world condemned to clerkships under Mr. Harlan, I can at least mitigate that dream of wretchedness and insult by adding the fancy of their fate under the action of his principles. Let me suppose them there, and he still magnifying the calling of the Secretary into that of the literary headman. He opens the great book of Genesis. Everywhere "indecent passages." The mother hushes the child, and bids him skip as he reads



aloud that first great history. It cannot be read in "drawing-rooms" by "gentlemen" and "ladies." The freest use of language, the plainest terms, frank mention of forbidden subjects; the story of Onan; of Hagar and Sarai; of Lot and his daughters; of Isaac, Rebekah and Abimelech; of Jacob and Leah; of Reuben and Bilhah; of Potiphar's wife and Joseph; tabooed allusion and statement everywhere; no veils, no euphemism, no delicacy, no meal in the mouth anywhere. Out with Moses! The cloven splendor on that awful brow shall not save him. Mr. Harlan takes up the Iliad and the Odyssey. The loves of Jupiter and Juno; the dalliance of Achilles and Patroclus with their women; the perfectly frank, undraped reality of Greek life and manners naively shown without regard to the feelings of Christian civilizes—horrible! Out with Homer! Here is Lucretius: Mr. Harlan opens the *De Rerum Natura*, and reads the vast, benign, majestic lines, sad with the shadow of the unintelligible universe upon them; sublime with the tragic problems of the Infinite; august with their noble love and compassion for mankind. Enough. Fine language, fine illustrations, fine precepts, pretty decency! Out with Lucretius? Out with the chief poet of the Tiber side! Here is Æschylus: a dark magnificence of cloud, all rough with burning gold, which thunders and drips blood! The Greek Shakespeare. The gorgeous and terrible Æschylus! What is this in the Prometheus about Jove and Io? What sort of detail is that which, at the distance of ten years, I remember amazed Mr. Buckley as he translated the Agamemnon? What kind of talk is this in the Chæphori, in The Suppliants, and in the fragments of the comic drama of The Argians? Out with Æschylus! Here is the sublime book of Ezekiel. All the Hebrew grandeur at its fullest is there. But look at this blurt of coarse words, hurled direct as the prophet-mouth can hurl them—this familiar reference to functions and organs voted out of language—this bread for human lips baked with ordure—these details of the scortatory loves of Aholah and Aholibamah. Enough. Dismiss this dreadful majesty of Hebrew poetry. He has no "taste." He is "indecent." Out with Ezekiel! Here is Dante. Open the tremendous pages of the Inferno. What is this about the she-wolf Can Grande will kill? What picture is that of Thais? Dante, too, has "indecent passages." Out with Dante! Here is the book of Job: the vast Arabian landscape, the picturesque pastoral details of Arabian life, the last tragic immensity of Oriental sorrow, the whole overarching sky of Oriental piety, are here. But here also the inevitable "indecent." Instead of the virtuous fiction of the tansy-bed, Job actually has the indecency to state how man is born—even mentions the belly; talks about the gendering of bulls and the miscarriage of cows; uses rank idioms; and in the thirty-first chapter especially, indulges in a strain of thought and expression which it is amazing does not bring down upon him, even at this late date, the avalanches of our lofty and pure Reviews. Here is certainly an "immoral poet." Out with Job! Here is Plutarch, prince of biographers, and Herodotus, flower of historians. What have we now? Traits of character not to be mentioned, incidents of conduct, accounts of manners, minute details of customs, which our modern historical dandies would never venture upon recording. Out with Plutarch and Herodotus. Here is Tacitus. What statement of crimes that ought not to be hinted! Does the man gloat over such things? What dreadful kisses are those of Agrippina to Nero—the mother to the son! Out with Tacitus! and since there are books that ought to be publicly burned, by all means let the stern grandeur of that rhetoric be lost in flame. Here is Shakespeare: "indecent passages" everywhere—every drama, every poem thickly inlaid with them; all that men do displayed; sexual acts treated lightly, jested about, mentioned obscenely; the language never bolted; slang, gross puns, lewd words, in profusion. Out with Shakespeare! Here is the Canticle of Canticles: beautiful, voluptuous poem of love literally, whatever be its mystic significance; glowing with the color, odoriferous with the spices, melodious with the voices of the East; sacred and exquisite and pure with the burning chastity of passion which completes and exceeds the snowy chastity of virgins. This to me, but what to the Secretary? Can he endure that the female form should stand thus in a poem, disrobed, unveiled, bathed in exotic splendor? Look at these voluptuous details, this expression of desire, this amorous tone and glow, this consecration and perfume lavished upon the sensual. No! Out with Solomon! Here is Isaiah. The grand thunder-roll of that righteousness, like the eternal roar of God above the guilty world, utters coarse words. Amidst the bolted lightnings of that sublime denunciation, coarse thoughts, indelicate figures, indecent allusion, flash upon the sight, like gross imagery in a midnight landscape. Out with Isaiah! Here is Montaigne. Open those great, those virtuous pages of the unflinching reporter of Man; the soul all truth and daylight, all candor, probity, sincerity, reality, eyesight. A few glances will suffice. Cant and vice and snuffle have groined over these pages before. Out with Montaigne! Here is Hafiz, the Anacreon of Persia, but more: a banquet of wine in a garden of roses, the nightingales singing, the laughing revellers high with festal joy; but a heavenly flame burns on every brow; a tone not of this sphere is in all the music, all the laughter, all the songs; a light of the Infinite trembles over every chalice and rests on every flower; and all the garden is divine. Still, when Hafiz cries out, "Bring me wine, and bring the famed veiled beauty, the Princess of the brothel," etc., or issues similar orders, Mr. Harlan, whose virtue does not understand or endure such metaphors, must deal sternly with this kosmic man of Persia. Out with Hafiz!—Here is Virgil, ornate and splendid poet of old Rome; a master with a greater pupil, Alighieri! a bard above whose ashes Boccaccio kneels a trader, and arises a soldier of mankind; but he must lose those fadeless chaplets, the undying green of a noble fame. Out with Virgil! Here is Swedenborg. Open this poem in prose, the Conjugal Love—to me, a temple, though in ruins; the sacred fane, clothed in mist, filled with moonlight, of a great though broken mind. What spittle of critic epithets stains all here? "Lewd," "sensual," "lecherous," "coarse," "licentious," &c. Of course these judgments are

final. There is no appeal from the tobacco-juice of an expectorating and disdainful virtue. Out with Swedenborg! Here is Goethe; the horrified squealing of prudes is not yet silent over pages of Wilhelm Meister; that high and chaste book, the Elective Affinities, still pumps up oaths from clergymen; Walpurgis has hardly ceased its uproar over Faust. Out with Goethe! Here is Byron: grand, dark poet; a great spirit—a soul like the ocean; generous lover of America; fiery trumpet of liberty; a sword for the human cause in Greece; a torch for the human mind in Cain; a life that redeemed its every fault by taking a side, which was the human side; tempest of scorn in his first poem, tempest of scorn and laughter in his last poem, only against the things that wrong man; vast bud of the infinite that death alone prevented from its vaster flower; immense, seminal, electrical, dazzling Byron.—But Beppo—O! But Don Juan—O fie! Not to mention the Countess Guiccioli—ah, me! Prepare quickly the yellow envelope, and out with Byron! Here is Cervantes: open Don Quixote, paragon of romances, highest result of Spain, best and sufficient reason for her life among the nations, a laughing novel which is a weeping poem. But talk such as this of Sancho Panza and Tummás Cecial under the cork-trees, and these coarse stories and bawdy words and this free and gross comedy—is it to be indured? Out with Cervantes! Here is another, a sun of literature, moving in a vast orbit with dazzling plenitudes of power and beauty; the one only modern European poet and novelist worthy to rank with the first; permanent among the fleeting; a demigod of letters among the pigmies; a soul of antique strength and sadness, worthy to stand as the representative of the high thought and hopes of the nineteenth century—Victor Hugo! Now open Les Misérables. See the great passages which the American translator tears away. Open this other book of his, William Shakespeare, a book with only one grave fault, the omission of the word "A Poem," from the title-page; a book which is the courageous arch, the comprehending sky of criticism, but which no American publisher will dare to issue, or, if he does, will expurgate. Out with Hugo, of course! Here is Juvenal, terrible and splendid fountain of all satire; inspiration of all just censure; exemplar of all noble rage at baseness; satirist and moralist sublimed into the poet; the scowl of the unclouded noon above the low streets of folly and of sin. But what he withers, he also shows. The sun-stroke of his poetry reveals what it kills. Juvenal tells all. His fidelity of exposure is frightful. Mr. Harlan would make short work of him. Out with Juvenal! Open the divine Apocalypse. What words are these among the thunderings and lightnings and voices! It is a poem to be read aloud in parlors for such appears to be the test of propriety and purity? At least, John might have been a little more choice in language. Some of these texts are "indecent." Yes indeed! John must go. Here is Spencer. Encyclopædis poet of the visioned chivalry. It is all there. Amandis, Esplandia, Tirante the White, Palmerin of England, all those Paladin romances were but the leaves: this is the flower. A lost dream of valor, chivalry, courtesy, glory—a dream that marks an age of human history—glimmers here, far in these depths, and makes this unexplored obscurity divine. But is the Faery Queen such a book as you would wish to put into the hands of a lady? What a question! Has it not been expurgated? Out with Spenser! Here is another, a true soldier of the human emancipation; one who smites amid uproars of laughter; the master of Titanic farce; a whirlwind and earthquake of derision—Rabelais. A nice one for Mr. Harlan! One glimpse at the chapter which explains why the miles lengthen as you leave Paris, or at the details of the birth and nurture of Gargantua, will suffice. Out with Rabelais—out with the great jester of France, as Lord Bacon calls him! And here is Lord Bacon himself, in one of those pages you may read, done from the Latin by Spedding into a magnificent golden thunder of English, the absolute defense of the free spirit of the great authors, coupled with stern rebuke to the spirit that would pick and choose, as dastard and effeminate. Out with Lord Bacon! Not him only, not these only, not only the writers: are under the ban. Here is Phidias, gorgeous sculptor in gold and ivory, giant dreamer of the Infinite in marble; but he will not use the fig-leaf. Here is Rembrandt, who paints the Holland landscape, the Jew, the beggar, the burgher, in lights and glooms of Eternity; and his pictures have been called "indecent." Here is Mozart, his music rich with the sumptuous color of all sunsets; and it has been called "sensual." Here is Michael Angelo, who makes art tremble with a new and strange afflatus, and gives Europe novel and sublime forms that tower above the centuries, and accost the Greek; and his works have been called "bestial." Out with them all! Now, except Virgil for vassalage to literary models, and for grave and sad falsehood to liberty, except Goethe for his lack of the final ecstasy of self-surrender which completes a poet, and for coldness to the great mother—one's country; except Spenser for his remoteness, and Byron for his immaturity, and there is not one of those I have named that does not belong to the first order of human intellect. But no need to make discriminations here; they are all great; they have striven. Moses, Homer, Lucertius, Æschylus, Ezekiel, Dante, Job, Plutarch, Herodotus, Tacitus, Shakespeare, Solomon, Isaiah, Montaigne, Hafiz, Virgil, Swedenborg, Goethe, Byron, Cervantes, Hugo, Juvenal, John, Spenser, Rabelais, Bacon, Phidias, Rembrandt, Mozart, Angelo—these are among the demi-gods of human thought; the souls that have loved and suffered for the race; the light-bringers, the teachers, the lawgivers, the consolers, the liberators, the inspired inspirers of mankind; the noble and gracious beings who, in the service of humanity, have borne every cross and earned every crown. There is not one of them that is not sacred in the eyes of thoughtful men. But not one of them does the rotten taste and morals of the nineteenth century spare. Not one of them is qualified to render work for bread under this Secretary! Do I err? Do I exaggerate, I write without access to the books I mention—(it is fitting that this piece of insolent barbarism should have been committed in almost the only important American city which is without a public library!)—with the exception of three or four volumes which I happen to have by me, I am

obliged to rely for my statements on the memory of youth-readings, eight or ten years ago; but name me one book of the first order in which such passages as I refer to do not occur? Tell me who can—what poet of the first grade escapes this brand, "immortal," or this spittle, "indecent"? If the great books are not, in the point under consideration in the same moral category as Leaves of Grass, then why, either in translation or in the originals, either by a bold softening which dissolves the authors meaning, or by absolute excision, are they nearly all expurgated? Answer me that.

By one process or the other, Brizeux, Cary, Wright, Cayley, Carlyle, everybody, expurgates Dante; Langhorne and others expurgate Plutarch; Potter and others expurgate Æschylus; Gifford, Anthon, and others expurgate Juvenal; Creech, Watson, and others expurgate Lucretius; Bowdler and others expurgate Shakespeare; Nott (I believe it is) expurgates Hafiz; Wraxall and Wilbour expurgate Hugo; Kirkland, Hart and others expurgate Spenser; somebody expurgates Virgil; somebody expurgates Byron; the Oxford scholars dilute Tacitus; Lord Derby expurgates Homer, besides making him as ridiculous as the plucked cock of Diogenes in translation; several hands expurgate Goethe; and Archbishop Tillotson in design expurgates Moses, Ezekiel, Solomon, Isaiah, St. John, and all the others—a job which Dr. Noah Webster executes, but, thank God, cannot popularize.

What book is spared? Nothing but a chain of circumstance, which seems divinely ordained, saves us the un mutilated Bible. Nearly every other great book bleeds. When one is not expurgated, the balance is restored by its being cordially abused. Thanks to the splendid conscience and courage of Mr. Wight, we can read Montaigne in English, without the omission of a single word! Thanks, also, to Motteux and others, Cervantes has gone untouched, and we have not, as yet, a family Rabelais. Neither have we, as yet, a family Mankind nor a family Universe; but this is an oversight which will, doubtless, be repaired in time. God will also, doubtless, be expurgated whenever it is possible. Why not? One step to this end is taken in the expurgation of genius, which is His second manifestation, as Nature is His first! Go on, gentlemen! You will yet have things as "moral" as you desire!

I am aware that so far as his opinion, not his act, is concerned, Mr. Harlan, however unintelligently, represents to some extent the shallow conclusions of his age; and I know it will be said, that if the great books contain these passages, they ought to be expurgated. It is not my design to endeavor to put a quart into people who only hold a gill, nor would I waste time in endeavoring to convert a large class of persons whom I once heard Walt Whitman describe, with his usual Titanic richness and strength of phrase, as "the immutable granitic pudding-heads of the world." But there is a better class than these; and I am filled with measureless amazement, that persons of high intelligence, living to the age of maturity, do not perceive, at least, the immense and priceless scientific and human uses of such passages, and the consequent necessity, transcending and quashing all minor considerations, of having them where they are. But look at these sad sentences—a complete and felicitous statement of the whole modern doctrine—in the pages of a man I love and revere: "The literature of three centuries ago is not decent to be read; we expurgate it. Within a hundred years, woman has become a reader, and for that reason, as much or more than anything else, literature has sprung to a higher level. No need now to expurgate all you read." He goes on to argue that literature in the next century will be richer than in the classic epochs, because woman will contribute to it as an author—her contribution, I infer, to be of the kind that will not need expurgating. These, I repeat, are sad sentences. If they are true, Bowdler is right to expurgate Shakespeare, and Noah Webster the Bible. But no, they are not true! I welcome woman into art; but when she comes there grandly, she will not come either as expurgator or creator of emasculate or partial forms. Woman, grand in art, is Rosa Bonheur, painting with fearless pencil the surly, sublime Jovian bull, equipped for masculine use; painting the powerful, ramping stallion in his amorous pride; not weakly or meanly flinching from the full celebration of what God has made. Woman, grand in art, will come creating in forms, however novel, the absolute, the permanent, the real, the evil and the good, as Æschylus, as Cervantes, as Shakespeare before her; with sex, with truth, with universality, without omissions or concealments. And woman, as the ideal reader of literature, is not the indelicate prude, flushing and squealing over some frank page; it is that high and beautiful soul, Marie de Gournay, devoutly absorbing the work of her master, Montaigne; finding it all great; greatly comprehending, greatly accepting it all; fronting its license and grossness without any of the livid shuddering of Puritans; and looking on the book in the same universal and kindly spirit as its author looked upon the world.

Woman reading otherwise than thus—shrinking from Apuleius, from Rabelais, from Aristophanes, from Shakespeare, from even Wycherly, or Petronius, or Aretin, or Shirley—is less than man, is not ideal, not strong, not nobly good, but petty, and effeminate and mean. And not for her, nor by her, nor by man, do I assent to the expurgation of the great books. Literature cannot spring to a higher level than theirs. Alas! it has sprung to a lower. The level of the great books is the Infinite, the Absolute. To contain all, by containing the premise, the truth, the idea and feeling of all; to tally the universe by profusion, variety, reality, mystery, inclosure, power, terror, beauty, service; to be great to the utmost conceivability of greatness—what higher level than this can literature spring to? Up, on the highest summit, stand such works, never to be surpassed, never to supplanted. Their indecency is not that of the vulgar; their vulgarity is not that of the low. Their evil, if it be evil, is not there for nothing—it serves; at the base of it is Love.

Every poet of the highest quality is, in the masterly coinage of the author of Leaves of Grass, a kosmos. His work, like himself, is a second world, full of contrarities, strangely harmonized, and moral indeed, but only as the world is



moral. Shakespeare is all good, Rabelais is all good, Montaigne is all good; not because all the thoughts, the words, the manifestations are so, but because at the core, and permeating all, is an ethic intention—a love which, through mysterious, indirect, subtle, seemingly absurd, often terrible and repulsive means, seeks to uplift and never to degrade. It is the spirit in which authorship is pursued, as Augustus, Schlegel has said, that makes it either an infamy or a virtue; and the spirit of the great authors, no matter what their letter, is one with that which pervades the creation. In mighty love, with implements of pain and pleasure, of good and evil, Nature develops man; genius also, in mighty love, with implements of pain and pleasure, of good and evil, develops man; no matter what the means, that is the end. Tell me not, then, of the indecent passages of the great poets! The world, which is the poem of God, is full of indecent passages! "Shall there be evil in a city and the Lord hath not done it?", shouts Amos. "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I, the Lord, do all these things," thunders Isaiah. "This," says Coleridge, "is the deep abyss of the mystery of God." Yes, and it is the profound of the mystery of genius also! Evil is part of the economy of God.

Gentle reviewers endeavor to find excuses for the freedoms of geniuses. "It is to prove that they were above conventionalities." "It is referable to the age." "The age permitted a degree of coarseness," etc. "Shakespeare's indecencies are the result of his age." O Ossa on Pelion, mount piled on mount, of error and folly! What has genius, spirit of the absolute and the eternal, to do with definitions of position, or conventionalities, or the age? Genius puts indecencies into its works, because Gods puts them into His world. Whatever the special reason in each case, this is the general reason in all cases. They are here, because they are there. That is the eternal why.

No; Alphonso of Castile thought, that if he had been consulted at the creation, he could have given a few hints to the Almighty. Not I. I play Alphonso neither to genius nor to God.

He then concludes as follows:

Instead of my comparatively cold and sober treatment, this transaction deserves rather the pitiless exposure and the measureless, stern anger, and red-hot steel scourge of Juvenal. But I leave untold its darkest details, and, waiving every other consideration, I rest solely and squarely on the general indignity and injury this action offers to individual liberty. I claim that to expel an author and subject him to public contumely, solely because he has published what no one can declare immoral without declaring all the grand books immoral, is to affix a penalty to thought, and to obstruct the freedom of letters. I declare this act the audacious captain of a series of acts and a style of opinions whose tendency and effect throughout Christendom is to dwarf and degrade literature, and to make great books impossible, except under pains of martyrdom. As such, I arraign it before every liberal and thoughtful mind. I denounce it as a sinister precedent; as a ban upon the free action of genius; as a logical insult to all commanding literature, and as in every way a most series and heinous wrong. Difference of opinion there may and must be upon the topics, but upon the act itself there can be none. As I drag them up here into the sight of the world, I call upon every scholar, every man of letters, every editor, every good fellow everywhere who wields the pen, to make common cause with me in rousing upon it the full tempest of reprobation it deserves. I remember Tennyson, a spirit of vengeance over the desecrated grave of Moore; I think of Scott rolling back the tide of obloquy from Byron; I see Addison gliding the blackening fame of Swift; I mark Southampton befriending Shakespeare; I recall Du Bellay enshrouding Rabelais; I behold Hutten fortressing Luther; here is Boccaccio lifting the darkness from Dante, and scattering flame on his foes in Florence; this is Bembo protecting Pomponatus; this is Grostete, enfolding Roger Bacon from the monkish fury; there, covered with light, is Aristophanes defending Æschylus; and if there lives aught of that old chivalry of letters, which in all ages has sprung to the succor and defense of genius, I summon it to act the part of honor and duty upon a wrong which, done to a single member of the great confraternity of literature, is done to all, and which flings insult and menace upon every immortal page that dares transcend the wicked heart or the constricted brain. I send this letter to Victor Hugo, for its passport through Europe; I send it to John Stuart Mill, to Newman, and Matthew Arnold, for England; I send it to Emerson and Wendell Phillips; to Charles Sumner; to every Senator and Representative in Congress; to all our journalists; to the whole American people; to every one who guards the freedom of letters and the liberty of thought throughout the civilized world. God grant that not in vain upon this outrage do I invoke the judgment of the mighty spirit of literature, and the fires of every honest heart!

WILLIAM DOUGLAS O'CONNOR,  
Of Massachusetts.

#### THE DRAMA AT COOPER INSTITUTE.

"The Naked Truth" is a strange title for a lecture. It is enough to shock the exquisite moral sensibilities of the fashionable Madame Mantalini's of society. Only think of it, the innovation of fact without fiction, God Almighty's truth without a fig leaf. To conceit myself to be what I am not, mortgaged on the brain, I might grow just a little hysterical and squeal out, good gracious! have hypocrisy, cant and moral cowardice been shorn of their kids, breaks and broadcloth. Spirit of Cotton Mather, has it come to this, that the political thimble-rigging and the nasal twanged Pecksniffism, with the sleek, sly, artful dodgery of social corruption must be exposed and our substratum civilization of fraud, credulity, ignorance and humbugery, unmantled and exhibited in all its nude deformity and ugliness by that little insignificant woman with the terribly significant soul in her face?

As a publican, having forgotten the meaning of republicanism, I appealed to the oracle of propriety, "should I go to the

lecture. To hear would be to blush for humanity; ah! "there's the rub." To know ourselves as we are is fearful to contemplate. The inconvenient removal of the subject matter from private action to public knowledge, is where the shoe pinches.

Truth, as a moral artist, astride the steed Pegasus, is obscene enough to alarm the Lord's anointed and summon us all, shepherds and sheep, to the rescue of Comstockology.

Fortunately I had forgotten my catechism; liberated reason overcame all religious scruples, and, with the energy of a man about to do a desperate act, I made a Toodle-like splurge at the buttons of my overcoat, slouched my Kossuth over eyes and ears, took my smelling-bottle along lest Mrs. Grundy might see me and I faint, and wended my way to social heresy and the Cooper Institute.

'Tis the 9th of January, 1873, and the posters on the dead walls of the city say Woodhull and the Naked Truth. Beecher and education are out to-night. From the palace and the prison they come to speak of God's knowledge and truth to man. The air is cold and biting; the chill of a Ludlow-street Jail shivers its way to the very marrow. Lies in overcoats and rubbers eagerly press up the Bowery; at the junction of Fourth avenue and the Bowery, creed and gain divide themselves. The sheep and goats pass on in opposite directions; some go to the preacher, some to the teacher. Ushers with bouquets, doubling and smiling, in wait for the preacher, ushers with locust clubs awaiting the teacher. Peter Cooper's monument is reached: humanity bless him. The Hall is lighted up and the doors wide open for Woodhull and Claflin and free speech. A weak old man, but brave, saves New York from everlasting infamy and disgrace. Boston, blush and repent, and tell them the next time that they lie who say that the rebels of '76 are the last tyrants of '73. That you do not read revolutions backward and claim that the inalienable rights of man mean the inalienable wrongs of woman.

An impatient and eager crowd of people surge up to the Institute door; some pass in, others turn back. I wonder at this retrograde move, and mentally exclaim, are the "lily-livered loons" afraid of a woman, or is there a moral earthquake at the threshold even of Naked Truth! No, the people are braver and truer than their leaders; 'tis not in fear they turn away. Some clerical jockey has put on the bridle and bit to make the "galled jade wince." The stratagem of religious persecution is at work; stalwart U. S. marshals guard the door; Uncle Sam is at the beck and bid of the insipid blonde with the flaxen hair; Comstock, whose holy zeal is stimulated by a more popular God than the Christian, Jehovah, has another arrest for Woodhull & Claflin; the seal of authority is on the writ. Now for the stripes and cross. The stars have fled the bunting of the nation, and sparkle on the breasts of a hundred policemen. Milk-faced Christian moral force exchanges the lion's skin for the fox's, and from the door-ways of the Institution grins out upon free conscience, free press and free speech, with an old-time feudal sacerdotal leer. The Golden Rule is a policeman's club to-night, and Yankee Jesuitism whispers with bated breath: the end justifies the means. Strange metamorphosis; forgiveness, as revenge, charity, as persecution; all the skim-milk of a Christian's love turned to the gall of a bigot's hate. Oh! weathercock of religion, how elastic and adaptable to thine own interests thou art, at the expense and happiness of confiding, trusting, simple minded men and women!

The marshals watch with lynx eyes for the coming of the woman of the hour. The sacreligious act of exposing the animus of Mrs. Woodhull's persecutors must not, shall not take place, and so the national police bids the people turn back. Saying, "Their will be no lecture to-night, Mrs. Woodhull is to be again arrested and flung into prison."

Hundreds turn away. Yet hundreds go in and, in a disappointed mood sit staring at the vacant platform, patiently watching for something, they know not what. Police to the right of them, police to the left of them. A fearful display of the dignity and strength of the Mosaic law. The ingenuous whisper, "What does it all mean; are they afraid of the people or afraid of the truth?" and we gaze around the hall scrutinizing the faces of the audience. Heretics and red-republicans in plenty, but all docile and peaceful. We see no danger of a riot, though they do look as if they were playing the devil at thinking. Christianity in complexity is present, more florid in countenance than usual. It is a blush of shame, very like. It needs very little skill in reading the human face divine to see that the audience are with and not against the lecturers, and that this display of the people's servants in uniform is ridiculously out of place, a blind to hide the real issue now pending before the people. The great want present is not the reading of the Riot Act or the suspension of the habeas corpus. No, nor the Young Men's Christian Association, nor Beecher, nor Tilton, nor "Uncle Samuel," with his eagle turned into a buzzard, nor the farce at Commissioner Davenport's, nor Ludlow-street Jail; but Woodhull! Woodhull! Woodhull! And the arched ceiling of the Cooper Institute rings with the significant command of three thousand voices in chorus; Victoria C. Woodhull and the "Naked Truth."

But to that great cry of want which goes up in noisy demonstration from the impatient citizens, no response comes back, and thoughtful men and women who read the bitter lessons of history aright, grow still more indignant at this puritanical abridgment of human rights, and muttered exclamations, such as Shame! Outrage! Persecution! Inquisition! go the rounds of the audience.

The animus of this cowardly persecution for the publishing of alleged obscene literature seemed to be thoroughly understood by all, and in the indignant phraseology of a level-headed workman in front, "It was too thin." According to the Comstockonian interpretation of obscenity, epithets repulsive to taste and refinement were flung at the heads of the shining lights of society. The admiration of revered citizens, and their unlawful protection from public exposure at the sacrifice of liberty, justice and truth, were on the ebb tide, and threatened to leave anti-revolution bigotry high and dry.

The impotent and lame excuse of public morals was played out, though Victoria was absent. Revolution had come, and it required all the manly efforts of the pious and severe-looking platoons in blue to keep within bounds the rapidly increasing indignation.

The clock fronting the now noisy throng shows past eight o'clock. Three thousand befooled citizens, the approved of and condemned of Paul, males and females, the enfranchised and disenfranchised, are madly calling and stamping for Mrs. Woodhull. A United States marshal guards each door ready to arrest her if she dare attempt the trial. No one, not even her most intimate friends know where she is. Christian young men, very young men, are masters of the situation. "I charge ye love one another." Comstock is chuchling at the ruse. 'Twas cunningly if not ably done. The paid informer, with all the United States at his back—lacking the people—kills two birds with one stone: shields Revered Quilp with the aegis of the law, and indirectly robs the truthful exposé of naughty clergymen of from five hundred to a thousand dollars.

O, artful dodger, to thus fall back on faith's old love and discipline the dangerous heretic with a prison and a crust.

Brave conspiracy hatched in a vestry room by the tools of a Yankee hierarchy, whose lives are not as spotless and virgin white as their lily-white neckties.

But see! Here comes war in the garb of peace. A queer-looking old lady, tottering with age, and dressed in Quaker gray and close-veiled, coal-scuttle bonnet of antique pattern, passes up the middle aisle to a front seat. The audience good-naturedly smile at this eccentric looking female Rip Van Winkle. A few fashionables laugh outright at the absurdity of dressing so far behind the age, as if fossils were only to be found beneath coal-scuttle bonnets and cocked hats. The thought flashes through my mind—what if Naked Truth were muffled beneath Quaker gray, and that the spirit of Ann Lee masked the fiery and daring soul of Victoria C. Woodhull. But no; the nerve, the address, the heroism to outwit and laugh at the machinations of Comstock & Co. (with marshals waiting for her at every door, fifty policemen within and as many without), from a persecuted and long-suffering woman almost hounded to death, were impossible.

Twenty minutes past eight, and the shouting and stamping grows fast and furious. All is confusion, indignation and scorn, all but the veiled figure of the old Quaker lady in the front seat; that is calm, motionless and at peace.

A female form glides on the stage and essays to speak. We recognize a brave, true-hearted champion of truth, Mrs. Laura Cuppy Smith. The noise dies out, and a perfect stillness takes its place; the proverbial pin might be heard to drop. She has just commenced to speak to apologize for the absence of Mrs. Woodhull. The motionless Quaker of the muffled face moves. She rises from her seat, and in the irresolution of old age, moves to the stairway of the platform, and slowly and deliberately ascending it walks half-way across the stage. A number smile at the serio-comic figure as it disappears behind one of the broad, square pillars supporting the roof of the hall.

In that impressive and eloquent manner so peculiar to Mrs. Smith, she dilates upon this last outrage upon the rights and liberties of the people. To quote her own words: "The enemies of free speech have another order of arrest for Mrs. Woodhull. She can't appear to-night, lest she be again flung into an American Bastille. She has intercepted her enemies, however, so far as this: though they may shut out Mrs. Woodhull, they shall not prevent the delivery of the lecture, for she has deputized me to read to you 'The Naked Truth; or, the Situation Reviewed.' The task, under the circumstances, is as painful to me as it is disappointing to you; but the custodians of the law guard the doors of the Institute, and neither Mrs. Woodhull or Miss Claflin can, no matter how much they may desire it, appear upon this platform to-night."

With the celerity of a flash of lightning, the old Quaker lady dashed from behind the pillar. Old age, coal-scuttle bonnet and gray dress disappeared like magic. Had a thunderbolt fallen upon the audience they could not have been any more surprised and astounded. There stood Victoria C. Woodhull, an overwhelming inspirational fire scintillating from her eyes and beaming from her face. The Quaker costume lay coiled at her feet, and, with her breast heaving in long suppressed nervous emotion, her arms raised aloft in nervous excitement, her hair in wild and graceful confusion, and the head thrown defiantly back like the head of the Apollo Belvidere, she looked the personification of Liberty in Arms. Her voice rose in clear and piercing tones, like a song of love, blended with the war-cry of battle, and the pent-up forces of her soul rushed forth in an impetuous and irresistible torrent of burning, glowing words, thought and voice being full to repletion with the musical and magnetic energy of the Marsellaise. Her look and voice came unexpected and sudden as the lightning's scathe; 'twas as "fire to heather set," igniting with an animated and undefined surprise, each and every heart present. It was Otis in the fire of revolution; Garrison breaking the shackles of the slave; Phillips in the alarm of labor; a Parker in the throes of religious despotism. The heroism, bravery and truth of the woman swept with inspired credentials into all hearts; and, half in awe and admiration, the audience listened spell-bound to the great persecuted.

A voice broke the spell saying, "Comstock's euchred!" Then the thunders came, peal after peal, of joyous applause in intense delight. The people saw nothing, knew nothing, wanted nothing then but Vic. Woodhull, whose invincible courage and rare fidelity to truth had outwitted the enemies of free speech. Electrified into a fever of intense excitement and unbounded admiration, the audience greet each sentence as it falls from her lips with cheers and applause.

Physical force with the badge of authority on its breast relaxed its austere look, dropped its club and gaped in rapt attention at the majesty of moral force in petticoats; the marshal forgot his writ of arrest; the thinker deposed the



bigot; a few pale-faced young men, from the neighborhood of Brooklyn, peeped in at the doors in consternation; but Victoria had the floor, and falsehood, slander and ignorance fainted to death in the grasp of eternal truth.

For one hour and a half a tempest of startling truths in all their native loveliness and purity, fresh and dewy from the garden of Heaven, deluged the consciences of all present in the baptism of a higher faith than was ever dreamed of in the philosophy of Christian ethics.

A great wrong done to this heroic soul stood at last revealed, and the cowardly, masterly inactivity of the public, assumed the hideous proportions of moral cowardice and tacit guilt. Public complicity in this outrageous act of persecuting a brave and noble woman was felt to the core, and thrilled the audience with fearful forebodings and alarm at the imminent danger of threatening the life and perpetuity of free government. The right of free speech and a free press was seen to tremble in the balance, and that, while cowards and fools laughed and jeered, this woman was battling alone for the liberties of the world. From the deep draughts of common sense, delivered in that inimitable manner, the entranced listeners learned the dreadful, subtle secret of tyranny and persecution, and, in the words of Franklin, "Mokana stood revealed"—that most men, as well as most sects in religion, think themselves in possession of all truth, and that whenever others differ from them it is so far error.

The lectress made Persecution versus Prosecution show cause, and revealed the startling spectacle, in a so-called free country, of a single creed assuming moral censorship over the thought and speech of the American people, and sneaking through a false interpretation of the law into a ridiculous and absurd authority, at once treasonable and unconstitutional, and for the specific object of hushing up from the public ear those very offenses in their teachers which they hypocritically condemn in others. Such a spectacle aroused memory from inaction. Again the fires of Smithfield illumined the night, and its ghostly shadow fell across the Cooper Institute. Once more the Christmas Eve log became the martyr's stake, and its burning, crimson tongues licked out the life-blood of the champions and martyrs of truth again, as of old. New England gibbets creaked and groaned with the victims of sanctified ignorance. The revolution was a failure. The Constitution a mocking and a snare, and life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness were swallowed up in religious intolerance, political persecution and mental slavery. All this was seen, and more; and the arch-genius of individual liberty, the imprisoned, robbed, belied Victoria C. Woodhull loomed up before them in majestic proportions of heart and soul as the protecting spirit of American liberty, that, like Minerva from the brain of Jove, sprang from the people armed with truth to do battle for human rights.

Strong men looked up to the little woman with the far-off look, and received her as a new revelation of womanhood, the prophetess of truth, the Messiah of politics, a weird, spiritual sybil, infused with marvelous power to sway the souls of men and women to higher aims than fearing to face the Naked Truth.

The lecture concluded, Mrs. Woodhull passed from sight. The light had gone out, the magnet was seen no more and the fevered blood of the audience regained its wonted heat. The man in blue was a policeman again; the marshal awoke and remembered his order of arrest, and with unusual and rare suavity of manner, performed his duty by arresting Mrs. Woodhull.

Too late, Comstock! The much-dreaded Naked Truth had reached the public ear through the silver-tongued Woodhull, the brave. She is the superior strategist. The terrible syren has enchained you and charmed your cohorts and battalions to silence and inaction.

The people have gone home to think, perchance to act; the night of the 9th of January, 1873, passes into history, and the bravest and truest of her sex moves further up Calvary from the rostrum to a prison.

ANTHONY HIGGINS, JR.

Jersey City.

**THE MARRIAGE PUZZLE.**—How shall the right man and woman find each other? One judge tells me he grants sixty divorces a month. A divorce may be as sacred as a wedding. A man appears to a woman like a god—and turns out to be a devil. Blame her not she must file her fetters, and so files her bill of divorce. The woman appears to a man like the light of the world and becomes to him a life-long despair; he might as well have married a boa-constrictor! Such cases, to be sure, are rare exceptions. Young people make the mistake of supposing that love at first sight should be immediately followed by the parson. Why, if I had married my first love I should have been dreadfully taken in! I was called on at once to marry a blue-eyed girl to a man with a mouth like a tiger. I did not like the job, but could not help it, but when I asked the mother, months after ward, how her daughter was getting along; I learned that he already had a wife in Michigan, and her daughter's heart was broken. When in England, an old peasant told me he would like to have gone to America, but he had made two dreadful blunders in his life. He was handsome when a youth, and when he was twenty he married an old woman of sixty because she had "the brass" and a farm. He thought she wouldn't live long, but she lived on to be ninety! Then when he was sixty he married a young woman of twenty, and now the farm and "the brass" were gone, and he had a family of young children to provide for. It was a bad job, and so selfishness, as well as haste, lead to misery in matrimony.—*Lynchburg Republican*.

JORDANVILLE, KNOX CO., IND., January 18, 1873.

MRS. VICTORIA C. WOODHULL AND TENNIE C. CLAFLIN:

Dear Ladies—The case is becoming exciting here, and there are many who desire to read the commencement of the case, and by so doing may become regular subscribers. I want

twenty-five copies for gratuitous distribution. As soon as I hear from you I shall send you the yearly subscription for your invaluable paper. You both have the sympathy of many who are strangers to you, and who will never forget you for the good you have already done. Be assured the doctrine you advocate is true, and your cause is just, and the people will receive it, although many are compelled to receive it in silence, for a time. You have set people to thinking, and it will not be long before they will think out loud. I have not seen a person whom I have conversed with who does not uphold your course in exposing hypocrisy and crime in high places, and building up the unfortunate. I have lived in and practiced medicine in New York city, and know what there is in high as well as low life. I know you cannot exaggerate it if you try. It is filled with such leeches as you have shown up. Go on, and do not spare them.

I am very truly yours,

A. B. CLOUGH.

#### AN ILLUSTRATION OF JOURNALISTIC JUSTICE.

Helen Nash, of Loveland, Ohio, addressed a communication to the Cincinnati *Commercial*, upon the great question that is agitating the public mind, taking a view opposite to that which was continually appearing in that journal. The article was returned, with the following reply, which speaks for itself:

CINCINNATI, January 13, 1873.

MISS NASH: Further reflection confirms my first impression, that there would be no good done in publishing this. You may be sure the truth of the scandal will come out. It is working to the surface with irresistible power. But the women, Woodhull and Claflin, I believe to have acted from the worst instead of the best of motives. If I were not thoroughly of that opinion, I might feel otherwise about publishing this communication. There is no risk in publishing it. I believe the printing would be useless. I believe in some conventionalities, and trust you will learn to recognize the virtue of expediency.

M. HALSTEAD.

Reply to Mr. Halstead:

LOVELAND, January 15, 1873.

MR. HALSTEAD:

Dear Sir—Yours of the 13th is just at hand, returning the manuscript. I care little about the "truth of the scandal" coming to the surface. There is justice and injustice in the whole affair. Men look at it from one standpoint, founded in their own selfishness; women from another standpoint, founded in the sense of their own slavery to hypocritical custom and the persecutions of both sexes.

I believe Mrs. Woodhull to have been actuated by the purest motives of interest in her own sex and fidelity to her fixed principles. You, as the editor of a prominent journal, ought not to fail in presenting to your readers all the phases of this now established controversy, taken from all standpoints. Any motive of "expediency" in this question is cowardly and unworthy of you. Expediency should never, under any circumstances, cloak hypocrisy and injustice, or enter into the conduct of a professed independent journal. "Let justice be done though the heavens fall."

I am now compelled to go upon a thankless mission in Cincinnati, namely, that of seeking an editor willing to present this matter to his readers in a light that does not bear entirely against the woman. I shall also write to Mrs. Woodhull a report of my interview with you, sending a copy of the article, also your reasons for not publishing it, which, since the printing of it involves no risk, the least you could have done was to have given to your readers at least one opinion of the "other side."

Respectfully,

HELEN NASH.

#### THE NEW LABOR PARTY.

[From the Sun, January 6, 1873.]

WOMAN TO BE ELEVATED TO THE RANK OF THE NEGRO—THE POLITICIANS TO BE OUSTED.

The delegates from the various trade unions who met yesterday adopted the following:

Whereas, Owing to the passions aroused by our civil war, corrupt and bad men, by monopolizing the trade of politics, have established a system of robbery, fraud and oppression, of which the working classes are the victims; and

Whereas, All legislation is by and in the interest of classes who oppress, rob and murder the poor with impunity; and

Whereas, As corruption has spread from all legislators and officials, even to our courts, asylums, reform and benevolent institutions, until there is no protection to the persons or property of the poor; and

Whereas, The present system of wrong cannot endure, but must end by reform or revolution; be it

Resolved, That we, as representative workingmen, do call upon all persons, without regard to country or class, creed, party or sex, to unite with us to form a party of equal privileges, equal rights, equal laws and equal punishments, under the name of the Labor Reform party, and with the following platform:

#### FIRST PRINCIPLE.

- Free speech, free press, free schools and free church.
- Reference to the people of all laws for their approval or rejection.
- Election of all officers for short terms and fixed salaries.
- Yearly reports of the workings and expenses of all public offices and institutions.
- Punishment of all corrupt officials and all swindlers of the people.
- The abolition of old feudal laws and the enactment of all simple and just laws suitable to the country and the age.
- Compulsory education and military training in the public schools.
- Progressive taxation according to wealth.
- The substitution of the city, State and nation for all monopolies and chartered robbers of the people.
- The granting of work, not alms, to the poor.
- The elevation of woman and the foreigner to the level of the colored man.
- The elevation of the worker and the reduction of the hours of labor.
- Sympathy and aid to the oppressed of all nations.

#### IS HE AMENABLE TO THE LAW?

It is quite true, and we blush for shame for our city when we confess it, that without a single iota of legal right, and

without even so much as responsible authority, our papers have been grossly and wantonly seized, wherever found, and illegally confiscated. The agent of the new Jesuitical Order, armed with nothing but the authority of that body to suppress obscene literature, stalks about the city, and in utter contempt for individual right and lawful possession, seizes our paper and defies the law. We shall yet see whether his commission gives him *carte blanche* authority to do this and to escape the penalty of the law for larceny. It is time that the wings of this Christian bird, which at present permit him to soar to such pure and ethereal heights as to be unconscious of material right and law, be clipped, and thus arrest him in his upward flight. The question is no longer, can Comstock confiscate and escape the penalty of the law because he belongs to the order of Christian Young Men; but shall they whom he would victimize, allow him to continue his nefarious outrages upon common right? He might, with just as much consistency, come into our office and steal a hundred dollars in money, as to steal papers of the same value; and before he gets through with the little job he has undertaken, he may have reason to expound the difference between the two cases, which, we have no doubt, will be equally as lucid and convincing to himself, and equally as stupid to every body else as were his reasons for adjudging language used in the WEEKLY, and quoted from the Bible, as obscene, while he considered it as not obscene in its original position in the Bible. But we must fain confess that we believe him to be enough bigot and fool combined to be honest in this conviction, and it is for this reason that some one ought to teach him the practical lesson, that he, no more than any other man, can enter the office of a newspaper and carry off its contents, simply because he, in his ignorance of common literature, chooses to assume them to be obscene.

#### PROPOSITIONS IN SEXUAL SCIENCE.

##### BASAL PROPOSITIONS.

First.—The human race is dual—male and female.

Second.—The continuation of the human race depends upon the blending of its quality in sexual commerce.

Third.—The commerce is natural when governed by the law of its existence—its regulation by arbitrary law being a prostitution of its natural use and purpose.

##### DEFINATORY PROPOSITIONS.

First.—LOVE is sexual attraction, and may be passionate and temporary—passional, intellectual and moral, and consequently perfect and permanent, or modifications of these, both as to incentive and continuation.

Second.—FREE LOVE is the natural name for the relations of the sexes, which primarily result from—and are maintained by—mutual and reciprocal attention.

Third.—PROSTITUTION is the natural name for the relations of the sexes, which primarily result from—and are maintained by—reasons other than mutual and reciprocal attraction.

Fourth.—MODERN MARRIAGE is a conglomerate modification of Free Love and Prostitution—ranging from the first in its purity to the last in its extreme sense, where sexual disgust replaces delight, and endurance, reciprocity.

##### RESULTANT PROPOSITIONS.

First.—The highest order of humanity results from sexual relations, in which love is the only element present.

Second.—The lowest order of humanity results from sexual relations where there is disgust instead of delight, and endurance instead of reciprocity.

Third.—The intermediate orders of humanity result from various modifications of the two extremes.

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**CANCER.**—In another column will be found the card of Dr. J. M. Comins, to which we call the attention of those afflicted with that terrible disease—cancer. It is not a usual thing for us to mention practicing physicians; but in this case we know whereof we speak, and we speak in the interest of the afflicted, rather than on that of Dr. Comins. He has specimens of cancer cases which have been cured by his treatment, which place him at the head of his profession. But the position he occupies in this disease is held by him in all others, especially in those of a chronic character.

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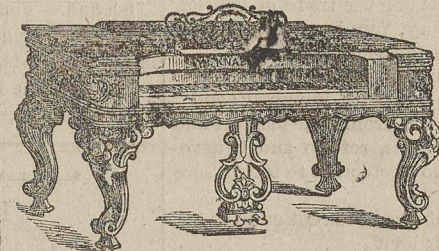
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