

THE
GREAT SENSATION.

By LEON OLIVER.

A FULL, COMPLETE AND RELIABLE HISTORY OF THE

BEECHER - TILTON - WOODHULL SCANDAL,

— WITH —

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

ILLUSTRATED WITH LIFE-LIKE PORTRAITS.

— ALSO —

*A Clear and Concise Statement of the Views of "The Woodhull" upon
Social Reform, Free Love, etc., etc.*

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INTRODUCTORY.

In presenting this book to the reading public, neither the Author, or Publishers, have any desire, or intention, to pander to prurient or depraved tastes, or to violate the sanctity of private lives.

They fully recognize and acknowledge the principle that the private lives and acts of private individuals are matters which concern themselves alone, and that it is a prostitution of journalism or authorship, to glean and blazon forth to the world the domestic affairs of any family.

But in this case it seems to them quite a different state of affairs. First the parties are public characters, and have for years been prominently before the public as professed pioneers in political, moral and social reform, and from the Press, the Pulpit and the Platform have sent out broadcast their peculiar doctrines and theories. In addition to this, they by *their own acts*, have made this most notorious scandal of the age, and themselves as connected with it, *public property*, and we therefore submit that it is not only competent, but legitimate, to canvass their actions, and inquire how far *their own lives* conform to the rules they so zealously prescribe for the guidance of others.

In the treatment of the subject, the Author wishes it to be distinctly understood that he does not intend to combat, or defend the orthodoxy, or heterodoxy, the social, or other doctrines or dogmas of any of the characters of whom he writes. But simply to give an impartial statement of both their teachings and practices, believing that his readers are fully competent to judge for themselves whether or not they, or any of them, are safe and reliable guides.

THE GREAT SENSATION.

CHAPTER I.

THE BEECHER FAMILY.

The late Rev. Dr. Todd some years ago made the following remark: "There are three classes of persons in the world. viz: Saints, Sinners and the Beecher family." For the past three score years, probably, no family in the United States has been more widely known, more warmly admired, or more cordially hated than the Beechers. Dr. Lyman Beecher, the father of the subject of this sketch, was in his day and generation, one of the most noted of American preachers. He was, by nature and practice a controversialist, and was for years, the target for the hyper-orthodox preachers and teachers of that age. And nearly all of his thirteen children (by three wives) have, in one way or another, been more or less prominently before the public. All the sons are, or have been ministers, and the daughters have not confined themselves exclusively to domestic duties. The eldest of the daughters, Catherine E. Beecher, (now past her three score years and ten,) has been in turn a teacher, an author of school-books, works upon domestic economy, etc. Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, through her "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and numerous later but less popular works, has probably reached a greater number of readers than any female writer of this, or any former age. Another sister, Mrs. Isabella Hooker, has of late years been quite prominent as a strong minded woman's-right's woman, and is generally supposed to be in full sympathy with the social reformers, although not so far advanced either in theory or practice as the Woodhull and her immediate retainers.

Of the sons of Dr. Beecher several have made quite a mark in their profession. Dr. Edward Beecher was for many years the foremost clergyman in Illinois (being located at Galesburg)

and was the author of several rather ultra theological works, the most prominent of which is the "Conflict of Ages."

Then there is the popular, eccentric Thos. K. Beecher of Elmira, N. Y., who, in his way is as ultra and sensational as his more noted brother, Henry Ward. It is related of him that during the Fremont campaign in 1856, the Rev Thomas declared that he would not shave or be shaved until John C. Fremont was elected President of the United States. It is not necessary to add that *he wears a full beard to this day.*

Rev. Chas. Beecher, of Owego, N. Y., is another of the same stamp, but younger and not so well known.

There are several others, but enough have been sketched to justify the statement that the Beechers are a remarkable family.

CHAPTER II.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE BEECHER.

Henry Ward Beecher was born June 24, 1813, and is now in his sixty-first year. His mother was the second wife of his father, and died while Henry was quite too young to retain any recollection of her. Mrs. Stowe was the offspring of the same mother. The early history of Mr. Beecher was not greatly different from boys of his age and times. He was blessed with an almost super-abundant amount of vitality, and was not unfrequently in disgrace, and the recipient of the old Puritan style of discipline. As a school-boy he was decidedly stupid, always preferring to fill himself from the great reservoir of nature rather than from the teachings of scholastic pedagogues; and that characteristic is now, after nearly forty years of ministerial life, as strongly developed as in his boyhood. He is not, never was, and with his peculiar organization never could be, a scholar in the strict and limited sense of that word. He was graduated at Amherst college in 1834, and studied theology at Lane Seminary, Cincinnati, of which his father was President. His first settlement as a minister was over a Presbyterian church at Lawrenceburg, Ind., in 1837, where he remained only two years, when he removed to Indianapolis, where he remained eight years. It was during his ministry at Indianapolis that the great tidal wave of his popularity began to develop. He became known not as a theologian, for he persistently, and as many of the cloth believed, recklessly and wickedly ignored the old forms and modes of presenting religious truths, and his sermons were oftener drawn from the fruits and flowers, the woods and streams, the birds and beasts, than from the law and the prophets.

It was during his residence here that he delivered and published a series of lectures to young men, which were at the time

very popular and were sold and read extensively at the East as well as in the vicinity where published. He was also editorially connected with an agricultural paper.

In 1847 he received a call to become the Pastor of the Plymouth Congregational Church at Brooklyn, which was accepted and for nearly twenty-six years he has held the position, and it is safe to say that no clergyman in America has ever so quickly attained, or so long retained such a hold upon the masses as Mr. Beecher. He has been praised, flattered, and almost deified by some, and villified, misrepresented and lied about by others. No man has ever preached to such congregations, for the hundreds who crowd his church are but a drop in the bucket compared to the thousands who hear his sermons, prayers and talks, through the medium of the press. Reporters attend his Sunday services, and his sermons are reported and printed in full, formerly in the *Independent*, but now in pamphlet form called "The Plymouth Pulpit." The *New York Herald* reports and prints his weekly Lecture Room talks, and for years a Boston daily has, in its Saturday evening issue, published one of his sermons. But the Church is not the only avenue through which he reaches the public. He has, for many years, been one of the most popular lecturers in the country; and he is now the *great star* of the lecture room. Like Cushman, Booth or Jefferson of the stage, he can dictate his own terms, and managers will "see him" for they know he is sure to draw. He has also been a prominent stump speaker in all the more exciting political campaigns for years, and it may be said in this connection, that many of his so-called sermons were very like political harangues. He has also been connected with the press for a long time. Was one of the most popular writers for the *Independent*, his contributions being signed with an asterisk became popularly known as the "Star Papers," and were subsequently published in book form under that title. He was at one time the reputed editor of the *Independent*, but was really little more than a contributor; the editorial labors being performed by the late Joshua Leavitt and others, but it was a good card, and the publishers knew it would win.

He has also for years written for the *New York Ledger*, his



HENRY WARD BEECHER.

first contribution being a serial for which Bonner paid a very large price, and it was doubtless a very good investment; yet the same story written by an unknown author, probably would not have brought a hundred dollars. Mr. Beecher still writes short sketches and squibs for the *Ledger*.

In addition to all these labors he has, until recently, been the ostensible editor of *The Christian Union* from its foundation, and his name has undoubtedly been one of the principal levers which have hoisted that publication into popularity. He also compiled and edited what is known as the "Plymouth Collection of Hymns and Tunes," and is now engaged in writing a "Life of Christ."

From the foregoing sketch of his various occupations it will be readily seen that Mr. Beecher has been anything but a drone in the human hive; on the contrary he has been "abundant in labors." Not one in a thousand could have endured half so much, and yet to-day, not one man in five thousand, is, at the age of sixty so well preserved, and so vigorous as Mr. Beecher, and from present indications, he is yet good for another score of working years.

CHAPTER III.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE, AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BEECHER.

Mr. Beecher is not a tall, nor is he a short man, but of about medium stature, not obese, but broad and stout, broad shoulders and full chest, and a perfect specimen of physical soundness. His whole appearance indicates that during his life thus far, he has realized to the fullest extent all the benefits which Macbeth invoked for his guests, saying, "And now may good digestion wait on appetite, and health on both." His head is large with a full, round and ruddy face. Eyes large, full and prominent, lips and chin heavy, and suggestive of a keen appetite for, and a thorough appreciation of all the creature comforts, and the requisite determination and firmness to acquire them. His neck is large and supports a base of brain proportionately well developed. His hair, formerly brown but now well streaked with gray, is worn long, and carelessly thrown back behind the ears, and is guiltless of any appearance of curl or wave. His whole face, eyes, nose and mouth are very expressive, and any one who had never before seen or heard of him, would single him out from a crowd as a remarkable man. His healthful and robust physique is certainly more suggestive of a well fed butcher, than of ministerial dyspepsia or theological bronchitis, and there is nothing in his appearance indicative of days of fasting or nights of prayer.

Prominent among the characteristics of Mr. Beecher is his total disregard of old and long accepted creeds, formulas and usages. Some twenty years ago the author of a book called the "American Pulpit," in his sketch of Mr. Beecher compared, or rather contrasted, him with Rev. Dr. R. S. Storrs of Brooklyn, and remarked: "Mr. Storrs has no lack of veneration; Mr. Beecher has no lack of the want of it."

Nothing is sacred to him because it is old, and venerable ; he ignores creeds. Said he, "Away with them, they are the husks that conceal the corn." It would puzzle one to sit under his preaching for years and attempt to define what he really believed or taught. One Sunday one would think him a Calvinist, the next a Universalist.

Some years ago in discussing theology with his friend Rev. E. H. Chapin, (confessedly the ablest Universalist preacher in the country,) the latter remarked "Well after all, there is not very much difference in our belief." "Yes there is Chapin, a *Hell* of a difference," was the characteristic response of Beecher, and yet, not long after, he declared that no one could really believe the old Calvinistic doctrine of hell, and retain their reason for a fortnight. One week you would imagine him to be a Spiritualist, and the next he would inveigh against it in no measured terms. Consistency and uniformity are no elements in his character. Possibly his beliefs do not vary so much as one would suppose, but his want of method and system in the preparation of his sermons fosters a loose mode of expression which makes him liable to be misunderstood. He does not sit down in his library on Monday, and build up his sermons according to the schools from "firstly" to "finally," but often selects his theme half an hour before going to church and relies upon his impulses, and the inspiration of the hour; drawing from the store-house of memory, or perhaps upon some incident of the moment for his illustrations. He is not a theologian nor a logician; not a student, nor a profound thinker, and yet no man in this country has for the past quarter of a century so swayed the people as has Mr. Beecher. What is the secret of his wonderful power? It is the opinion of the writer that it lays in his great vitality, his *intensely* human nature, and his overflowing reservoir of magnetism. The writer has often seen an immense audience of men, women and children completely entranced by him, and he had them so *en rapport* that they laughed or cried without any volition of their own; they were like the pipes and stops of a great organ, while he was the master who played upon them as upon an instrument.

His manner in the pulpit is such an innovation upon old cus-

toms and church etiquette, that it is no wonder, Plymouth church is sometimes called "Beecher's Theatre."

For a stranger to get a seat in his church, unless he has a friend who is a pew-holder to take him in, is no easy task. An hour before the doors are opened the street is packed with a crowd reminding one of the scenes around the tents of a circus in a country town. And when the doors are finally opened, none but pew-holders and accompanying friends are admitted, until a few minutes before the service commences when outsiders are permitted to enter, and the one securing a seat may be counted as fortunate.

While the organ is pealing forth the voluntary, a little door at the back of the rostrum (for it is not a pulpit) slides back, and Mr. Beecher pops in and takes his seat at the front, by a small table on which are a bible and hymn-book, and always some choice flowers. There is an entire absence of formality, and old stereotyped usages. There is singing and prayer, but not the long, cold and dry prayers, that those of us reared in New England can so well remember. In prayer Mr. Beecher seems to come like a child to his parent, and asks simply and yet confidently for what he needs, and no one who has seen him pleading with the Father for the desired blessing, with such earnestness, while the tears rolled down his cheeks, could avoid one of two conclusions, that he was either almost a saint, or else a most inimitable actor.

Of Mr. Beecher's sermons or lectures we hardly know what to say, they are almost indescribable. He is without doubt a *natural* orator; certainly there is nothing of art perceptible in his efforts. He deals largely in illustrations, drawn more from real life and nature, than from books. At times he is terribly in earnest, walking up and down the platform, gesticulating almost wildly, while the perspiration fairly pours from his face, and his hearers shudder, and say "verily this is one of the old prophets come back to us." He will next strike a vein of pathos (and no one can do it more effectually) and directly the late shuddering, half frightened audience is melted, and in tears, and feel inclined to say "surely this is a wizard." But relief soon comes, for he will in a twinkling change from the pathetic to the comic, and his queer conceits will be enforced and vivi-

fied by the most comical gestures, and grotesque facial contortions, and the listener or observer must be more than ordinarily well anchored who can refrain from a good hearty laugh "right out in meeting" and the mental exclamation will involuntarily arise, "What a rare comedian."

In his illustrations he frequently uses some most beautiful figures, and whether studied and wrought out for the occasion or not, they always *seem* to be spontaneous. For instance, once discoursing upon the loving kindness, and forgiving mercy of the Great Father, he stopped, was silent for a moment, an almost heavenly smile came over his face, and with a voice subdued and modulated as very few are capable of doing, he said, "God forgives as a mother, who kisses away into everlasting forgetfulness the faults of her erring, but penitent child."

As previously remarked, Mr. Beecher is not a Theologian, and cannot be claimed by any school, although he has been for twenty-five years the foremost preacher in the country, and his church is *called* "Congregational;" yet he is not in accord with that denomination, and it is almost certain, that if he were a young, and unknown man, and should present himself before an association of Orthodox Congregational Ministers, as a candidate for ordination and installation, as a Pastor, and should while under examination, avow a tithe of his disregard for the accepted doctrines of that organization, which he so freely and boldly preaches to his own people, he would be unanimously rejected as unsound and dangerous. Or if he should succeed by his wonderful magnetic power, in so mesmerizing a staid body of Puritan Clergymen, as to secure their indorsement, we think the bones of Cotton Mather, Edwards, Hopkins, Tyler and others of the departed New England Fathers would rattle in their graves.

"What is Orthodoxy?" he asks. "I will tell you. Orthodoxy is *my* doxy — and Hetrodoxy is *your* doxy, that is if *your* doxy is not like *my* doxy." What is terribly and dangerously hetrodox this year, may be accepted as the very essence of orthodoxy next year.

His idea of the true mission of the church and its ministry is *not* to dig among the dead dogmas of the past, or to choke his people with the dust from the mummies of a theology which

might have been good centuries ago, but is now obsolete. But rather this, that Christianity, if valuable at all, is only so, when applied to the living issues of the day, and that its forms of presentation and application must change with advancing civilization. As well think of compelling the full grown, brawny man, to wear the bands and swaddling clothes of his infancy, and be fed on pap, as to demand that this generation shall be restricted to the theologic limits of the centuries which have passed into history. Every art, every science, and every profession have made, and will continue to make rapid strides with each succeeding generation, and there is no reason why theology should be an exception. Such are Mr. Beecher's ideas, although not expressed in his own words.

Mr. Beecher is a better demolisher than builder. He has done much to weaken and pull down the old walls of religious superstition, and in doing so may not have been very cautious in avoiding to pull down and weaken faith in some doctrines that were still valuable. Like Theodore Parker and other radical demolishers of old and musty creeds, he has not evinced much constructive talent, and yet, there can be little question that while he has done much to unsettle the faith of thousands in the theology of their ancestors, he has at the same time accomplished a good work in diffusing more liberal ideas throughout the land, and all denominations (perhaps unconsciously) have modified and softened not only their beliefs, but their manner of teaching them, and few ministers now would dare to preach to an intelligent congregation, the doctrines of "Infant Damnation" and that God the Father *had before the foundation of the world elected* unborn millions to suffer the fiery tortures of *Eternal Hell*.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. BEECHER AS A LECTURER.

Mr. Beecher's appearance upon the platform of the Lecture Room is not much different from what it is in the church. There are the same general characteristics, but more abandon and a broader humor. His lectures are generally upon Political, National or Social topics, and as in his sermons, he is profuse in the use of illustrations. He so utterly ignores in his dress and manners, the conventionalities of the clergy, that one who was ignorant of the fact, would never suspect him of belonging to the fraternity. He not only ignores, but most heartily despises, the traditional peculiarities and deportment so generally adopted by his brethren in the ministry.

Once in the course of a lecture he alluded to the severe criticisms which had been so freely made by both the secular and religious press upon his taking such an active part in political affairs, (this was in the winter following the Fremont campaign, during which he not only took the stump, but preached politics in his church, and sent out his burning sarcasms, weekly, through the columns of the *Independent*.) He said: "Did I when I became a minister cease to be a man and a citizen? No! A thousand times no! Have I not as much interest in our government as though I were a lawyer, a doctor, a merchant, a banker, a farmer, a ditch digger or a wood sawyer?" "Out upon this idea that a minister must *dress* minister, *walk* minister, *talk* minister, *eat* minister, and wear his ministerial badge as a convict does his stripes." "I have the same rights, privileges, and responsibilities as any other citizen, and I intend to claim them always and everywhere, and I ask no exemptions or privileges on the ground that *I am a minister*." In the delivery of the above, his mimicry of the conventional minister was one of the finest pieces of comedy acting it has ever

been the privilege of the author to witness, and he has seen Sothern, Jefferson, Warren, Clarke and nearly all the great comedians of the age. Another instance of his wonderful power in the use of illustration.

He, in the course of a lecture, managed to bring in trout fishing; and he at once threw himself into the attitude of an expert angler; he threw his fly, (an imaginary one of course) and presently hooked his finny game, and then for five minutes (it seemed fifteen) he dodged from one side of the rostrum to the other, up and down, giving line and reeling in, until the entire audience (nearly two thousand) leaned forward with expectant eyes and open mouths, until, finally after many attempts and feints he landed the speckled beauty, when there was a sigh of relief all through the hall, and one particularly exciteable man exclaimed: "By —— he's got him." Now there was no water, no trout, no rod, no line, no fly, and yet there was all the excitement there could have been, had the audience really seen Seth Green or George Dawson hook and land a three pounder.

CHAPTER V.

MR. BEECHER IN SOCIAL LIFE.

Socially Mr. Beecher is as pleasing and interesting as in his public efforts; always genial and hearty, brim full of life and running over with humor, abounds in anecdote, and tells a good story, enjoys a hearty laugh after a hearty dinner. His fund of magnetism, like the widow's cruse, is never exhausted, no matter how frequent or large drafts are made upon it. The men admire him, the woman adore him, and the children all love him. He is very fond of children and pets of all kinds. A good horse is his delight, and he enjoys hugely a ride behind one who goes in *two and a small fraction*, and probably would not object, if he had the means, to emulate his friend Bonner in his stables, stud and equipage; and no man is a more ardent lover of the beautiful in nature. The rocks and the rills, the vales and the hills, woods, brooks and rivers all find in him an enthusiastic worshiper.

Mr. Beecher's profession never prevents him from having his "little joke" for which he has a keen relish. The late T. Starr King, (in many respects the most brilliant genius that ever adorned the American pulpit, or lecture hall) related the following characteristic anecdote of Mr. Beecher. Mr. King, as those who have seen him will remember, was a thin, spare man with an almost bloodless face, and it seemed a marvel how such a frail physical structure could sustain such a colossal brain, heart and soul. One cold, winter morning he was walking across Boston Common; the east wind was sweeping through the mall and walks, and he said it seemed as though the very marrow in his bones had turned to ice, his lips were blue, and his whole frame shivering, when suddenly a pair of strong arms were thrown around him from behind, and he was lifted up

bodily ; turning his head he saw the round, jolly face of Mr. Beecher, his cheeks in a ruddy glow, and glistening with perspiration. "How is it, (asked King) that you are glowing with warmth while I am nearly chilled to death?" "Easily accounted for, Bro. King," responded Beecher. "What right have you who are not orthodox, to expect to have warm blood coursing through your veins? It is simply orthodoxy, or the lack of it, that makes the difference. You must be orthodox, my brother if you want to be warm and vigorous."

ANOTHER.

Mr. Beecher and Rev E. H. Chapin have for many years been warm personal friends, and have been co-workers in the temperance cause. Chapin has suffered from occasional attacks of gout, and has at times been confined for some weeks and suffered intensely from its effects. During one of his attacks, the author called upon him at his house, and found him in his easy chair, with his game foot swathed and resting upon a cushion in the genuine old aristocratic style. After disposing of the business which occasioned the visit, a little time was spent in familiar chat. "By the way," said Chapin, "Beecher was over to see me yesterday, and hit me a good one. Ah!" said he, "this *preaching* temperance is all very fine, and possibly may be productive of great good to our fellow creatures, but if one wants to enjoy the blessed fruits of temperance in his own body, he must *practice* as well as preach."

ONE MORE AND THE LAST.

Mr. Beecher some years ago lectured in a city in Western New York on the evening of the municipal election day. At the close of the lecture, as was the custom, the managers of the lecture course with the lecturer, adjourned to a reception room below, and of course there was the usual rush of individuals seeking an introduction to the great orator. Among them was Mr. H., who had been a candidate for alderman in one of the wards. He is a great humorist and having stood at the polls all through the chilly March day, had doubtless occasionally

adjourned to a house of refreshment to "see a man." The votes had been counted and revealed the mortifying fact that he was defeated. He asked an introduction to Mr. Beecher, and after the ceremony he looked up in a quizzical way, and asked Mr. B. if he had ever run for alderman, and got beat. "No," said Beecher. "I have been in many mean scrapes, and done lots of things I am ashamed of, but I never got so low yet as to run for Alderman or for Congress, but still I won't boast, Mr. H. for we none of us can know what we shall yet be left to do."

No sketch of Mr. Beecher would be at all complete, in which was omitted his life-long championship of the poor, the ignorant, the degraded and the enslaved. He is an intense lover of liberty, and the largest liberty for all; although not openly identified with the woman's rights organization, he has for years been in favor of female suffrage. He is also reported to be, in his views and practice, quite advanced on the social question, involving the family and marriage relations, but this will appear in another part of this work, and the reader can judge whether Mr. Beecher is the moral hero that his friends and admirers have claimed that he is, or the abject moral coward, as he is charged withal by the Woodhull and her disciples.

CHAPTER VI.

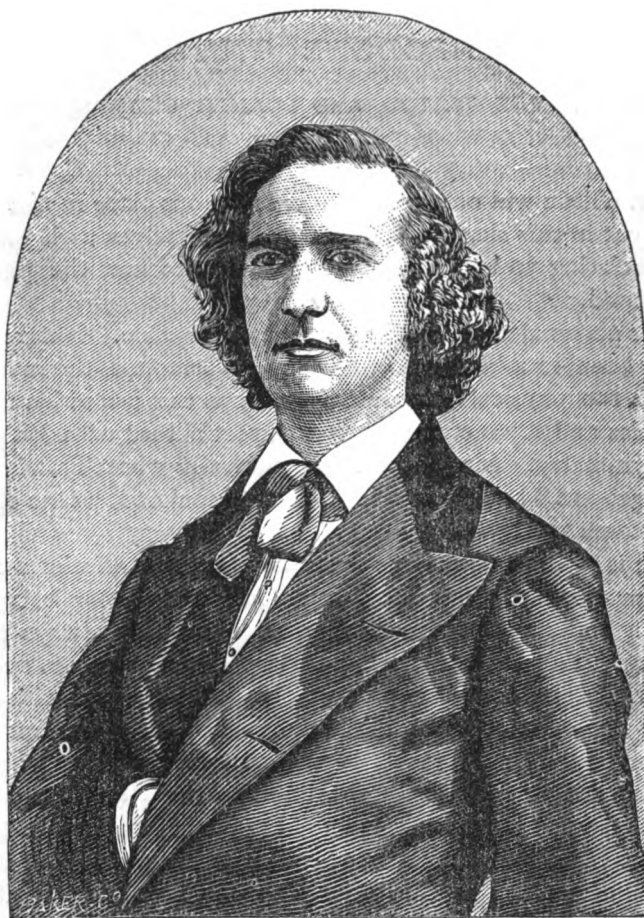
THEODORE TILTON.

THE MAN, THE EDITOR, AND FORMER CHAMPION OF THE
WOODHULL.

Mr. Tilton will occupy a very conspicuous place in this work, and yet in this sketch we shall content ourselves with generalities, relating to his public life, since he reached the plane of manhood.

His personal appearance is almost remarkable. Nature must have been in a kindly mood when she arranged the mould in which the physical Theodore Tilton was cast ; and his mental abilities and characteristics are in sweet accord with his physical symmetry. Mr. Tilton is emphatically what Trowbridge's "Vagabond" said he was in his early manhood, "One of your handsome men."

He is rather tall, neither slim, nor stout, but of elegant form and proportion. His hair (worn long) is in color between a brown and auburn, and is inclined to curl, is always neatly arranged, and combed back, hanging in heavy masses over his collar. His eyes are very expressive, piercing, yet with an almost dove-like softness and tenderness. His features come nearer to the pure Grecian type than any American whom we have met, always cleanly shaved ; his dress faultlessly neat, rich and becoming, and his linen immaculate in its whiteness. In fact his whole appearance would indicate that he fully accepted the truth of the proverb that "cleanliness is akin to Godliness." The reader may think we are drawing the portrait of a perfect Adonis ; and perhaps we may as well admit it, for we have rarely, if ever, met a man who approximates so nearly to our standard of the ideal Adonis, as does Theodore Tilton ; and we should think that any woman of sentiment and



THEODORE TILTON

refinement would not only admire him, but fall in love with him. Socially, he is not only interesting, but fascinating; *almost irresistible*; always the refined gentleman; a first class conversationalist, and an evening spent with him, listening to his converse, or hearing him read poetry, with his soft, rich voice, is something to remember with pleasurable emotion; and yet he is a radical of the most ultra type. And just here (at the same time begging pardon of the reader for this digression) the author would remark that he, and doubtless hundreds of others, have been surprised, nay, almost confounded at what would seem to be the most glaring incongruity, in the characteristics of noted agitators and radicals, men whose writings would lead one to think, they were the most blood-thirsty of their kind, and that their chief delight would be in witnessing the immolation, gibbetting or burning of those who differed with them. And yet, when we meet these same men we find them overflowing with love and sympathy for all mankind. Men who would not kill an insect, or tread on a worm; severely cutting, and uncompromisingly sarcastic in their writings and public speeches; they are in their private lives all gentleness and kindness. As notable instances of this seeming paradox we will mention, Wm. Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, Gerrit Smith, George Wm. Curtis, Fred Douglass, George Thompson, the great English abolitionist, the late Horace Greeley and others at the north, and many at the south who are popularly considered and stigmatized as "Fire Eaters," among whom the writer remembers the late Wm. L. Yancey, as one of the most perfect specimens of the refined gentleman *socially*, he has ever met.

Mr. Tilton is about thirty-seven years of age, and has during his whole manhood life, been connected with Journalism. In his early career as a journalist, he was a stenographer and reporter, but he first became prominently known to the public through his connection with the *Independent*, of which he was for several years the responsible, managing editor, and in his editorials, no one can gainsay that he was in all respects what the title of that paper indicates, for he was emphatically *independent* in the full significance of that word. In his expressions of his views, political, social or religious, he as utterly ignored

the old beaten tracks and long accepted formulas, as did his pastor, Mr. Beecher, in his ministrations at Plymouth church. As a radical he fairly out-distanced those who had been pioneers in the cause before he had ever written a paragraph.

The *Independent*, as the reader is aware, was started as a professedly religious publication, but has really been quite as much devoted to political, social and commercial interests as to purely religious topics, and under the management of Mr. Tilton, politics seemed to be the dominant feature in that sheet ; and while Mr. Tilton was professedly a republican, he never hesitated to score any leader in that party who failed to come up to his ideas of the true mission of radical republicanism. He was, prior to the act of emancipation, a most ultra and uncompromising advocate of freedom for all, and as soon as the abolition of slavery had become a fixed fact he turned his artillery upon the real or supposed wrongs of woman, and the columns of his paper fairly teemed with appeals and arguments in behalf of woman's rights, and female suffrage, and we question if the cause has ever had a more enthusiastic advocate among the "Lords of creation" than Theodore Tilton. He not only wrote for it, but spoke for it ; and was sneered at and made the target for all sorts of ridicule by the conservative press the country through.

From the initiatory of woman's rights and female suffrage, to the extreme and revolutionary social-freedom platform of Mrs. Woodhull and her disciples, the road was an easy and natural one, and Mr. Tilton was ere long found standing side by side with her, and openly indorsing her peculiar doctrines. Thus we find him Nov. 20, 1871, at Steinway Hall, New York city, presiding at an immense meeting, and introducing Mrs. Woodhull to the audience before whom she delivered her celebrated speech defining for the first time *publicly* the principles of social freedom as held by her ; and whatever may be his position *now*, the part he assumed *then* was virtually a public indorsement of, and declaration of adhesion to, the bold platform launched on the waves of public opinion on that occasion. He also wrote (or allowed his name to go forth to the public as the author of) a biography of Mrs. Woodhull, and eulogized her as one of the *purest women on earth* ; and she at that time, no

doubt, counted upon him, as one who would stand in the front rank as an advocate and exemplar of her social doctrines, and as a founder and sustainer of the Utopia, to the establishment of which she had pledged her "fortune," her "life" and her "sacred honor."

In addition to his duties as editor of the *Independent* Mr. Tilton was also editor of the *Brooklyn Union*, a paper published by Mr. Bowen, and the cause and manner of his losing both these lucrative positions will be found in another part of this work.

After his summary dismissal by Mr. Bowen from the two positions alluded to above, Mr. Tilton projected and is now publishing a paper called *The Golden Age*, holding the two-fold position of Editor and Publisher. It is an ably conducted sheet, and cannot be called in *any sense* sectarian, partizan, or the organ of any clique or ring.

We have said that Mr. Tilton was a radical republican, but he has long since ceased to act with that party as represented by the present administration, and no journalist has been more free or caustic than he has in his criticisms upon the political and personal actions of the President. He was one of the foremost in the movement that resulted in the organization of the party or faction known as liberal republicans, and by pen and tongue was one of the most influential in securing the nomination of the late Horace Greeley as the candidate for the Presidency, which, as Mrs. Woodhull claims she forewarned him, would bring his old friend Greeley to his death.

But it is not only as a journalist that Mr. Tilton has been known to the public; for several years he has been a favorite with the people as a lecturer, and has been in great demand both east and west by the managers of lyceum and other associations where the lecture system has obtained. He does not possess the fiery eloquence of Beecher, the musical voice or classical eloquence of Curtis, yet he is a very effective speaker; his rare personal beauty attracts the attention of an audience at once; and he does not disappoint them when he speaks, for he is an orator of no mean repute; he has a good command of language, and his manner impresses his hearers.

with the idea that he is an earnest, honest man, and thoroughly imbued with the doctrines or ideas which he promulgates.

He is also a poet. (His appearance would indicate that to even a casual observer) and has written some poems of rare beauty.

The course he has seen fit to pursue in regard to the scandal which so deeply affects his domestic relations, has been variously commented upon; his reticence since its promulgation has been severely condemned by some of his friends, and as heartily commended by others. Whether he has acted wisely or not, is neither the purpose or province of the author to attempt to decide.

One thing however is certainly very sure, and that is, he deeply regrets his association with, and frequent public indorsement of the champions of free love, and social revolution, and has doubtless found it as dangerous an occupation as holding a wolf by the ears, *neither safe to hold on or let go*,

The details of his experience in this character will hereinafter more fully appear. In this connection we will give the reader in Mr. Tilton's own words his estimate of the character of Mrs. Woodhull while they were yet friends, and we have no evidence that he has ever changed his opinions, notwithstanding the special co-partnership formerly existing between them is dissolved.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WOODHULL A PARAGON OF VIRTUE AND MORAL PURITY AS SEEN THROUGH TILTON'S SPECTACLES.

Letter of Theodore Tilton to Mrs Isabella Hooker, (a sister of Henry Ward Beecher.)

NEW YORK, JUNE 10, 1870.

My Dear Mrs. Hooker :—"I have seen a few lines of a letter written by you to Mrs. Woodhull, full of the sympathy of your large heart. Accept my thanks for remaining the friend of a woman who, however the world may misjudge her is one of the most sincere, true-hearted and heaven-seeking of human beings.

"She has strange traits occasionally, indicating over-excitement of mind, and she gives undue credence to spirit influence; and above all, she uses the term free-love in a sense wholly different from that in which it is understood by the world, and so is fearfully misconstrued. But I give my testimony to the fact that she is one of the most upright, truthful, religious and unsullied souls I ever met. Just at present when everybody seems willing to treat her with bitterness, I thank you for standing, as I do, her unchanging friend.

"THEO. TILTON."

From "A Legend of Good Women" by Theodore Tilton, in the "*Golden Age*," June 20, 1871.

"Victoria C. Woodhull is a younger heroine than most of the foregoing, having come into the cause after some of her elders had already become veterans. But her advocacy of woman's right to the ballot, as logically deduced from the Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments, has given her a national notoriety. If the woman's movement has a Joan of Arc, it is this gentle but fiery genius. She is one of the most remarkable women of her time. Little understood by the public, she is denounced in the most outrageous manner by people who do not appreciate her moral worth. But her sincerity, her truthfulness, her uprightness, her true nobility of character,

are so well known to those who know her well, that she ranks in the estimation of these, somewhat as St. Theresa does in the admiring thoughts of pious Catholics.

She is a devotee, a religious enthusiast, a seer of visions, a devout communionist with the other world. She acts under spiritual influences, and, like St. Paul, "is not disobedient to the heavenly visions." Her bold social theories have startled many good souls but anybody who, on this account, imagines her to stand below the whitest and purest of her sex, will misplace a woman, who in moral integrity rises to the full height of the highest."

The following is a letter from Mr. Tilton to a brother journalist.

NEW YORK, JUNE 22, 1871.

My Dear Mr. Sanbourn.—I take it for granted that the remarks in the *Republican* are yours. But you err in the estimate of the woman. She is a purist in morals—just the opposite of what you imagine her to be. I know her well, very well. Her character, I believe, (and I cheerfully testify,) is spotless. Her social views are not those of Stephen Pearl Andrews, but of John Stuart Mill. Except for her mistaken use of the term 'free love'—a term which she employs in a wholly different sense from that which it bears when you read it in the writings of Mr. Andrews—I believe her social theories would not differ at all from your own. I take pains to write you this line because Mrs. Woodhull is a woman of singular moral excellence, a model of truthfulness, sincerity and uprightness. Her unfortunate reputation is due wholly to an infelicitous use of words. Persons who know her well, hold her in no common respect. Never have I met, whether among women or men, a character of greater simplicity or goodness than hers. Excuse my boldness and believe me fraternally yours.

"THEO. TILTON."

Mr. Tilton's remarks, introducing Mrs. Woodhull to the audience at Steinway Hall, New York, on the occasion of her celebrated speech defining her theories upon social freedom, Nov. 20, 1871.

"Ladies and Gentlemen.:—Happening to have an unoccupied night, which is an unusual thing for me in the lecture season, I came to this meeting actuated by curiosity to know what my friend would have to say in regard to the great question which has occupied so many years of her life. I was

met at the door by a member of the committee, who informed me that several gentlemen had been applied to, particularly within the circuit of two or three neighboring cities, to know whether they would occupy the platform and preside on this occasion."*

"Every one had declined one after another, for various reasons, the chief among them being, first, objections to the lady's character; and second, objections to the lady's views. I was told she was coming upon the stand unattended and alone. Now as to her character: I know it, and believe in it, and vouch for it. As to her views, she will give them to you herself in a few moments, and you may judge for yourselves. It may be that she is a fanatic; it may be that I am a fool; but before high heaven, I would rather be both fanatic and fool in one, than to be such a coward as would deny to a woman the sacred right of free speech. I desire to say that five minutes ago I did not expect to appear here. Allow me the privilege of saying that, with as much pride as ever prompted me to the performance of any act in fifteen or twenty years, I have the honor of introducing to you Victoria C. Woodhull, who will address you on the subject of social freedom."

In addition to the foregoing, Mr. Tilton made frequent allusions to Mrs. Woodhull in his paper, *The Golden Age*, and in his lectures, all through the country, and always in the same degree of unqualified admiration for her social and moral virtues. In our sketch of Mrs. Woodhull we give the reader liberal extracts from Mr. Tilton's Biography

*Henry Ward Beecher was the one relied upon by Mrs. Woodhull, and it is claimed by Mrs. Woodhull, that she submitted her speech to him, and that he fully indorsed its doctrines, and gave her good reason to expect he would stand by her on this occasion — thus virtually making a public profession of his faith in social freedom.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE WOODHULL.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF THE SO CALLED "SCARLET WOMAN," HOW SHE LOOKS, HOW SHE ACTS, HOW SHE TALKS.

Mrs. Woodhull is about thirty-four years of age, but seen at a little distance she looks younger. She is of medium height, and rather slight, although by no means scrawny; has a good form, erect and firm; her features are regular and of the aquiline type; eyes dark blue and very expressive, and when in speaking she gets thoroughly roused, they are flashingly eloquent. She is rather inclined to paleness, except when excited in conversation or speaking to an audience there comes a flush upon her cheeks which is of the hectic order; her hair, which is a light brown, is worn short, and carelessly arranged; her forehead is high and broad, and her whole head and face indicate more than ordinary intellectuality and mental power. When not engaged in speaking she has a sad and decidedly thoughtful expression, and is in her general appearance what the French term *spirituelle*. There is nothing masculine or sensual in her looks, and if she is the sensual, depraved woman that she is charged withal, her whole physiognomy is a glaring lie. Her manners are refined and lady-like. When strangers are presented to her, she greets them with a winning cordiality which at once sets them at ease; she is a good conversationalist, and never wearies one with worn out platitudes, but is original in her modes of expression, every now and then startling her auditors with some bold and novel proposition. She is apt to call things by their right names, and is guiltless of prudery and sham modesty, but speaks out boldly what she thinks, and we should infer that she had adopted as her own, the motto of the Knight of the Garter. A close observer spending an hour in



VICTORIA C. WOODHULL.

her company, and witnessing her greetings to one and another, speaking briefly to a dozen different persons, and perhaps on as many different topics, will readily understand the secret of her wonderful power over both men and women. We do not wonder that so many love her, and others fear her, for no one can long be placed within the charmed circle of her presence and remain insensible to the almost irresistible power of her fascinations. But it is on the platform that her peculiar talents are most vividly exhibited.

As a rule, female declaimers are not a success, and Mrs. Woodhull is not altogether an exception to the rule, and yet there is something about her that will not only attract, but hold an audience; she is a radical of the radicals, and boldly, nay, defiantly launches forth her most ultra and advanced doctrines of free love, and, as we think, often shocks her hearers by preaching such extremes of social and sexual freedom, as she would not herself put in practice under *any circumstances*.

She has a pleasant voice, and ordinarily speaks with deliberation, enunciating clearly and distinctly; is at times quite logical, but often mistakes sophistry for logic. She appears best when she is broken up in her discourse by hisses, or other uncomplimentary interruptions; they seem to evoke all the latent powers of her whole nature, and leaving her desk and manuscript, she pours forth a perfect torrent of fiery eloquence, freely using (and effectively too) invective, sarcasm, or ridicule, as the occasion demands; she is never at a loss for a ready and apt retort on such occasions. Her pereorations at the close of a long and carefully written speech, *seem* to be impromptu, and the ideas, and words wherewithal to clothe them, to come from the inspiration of the moment; and even an unbeliever in Spiritualism can almost believe that what she claims is really true; that she is controlled and guided by the spirit of Demosthenes, who, as she says, has for years been her special guardian, and that she not only draws her inspiration from him, but also many of her ideas and expressions; she most assuredly has all the appearance of one so wholly rapt and absorbed by some invisible influence as to be hardly conscious of her own identity. She is very pointed and often personal in her speeches; and to use a pugilistic simile, "hits from the shoul-

der " and has no hesitation in hitting "below the belt." She is merciless ; sparing neither friend or foe ; truth, as she claims, is what she is seeking, no matter where it may lead, or how many previously accepted opinions, or former friends and associates are sacrificed. Nothing is sacred or inviolate with her, if it stand in the way she has marked out. She says "wherever I find a social carbuncle I shall plunge my surgical knife of reform into it, *up to the hilt.*" As it regards consequences personal to herself, she declares she never takes them into the account ; she may be shut up in prison, or even led to the stake, but she will not turn one hair's breadth to the right or left from the course marked out for her by her own conscience, and the teachings of her guardian spirit. In a recent speech in Chicago she said, "I am charged with seeking notoriety, but who among you would accept my notoriety and pay a tithe of its cost to me? Driven from my former beautiful home, reduced from affluence to want, my business broken up and destroyed, dragged from one jail to another, and in a short time am again to be arraigned before the courts and stand trial for telling the truth. I have been smeared all over with the most opprobrious epithets, and the vilest names, am stigmatized as a bawd and a black-mailer. Now until you are ready to accept my notoriety, with its conditions—to suffer what I have suffered and am yet to suffer—*do not dare to impugn my motives* ; as to your approval or dissent, your applause or your curses, they have not a feather's weight with me, I am set apart for a high and sacred duty, and *I shall perform it without fear or favor.*"

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CHAPTER IX.

THE WOODHULL AS A WRITER.

For several years Mrs. Woodhull has wielded a prolific pen, writing mainly upon social topics, or in replying to, and commenting upon criticisms made upon herself by her opponents; and her pen is as caustic as her tongue, and whoever attacks her may be assured that she will claim a woman's prerogative, and have the last word. But her writings have not been limited to the social question. She has written considerable upon the subject of finance, and national questions. As a writer she is generally known to the public through the columns of "Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly," of which she is the responsible Editor, assisted by her sister and partner, Miss Tennie C. Claflin, and Col. Blood. She also published some years since quite a large volume entitled "The Principles of Government." The extracts from her writings and speeches which are embodied in this work will give the reader a more intelligent idea of her general style than any mere description. It is no slander to say that she is revolutionary in the extreme, upon all questions, whether social, political, or religious, and while very few can be found to endorse her theories, which, if adopted, would sap the very foundation of existing social, marriage, and family relations, she will rarely fail to impress her hearers or readers with the idea that she really and truly believes what she so enthusiastically teaches.

CHAPTER X.

BIOGRAPHICAL GENERALITIES IN REGARD TO "THE WOODHULL."

Victoria Claflin Woodhull is, as we have said, about thirty-four years of age. The exact time, place or circumstances of her entrance into what she would term her "*earth life*" are not material to our present purpose. She was one of a numerous, and in many respects a very peculiar family; her parents have for years been spiritualists, and her mother a medium and clairvoyant. By many her mother is thought to be insane, and some of her public demonstrations justify the opinion. Victoria was, when a mere child, (under fourteen years) married to Doctor Woodhull, (whose name she still bears) a man of some distinction, of high social position, and of an old and somewhat aristocratic family. He was old enough to be Victoria's father, a thorough "man of the world," a devotee if not a debauchee to all its pleasures. The marriage was not a happy one. It could hardly be expected that there would be any congeniality between a *blaze* man of the world and his unsophisticated "child wife." The first fruit of this incongruous marriage was a boy, born in the city of Chicago; *born an idiot, and remains an idiot* to this day — a direct result, *as she claims*, of a union unblessed by love, and lacking all the essential elements that constitute a true marriage — and it is the constant thought of that terrible wreck of a mother's hopes, that incites her to attack a system which, as she believes, wrecked her young life and fondest hopes. In one of her late speeches upon the sexual slavery, which led her to devote her life to a crusade against conventional marriage, she said: "I have walked the icy pavements of New York City, in mid-winter with nothing on my feet but an old pair of india rubber shoes, and only a common calico dress to cover my body, seeking employment,

while the man who called me wife, and whose sexual slave I was, was spending his money upon other women."

In time the natural, and almost inevitable result of such an ill starred union occurred — a separation and a divorce. For years Victoria was a professional clairvoyant, and practiced it in various parts of the country as a means of support for herself and children, and others of her family, who have looked to her for a home and subsistence.

Some years since she formed a connection with Col. Blood, who has since occupied the position of her husband *in fact*, but not in name or by legal sanctions or forms — a relation in full accordance with her social theories, founded upon mutual love and adaptation, and to continue while those conditions exist, and no longer. In this connection we will allude to the circumstances which gave rise to the story that she was living with two husbands, at the same time and under the same roof.

During the latter years of Doctor Woodhull's life he was broken down by dissipation and disease, destitute, homeless and friendless, he had not where to lay his head. She then (being in affluent circumstances) gave him a home, and took care of him and nursed him until he died, and then buried him.

CHAPTER XI

"THE WOODHULL" AMONG THE BULLS AND BEARS.

A few years ago a great sensation was created by the appearance in Wall street of a firm of Female Brokers. Woodhull & Claflin boldly walked into the arena of Bulls and Bears, and announced their ability and their determination to cope with the "Lords of Creation" in a sphere which had hitherto been considered, like the lodges of Free Masonry, wholly inaccessible to woman. The boldness of the movement attracted attention, and business flowed in upon them; doubtless the novelty of the thing induced many to patronize the "She Brokers" as they were called.

For a time at least the firm was a financial success. They lived in style in an elegant house on Murray Hill, kept their servants, their carriage, supported their poor relations, and entertained their wealthy friends and business acquaintances after the manner of other successful Wall Street operators.

Thus for a time all went on smoothly with the female brokers; until there appeared a new paper, edited and published by this strange firm. "Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly" was its title, and the motto at the head of its columns was

"Progress! Free Thought! Untrammelled Lives!"

"Breaking The Way For Future Generations!"

Its avowed object was the inculcation and free discussion of the extreme doctrines of social and sexual freedom; and its columns were open to any writer, no matter how radical or revolutionary, the more so the better.

To launch a large sized weekly paper requires, not only time, but plenty of money, and the diversion from the brokerage business of so much time and capital, caused the business to fall off, and rendered it necessary for the firm to give up their

Murray Hill mansion, and adopt a more economical mode of living.

Again the boldness with which she advocated her revolutionary theories alienated many of her friends, and the business dwindled, gradually; the climax was reached when in the weekly of Nov. 2d, 1872, she published the Beecher-Tilton scandal; which fell like a thunderbolt upon the community, notwithstanding the fact that there had been for months, hints and insinuations afloat pointing to something of the kind.

The result was, her paper was seized, and for a time suppressed, and she and her sister were arrested and thrown into jail, and from that time the sisters have been subjected to numerous prosecutions — have been arrested no less than eight times — have lain in jail for weeks in succession; and are, at the time we are writing this, under bonds to a very large amount to appear for trial in suits growing out of the publication of the story of Beecher-Tilton, & Co.

Having thus briefly sketched some of the more prominent features of Mrs. Woodhull's public life, we will copy some opinions of others regarding her character, both in public and private life.

CHAPTER XII.

VARIOUS OPINIONS, FROM VARIOUS SOURCES, OF THE WOODHULL.

The first one we copy is from correspondence of the *Troy Whig*, Sept., 1871: "I went yesterday to see Mrs. Woodhull, prompted, I confess, by the most vulgar curiosity, just as I might have walked a block to see Jim Fisk, Beelzebub or a two-headed monstrosity. I had never been more violently prejudiced against any person, man or woman. It was not alone that I considered her impure in character. Private immorality may be viewed with pity, sometimes with contempt. But, accepting with Stuart Mill and Beecher, the principle of Woman's Rights, I loathed Mrs. Woodhull for disgracing a good cause; for brazenly hitching this cause, as I supposed, to the business card of a tramping broker. A thousand things in the general press seemed to justify this conviction. On reaching the lyceum hall of the Spiritualists, I found that Mrs. Woodhull had just finished her remarks to the convention, and had retired with some friends to an ante-room. Seeing an editorial acquaintance I asked him to stroll with me into the room and point her out. I refused an introduction, thinking at first that, in Mrs. Woodhull's case, it would answer to forget the manners of a gentleman, and simply stare at her. But, once in the room, this attitude became ridiculous, and so I was presented to her.

"Doubtless no person in America has been so misjudged as this young woman. Everybody has written harshly of her. I have done so among the rest. But as Tilton heads his biography of Mrs. Woodhull, 'He that uttereth a slander is a fool.' I had not even taken the trouble to read Mr. Tilton's article, until after I saw his heroine. But I now think that in telling the sad story of her life, he has done the American people a noble service.

"Mrs. Woodhull is certainly not a well 'balanced mind.' To use a common word she is 'crazy'—a little so, but in the same sense that Joan of Arc and Swedenborg were, 'out of their heads.' But she is not coarse, not vain, not selfish; she is not even self-conscious in the meaning of ordinary egotism. She has just the reverse of all these qualities. She is simply an enthusiast—the most rapt idealist I have ever met. In conversation she never seems to think of herself, and scarcely of her listener; she is entirely lost, absorbed heart and soul, in the ideas she advocates. Her very financial schemes seem a crusade against Wall street, rather than endeavors to prosper by its vicious gambling.

"Mr. Tilton's description of her person is accurate. Her face is not sensuously attractive, but its intellectual beauty is much more than remarkable. I know of no other character with such a transparent expression of impassioned thought. Even Anna Dickinson, whose moral earnestness is almost the whole secret of her power, has an inexpressive face compared with this sibyl of politics and Spiritualism.

* * * * *

"She is such an intense nature that I presume she sees visions—as many angels as St. John, perhaps as many devils as Luther. Had she been carefully trained from childhood, I must think she would have been a wonderful scholar, poet and thinker. As it is she is an abnormal growth of democratic institutions—thoroughly sincere, and fitted to exaggerate great truths.

"But now that Mr. Tilton has shown her personal character to be as pure as that of any woman married after divorce; now that the story of her two husbands has been exploded in all but the most generous pity and charity, for the outcast Woodhull, American editors should heal the wound they have caused by their ignorant slanders. If the press of this nation has not settled into a hopeless oligarchy of gossips, a 'coward's castle' filled with blackguards, it will make the atonement that common decency demands."

WHAT ELIZABETH CADY STANTON THOUGHT OF "THE WOODHULL."

In a letter published in the *Golden Age* December, 1871, Mrs. Stanton says:

"Some people carp at the national organization because it indorses Mrs. Woodhull. When our representatives granted to Victoria C. Woodhull a hearing before the judiciary committee — an honor conferred on no other woman in the nation before — they recognized Mrs. Woodhull as the leader of the woman suffrage movement in this country. And those of us, who were convinced by her unanswerable arguments that her positions were sound, had no choice but to follow.

"Mrs. Woodhull's speeches and writings, on all the great questions of national life, are beyond anything yet produced by man or woman on one platform. What if foul-mouthed scandal with its many tongues seeks to defile her? Shall we ignore a champion like this? Admit, for the sake of argument, that what all men say of her is true — though it is false — that she has been, or is a courtesan, in sentiment and practice. When a woman of this class shall suddenly devote herself to the study of the grave problem of life, brought there by profound thought, or sad experience, and with new hope and faith struggles to redeem the errors of the past by a grand life in the future, shall we not welcome her to the better place she desires to hold? There is to me a sacredness in individual experience that it seems to me like profanation to search into and expose.

"Victoria C. Woodhull stands before us to-day a grand, brave woman, radical alike in political, religious and social principles. Her face and form indicate the complete triumph in her nature of the spiritual over the sensuous. The processes of her education are little to us; the grand result is everything. Are our brilliant flowers less fragrant, our luscious fruit less palatable, because the *debris* of sewers and barn-yards have enriched them? The nature that can pass through all phases of social degradation, vice, crime, poverty and temptation in all its forms, and yet maintain a purity and dignity of character through all, gives unmistakable proof of its high origin, its divinity.

"The *Lilium Candium* — that magnificent lily, so white and pure that it looks as if it could ne'er battle with the wind and storm; that queen of flowers flourishes in all soils, braves all winds and weathers, sunshine and rain, heat and cold, and with its feet in frozen clods still lifts its pure white face forever towards the stars.

"When I think of the merciless and continued persecution of that little woman by the entire press of this nation, I blush for humanity. In the name of woman let me thank you (Mr. Tilton) for so generously defending her."

Again in a letter to the *Weekly*, of date March 10, 1872, Mrs. Stanton says:

"I ask no higher praise than to have it said that you — maligned, denounced, and wickedly persecuted by priests, politicians, press and people — ever found in my heart a warm and welcome place, and by my side you are doing a grand work, not only for your sex but for humanity. I have read all your speeches and bound volumes on political and social equality, and I consider your arguments on the many national questions now moving popular thought, able and unanswerable.

"Do not let the coldness and ingratitude of some of your sex wound you, while such noble women as Lucretia Mott, Martha C. Wright, Paulina W. Davis, Matilda J. Gage, Mary J. Davis, Susan B. Anthony and Isabella Beecher Hooker are one and all your sincere friends.

"The latter spent a few days with me not long since; and one night, as we sat alone hour after hour, by the bright moonlight, talking over the past, the present, and the future of woman's sad history, and happier destiny, and of your sudden and marvellous coming, she abruptly exclaimed, 'that little woman has bridged with her prostrate body an awful gulf over which womanhood will walk to her freedom.' Many of us fully appreciate the deep plowing, sub-soiling and under-draining you have done for public and private morals in the last year; and while the world sneers at your blunders, we shall garner up your noble utterances with grateful hearts."

From the *Sunday Gazette*, Washington, D. C., Jan'y, 1872.

VICTORIA C. WOODHULL.

"Those professing independence are not independent if they are afraid to tell the truth when a proper time exists for its expression. Concerning the prominent woman whose name stands at the head of this article, we propose to speak the truth, to re-iterate a few facts of history.

"Victoria C. Woodhull in her, personal appearance and ad-

dress is a gentle lady. She charms all who come within the influences of her presence, and attaches such to her as friends. She is an eminent truth-teller. Touching the faults and blemishes of her life she herself tells the truth. Anything beyond what she tells resolves itself into the form of unwarranted and malignant strictures—the offspring alike of jealousy or depravity, and from which the names of but few women are free in this wicked world. Well-judging men, those who are familiar with the world, are not apt to eagerly credit irresponsible reports affecting a lady's character. They also know enough to know that a woman with a face like Victoria Woodhull's—one radiant even with an angelic expression—is not, and cannot easily be a bad woman. 'Impossible!' echo those who know her. Another fact: She is generous to the poor. Her hands are white with charity. She is a modest woman. It is her devotion to a cause in which her heart and tremendous energies are interested, that inspires her. It is the advancement of the cause, her interest in humanity, and not personal pride or ambition which impel her onward. She is a popular woman. She is heroic and self-sacrificing, and would not hesitate at anything, not even the laying down of her life, for truth."

Susan B. Anthony, in her speech before the woman's suffrage convention in Washington, Jan'y, 1872, said: "Some one says I am mad. Victoria Woodhull was mad last night; but she did not begin to be as mad as I am now. She has been abused, but not half as much as I have been.

"When I heard of a woman on Wall street I went to see her. Women have the same right there that men have. I have been asked by many, 'Why did you drag Victoria C. Woodhull to the front?' Now, bless your souls, she was not dragged to the front. She came to Washington with a powerful argument. She presented her memorial to Congress, and it was a power. I should have been glad to call it the Dickinson Memorial, or the Beecher Memorial, or even the Anthony Memorial, since it was a mighty effort, of which any woman might be proud. She had an interview with the Judiciary Committee; we could never secure that privilege. She was young, handsome and rich. Now if it take youth, beauty and money to capture Congress, Victoria is the woman we are after.

"Women have too much false modesty. I was asked by the editor of a New York paper if I knew Mrs. Woodhull's antecedents. I said I didn't, and that I did not care any more for them than I do about those of the members of Congress. Her antecedents will compare favorably with any member of Congress.

"I have been asked along the line of the Pacific Coast : 'What about Woodhull ; you make her your leader ?' Now we don't make leaders ; they make themselves. If any can accomplish a more brilliant effort than Victoria Woodhull let him or her go ahead and they shall be our leader."

CHAPTER XIII.

SAINT VICTORIA AS PAINTED BY THEODORE TILTON, BEING
EXTRACTS FROM HIS BIOGRAPHY OF MRS. WOODHULL.

MOTTO. "*He that uttereth a slander is a fool.*"

Solomon.

"I Shall swiftly sketch the life of Victoria Claflin Woodhull; a young woman whose career has been as singular as any heroine's in a romance; whose ability is of rare, and whose career of the rarest type; whose personal sufferings are of themselves a whole drama of pathos; whose name (through the malice of some and the ignorance of others) has caught a shadow in strange contrast with the whiteness of her life; whose position as a representative of her sex in the greatest reform of modern times, renders her an object of peculiar interest to her fellow citizens; and whose character (inasmuch as I know her well) I can portray without color or tinge from any other partiality save that I hold her in uncommon respect."

Passing over that portion of Mr. Tilton's Biography which relates to family or domestic matters which are not pertinent to our purpose, we again quote: Speaking of her former husband, (Doct. Woodhull) he said: "To be now turned out of doors by the woman he had wronged, but who would not wrong him in return, would be an act of inhumanity which it would be impossible for Mrs. Woodhull and Col. Blood either jointly or separately to commit. For this piece of noble conduct — what is commonly called her living with two husbands under one roof — she has received not so much censure on earth, as I think she will receive reward in heaven. No other passage of her life more singularly illustrates the nobility of her moral judgements, or the supernal courage with which she stands by her convictions. Not all the clamorous tongues in

Christendom, though they should simultaneously cry out against her, 'Fie, for shame!' could persuade her to turn this wretched wreck from her home. And I say she is right, and I will maintain this opinion against the combined Pecksniffs of the whole world.

"This act and the malice of enemies, together with her bold opinions on social questions, have combined to give her reputation a stain. But no slander ever fell on any human soul with greater injustice. A more unsullied woman does not walk the earth. She is one of those aspiring devotees who tread the earth merely as a stepping-stone to heaven, and whose chief ambition is finally to present herself at the supreme tribunal 'spotless, and without wrinkle, or blemish, or any such thing.' Knowing her as well as I do, I cannot hear an accusation against her without recalling Tennyson's line of King Arthur:

'Is thy white blamelessness accounted blame?'"

In speaking of the Woodhull Memorial to Congress he says:

"The document was shown to a number of friends, including one eminent judge, who ridiculed its logic and conclusions. But the lady herself, from whose sleeping and yet unsleeping brain the strange document had sprung like Minerva from the head of Jove, simply answered that her antique instructor, having never misled her before, was guiding her along then. Nothing doubting, but much wondering, she took the novel demand to Washington, where, after a few days of laughter from the shallow minded, and of neglect from the indifferent it suddenly burst upon the Federal Capital like a storm, and then spanned it like a rainbow. She went before the Judiciary Committee, and delivered an argument in support of her claim to the franchise under the new amendments, which some who heard it pronounced one of the ablest efforts, which they had ever heard on any subject. She caught the listening ear of Senator Carpenter, General Butler, Judge Woodward, George W. Julian, General Ashley, Judge Loughridge and other able statesmen in Congress, and harnessed these gentlemen as steeds to her chariot. Such was the force of her appeal that the whole city rushed together to hear it, like the Athe-

nians to the market place when Demosthenes stood in his own and not borrowed clay.

"A great audience one of the finest ever gathered in the capital, assembled to hear her defend her thesis in the first public speech of her life. At the moment of rising, her face was observed to be very pale, and she appeared about to faint. On being afterward questioned as to the cause of her emotion, she replied that, during the first prolonged moment, she remembered a prediction of her guardian spirit, until then forgotten, that she would one day speak in public, and that her first discourse would be pronounced in the capital of her country. The sudden fulfillment of this prophecy smote her so violently that for a moment she was stunned into apparent unconsciousness. But she recovered herself, and passed through the ordeal with great success, which is better luck than happened to the real Demosthenes, for Plutarch mentions that his maiden speech was a failure, and he was laughed at by the people.

"Assisted by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Paulina Wright Davis, Isabella Beecher Hooker, Susan B. Anthony and other staunch and able women, whom she swiftly persuaded into accepting this construction of the constitution, she succeeded after her petition was denied by a majority of the Judiciary Committee, in obtaining a minority report in its favor, signed jointly by Gen. Benj. F. Butler of Massachusetts, and Judge Loughridge of Iowa. To have clutched this report from General Butler — as it were a scalp from the ablest head in the house of Representatives — was a sufficient trophy to entitle the brave lady to an enrollment in the political history of her country.

"I must say something of her personal appearance, although it defies portrayal, whether by photograph or pen. Neither tall nor short, stout or slim, she is of medium stature, lithe and elastic, free and graceful. Her side face, looked at over her left shoulder, is of perfect aquiline outline, as classic as ever went into Roman marble, and resembles the mask of Shakespeare taken after death; the same view, looking from the right, is a little broken and irregular, and the front face is broad, with prominent cheek bones, and with some unshapely nasal lines.

"Her countenance is never twice alike, so variable is its expression and so dependent on her moods. Her soul comes into

it and goes out of it, giving her at one time the look of a superior and almost saintly intelligence, and at another leaving her dull, common place and unprepossessing. When under strong spiritual influence, a strange and mystical light irradiates from her face, reminding the beholder of the Hebrew Lawgiver who gave to men, what he received from God, and whose face during the transfer shone. Tennyson, as with the hand of a gold-beater has beautifully gilded the same expression in his stanza of St. Stephen the martyr in the article of death :

“ ‘ And looking upward, full of grace
He prayed, and from a happy place
God’s glory smote him on the face.’

“ In conversation, until she is somewhat warmed with earnestness, she halts, as if her mind was elsewhere, but the moment she brings all her faculties to her lips for the full utterance of her message, whether it be of persuasion or indignation, and particularly when under spiritual control, she is a very orator for eloquence—pouring forth her sentences like a mountain stream, sweeping everything that frets its flood. Her hair which, left to itself, is as long as those tresses of Hortense in which her son, Louis Napoleon, used to play hide-and-seek, she now mercilessly cuts short like a boy’s from impatience at the daily waste of time in suitably taking care of this prodigal gift of nature.

“ ‘ Difficulties,’ says Emerson, ‘ exist to be surmounted.’ This might be the motto of her life. In her lexicon (which is still of youth) there is no such word as fail. Her ambition is stupendous, nothing is too great for her grasp. Prescient of the grandeur of her destiny, she goes forward with a resistless fanaticism to accomplish it. Believing thoroughly in herself (or rather in her spirit aids) she allows no one to doubt either her or them. In her case the old miracle is enacted anew, the faith which removes mountains. A soul set on edge is a conquering weapon in the battle of life. Such, and of Damascus temper is hers.

“ In making an epitome of her views, I may say that in politics she is a downright democrat, scorning to divide her fellow-citizens into upper and lower classes, but ranking them all in one comprehensive equality of right, privilege and opportunity; concerning finance, which is a favorite topic with her, she holds

that gold is not the true standard of money-value, but that the government should abolish the gold-standard, and issue its notes instead, giving to these a fixed and permanent value, and circulating them as the only money; on social questions, her theories are similar to those which have long been taught by John Stuart Mill and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and which are styled by some as free-love doctrines, while others reject this appellation on account of its popular association with the idea of a promiscuous intimacy between the sexes — the essence of her system being that marriage is of the heart, and not of the law; that when love ends, marriage should end with it, being dissolved by nature, and that no civil statute should outwardly bind two hearts which have been inwardly sundered; and in religion, she is a spiritualist of the most mystical and ethereal type.

“Engrossed in business affairs, nevertheless at any moment, she would rather die than live, such is her infinite estimate of the other world over this. But she disdains all common place parleyings with the spirit-realm, such as are had in ordinary spirit-manifestations. On the other hand, she is passionately anxious to see the spirits face to face — to summon them at her will, and commune with them at her pleasure. Twice (as she unshakenly believes) she has seen a vision of Jesus Christ, honored thus doubly over St. Paul, who saw his master but once, and then was overcome by the sight. She never goes to any church — save the solemn temple whose starry arch spans her housetop at night, there she sits like Simeon Stylites on his pillar, a worshiper in the sky. Against the inculcations of her childish education, the spirits have taught her that he whom the church calls Savior of the world is not God, but man. But her reverence for him is supreme and ecstatic. The Sermon on the Mount fills her eyes with tears. The exulting exclamations of the Psalmist are her familiar outbursts of devotion. For two years as a talisman against any temptation towards untruthfulness, (which with her, is the unpardonable sin) she wore, stitched into the sleeve of every one of her dresses the 2d verse of the 120th Psalm, namely, ‘Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.’ Speaking the truth punctilliously, whether in great things or small, she

so rigorously exacts the same of others, that a deceit practiced upon her, enkindles her soul to a flame of fire; and she has acquired a clairvoyant or intuitive power to detect a lie in the moment of its utterance, and to smite the liar in the act of his guilt. She believes that intellectual power has its fountains in spiritual inspiration. And once when I put to her the searching question, 'What is the greatest truth that has ever been expressed in words?' she thrilled me with the sudden answer, 'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.'

"As showing that her early clairvoyant power still abides, I will mention a fresh instance. An eminent judge in Pennsylvania, in whose court-house I had once lectured, called to see me lately at the office of *The Golden Age*. On my inquiring after his family, he told me a strange event had just happened in it. 'Three months ago,' said he, 'while I was in New York, Mrs. Woodhull said to me, with a rush of feeling, 'Judge, I foresee that you will lose two of your children within six weeks,' This announcement, he said, wounded him as a sort of tragic trifling with life and death. 'But,' I asked, 'did anything follow the prophecy?' 'Yes,' he replied, 'fulfillment; I lost two children within six weeks.' 'The Judge who is a Methodist, thinks that Victoria the clairvoyant, is like 'Anna the prophetess.'

"Let me say that I know of no person against whom there are more prejudices, nor any who more quickly disarms them. This strange faculty is the most wonderful of her powers. She shoots a word like a sudden sunbeam through the thickest mist of people's doubts and accusations, and clears the sky in a moment. Questioned by some committee or delegation who have come to her with idle tales against her busy life, I have seen her swiftly gather together all the stones they have cast, put them like miner's quartz into the furnace, melt them with fierce and fervent heat, bring out of them the purest gold, stamp thereon her image and superscription as she were sovereign of the realm, and then (as the marvel of it all) receive the sworn allegiance of the whole company on the spot. At one of her public meetings, when the chair (as she hoped) would be occupied by Lucretia Mott, this venerable woman had been persuaded to decline this responsibility, but afterward stepped

forward on the platform and lovingly kissed the young speaker in the presence of the multitude. Her enemies (save those of her own household) are strangers. To see her is to respect her, to know her is to vindicate her. She has some impetuous and headlong faults, but were she without the same traits which produce these, she would not possess the mad and magnificent energies which (if she lives) will make her a heroine of history.

"In conclusion, amid all the rush of her active life, she believes with Wordsworth that

'The gods approve the depth, and not
The tumult of the soul.'

So, whether buffeted by criticism, or defamed by slander, she carries herself in that religious peace which, through all turbulence, is 'a measureless content.' When apparently about to be struck down she gathers unseen strength and goes forward conquering and to conquer. Known only as a rash iconoclast, and ranked even with the most uncouth of those noise-makers who are waking a sleepy world before its time, she beats her daily gong of business and reform with notes not musical but strong, yet mellows the outward rudeness of the rythm by the inward and devout song of one of the sincerest, most reverent, and divinely gifted of human souls."

The reader will bear in mind that the foregoing opinions or estimates of Mrs. Woodhull, are given as they were recorded by the persons named, and *they* and *not the author* are wholly responsible for them. But we will say here, that our description of the personal appearance of Mrs. Woodhull was written before we had ever seen those copied above.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW "THE WOODHULL" OUTWITTED THE UNITED STATES MARSHALS, JAN'Y 9, 1873, AND SPOKE HER PIECE AT COOPER INSTITUTE IN SPITE OF THEM.

After the first arrest of Woodhull and Claflin, and their release on bail, Mrs. Woodhull prepared a speech which she called "The Naked Truth, or The Situation Reviewed!" and it was announced that she would deliver it in Cooper Institute on the evening of January 9th, 1873, whereupon another order for their arrest was issued by an U. S. Judge, and placed in the hands of an U. S. Marshal to be executed. This fact coming to the knowledge of Woodhull and Claflin, they resorted to the same strategy once practiced by Jim Fisk during the Erie war, *i. e.*, they changed their base to Jersey City, and were invisible, at least to the officers of the law.

The evening came, and an immense crowd from all directions converged at the Cooper Institute. An U. S. Marshal stood guard at every door prepared to arrest the sisters should they make their appearance; and the people were informed that there would be no lecture as they should, by arresting Mrs. Woodhull, prevent her from speaking; but while a few turned back the masses somehow had faith and filed in, filling the hall. The description of the scene within the hall we copy from a letter written by one who was present, and it is fair to say that the writer is a warm partizan and an ardent admirer of Woodhull.

"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, wearing a 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 absurd-

ity 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 in that Quaker garb, and that the spirit of Ann Lee masked the fiery, 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 at every door, and 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 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 moves. She rises from her seat, and with the irresoluteness of old age, moves to the stairway of the platform, and slowly, deliberately ascending it, walks half-way across the stage. A number of people laugh at the serio-comic figure as it passes 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 from her own words, ‘The enemies of free-speech have another order of arrest for Mrs. Woodhull. She cannot appear to-night unless she be again thrown into the American Bastile. She has intercepted her enemies, however, so far as this; though they may shut out Mrs. Woodhull, they cannot 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 Clafin can, no matter how much they desire it, appear on this platform to-night.’ With the celerity of a flash of light-

ning the old Quaker lady dashed from behind the pillar. Old age, coal-scuttle bonnet and grey dress disappeared like magic. Had a thunderbolt fallen upon the audience they could not have been any more surprised or 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 with long suppressed emotion, her arms raised aloft in nervous excitement, her hair in wild, yet graceful confusion, her head thrown back like the head of the Apollo Belvidere, she looked the personification of Liberty in arms. Her voice raised in clear, 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 a 'fire to heater set,' igniting with an animated and undefined surprise each and every heart present. It was Otis in the fire of the revolution; Garrison breaking the shackles of the slave; Phillips in the alarm of labor; a Parker in the throes of religious freedom. Victoria had the floor, and falsehood, slander and ignorance fainted to the death in the grasp of eternal truth.

"For an 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.

* * * * *

"Strong men looked up to the little woman as a new revelation of womanhood, the prophetess of truth, the Messiah of politics, a weird, spiritual sybil, infused with marvellous 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 severed blood of the audience sank to 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 has reached the ear of the public.

"The night of January 9th, 1873, passes into history, and the bravest and truest of her sex moves further up Calvary from the rostrum to a prison."

CHAPTER XV.

TENNIE C. CLAFLIN.

THE FAVORITE SISTER, CO-WORKER AND PARTNER OF "THE WOODHULL."

Our sketch of Tennie will be brief, as her public life has been so intertwined with that of her elder sister that the story of Mrs. Woodhull is necessarily to a great extent that of Tennie. It is rare that you will find two sisters more devotedly attached to each other, and yet they are very unlike. It is not the purpose of the author to give a correct biography of Miss Claflin, or to go into the details of her private life. Like her sister she was, even in girlhood, a clairvoyant and so-called medium, and for several years professionally followed it as a vocation in various parts of the country. She has been married and divorced, indeed, to be married and divorced seems to run in the family, but with her married or domestic life we have nothing to do.

Miss Claflin is about twenty-eight years of age, but really looks much younger, in fact her face in its expression is almost child-like. She is rather below medium height, and while she is not stout, she has a plump, well-rounded form, and in both form and features singularly free from anything approximating to angularities; her complexion is light, almost to paleness, and her skin is fair as that of an infant; hair, light brown, worn short, and inclined to curl; eyes blue, sparkling, and very expressive. When engaged in conversation upon any topic which interests her, she is all animation; talking not only with her tongue, but with eyes, face, hands, and *all over*; and one would think her whole physical structure was inlaid with a thousand sensitive spiral springs. She is all nerve and vivacity; full of magnetism and excitability, very free in her modes of expres-



TENNIE C. CLAFLIN.

sion, and seemingly never stops to think how any sentence is going to sound to another, or that by her careless freedom she is liable to be misapprehended, and notwithstanding she has since her girlhood been much around the world, and has mingled largely and freely with men of the world, she will say and do the most *outré* things, but with an air of the most child-like and unsophisticated innocence.

Her face does not wear the sad expression of her sister, nor is it like hers "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought." We should judge that as a broker she would be of more service to the firm as a drummer up of business, and in entertaining patrons, than in attending to details which require patience and consecutive thought, and that as one of the late stock brokerage firm of Woodhull & Claflin, Tennie was the Jim Fisk and Victoria the Jay Gould; and as publishers of the *Weekly* Victoria's sphere was the editorial sanctum and Tennie's that of outside business *man*! to get subscribers and secure paying advertisements. Like her sister she is an ardent spiritualist, and sees visions, and dreams dreams; both developing a strong hereditary superstition of this peculiar form.

Tennie sometimes is heard upon the platform as a speaker, and while quite as enthusiastic as her sister, is not as argumentative or effective. She also wields a ready pen, and has issued quite a large book under the title of "Constitutional Equality of the Sexes." She has also written more or less for the *Weekly*, and has given to the public through its columns free utterance to her free social theories; her strongest points however are made on the subject of the social equality of the sexes — maintaining that if the woman who violates the laws of social purity is ostracised by society, her male partner in guilt should suffer the same penalty, or if the libertine and seducer be received into, and petted by society, his female victim be equally well received — that if female chastity be the condition of social recognition, the same condition be inexorably required of the man; that if Hester Prynne be compelled to wear the "scarlet letter" in the market place, her reverend seducer shall stand by her side, wearing the same red insignia of shame; or to use an old and trite maxim, "Sauce for goose, sauce for gander." In our introductory we announced that we did not intend to either

commend or condemn the doctrines promulgated by any of our characters, nor do we now. But we will say if *this* one feature of social equality could generally prevail, we do not think there would be much further occasion for preaching about social reform or social freedom. As specimens of Tennie's style of writings and speeches, we copy some extracts from one of her published speeches :

"Whatever may be your ideas as to whether individuals should, or should not, be permitted to think upon social freedom, and to advocate their views regarding it, none of you will, I dare say, presume to deny my sister and myself the right to advocate whatever religious views we may hold ; and I further presume you will not object to our changing those views (at any time) according to any new light that may shine upon us.

"Herein, I shall not hesitate to say that in religion we are most thorough, and I trust devout spiritualists ; and that whether we are deceived, insane, or whatever else may be conceived of, all our movements are largely the result of spirit influence, and often of positive direction. And we are proud to proclaim at all times and in all places that we yield willing obedience to all such requirements, because through a long series of years we have learned from frequent trial to trust them.

"We know, as well as any of you know what you are engaged in, that we are engaged in introducing new social views to the notice, and for the consideration of the general public ; and that these views look to radical and sweeping changes in the present system, which everybody knows must be changed before anything like the millenium, in which all Christians pretend to believe, can be realized. Step by step we have been led on, from one thing to another, sometimes ourselves even, fearing the results which might come, but ever being justified by what has come, until we now stand on the very brink of what we know, is to be a social earthquake. What this earthquake may destroy, who may be swallowed up in its yawning chasm, or whether we ourselves may be swept away, we do not know ; but that great good to the human family will come of it, we feel assured. Our course has not always brought us peace, happiness and comfort ; on the contrary we have suffered almost all the terrors

to which human life is subject. Even now we stand under two criminal indictments, upon both of which, if present public opinion, under the manipulations of the church and press, could have its way, whether according to law we are, or are not guilty, we should be so adjudged; yet we rely upon truth as against all other powers that may be conjured up to oppose it, and we know that it shall triumph, even if we are crushed in the process.

"You must remember that many, if not most of you, to-day worship One, who in doing His duty to His Father, died upon the cross. None of you imagine that it was a pleasant duty He performed in thus yielding up His life. He did not live selfishly for Himself, as I fear most of those who profess him so loudly, live for themselves. He was despised of the authorities in government, in philosophy and in religion, His associates were Magdalens, sinners and lowly fishermen; and yet you now exalt Him to the throne of the Universe, and pretend *weekly at least*, to bow in homage before His shrine.

"I would not have it understood from this reference that my sister and I presume to place ourselves as Christs of the present generation. On the contrary we wish it to be distinctly understood, that we lay claim to nothing, except this: that without fear or favor, we do what we believe to be right to do; that we live the life which is the best we can live, and which we are willing the whole world shall know, and that we obey the directions of those whom we know to be wiser than we are. Again I say you may credit us with insanity, if you will; but I pray you, along with it, to also give us credit for honesty of purpose.

"It has been freely circulated through the press, that we are simply notoriety seekers. Now let me ask you to consider calmly for a moment the probabilities of such a thing. Do people usually invoke upon themselves continuous persecution, merely to obtain notoriety? Do they consciously invoke the terrible power of the press to crush them, to brand them before the world by every vile and detestable epithet known to language; do they seek the hoots and jeers of the common multitudes, and the sneers, and the upturned noses of the select few wherever they go; do they purposely, render themselves friendless, and homeless and distressed in all possible and conceivable

ways merely to become simply notorious? Nay, my friends! none of you can honestly say you believe this. It requires stern convictions of duty; unflinching allegiance to purposes; undying devotion to principles, and an unswerving faith to enable any one, and especially frail women, to endure unto the end under all these trials.

* * * * *

"If one half that has been charged against us, had even a shadow of foundation in fact, we should have been long ere this, and justly too, in the Penitentiary.

"Early in this course, which has been marked out to us, we sometimes almost fainted by the way-side. It was almost a greater sorrow than we could endure, to see the whole public press teeming with the most outrageous and debasing items about us. Every woman knows what it requires to endure even the shadow of a reflection upon her private social life, to say nothing about sweeping charges, destroying in the minds of those, who from them alone, gather their information, and form their conclusions, every sentiment of respect, and making room for utter detestation and hate.

"It has been said that we are utterly insensible to these things; but if the public knew what it has cost us in sleepless nights, in heart-aches and laceration of soul, to be able to perform our duties, under the heavy hand, that has at times been laid upon us, you would wonder, not that we have maintained ourselves, but that we could ever presume to think of living at all.

* * * * *

"There are thousands upon thousands in this country, who hate us with the most inveterate hatred; who think us the personification of every thing that is bad, who honestly believe that no fate could be too cruel for us to endure, and yet not one of these people, *of their own knowledge*, know a single fact to justify their convictions.

* * * * *

"Man proposes, but God disposes; and we are very willing to act our part as best we may, and trust the rest to Him who 'maketh even the wrath of man to praise Him.' We have cast ourselves into the gap broken in social despotism, and there

we shall stand firmly and proudly, until the war shall be ended and the victory secured, even if it bring death to us. And I say here and now: We shall be justified!

"Thus through storm and sunshine alike, we have steadfastly pursued our way, halting at nothing, but shoulder to shoulder, battling together, for what we believe to be the right and the truth."

* * * * *

The following sentences, are extracts from a letter written by Miss Claffin, to a prostitute, in answer to one she had written to Mrs. Woodhull, asking for some advice and counsel, in her determination to lead a different life: "I am proud to call you also, sister, as I do every one of the daughters of our common Father in heaven. * * * I live on Murray Hill, quite among the respectables, and am visited continually by all classes, from the family of the President, and from clergymen and their wives and the presidents of colleges down to the most humble, and I shall be happy to receive you at my home at any time, alone, or with others of your class; and shall be as ready to accompany you on the street, or dine with you at the restaurant, as if you were in all respects, the first ladies of the land. It is enough for me that you are human beings, and such as Christ loved and associated with. If you are not doing as well as you might under all your conditions, I hope to love you into doing better. * * * I have to associate with male prostitutes every day, in my business and elsewhere, and if I condemn, and despise and avoid women of like character, am I not glaringly false and traitorous to the dignity and equality of my own sex, and a participant in the injustice and outrage which men would and do heap upon us?

CHAPTER XVI.

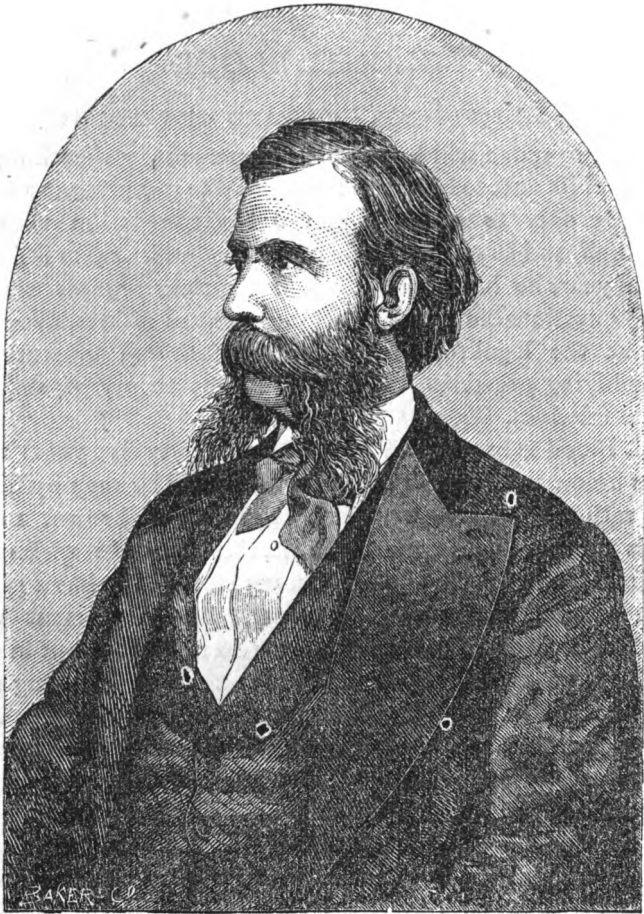
COLONEL BLOOD.

THE LOVER AND "BREVET" HUSBAND OF "THE WOODHULL."

But little space will be required in personally sketching Col. Blood. His antecedents are immaterial to our present purpose ; we have only to speak of him in his connection with Mrs. Woodhull, and as one of the firm of Woodhull, Claflin & Co. For several years he has occupied the (as society regards such alliances) questionable position of the husband of Mrs. Woodhull, without the legal form or sanction of church or state, thus exemplifying practically Mrs. Woodhull's theory of social and sexual freedom.

Col. Blood is, we should judge about thirty-five years of age, rather below the average height, and, as will be seen by his portrait, rather good looking. His hair is a dark brown, and his face is adorned with a heavy mustache, and side whiskers approximating in length the Dundreary style. He has a pleasing countenance, and is a good talker, has a pleasant voice ; whether he ever makes speeches we do not know, but in public meetings, when making an announcement, or speaking a few words upon any subject under discussion, he impresses one as having clear ideas, and at least a fair capacity for expressing them, and is in appearance what would be generally termed a "good fellow." It has been said, and is by many believed that he is the "power behind the throne," or the "Warwick" of the Woodhull kingdom, and that he writes the speeches, editorials, etc., of Victoria and Tennie. But we should judge from what we had seen of the trio, that such a suspicion is not well founded. This however is a matter of opinion rather than knowledge. But we do believe him to be a valuable, and important spoke in the business wheel of the firm.

In regard to his peculiar relations with Mrs. Woodhull, no



COL. J. H. BLOOD.

better description can be given, than that of Mrs. Woodhull herself, in a recent speech at Vineland N. J., pointing to Col. Blood she said: "There stands my lover, but when I cease to love him, I shall leave him, I hope however that time will never come."

CHAPTER XVII.

HENRY C. BOWEN.

THE EX-DRY GOODS PRINCE — THE EDITOR AND PUBLISHER,
AND THE FIRST ONE TO CHARGE MR. BEECHER WITH SOCIAL
DELINQUENCIES.

Mr. Bowen is not one of the most prominent characters in the history we are writing, still as he was the first to promulgate the story of Mr. Beecher's "little game" he is deserving a brief notice in this work. It is not necessary however that we give his pedigree, time or place of birth, nor enter into more than generalities in the sketch given of him. Mr. Bowen, as to age, is probably up in the sixties. He was formerly one of the foremost dry goods merchants in New York, being the senior partner of the house of Bowen, McNamee & Co., who many years ago did business down Broadway, below the Astor House, afterward in a splendid block erected on the site of the old Broadway Theatre. He was from its foundation one of the pillars of Plymouth church, and probably was more largely instrumental than any other one man, in securing the services of Mr. Beecher, as its pastor. He was always a radical abolitionist, having received his business, political and religious training from the Tappans, who were among the pioneers in the anti-slavery movement in New York. His house at one time had a large southern trade, but when sectional strife was at its flood, the names of Bowen, McNamee & Co. were among the first to be put upon what was called the "black list," and southern merchants were emphatically warned not to patronize them. They accepted the situation, and boldly unfurled a banner bearing the following inscription "*Our Goods, and not our Principles for sale.*" Mr. Bowen was one of the founders of the

Independent and it is not too much to say that no paper in this country in its inception, ever had such a brilliant array of talent, editorial, and as stated contributors as this. Its responsible editors were, Rev. Joshua Leavitt, Rev. Geo. B. Cheever, D. D., Rev. Leonard Bacon D. D., and Rev. R. S. Storrs, Jr. D. D. Among its stated contributors were Henry Ward Beecher, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Rev. Chas. L. Brace, Rev. F. D. Huntington, (at that time a popular Unitarian clergyman in Boston, but now the Episcopal Bishop of Central New York) Edna Dean Proctor, and many others. Mr. Bowen was the commercial editor, and furnished, or was responsible for the "sinews of war." During the financial storm of 1857, "a feature" in the business department of the *Independent*, was the publication weekly, of a list of failures. Many commercial and mercantile houses protested against this feature, but the commercial editor with characteristic firmness adhered to the plan, until one fine day the old, and as was supposed, wealthy firm of Bowen, McNamee & Co., had to "walk the plank" whereupon it was suddenly discovered that the publication of the list of failures was not expedient. It came to pass, in the course of human events that Mr. Bowen abandoned mercantile pursuits, and finally became (after the retirement of Mr. Richards) the publisher of the *Independent*, and is now publisher, proprietor, and, in name at least, editor. He is a shrewd, sharp, business man, but some of his transactions, in relation to the Beecher scandal, and his summary dismissal of Mr. Tilton from his position as editor of the *Independent* and the "*Brooklyn Union*," are, to say the least a little questionable.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHAT MRS. WOODHULL IS STRIVING TO ACCOMPLISH, AS GLEANED FROM AN INTERVIEW WITH HER PRIOR TO HER PUBLICATION OF THE BEECHER-TILTON SCANDAL.

In the following pages, the author does not attempt to give Mrs. Woodhull's exact language, nor all she said, but rather a sort of resume or digest which he believes fairly represents her views at that time. But as she is progressive, and claims the right to change her views or her lovers at any time, these sentiments may fall short of, or go beyond her present position on the social question. We will however give it to our readers as what one year ago we would term

"MRS. WOODHULL'S SOCIAL UTOPIA."

The reader will for convenience sake consider that it is Mrs. Woodhull, and not the author who is speaking.

I am always ready to give any information in regard to my views, and ultimate aims, but I am often misunderstood or misrepresented, perhaps through a want of recollection on the part of the interviewer of what I really do say, and often those to whom I impart my views are apt to select out some matters which will afford themes for gossip and print them, and leave wholly out of view those things that show a comprehensive scheme of social reorganization, and which if more fully understood by the public they would think better of me than they do. I naturally expect adverse criticism. My motives are revolutionary and go to the very foundations upon which government, commerce, industries, the household and the social relations are built. The leaven is slowly, but surely working. My boldest and most radical utterances which a few years ago would have shocked the sensibilities of people, are now recognized as truths, and hundreds of men and women in this city, of the first respectability have told me that they cordially endorse my

most revolutionary ideas ; but as a general thing they fear to give publicity to the fact of their holding such notions, because it might tumble them from the pinnacle of respectability they now occupy. *Respectability!* It is the most horrid word in the language, so long as a man or woman has a particle of it left, their ability for usefulness is dwarfed if not wholly eliminated. I thank heaven I have none of it in my composition.

Now you have asked me to tell you all I am striving for, and what I hope to accomplish, well it is a *big job*, and in the brief space of time I can now devote to an index of it, I can barely give you an inkling, and a crude one at that. It is nothing less than such an evangelization of the world, as shall result in the reformation of government, the establishment of an equitable commerce, the purification of society in all its complex relations, the eradication of poverty, the installment of the people into comfortable and elegant homes, the beautification of the earth, the universal diffusion of intelligence, and the giving to every human being the opportunity of attaining the highest development, morally, intellectually and physically, of which she or he is capable.

CHAPTER XIX.

A VERITABLE MILLENIUM.

I am sanguine that all I have said is to be accomplished, and I am determined to do my share to bring about the result. Of course people are incredulous, even those who fully recognize the falsities and wrongs in the present condition of affairs. Mankind as an entirety are, and always have been doubters. Idealists have predicted a grander future for the race, but they have been pooh poohed at as dreamers. And yet the rays of tradition, history, inspiration, science, art and poesy converge upon a point which is the perfection of humanity in all its varied relations. The scriptures tell us of a Millenium; poets sing of a Utopia; not a soul exists but has at least an unuttered aspiration for translation into a social order free from falsehood and wrong, but they place the realization in the unknown hereafter. I am tired and sick at heart of always making the future an adjourned meeting of the past, and the eternity of hope for peace, to be attained only beyond the grave. I believe that the poet is the prophet of the harmonic future, and that his grandest dreams of to-day are the living realities of to-morrow.

I know you will call this rhapsody, but it is truth *every word of it*. I am, as you know, an ardent advocate of female suffrage and other kindred reforms, but these aims, great and desirable as they are, are but minor means to the great end. There is something as far beyond the ballot as the ballot is beyond the bullet, or Christianity is a humbug and the mission of Christ a delusion.

THE MODERN CHURCHES CRITICISED.

Christ's life was devoted to grappling with the iniquities of his time. The spirit of a pure and true Christianity is the same in all ages, to build up the right and put down the wrong. But what has conventional Christianity done? It has held the dry

bones of the past up before us, from which we are taught to draw the inspiration to do right ; it has discussed the charming spectacle of infants not a span long writhing in perdition ; and the relative merits of a plunge bath and a shower bath as a means of saving grace, and all such stuff, when men, women and children, God's own creatures made in His image, were starving for want of food, shivering from lack of clothing, and living in filthy, miserable habitations, such as a gentleman would not permit his horse, his dog, no, not even his hogs to occupy.

Carlyle says that the great problem of society is to get the superfluous shirts on the backs of the shirtless. The conventional means by which this is sought to be accomplished is by charity, a mere palliation of suffering to-day which to-morrow is as intense as ever.

Fourier calls this "simplectic philanthropy." The motive is good but the method stupid. The great thing to be done is to help people to help themselves. Every man who organizes industry and insures employment is a philanthropist, whatever the motive that prompts him. Every man who harmonizes the interests of labor and capital by making his employees participants in the general result, is one of God's chosen people, and is a brother and co-worker with the Christ. Every man who not only does that, but surrounds his people with schools and lyceums and libraries and art galleries, and the theatre and opera, to exalt their manhood and improve their tastes, is a saint and will be canonized. Such is the universal Christian church of the future. Such a man, though he never read the scriptures, or went to sleep under the platitudes of the pulpit, is nearer God, and more Christ-like than the one who makes long prayers in the family circle, and swears off a week's iniquities on Sunday, only to make a fresh start on Monday morning.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION PRACTICABLE.

Now, sir, you doubt the practicability of my ideas and aspirations. I maintain that *it is always practicable to do right*. Do you ever read *Harper's Magazine* ? Three or four months since there was an elegant article about the experiment of Mons. Godin at Guise in France. M. Godin started out in life a poor boy. He was engaged in some branch of iron manufacture, I

don't know exactly what. When a young man he was an ardent admirer of Fourier, and became fully imbued with his ideas. He went to work and by industry and thrift became rich. He built large works and employs several hundred people. Ten years ago he erected a magnificent edifice in which his workmen and their families numbering nine hundred souls are living with ample accommodations, cleanly apartments, charming surroundings, schools, music, art, and everything to make them prosperous, intelligent and happy.

Then a cotton spinner in England, Mr. Peter Salt (not salt petre) has done much the same thing for his operatives. You will also find an account of his experiment in one of the numbers of *Harper* of this year. There are, I learn, several establishments in this country in which the employees, in addition to a stated salary, participate in the resulting profits to the employer, receiving a certain percentage, and in this way every one is interested in increasing the product, and to make it as perfect as possible.

All these things show a tendency towards an organized philanthropy which shall not merely palliate human suffering, but permanently elevate and improve the people.

You know I am called a free lover. Well, I accept the title. I certainly *must* and *do* love all such noble men as those I have mentioned, in fact I love all who love and have faith in their fellow men, and show their faith by their works. Do you ever read Leigh Hunt? He strikes the key note in his little poem *Abou Ben Adhem*. I learned it when a little girl, and have never forgotten it. I will, if you please, rest myself by reciting it:

“ Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase)
 Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
 And saw within the moonlight in his room
 Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
 An angel writing in a book of gold !
 Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
 And to the Presence in the room he said,
 ‘ What writest thou ? ’ The vision raised its head,
 And with a look made all of sweet accord
 Answered — ‘ The names of those who love the Lord.’
 ‘ And is mine one ? ’ said Abou ; ‘ Nay, not so,’
 Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low

But cheerly still ; and said ' I pray thee then
Write me as one that loves his fellow men. '

" The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed
And lo ! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest. "

CHAPTER XX.

WHAT MEN OWE TO WOMAN, AND HOW THEY HAVE RECOMPENSED HER.

In a community without women men lose their gentlemanly traits, and become fit associates for loafers, "stag parties" as they are called, mean drinking bouts, and indecent conversation. Even your elections are scenes of drunkenness and blackguardism, and too often of fighting and crime. From whatever place woman is excluded, the devil holds high carnival. Wherever she is admitted there is gentlemanly bearing and refinement on the part of the men. All this, and more, woman has done and is doing, and yet she has always been dwarfed in the growth of her womanhood, to the extent of being accepted as a plaything when young, and a slave around the hearthstone when matured. Her education has been restricted and of the most superficial kind, and with the cares of maternity, and the household, nine women out of ten have less intelligence at thirty than at twenty. For her devotion and sacrifice your noble sex has accorded to her what? The position of housekeeper, nurse, wash-woman, cook and sempstress. Woman's life is a weekly revolution around a broomstick, a cradle, a wash-tub, a cook-stove and a needle. They are the symbols of her career as it is prescribed by man. Every inch she has transcended the bounds of man's conventional propriety she has had to fight for. In Shakespeare's time boys played the woman's parts on the stage. When women essayed the drama at first, they were regarded as little better than prostitutes, and even now this prejudice has not been wholly removed. If a woman tried authorship she was sneered at as a "blue stocking." If she qualified herself to fill the position of teacher, she could possibly secure a place by working at half price. If with the needle she did her work just as well as a man, she must consent to receive less pay, and so

in every department of labor it has gone on to this day, and that, too, in America where the condition of woman is superior to what it is in any other country.

Now what is the result of all this? The young girl, dwarfed in intellectual growth has no exalted idea of womanhood. Her head is filled with frivolous ideas of going into society and courting fashion. Beaux and lovers are her ambition. She loves, but her love is without dignity. She is taught to believe that to get a husband is the chief end of woman, and that the first man who proposes marriage and can give her a good support, if he is not positively repugnant to her, she should accept; that if she should not love him then, she will learn to afterwards, or if she should not — well, it is no matter. So she is caught in the trap, and learns too late what a sad mistake she has made. You think me earnest? *I am terribly in earnest.* I know whereof I speak. I have eaten of the "Dead Sea" fruit. The relentless iron has entered my own soul. My young life was stranded and wrecked on the same treacherous rocks, and I feel that I have a right to be in earnest.

A woman is nothing unless she is loving and being loved. The more she loves and is loved in return, the grander and richer her womanhood. Her "pearl of great price" is in her affections, but she too often finds she cannot love the man she has chosen, and that his attentions are not only distasteful, but positively repugnant to her. Then, again, where there is mutual affection at marriage, it is not unfrequent that the result is equally disastrous. The husband comes home to the same scenes day by day, sees a careworn wife debilitated by constant confinement to household duties, and the cares and exhaustions incident to maternity, her youthful vivacity and beauty gone, while he is in the full vigor of manhood; and his once romantic love subsides into a feeling of common place respect, followed by neglect and often more than indifference. The wife, finding nothing but the dry husks of affection left to her, settles into a state of melancholy with only a mother's love to sustain her, and even this too often proves insufficient for the trials that encompass her, and she gradually sinks into the only refuge left to her — the grave.

You think I have drawn this picture rather strong? Perhaps

it is for one who has seen or observed but superficially. But it is nevertheless true. Since I have been active in the discussion of these questions I have been made the repository of the heart secrets of hundreds of families, sometimes by both husband and wife, each without the other's knowledge, until my whole soul is sick, especially when I reflect that not one in a hundred of such cases which exist in this Christian city have ever come to my knowledge.

You ask what remedy I propose. First I propose that woman shall be possessed of a material independence of man ; that she shall have an equitable remuneration for her labor, and not be compelled *just because of the difference in their physical organization*, to perform the same work as a man for *one half the compensation* ; that she shall have the avenues of usefulness within the scope of her abilities opened to her which are now closed ; that she shall have the fullest opportunities for education ; and that she shall have a chance to attain the highest development, moral, intellectual and physical, of which she is capable.

To bring about this, woman must have the ballot, and thus become a part of the governing power of the land, and wielding that power, her influence will be felt. Politicians court the Irish, the German and the Negro vote — mere fractions of the population — and to obtain it they are compelled to make concessions to those classes whose only power is the ballot. With the right to participate in the selection of the law makers, our legislation will be so shaped as to advance her interests in respect to education and employment. Ensure her a fair competence as the result of her labor, and no woman will marry for a home. In the place of a feeling of dependence which forces her into marriage, she will be satisfied to wait until she finds a man whom she loves with a love worthy of the name, and to whom she can look up with respect and even veneration, and not a man inferior to herself in intellect, intelligence and culture, and whose only recommendation is that he possesses the means to provide her with a home, and supply her desires for food and raiment. Why! a majority of our marriages even in America where women have vastly better opportunities than in Europe, are based upon no higher motive than to secure a

home, with just enough of sentiment coupled with the relation in its inception to deceive the girl into the idea that she loves.

And as regards the men the passion which they dignify by the sacred name of love has hardly any deeper significance. A pretty face, or pleasing manners, excite an emotion of admiration, a seeming reciprocation of it which flatters a man's pride, and then there is a desire to settle down and have a home; the result is an offer of marriage and an acceptance, and the old, old story is repeated. Now, in my opinion, marriage should proceed from a higher and holier motive—a deep, intelligent consciousness of mutual respect and love, and a firm conviction that it is not a passing fancy, but an enduring affection.

But you say I don't believe in marriage. *Most emphatically I do not in the conventional.* In the true sense I do. What is marriage? Under the law and usage, a man and woman, actuated by the most mercenary motives, and without the shadow of love, or even respect, who stand up before a priest or magistrate and listen to the mummery of a ceremony, are husband and wife, with all the responsibilities of the marriage relation. The world calls that a reputable connection, and the man and woman are without question admitted into the most respectable society. I call it *legalized prostitution*, beside which the relation of lover and mistress, *where mutual love exists* is dignified and pure.

The sentiment that attaches to marriage in anticipation, as portrayed in novels, is beautiful. But did you ever notice that all novels *end* with marriage? And do you comprehend the reason why? I will tell you. The novelist might extend his story to a few months after the honeymoon, when the romance generally ends. Now my idea of *real* marriage is one constantly intensifying courtship. The ecstasy of pleasure that the affianced experience should be but a prelude to the grander joys vouchsafed in the full fruition of married life. But this is not so, and if you are a married man you know what I say is true.

How, you will naturally ask, do you expect to make your ideal of marriage a reality in every-day life?

CHAPTER XXI.

THE UNITARY HOUSEHOLD WHICH IS TO BE GENERALLY ADOPTED WHEN "THE WOODHULL'S" SOCIAL REFORMS PREVAIL.

The first step is, as I have stated, by giving to woman a material independence of man, by ensuring her the opportunity to sustain herself, and make conventional marriage no longer a necessity. Next by doing away with the isolated household, with the separate cooking stove, the separate wash-tub, the separate parlor, the separate hall, the separate nursery and the separate sewing room which exist in the household of every well-to-do family, and which are often combined in a single room in the homes of the poor; and putting up instead, grand unitary edifices calculated to house perhaps a thousand families, each edifice with a unitary kitchen with professional cooks, a unitary laundry, vast suits of parlors, elevators to carry persons from one flight to another, thus saving the women from the killing labor of climbing stairs, a unitary nursery, where the babies can be cared for by professional nurses, where they can breathe a baby atmosphere and have baby surroundings, with toys and playthings to amuse, and instruction suited to the baby mind; with unitary halls, and unitary music rooms; unitary rooms for games, and each department fitted with appliances and machinery to economize manual labor, and reduce the cost of living to each individual more than one half, and above all leave woman to engage in productive and less exhaustive employments, so that she can see some fruit from her labors instead of (as now) being a drudge whose labors, from her rising in the morning until she lays her sad face and weary head upon the pillow at night, producing nothing tangible, and feeling a sad consciousness that after all her labors and weariness, she still remains a burden upon her husband and a recipient of his bounty.

Model houses are very well as far as they go, but they stop far short of the desired mark. To be sure they substitute cleanliness for squalor and filth, free ventilation for a stifling atmosphere, but there is the isolated household still, and woman in a dependent condition with her destinies pinned to the skirts of the man, instead of being permitted to live her own life, and develop her own self-hood.

If you ask how that will affect the marriage relation I answer — here let me say is the crowning glory of the whole plan — it will strike the death knell of conventional marriage. Man will no longer feel that he holds a fee simple in a wife when he gets the marriage certificate, and if he really loves his wife he knows that his tenure of husbandship is dependent on his good behavior and his ability to retain her affections by attraction alone, and not by a bill of sale in the form of a marriage certificate. The wife, if she loves her husband, will no longer go about the house in slatternly garments and uncombed hair, but will do as she did before marriage, make herself and keep herself as beautiful as her years and the adornments of art will admit. Then novels will be written, in which courtship will be the preface and marriage the story.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE NEW GOSPEL OF FREE LOVE ACCORDING TO WOODHULL
AND HOW BEAUTIFULLY IT WILL USHER IN THE LONG
EXPECTED, AND ARDENTLY DESIRED MILLENNIUM.

Now you ask me the inevitable question, "Suppose love does not continue to exist?" and this calls up my *Free Love* doctrines, but please do not, as so many have done, confound free love with free lust. In case love ceases, let the relations cease, when the *real* uniting bond is severed, do not continue to wear the dead form, for instead of a wreath, it has become a mere shackle. Whichever has ceased to love, will retire to his or her own apartment, which is sacred to him or to her as the case may be. To continue such a relation without mutual love is a sin against the holiest instincts of human nature, and as a natural and inevitable sequence a sin against God. If you ask what is to prevent in such a condition of society, a promiscuous intercourse between the sexes, I answer: The incarnation of God in every human being, which with mankind developed according to its aspirations, will ennoble every man, and make every woman an angel. Do you suppose that with men and women educated and refined, that in their most sacred relations (emphatically so with woman self sustaining) either are going to debase themselves by indiscriminate intercourse, when no motive exists for it? It certainly cannot be worse than it is now. Just look at the poor girls who tramp the streets night after night, painted, and bedizened with cheap jewelry, or those who inhabit houses brilliant with gilded iniquity, and ready to sell themselves to the first base wretch reeking with the fumes of liquor or tobacco. Look at the assignations, not one in a thousand of which ever come to light, and when they do, it is generally through vengeance inspired by jealousy, or in suits for divorce, and see what a commentary upon the purity of the relations of the sexes in our enlightened communities. I used

to cry over these things for hours together, but I have ceased to do that. Instead of crying over that which I can't help in the present, I have resolutely set to work to try and teach the world that there is something better in the future for their children, if not for themselves.

You ask if I expect all I have pictured will be realized. Yes, and very much more ; I may not live in my earth-form to see it, *but I shall see it nevertheless*. There is a geographical Pisgah, from whose summit Moses was vouchsafed a panoramic view of the Canaan to which he led his people, but into which he was denied an entrance. I am as you know a spiritualist, and there is a spiritual Pisgah upon whose summit I am sometimes allowed to stand, and see spread out before me the great and glorious future for which I labor. I am called an enthusiast. So I am. I never advocate a cause in which I do not religiously believe, nor for which I am not fortified by inspiration from the spirit land. And when I have the approval of my own conscience, and the spirits, I can easily endure the contumely and persecution which is so freely heaped upon me. The world will yet do me or my memory justice, and if they knew how earnestly and honestly I am striving for the good of my race, they might think me a foolish enthusiast, or a lunatic even, but I am sure they would think of me and speak of me more kindly than they have been accustomed to.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MRS. WOODHULL'S OWN STATEMENT OF HER PECULIAR SOCIAL DOCTRINES, IN HER OWN WORDS, AS UTTERED IN HER CELEBRATED SPEECH AT STEINWAY HALL, NEW YORK, NOV. 20TH, 1871, AND REPRINTED IN WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY, AUGUST 16TH, 1873.

It was the intention of the author to prepare a sort of condensed epitome of this speech, but finding it a difficult matter to do justice either to her or his readers, finally decided to publish it in her own language, (that is, portions of it) much has been left out, but enough is printed to give the reader a clear idea of her free love doctrines, which she sums up thus: "*Perfect individual sexual freedom, to be regulated by education instead of law.*" Mrs. Woodhull claims that prior to the delivery of this speech, which was the first distinct public announcement of her social, or free love theories, she submitted it to Mr. Beecher, and that it received his unqualified approval, and that she expected, and had good reasons to expect, he would sit with her upon the platform, and introduce her to the audience, but that his courage oozed out at the eleventh hour, and Theodore Tilton acted in his stead.

The author will here repeat substantially what he announces in his introductory, that it is not his intention to either approve or combat the doctrines or theories of any of the persons of whom he writes, or from whom he quotes. They are given as they are, and it is for the readers to judge for themselves, whether they are sound or otherwise.

"I would recall the attention of all objecting egotists, Pharisees and would-be regulators of society to the true functions of government — to protect the complete exercise of individual rights, and what they are, no living soul, except the individual has any business to determine or to meddle with, in any way whatever, unless his own rights are first infringed.

"If a person believe that a certain theory is a truth, and consequently the right thing to advocate and practice, but from its being unpopular or against established public opinion does not have the moral courage to advocate or practice it, that person is a moral coward and a traitor to his own conscience, which God gave for a guide and guard.

"What I believe to be the truth I endeavor to practice, and, in advocating it, permit me to say I shall speak so plainly that none may complain that I did not make myself understood.

"The world has come up to the present time through the outworking of religious, political, philosophical and scientific principles, and to-day we stand upon the threshold of greater discoveries in more important things than have ever interested the intellect of man. We have arrived where the very foundation of all that has been, must be analyzed and understood — and this foundation is the relation of the sexes. These are the bases of society — the very last to secure attention, because the most comprehensive of subjects.

"All other departments of inquiry which have their fountain in society have been formulated into special sciences, and made legitimate and popular subjects for investigation; but the science of society itself has been, and still is, held to be too sacred a thing for science to lay its rude hands upon. But of the relations of science to society we may say the same that has been said of the relations of science to religion: 'That religion has always wanted to do good, and now science is going to tell it how to do it.'

"Over the sexual relations, marriages have endeavored to preserve sway and to hold the people in subjection to what has been considered a standard of moral purity. Whether this has been successful or not may be determined from the fact that there are scores of thousands of women who are denominated prostitutes, and who are supported by hundreds of thousands of men who should, for like reasons, also be denominated prostitutes, since what will change a woman into a prostitute must also necessarily change a man into the same.

"This condition, called prostitution, seems to be the great evil at which religion and public morality hurl their special weapons of condemnation, as the sum total of all diabolism;

since for a woman to be a prostitute is to deny her not only all Christian, but also all humanitarian rights.

“But let us inquire into this matter, to see just what it is; not in the vulgar or popular, or even legal sense, but in a purely scientific and truly moral sense.

“It must be remembered that we are seeking after truth for the sake of the truth, and in utter disregard of everything except the truth; that is to say, we are seeking for the truth, ‘let it be what it may and lead where it may.’ To illustrate, I would say the extremest thing possible. If blank materialism were true, it would be best for the world to know it.

“If there be any who are not in harmony with this desire, then such have nothing to do with what I have to say, for it will be said regardless of antiquated forms or fossilized dogmas, but in the simplest and least offending language that I can choose.

“If there is anything in the whole universe that should enlist the earnest attention of everybody, and their support and advocacy to secure it, it is that upon which the true welfare and happiness of everybody depends. Now to what more than to anything else do humanity owe their welfare and happiness? Most clearly to being born into earthly existence with a sound and perfect physical, mental and moral beginning of life, with no taint or disease attaching to them, either mentally, morally or physically. To be so born involves the harmony of conditions which will produce such results. To have such conditions involves the existence of such relations of the sexes as will in themselves produce them.

“Now I will put the question direct. Are not these eminently proper subjects for inquiry and discussion, not in that manner of maudlin sentimentality in which it has been the habit, but in a dignified, open, honest and fearless way, in which subjects of so great importance should be inquired into and discussed?

“An exhaustive treatment of these subjects would involve the inquiry what should be the chief end to be gained by entering into sexual relations. This I must simply answer by saying, ‘Good children, who will not need to be regenerated,’ and pass to the consideration of the relations themselves.

"All the relations between the sexes that are recognized as legitimate are denominated marriage. But of what does marriage consist? This very pertinent question requires settlement before any real progress can be made as to what Social Freedom and Prostitution mean. It is admitted by everybody that marriage is a union of the opposites in sex, but is it a principle of nature outside of all law, or is it a law outside of all nature? Where is the point before reaching which, it is not marriage, but having reached which, it is marriage? Is it where two meet and realize that the love elements of their nature are harmonious, and that they blend into and make one purpose of life? or is it where a soulless form is pronounced over two who know no commingling of life's hopes? Or are both these processes required — first, the marriage union without the law, to be afterward solemnized by the law? If both terms are required, does the marriage continue after the first departs? or if the restrictions of the law are removed and the love continues, does marriage continue? or if the law unites two who hate each other, is that marriage? Thus are presented all the possible aspects of the case.

"The courts hold if the law solemnly pronounce two married, that they are married, whether love is present or not. But is this really such a marriage as this enlightened age should demand? No! It is a stupidly arbitrary law, which can find no analogies in nature. Nature proclaims in broadest terms, and all her subjects re-echo the same grand truth, that sexual unions, which result in reproduction, are marriage. And sex exists wherever there is reproduction.

"By analogy, the same law ascends into the sphere of and applies among men and women; for are not they a part and parcel of nature in which this law exists as a principle? This law of nature by which men and women are united by love is God's marriage law, the enactments of men to the contrary notwithstanding. And the precise results of this marriage will be determined by the character of those united; all the experiences evolved from the marriage being the legitimate sequences thereof.

"Marriage must consist either of love or of law, since it may exist in form with either term absent; that is to say, people may

be married by law and all love be lacking ; and they may also be married by love and lack all sanction of law. True marriage must in reality consist entirely either of law or love, since there can be no compromise between the law of nature and statute law by which the former shall yield to the latter.

“ Law cannot change what nature has already determined. Neither will love obey if law command. Law cannot compel two to love. It has nothing to do either with love or with its absence. Love is superior to all law, and so also is hate, indifference, disgust and all other human sentiments which are evoked in the relations of the sexes. It legitimately and logically follows, if love have anything to do with marriage, that law has nothing to do with it. And on the contrary, if law have anything to do with marriage, that love has nothing to do with it. And there is no escaping the deduction.

“ If the test of the rights of the individual be applied to determine which of these propositions is the true one, what will be the result ?

“ Two persons, a male and a female, meet, and are drawn together by a *mutual* attraction — a *natural* feeling unconsciously arising within their natures of which neither has any control — which is denominated love. This is a matter that concerns these two, and no other living soul has any human right to say aye, yes or no, since it is a matter in which none except the two have any right to be involved, and from which it is the duty of these two to exclude every other person, since no one can love for another or determine why another loves.

“ If true, mutual, natural attraction be sufficiently strong to be the dominant power, then it decides marriage ; and if it be so decided, no law which may be in force can any more prevent the union than a human law could prevent the transformation of water into vapor, or the confluence of two streams ; and for precisely the same reasons : that it is a natural law which is obeyed ; which law is as high above human law as perfection is high above imperfection. They marry and obey this higher law than man can make — a law as old as the universe and as immortal as the elements, and for which there is no substitute.

“ They are sexually united, to be which is to be married by nature, and to be thus married is to be united by God. This

marriage is performed without special mental volition upon the part of either, although the intellect may approve what the affections determine ; that is to say, they marry because they love, and they love because they can neither prevent nor assist it. Suppose after this marriage has continued an indefinite time, the unity between them departs, could they any more prevent it than they can prevent the love? It came without their bidding, may it not also go without their bidding? And if it go, does not the marriage cease, and should any third persons or parties, either as individuals or as government, attempt to compel the continuance of a unity wherein none of the elements of the union remain?

“At no point in the process designated has there been any other than an exercise of the right of the two individuals to pursue happiness in their own way, which way has neither crossed nor interfered with any one else's right to the same pursuit ; therefore, there is no call for a law to change, modify, protect or punish this exercise. It must be concluded, then, if individuals have the constitutional right to pursue happiness in their own way, that all compelling laws of marriage and divorce are despotic, being remnants of the barbaric ages in which they were originated, and utterly unfitted for an age so advanced upon that, and so enlightened in the general principles of freedom and equality, as is this.

“It must be remembered that it is the sphere of government to perform the duties which are required of it by the people, and that it has, in itself, no rights to exercise. These belong exclusively to the people whom it represents. It is one of the rights of a citizen to have a voice in determining what the duties of government shall be, and also provide how that right may be exercised ; but government should not prohibit any right.

“To love is a right higher than constitutions or laws. It is a right which constitutions and laws can neither give nor take and with which they have nothing whatever to do, since in its very nature it is forever independent of both constitutions and laws, and exists — comes and goes — in spite of them. Governments might just as well assume to determine how people shall exercise their right to think, or to say that they shall not

think at all, as to assume to determine that they shall not love, or how they may love, or that they shall love.

The proper sphere of government in regard to the relations of the sexes, is to enact such laws as in the present conditions of society are necessary to protect each individual in the free exercise of his or her right to love, and also to protect each individual from the forced interference of every other person, that would compel him or her to submit to any action which is against their wish and will. If the law do this it fulfills its duty. If the law do not afford this protection, and worse still, if it sanction this interference with the rights of an individual, then it is infamous law and worthy only of the old-time despotism; since individual tyranny forms no part of the guarantee of, or the right to, individual freedom.

It is therefore a strictly legitimate conclusion that where there is no love as a basis of marriage there should be no marriage, and if that which was the basis of a marriage is taken away that the marriage also ceases from that time, statute laws to the contrary notwithstanding.

Such is the character of the law that permeates nature from simplest organic forms — units of nucleated protoplasm to the most complex aggregation thereof — the human form. Having determined that marriage consists of a union resulting from love, without any regard whatever to the sanction of law, and consequently that the sexual relations resulting therefrom are strictly legitimate and natural, it is a very simple matter to determine what part of the sexual relations which are maintained are prostitutions of the relations.

It is certain by this Higher Law, that marriages of convenience, and, still more, marriages characterized by mutual or partial repugnance, are adulterous. And it does not matter whether the repugnance arises before or subsequently to the marriage ceremony. Compulsion, whether of the law or of a false public opinion, is detestable, as an element even, in the regulation of the most tender and important of all human relations.

I do not care where it is that sexual commerce results from the dominant power of one sex over the other, compelling him or her to submission against the instincts of love, and where hate or disgust is present, whether it be in the gilded palaces

of Fifth avenue or in the lowest purlieu of Greene street, there is prostitution, and all the law that a thousand State Assemblies may pass cannot make it otherwise.

"I know whereof I speak; I have seen the most damning misery resulting from legalized prostitution. Misery such as the most degraded of those against whom society has shut her doors never know. Thousands of poor, weak, unresisting wives are yearly murdered, who stand in spirit-life looking down upon the sickly, half made-up children left behind, imploring humanity for the sake of honor and virtue to look into this matter, to look into it to the very bottom, and bring out into the fair daylight all the blackened, sickening deformities that have so long been hidden by the screen of public opinion and a sham morality.

It does not matter how much it may still be attempted to gloss these things over and to label them sound and pure; you, each and every one of you, know that what I say is truth, and if you question your own souls you dare not reply: it is not so. If these things to which I refer, but of which I shudder to think, are not abuses of the sexual relations, what are?

"You may or may not think there is help for them, but I say Heaven help us if such barbarism cannot be cured.

"I would not be understood to say that there are no good conditions in the present marriage state. By no means do I say this; on the contrary, a very large proportion of present social relations are commendable — are as good as the present status of society makes possible. But what I do assert, and that most positively, is, that all which is good and commendable, now existing, would continue to exist if all marriage laws were repealed to-morrow. Do you not perceive that law has nothing to do in continuing the relations which are based upon continuous love? These are not results of the law to which, perhaps, their subjects yielded a willing or unwilling obedience. Such relations exist in spite of the law; would have existed had there been no law, and would continue to exist were the law annulled.

It is not of the good there is in the present condition of marriage that I complain, but of the ill, nearly the whole of which is the direct result of the law which continues the relations in which it exists. It seems to be the general argument that if

the law of marriage were annulled it would follow that everybody must necessarily separate, and that all present family relations would be sundered, and complete anarchy result therefrom. Now, whoever makes that argument either does so thoughtlessly or else he is dishonest; since if he make it after having given any consideration thereto, he must know it to be false. And if he have given it no consideration then he is no proper judge. I give it as my opinion, founded upon an extensive knowledge of, and intimate acquaintance with, married people, if marriage laws were repealed, that less than a fourth of those now married would immediately separate, and that one-half of these would return to their allegiance voluntarily within one year; only those who, under every consideration of virtue and good, should be separate, would permanently remain separated. And objectors as well as I, know it would be so. I assert that it is false to assume that chaos would result from the abrogation of marriage laws, and on the contrary affirm that from that very hour the chaos now existing would begin to turn into order and harmony. What then creates social disorder? Very clearly, the attempt to exercise powers over human rights which are not warrantable upon the hypothesis of the existence of human rights which are inalienable in, and sacred to, the individual.

It is true there is no enacted law compelling people to marry, and it is therefore argued that if they do marry they should always be compelled to abide thereby. But there is a law higher than any human enactments which does compel marriage—the law of nature—the law of God. There being this law in the constitution of humanity, which, operating freely, guarantees marriage, why should men enforce arbitrary rules and forms? These, though having no virtue in themselves, if not complied with by men and women, they in the meantime obeying the law of their nature, bring down upon them the condemnations of an interfering community. Should people, then, voluntarily entering legal marriage be held thereby “till death do them part?” Most emphatically NO, if the desire to do so do not remain. How can people who enter upon marriage in utter ignorance of that which is to render the union happy or miserable be able to say that they will always “love

and live together." They may take these vows upon them in perfect good faith and repent of them in sackcloth and ashes within a twelvemonth.

"I think it will generally be conceded that without love there should be no marriage. In the constitution of things nothing can be more certain. This basic fact is fatal to the theory of marriage for life; since if love is what determines marriage, so, also, should it determine its continuance. If it be primarily right of men and women to take on the marriage relation of their own free will and accord, so, too, does it remain their right to determine how long it shall continue and when it shall cease. But to be respectable (?) people must comply with the law, and thousands do comply therewith, while in their hearts they protest against it as an unwarrantable interference and proscription of their rights. Marriage laws that would be consistent with the theory of individual rights would be such as would regulate these relations, such as regulate all other associations of people. They should only be obliged to file marriage articles, containing whatever provisions may be agreed upon, as to their personal rights, rights of property, of children, or whatever else they may deem proper for them to agree upon. And whatever these articles might be, they should in all cases be equally entitled to public respect and protection. Should separation afterward come, nothing more should be required than the simple filing of counter articles.

"There are hundreds of lawyers who subsist by inventing schemes by which people may obtain divorces, and the people desiring divorces resort to all sorts of tricks and crimes to get them. And all this exists because there are laws which would compel the oneness of those to whom unity is beyond the realm of possibility. There are another class of persons who, while virtually divorced, endeavor to maintain a respectable position in society, by agreeing to disagree, each following his and her individual ways, behind the cloak of legal marriage. Thus there are hundreds of men and women who to external appearances are husband and wife, but in reality are husband or wife to quite different persons.

"If the conditions of society were completely analyzed, it would be found that all persons whom the law holds married

against their wishes find some way to evade the law and to live the life they desire. Of what use, then, is the law except to make hypocrites and pretenders of a sham respectability?

"But, exclaims a very fastidious person, then you would have all women become prostitutes! By no means would I have any woman become a prostitute. But if by nature women are so, all the virtue they possess being of the legal kind, and not that which should exist with or without law, then I say they will not become prostitutes because the law is repealed, since at heart they are already so. If there is no virtue, no honesty, no purity, no trust among women except as created by the law, I say heaven help our morality, for nothing human can help it.

"It seems to me that no grosser insult could be offered to woman than to insinuate that she is honest and virtuous only because the law compels her to be so; and little do men and women realize the obloquy thus cast upon society, and still less do women realize what they admit of their sex by such assertions. I honor and worship that purity which exists in the soul of every noble man or woman, while I pity the woman who is virtuous simply because a law compels her.

"But, says another objector, though the repeal of marriage laws might operate well enough in all those cases where a mutual love or hate would determine continuous marriage or immediate divorce, how can a third class of cases be justified, in which but one of the parties desire the separation, while the other clings to the unity?

"I assume, in the first place, when there is not mutual love there is no union to continue and nothing to justify, and it has already been determined that, as marriage should have love as a basis, if love depart marriage also departs. But laying this aside, see if there can any real good or happiness possibly result from an enforced continuance of marriage upon the part of one party thereto. Let all persons take this question home to their own souls, and there determine if they could find happiness in holding unwilling hearts in bondage. It is against the nature of things that any satisfaction can result from such a state of things except it be the satisfaction of knowing that you have succeeded in virtually imprisoning the person whom you profess to love, and that would be demoniacal.

“Again. It must be remembered that the individual affairs of two persons are not the subject of interference by any third party, and if one of them choose to separate, there is no power outside of the two which can rightly interfere to prevent. Beside, who is to determine whether there will be more happiness sacrificed by a continuation or a separation. If a person is fully determined to separate, it is proof positive that another feeling stronger than all his or her sentiments of duty determined it. And here, again, who but the individual is to determine which course will secure the most good? Suppose that a separation is desired because one of the two loves and is loved elsewhere. In this case, if the union be maintained by force, at least two of three, and, probably, all three persons will be made unhappy thereby; whereas if separation come and the other union be consummated, there will be but one unhappy. So even here, if the greatest good of the greatest number is to rule, separation is not only legitimate, but desirable. In all other things except marriage it is always held to be the right thing to do, to break a bad bargain or promise just as soon as possible, and I hold that of all things in which this rule should apply, it should first apply to marriages.

“Now, let me ask, would it not rather be the Christian way, in such cases, to say to the disaffected party: ‘Since you no longer love me, go your way and be happy, and make those to whom you go happy also.’ I know of no higher, holier love than that described, and of no more beautiful expression of it than was given in the columns of the *Woman’s Journal*, of Boston, whose conductors have felt called upon to endeavor to convince the people that it has no affiliation with those who hold to no more radical doctrine of Free Love than they proclaim, as follows:

“‘The love that I cannot command is not mine; let me not disturb myself about it, nor attempt to filch it from its rightful owner. A heart that I supposed mine has drifted and gone. Shall I go in pursuit? Shall I forcibly capture the truant and transfix it with the barb of my selfish affections, pin it to the wall of my chamber? God forbid! Rather let me leave my doors and windows open, intent only on living so nobly that the best cannot fail to be drawn to me by an irresistible attraction.’

“To me it is impossible to frame words into sentences more holy, pure and true than are these. I would ever carry them in my soul as my guide and guard, feeling that in living by them happiness would certainly be mine. To the loving wife who mourns a lost heart, let me recommend them as a panacea. To the loving husband whose soul is desolate, let me offer these as words of healing balm. They will live in history, to make their writer the loved and revered of unborn generations.

“The tenth commandment of the Decalogue says: ‘Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife.’ And Jesus, in the beautiful parable of the Samaritan who fell among thieves, asks: ‘Who is thy neighbor?’ and answers his own question in a way to lift the conception wholly out of the category of mere local proximity into a sublime spiritual conception. In other words, he spiritualizes the word and sublimates the morality of the commandment. In the same spirit I ask now, Who is a wife? And I answer, not the woman who, ignorant of her own feelings, or with lying lips, has promised, in hollow ceremonial, and before the law, to love, but she who really loves most, and most truly, the man who commands her affections, and who in turn loves her, with or without the ceremony of marriage; and the man who holds the heart of such a woman in such a relation is ‘thy neighbor,’ and that woman is ‘thy neighbor’s wife’ meant in the commandment; and whosoever, though he should have been a hundred times married to her by the law, shall claim, or covet even, the possession of that woman as against her true lover and husband in the spirit, sins against the commandment.

“We know positively that Jesus would have answered in that way. He has defined for us ‘the neighbor,’ not in the paltry and common place sense, but spiritually. He has said: ‘He that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.’ So, therefore, he spiritualized the idea of adultery. In the kingdom of heaven, to be prayed for daily, to come on earth, there is to be no ‘marrying or giving in marriage;’ that is to say, formally and legally; but spiritual marriage must always exist, and had Jesus been called on to define a wife, can anybody doubt that he would, in the same spirit, the spiritualizing tendency and character of all his doctrine, have spiritualized the marriage relation as absolutely

as he did the breach of it? that he would, in other words, have said in meaning precisely what I now say? And when Christian ministers are no longer afraid or ashamed to be Christians they will embrace this doctrine. Free Love will be an integral part of the religion of the future.

"It can now be asked: What is the legitimate sequence of Social Freedom? To which I unhesitatingly reply: Free Love, or freedom of the affections. 'And are you a Free Lover?' is the almost incredulous query.

"I repeat a frequent reply: 'I am; and I can honestly, in the fullness of my soul, raise my voice to my Maker, and thank him that I am, and that I have had the strength and the devotion to truth to stand before this traducing and vilifying community in a manner representative of that which shall come with healing on its wings for the bruised hearts and crushed affections of humanity.'

"And to those who denounce me for this I reply: 'Yes, I am a free lover. I have an inalienable, constitutional and natural right to love whom I may, to love as long or as short a period as I can; to change that love every day if I please, and with that right neither you nor any law you can frame have any right to interfere. And I have the further right to demand a free and unrestricted exercise of that right, and it is your duty not only to accord it, but, as a community, to see that I am protected in it. I trust that I am fully understood, for I mean just that, and nothing less!

"To speak thus plainly and pointedly is a duty I owe to myself. The press have stigmatized me to the world as an advocate, theoretically and practically, of the doctrine of free love, upon which they have placed their stamp of moral deformity; the vulgar and inconsequent definition which they hold makes the theory an abomination. And though this conclusion is a no more legitimate and reasonable one than that would be which should call the Golden Rule a general license to all sorts of debauch, since free love bears the same relations to the moral deformities of which it stands accused as does the Golden Rule to the Law of the Despot, yet it obtains among many intelligent people. But they claim, in the language of one of these exponents, that 'Words belong to the people; they are the common property of the mob. Now the common use, among the

mob, of the term free love, is a synonym for promiscuity.' Against this absurd proposition I oppose the assertion that words do not belong to the mob, but to that which they represent. Words are the exponents and interpretations of ideas. If I use a word which exactly interprets and represents what I would be understood to mean, shall I go to the mob and ask of them what interpretation they choose to place upon it? If lexicographers, when they prepare their dictionaries, were to go to the mob for the rendition of words, what kind of language would we have?

"I claim that freedom means to be free, let the mob claim to the contrary as strenuously as they may. And I claim that love means an exhibition of the affections, let the mob claim what they may. And therefore, in compounding these words into free love, I claim that united they mean, and should be used to convey, their united definitions, the mob to the contrary notwithstanding. And when the term Free Love finds a place in dictionaries, it will prove my claim to have been correct, and that the mob have not received the attention of the lexicographers, since it will not be set down to signify sexual debauchery, and that only, or in any governing sense.

"It is not only usual but also just, when people adopt a new theory, or promulgate a new doctrine, that they give it a name significant of its character. There are, however, exceptional cases to be found in all ages. The Jews coined the name of Christians, and, with withering contempt, hurled it upon the early followers of Christ. It was the most opprobrious epithet they could invent to express their detestation of those humble but honest and brave people. That name has now come to be considered as a synonym of all that is good, true and beautiful in the highest departments of our natures, and is revered in all civilized nations.

"In precisely the same manner the Pharisees of to-day, who hold themselves to be representatives of all there is that is good and pure, as did the Pharisees of old, have coined the word Free-Love, and flung it upon all who believe not alone in Religious and Political Freedom, but in that larger Freedom, which includes both these, Social Freedom.

"For my part, I am extremely obliged to our thoughtful Pharisical neighbors for the kindness shown us in the invention

of so appropriate a name. If there is a more beautiful word in the English language than love, that word is freedom, and that these two words, which, with us, attach or belong to everything that is pure and good, should have been joined by our enemies, and handed over to us already coined, is certainly a high consideration, for which we should never cease to be thankful. And when we shall be accused of all sorts of wickedness and vileness by our enemies, who in this have been so just, may I not hope that, remembering how much they have done for us, we may be able to say, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,' and to forgive them ourselves with our whole hearts.

"Of the love that says: 'Bless *me*, darling;' of the love so called, which is nothing but selfishness, the appropriation of another soul as the means of one's own happiness merely, there is abundance in the world; and the still more animal, the mere desire for temporary gratification, with little worthy the name of love, also abounds. Even these are best left free, since as evils they will thus be best cured; but of that celestial love which says: 'Bless *you* darling,' and which strives continually to confer blessings; of that genuine love whose office it is to bless others or another, there cannot be too much in the world, and when it shall be fully understood that this is the love which we mean and commend there will be no objection to the term Free Love, and none to the thing signified.

"We not only accept our name, but we contend that none other could so well signify the real character of that which it designates — to be free and to love. But our enemies must be reminded that the fact of the existence and advocacy of such a doctrine cannot immediately elevate to high condition the great number who have been kept in degradation and misery by previous false systems. They must not expect at this early day of the new doctrine, that all debauchery has been cleansed out of men and women. In the haunts where it retreats, the benign influence of its magic presence has not yet penetrated. They must not expect that brutish men and debased women have as yet been touched by its wand of hope, and that they have already obeyed the bidding to come up higher. They must not expect that ignorance and fleshly lust have already been lifted to the region of intellect and moral purity. They must

not expect that Free Love, before it is more than barely announced to the world, can perform what Christianity in eighteen hundred years has failed to do.

"They must not expect any of these things have already been accomplished, but I will tell you what they may expect. They may expect more good to result from the perfect freedom which we advocate in one century than has resulted in a hundred centuries from all other causes, since the results will be in exact proportion to the extended application of the freedom. We have a legitimate right to predict such results, since all freedom that has been practiced in all ages of the world has been beneficial just in proportion to the extent of human nature it covered.

"Will any of you dare to stand up and assert that Religious Freedom ever produced a single bad result? or that Political Freedom ever injured a single soul who embraced and practiced it? If you can do so, then you may legitimately assert that Social Freedom may also produce equally bad results, but you cannot do otherwise, and be either conscientious or honest.

"Is it too late in the age for intelligent people to cry out thief, unless they have first been robbed, and it is equally late for them to succeed in crying down anything as of the devil to which a name attaches that angels love. It may be very proper and legitimate, and withal perfectly consistent, for philosophers of the *Tribune* school to bundle all the murderers, robbers and rascals together, and hand them over to our camp, labeled as Free Lovers. We will only object that they ought to hand the whole of humanity over, good, bad and indifferent, and not assort its worst representatives.

"My friends, you see this thing we call Freedom is a large word, implying a deal more than people have ever yet been able to recognize. It reaches out its all-embracing arms, and while encircling our good friends and neighbors, does not neglect to also include their less worthy brothers and sisters, every one of whom is just as much entitled to the use of his freedom as is either one of us.

"But objectors tell us that freedom is a dangerous thing to have, and that they must be its conservators, dealing it out to such people, and upon such matters, as they shall appoint. Having coined our name, they straightway proceed to define

it, and to give force to their definition, set about citing illustrations to prove not only their definition to be a true one, but also that its application is just.

"Among the cases cited as evidences of the evil tendencies of Free Love are those of Richardson and Crittenden. The celebrated McFarland-Richardson case was heralded world-wide as a case of this sort. So far as Richardson and Mrs. McFarland were concerned, I have every reason to believe it was a genuine one, in so far as the preventing obstacles framed by the 'conservators' would permit. But when they assert that the murder of Richardson by McFarland was the legitimate result of Free Love, then I deny it *in toto*. McFarland murdered Richardson because he believed that the law had sold Abby Sage soul and body to him, and, consequently, that he owned her, and that no other person had any right to her favor, and that she had no right to bestow her love upon any other person, unless that ownership was first satisfied. The murder of Richardson, then, is not chargeable to his love or her love, but to the fact of the supposed ownership, which right of possession the law of marriage conferred on McFarland,

"If anything further is needed to make the refutation of that charge clear, I will give it by illustration. Suppose that a pagan should be converted to Christianity through the efforts of some Christian minister, and that the remaining pagans should kill that minister for what he had done, would the crime be chargeable upon the Christian religion? Will any of you make that assertion? If not, neither can you charge that the death of Richardson should be charged to Free Love. But a more recent case is a still clearer proof of the correctness of my position. Mrs. Fair killed Crittenden. Why? Because she believed in the spirit of the marriage law; that she had a better right to him than had Mrs. Crittenden, to whom the law had granted him; and rather than to give him up to her, to whom he evidently desired to go, and where, following his right to freedom, he did go, she killed him. Could a more perfect case of the spirit of the marriage law be formulated? Most assuredly, no!

"Now, from the standpoint of marriage, reverse this case to that of Free Love, and see what would have been the result had all those parties been believers in and practicers of that

theory. When Mr. Crittenden evinced a desire to return to Mrs. Crittenden, Mrs. Fair, in practicing the doctrine of Free Love, would have said, 'I have no right to you, other than you freely give; you loved me and exercised your right of freedom in so doing. You now desire to return to Mrs. Crittenden, which is equally your right, and which I must respect. Go, and in peace, and my blessing shall follow, and if it can return you to happiness, then will you be happy.'

"Would not that have been the better, the Christian course, and would not every soul in the broad land capable of a noble impulse, and having knowledge of all the relevant facts, have honored Mrs. Fair for it? Instead of a murder, with the probability of another to complement it, would not all parties have been happy in having done right? Would not Mrs. Crittenden have even loved Mrs. Fair for such an example of nobility, and could she not safely have received her even into her own heart and home, and have been a sister to her, instead of the means of her conviction of murder?

"I tell you, my friends and my foes, that you have taken hold of the wrong end of this business. You are shouldering upon free love the results that flow from precisely its antithesis, which is the spirit, if not the letter, of your marriage theory, which is slavery, and not freedom.

"I have a better right to speak, as one having authority in this matter, than most of you have, since it has been my province to study it in all its various lights and shades. When I practiced clairvoyance, hundreds, aye thousands, of desolate, heart-broken men, as well as women, came to me for advice. And they were from all walks of life, from the humblest daily laborer to the haughtiest dame of wealth. The tales of horror of wrongs inflicted and endured, which were poured into my ears, first awakened me to a realization of the hollowness and the rottenness of society, and compelled me to consider whether laws which were prolific of so much crime and misery as I found to exist should be continued; and to ask the question whether it were not better to let the bond go free. In time I was fully convinced that marriage laws were productive of precisely the reverse of that for which they are supposed to have been framed, and I came to recommend the grant of entire freedom to those who were complained of as inconstant; and the frank asking

for it by those who desired it. My invariable advice was; 'Withdraw lovingly, but completely, all claim and all complaint as an injured and deserted husband or wife. You need not perhaps disguise the fact that you suffer keenly from it, but take on yourself all the fault that you have not been able to command a more continuous love; that you have not proved to be all that you once seemed to be. Show magnanimity, and in order to show it, try to feel it. Cultivate that kind of love which loves the happiness and well-being of your partner most, his or her person next, and yourself last. Be kind to, and sympathize with, the new attraction rather than waspish and indignant. Know for a certainty that love cannot be clutched or gained by being fought for; while it is not impossible that it may be won back by the nobility of one's own deportment. If it cannot be, then it is gone forever, and you must make the best of it and reconcile yourself to it, and do the next best thing—you may perhaps continue to hold on to a slave, but you have lost a lover.'

"Some may indeed think if I can keep the semblance of a husband or wife, even if it be not a lover, better still that it be so. Such is not my philosophy or my faith, and for such I have no advice to give. I address myself to such as have souls, and whose souls are in question; if you belong to the other sort, take advice of a Tombs lawyer and not of me. I have seen a few instances of the most magnanimous action among the persons involved in a knot of love, and with the most angelic results. I believe that the love which goes forth to bless, and if it be to surrender in order to bless, is love in the true sense, and that it tends greatly to beget love, and that the love which is demanding, thinking only of self, is not love.

"I have learned that the first great error most married people commit is in endeavoring to hide from each other the little irregularities into which all are liable to fall. Nothing is so conducive to continuous happiness as mutual confidence. In whom, if not in the husband or the wife, should one confide? Should they not be each other's best friends, never failing in time of anxiety, trouble and temptation to give disinterested and unselfish counsel? From such a perfect confidence as I would have men and women cultivate, it is impossible that bad or

wrong should flow. On the contrary, it is the only condition in which love and happiness can go hand in hand. It is the only practice that can insure continuous respect, without which love withers and dies out. Can you not see that in mutual confidence and freedom the very strongest bonds of love are forged? It is more blessed to grant favors than to demand them, and the blessing is large and prolific of happiness, or small and insignificant in results, just in proportion as the favor granted is large or small. Tried by this rule, the greater the blessing or happiness you can confer on your partners, in which your own selfish feelings are not consulted, the greater the satisfaction that will redound to yourself. Think of this mode of adjusting your difficulties, and see what a clear way opens before you. There are none who have once felt the influence of a high order of love, so callous, but that they intuitively recognize the true grandeur and nobility of such a line of conduct. It must always be remembered that you can never do right until you are first free to do wrong; since the doing of a thing under compulsion is evidence neither of good nor bad intent; and if under compulsion, who shall decide what would be the substituted rule of action under full freedom?

"In freedom alone is there safety and happiness, and when people learn this great fact, they will have just begun to know how to live. Instead then of being the destroying angel of the household, I would become the angel of purification to purge out all insincerity, all deception, all baseness and all vice, and to replace them by honor, confidence and truth.

"I know very well that much of the material upon which the work must begin is very bad and far gone in decay. But I would have everybody perfectly free to do either right or wrong, according to the highest standard, and if there are those so unfortunate as not to know how to do that which can alone bring happiness, I would treat them as we treat those who are intellectually without culture — who are ignorant and illiterate. There are none so ignorant but they may be taught. So, too, are there none so unfortunate in their understanding of the true and high relation of the sexes as not to be amenable to the right kind of instruction. First of all, however, the would-be-teachers of humanity must become truly Christian, meek and

lowly in spirit, forgiving and kind in action, and ever ready to do as did Christ to the Magdalen. We are not so greatly different from what the accusing multitude were in that time. But Christians, forgetting the teaching of Christ, condemn and say, 'Go on in your sin.' Christians must learn to claim nothing for themselves that they are unwilling to accord others. They must remember that all people endeavor, so far as lies in their power, and so far as it is possible for them to judge, to exercise their human right, or determine what their action shall be, that will bring them most happiness; and instead of being condemned and cast out of society therefor, they should be protected therein, so long as others' rights are not infringed upon. We think they do not do the best thing; it is our duty to endeavor to show them the better and the higher, and to induce them to walk therein. But because a person chooses to perform an act that we think a bad one, we have no right to put the brand of excommunication upon him. It is our Christian and brotherly duty to persuade him instead that it is more to his good to do something better next time, at the same time, however, assuring him he only did what he had a perfect right to do.

"If our sisters who inhabit Greene street and other filthy localities choose to remain in debauch, and if our brothers choose to visit them there, they are only exercising the same right that we exercise in remaining away, and we have no more right to abuse and condemn them for exercising their rights that way, than they have to abuse and condemn us for exercising our rights our way. But we have a duty, and that is by our love, kindness and sympathy to endeavor to prevail upon them to desert those ways which we feel are so damaging to all that is high and pure and true in the relations of the sexes.

"If these are the stray sheep from the fold of truth and purity, should we not go out and gather them in, rather than remain within the fold and hold the door shut, lest they should enter in and defile the fold? Nay, my friends, we have only an assumed right to thus sit in judgment over our unfortunate sisters, which is the same right of which men have made use to prevent women from participation in government.

"The sin of all time has been the exercise of assumed powers.

This is the essence of tyranny. Liberty is a great lesson to learn. It is a great step to vindicate our own freedom. It is more, far more, to learn to leave others free, and free to do just what we perhaps may deem wholly wrong. We must recognize that others have consciences and judgment and rights as well as we, and religiously abstain from the effort to make them better by the use of any means to which we have no right to resort, and to which we cannot resort without abridging the great doctrine, the charter of all our liberties, the doctrine of Human Rights.

“ But the public press, either in real or affected ignorance of what they speak, denounce Free Love as the justification of, and apologist for, all manner and kind of sexual debauchery, and thus, instead of being the teachers of the people, as they should be, are the power which inculcates falsehood and wrong. The teachings of Christ, whom so many now profess to imitate, were direct and simple upon this point. He was not too good to acknowledge all men as brothers and all women as sisters; it mattered not whether they were highly advanced in knowledge and morals, or if they were of low intellectual and moral culture.

“ It is seriously to be doubted if any of Christ's disciples, or men equally as good as were they, could gain fellowship in any of your Fifth avenue church palaces, since they were nothing more than the humblest of fishermen, of no social or mental standing. Nevertheless, they were quite good enough for Christ to associate with, and fit to be appointed by Him to be ‘ fishers of men.’ The church seems to have forgotten that good does sometimes come out of the Nazareths of the world, and that wisdom may fall from the mouths of ‘ babes and sucklings.’ Quite too much of the old pharisaical spirit exists in society to-day to warrant its members' claims, that they are the representatives and followers of Christ. For they are the I-am-holier-than-thou kind of people, who affect to, and to a great extent do, prescribe the standards of public opinion, and who ostracise everybody who will not bow to their mandates.

“ Talk of freedom, of equality, of justice! I tell you there is scarcely a thought put in practice that is worthy to be the offspring of those noble words. The veriest systems of despotism

still reign in all matters pertaining to social life. Caste stands as boldly out in this country as it does in political life in the kingdoms of Europe.

“It is true that we are obliged to accept the situation just as it is. If we accord freedom to all persons we must expect them to make their own best use thereof, and, as I have already said, must protect them in such use until they learn to put it to better uses. But in our predication we must be consistent, and now ask who among you would be worse men and women were all social laws repealed?

“Would you necessarily dissolve your present relations, desert your dependent husbands — for there are even some of them — and wives and children simply because you have the right so to do? You are all trying to deceive yourselves about this matter. Let me ask of husbands if they think there would be fifty thousand women of the town supported by them if their wives were ambitious to have an equal number of men of the town to support, and for the same purposes? I tell you, nay! It is because men are held innocent of this support, and all the vengeance is visited upon the victims, that they have come to an immunity in their practices.

“Until women come to hold men to equal account as they do the women with whom they consort; or until they regard these women as just as respectable as the men who support them, society will remain in its present scale of moral excellence. A man who is well known to have been the constant visitor to these women is accepted into society, and if he be rich is eagerly sought both by mothers having marriageable daughters and by the daughters themselves. But the women with whom they have consorted are too vile to be even acknowledged as worthy of Christian burial, to say nothing of common Christian treatment. I have heard women reply when this difficulty was pressed upon them, ‘We cannot ostracise men as we are compelled to women, since we are dependent on them for support.’ Ah! here’s the rub. But do you not see that these other sisters are also dependent upon men for their support, and mainly so because you render it next to impossible for them to follow any legitimate means of livelihood? And are only those who have been fortunate enough to secure legal support entitled to live?

“When I hear that argument advanced, my heart sinks within me at the degraded condition of my sisters. They submit to a degradation simply because they see no alternative except self-support, and they see no means for that. To put on the semblance of holiness they cry out against those who, for like reasons, submit to like degradation ; the only difference between the two being in a licensed ceremony, and a slip of printed paper costing twenty-five cents and upward.

“The good women of one of the interior cities of New York some two years since organized a movement to put down prostitution. They were, by stratagem, to find out who visited houses of prostitution, and then were to ostracise them. They pushed the matter until they found their own husbands, brothers and sons involved, and then suddenly desisted, and nothing has since been heard of the eradication of prostitution in that city. If the same experiment were to be tried in New York the result would be the same. The supporters of prostitution would be found to be those whom women cannot ostracise. The same disability excuses the presence of women in the very home, and I need not tell you that Mormonism is practiced in other places beside Utah. But what is the logic of these things? Why, simply this: A woman, be she wife or mistress, who consorts with a man who consorts with other women, is equally, with them and him, morally responsible, since the receiver is held to be as culpable as the thief.

“The false and hollow relations of the sexes are thus resolved into the mere question of the dependence of women upon men for support, and women, whether married or single, are supported by men because they are women and their opposites in sex. I can see no moral difference between a woman who marries and lives with a man because he can provide for her wants, and the woman who is not married, but who is provided for at the same price. There is a legal difference, to be sure, upon one side of which is set the seal of respectability, but there is no virtue in law. In the fact of law, however, is the evidence of the lack of virtue, since if the law be required to enforce virtue, its real presence is wanting; and women need to comprehend this truth.

“The sexual relation must be rescued from this insidious

form of slavery. Women must rise from their position as ministers to the passions of men to be their equals. Their entire system of education must be changed. They must be trained to be like men, permanent and independent individualities, and not their mere appendages or adjuncts, with them forming but one member of society. They must be the companions of men from choice, never from necessity.

"It is a libel upon nature and God to say this world is not calculated to make women, equally with men, self-reliant and self-supporting individuals. In present customs, however, this is apparently impossible. There must come a change, and one of the direct steps to it will be found in the newly claimed political equality of women with men. This attained, one degree of subjugation will be removed. Next will come, following equality of right, equality of duty, which includes the duty of self-hood, or independence as an individual. Nature is male and female throughout, and each sex is equally dependent upon nature for sustenance. It is an infamous thing to say a condition of society which requires women to enter into and maintain sexual relations with men is their legitimate method of protecting life. Sexual relations should be the result of entirely different motives than for the purpose of physical support. The spirit of the present theory is, that they are entered upon and maintained as a means of physical gratification, regardless of the consequences which may result therefrom, and are administered by the dictum of the husband, which is often in direct opposition to the will and wish of the wife. She has no control over her own person, having been taught to 'submit herself to her husband.'

"I protest against this form of slavery, I protest against the custom which compels women to give the control of their maternal functions over to anybody. It should be theirs to determine when, and under what circumstances, the greatest of all constructive processes—the formation of an immortal soul—should be begun. It is a fearful responsibility with which women are intrusted by nature, and the very last thing that they should be compelled to do is to perform the office of that responsibility against their will, under improper conditions or by disgusting means.

“What can be more terrible than for a delicate, sensitively organized woman to be compelled to endure the presence of a beast in the shape of a man, who knows nothing beyond the blind passion with which he is filled, and to which is often added the delirium of intoxication? You do not need to be informed that there are many persons who, during the acquaintance preceding marriage, preserve a delicacy, tenderness and regard for womanly sensitiveness and modest refinement which are characteristic of true women, thus winning and drawing out their love-nature to the extreme, but who, when the decree has been pronounced which makes them indissolubly theirs, cast all these aside and reveal themselves in their true character, as without regard, human or divine, for aught save their own desires. I know I speak the truth, and you too know I speak the truth, when I say that thousands of the most noble, loving-natured women by whom the world was ever blessed, prepared for, and desirous of pouring their whole life into the bond of union, prophesied by marriage, have had all these generous and warm impulses thrust back upon them by the rude monster into which the previous gentleman developed. To these natures thus frosted and stultified in their fresh youth and vigor, life becomes a burden almost too terrible to be borne, and thousands of pallid cheeks, sunken eyes, distorted imaginations and diseased functions testify too directly and truly to leave a shade of doubt as to their real cause. Yet women, in the first instance, and men through them as their mothers, with an ignorant persistence worthy only of the most savage despotism, seem determined that it shall not be investigated; and so upon this voluntary ignorance and willful persistence society builds. It is high time, however, that they should be investigated, high time that your sisters and daughters should no longer be led to the altar like sheep to the shambles, in ignorance of the uncertainties they must inevitably encounter. For it is no slight thing to hazard a life's happiness upon a single act.

“I deem it a false and perverse modesty that shuts off discussion, and consequently knowledge, upon these subjects. They are vital, and I never performed a duty which I felt more called upon to perform than I now do in denouncing as barbarous the ignorance which is allowed to prevail among young women about to enter those relations which, under present

customs, as often bring a life-long misery as they do happiness.

“ Mistakes made in this most important duty of life can never be rectified ; a commentary upon the system which of itself is sufficient in the sight of common sense to forever condemn it. In marriage, however, common sense is dispensed with, and a usage substituted therefor which barbarism has bequeathed us, and which becomes more barbarous as the spiritual natures of women gain the ascendancy over the mere material. The former slaves, before realizing that freedom was their God-appointed right, did not feel the horrors of their condition. But when, here and there, some among them began to have an interior knowledge that they were held in obedience by an unrighteous power, they then began to rebel in their souls. So too, is it with women. So long as they knew nothing beyond a blind and servile obedience and perfect self-abnegation to the will and wish of men, they did not rebel ; but the time has arrived wherein, here and there, a soul is awakened by some terrible ordeal, or some divine inspiration, to the fact that women as much as men are personalities, responsible to themselves for the use which they permit to be made of themselves, and they rebel demanding freedom, freedom to hold their own lives and bodies from the demoralizing influence of sexual relations that are not founded in and maintained by love. And this rebellion will continue, too, until love, unshackled, shall be free to go to bless the object that can call it forth, and until, when called forth, it shall be respected as holy, pure and true. Every day farther and wider does it spread, and bolder does it speak. None too soon will the yoke fall by which the unwilling are made to render a hypocritical obedience to the despotism of public opinion, which, distorted and blinded by a sham sentimentality, is a false standard of morals and virtue, and which is utterly destructive to true morality and to real virtue, which can only be fostered and cultivated by freedom of the affections.

“ Free Love, then, is the law by which men and women of all grades and kinds are attracted to or repelled from each other, and does not describe the results accomplished by either ; these results depend upon the condition and development of the individual subjects. It is the natural operation of the affectional

motives of the sexes, unbiased by any enacted law or standard of public opinion. It is the opportunity which gives the opposites in sex the conditions in which the law of chemical affinities raised into the domain of the affections can have unrestricted sway, as it has in all departments of nature except in enforced sexual relations among men and women.

"It is an impossibility to compel incompatible elements of matter to unite. So also is it impossible to compel incompatible elements of human nature to unite. The sphere of chemical science is to bring together such elements as will produce harmonious compounds. The sphere of social science is to accomplish the same thing in humanity. Anything that stands in the way of this accomplishment in either department is an obstruction to the natural order of the universe. There would be just as much common sense for the chemist to write a law commanding that two incompatible elements should unite, or that two, once united, should so remain, even if a third, having a stronger affinity for one of them than they have for each other, should be introduced, as it is for chemists of society to attempt to do the same by individuals; for both are impossible. If in chemistry two properties are united by which the environment is not profited, it is the same law of affinity which operates as where a compound is made that is of the greatest service to society. This law holds in social chemistry; the results obtained from social compounds will be just such as their respective properties determine.

"Thus I might go on almost infinitely to illustrate the difference which must be recognized between the operations of a law and the law itself. Now the whole difficulty in marriage law is that it endeavors to compel unity between elements in which it is impossible; consequently there is an attempt made to subvert not only the general order of the universe, but also the special intentions of nature, which are those of God. The results, then, flowing from operations of the law of Free Love will be high, pure and lasting, or low, debauched and promiscuous, just in the degree that those loving are high or low in the scale of sexual progress; while each and all are strictly natural, and therefore legitimate in their respective spheres.

"Promiscuity in sexuality is simply the anarchical stage of

development wherein the passions rule supreme. When spirituality comes in and rescues the real man or woman from the domain of the purely material, promiscuity is simply impossible. As promiscuity is the analogue to anarchy, so is spirituality to scientific selection and adjustment. Therefore I am fully persuaded that the very highest sexual unions are those that are monogamic, and that these are perfect in proportion as they are lasting. Now if to this be added the fact that the highest kind of love is that which is utterly freed from and devoid of selfishness, and whose highest gratification comes from rendering its object the greatest amount of happiness, let that happiness depend upon whatever it may, then you have my ideal of the highest order of love and the most perfect degree of order to which humanity can attain. An affection that does not desire to bless its object, instead of appropriating it by a selfish possession to its own uses, is not worthy the name of love. Love is that which exists to do good, not merely to get good, which is constantly giving instead of desiring.

"A Cæsar is admired by humanity, but a Christ is revered. Those persons who have lived and sacrificed themselves most for the good of humanity, without thought of recompense, are held in greatest respect. Christians believe that Christ died to save the world, giving His life as a ransom therefor. That was the greatest gift he could make to show His love for mankind.

"The general test of love to-day is entirely different from that which Christ gave. That is now deemed the greatest love which has the strongest and most uncontrollable wish to be made happy, by the appropriation, and if need be the sacrifice, of all the preferences of its object. It says: 'Be mine. Whatever may be your wish, yield it up to me.' How different would the world be were this sort of selfishness supplanted by the Christ love, which says: Let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done. Were the relations of the sexes thus regulated, misery, crime and vice would be banished, and the pale, wan face of female humanity replaced by one glowing with radiant delight and healthful bloom, and the heart of humanity beat with a heightened vigor and renewed strength, and its intellect cleared of all shadows.

sorrows and blights. Contemplate this, and then denounce me for advocating freedom if you can, and I will bear your curse with a better resignation.

"Oh! my brothers and sisters, let me entreat you to have more faith in the self-regulating efficacy of freedom. Do you not see how beautifully it works among us in other respects? In America everybody is free to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, or even not to worship anything, notwithstanding you or I may think that very wicked or wrong. The respect for freedom we make paramount over our individual opinions, and the result is peace and harmony, when the people of other countries are still throttling and destroying each other to enforce their individual opinions on others. Free Love is only the appreciation of this beautiful principle of freedom. One step further I entreat you to trust it still, and though you may see a thousand dangers, I see peace and happiness and steady improvement as the result.

"To more specifically define Free Love I would say that I prefer to use the word love with lust as its antithesis, love representing the spiritual and lust the animal; the perfect and harmonious inter-relations of the two being the perfected human. This use has its justification in other pairs of words; as good and evil; heat and cold; light and dark; up and down; north and south; which in principle are the same, but in practice we are obliged to judge of them as relatively different. The point from which judgment is made is that which we occupy, or are related to, individually, at any given time. Thus what would be up to one person might be down to another differently situated, along the line which up and down describe. So also is it of good and evil. What is good to one low down the ladder may not only be, but actually is, evil to one further ascended; nevertheless it is the same ladder up which both climb. It is the comprehension of this scientific fact that guarantees the best religion. And it is the non-comprehension of it that sets us as judges of our brothers and sisters, who are below us in the scale of development, to whom we should reach down the kind and loving hand of assistance, rather than force them to retreat farther away from us by unkindness, denunciation and hate.

"In fine, and to resume: We have found that humanity is composed of men and women of all grades of development,

from the most hideous human monster up to the highest perfected saint ; that all of them, under our theory of government, are entitled to worship God after the dictates of their several consciences ; that God is worshiped just as essentially in political and social thought and action as he is in religious thought and action ; that no second person or persons have any right to interfere with the action of the individual unless he interfere with others' rights, and then only to protect such rights ; that the thoughts and actions of all individuals, whether high and pure, or low and debauched, are equally entitled to the protection of the laws, and, through them, to that of all members of the community. Religious thought and action already receive the equal protection of the laws. Political thought and action are about to secure the equal protection of the laws. What social thought and action demand of the laws and their administrators is the same protection which religion has, and politics is about to have.

“ I know full well how strong is the appeals that can be made in behalf of marriage, an appeal based on the sanctions of usage and inherited respect, and on the sanctions of religion reinforced by the sanctions of law. I know how much can be said, and how forcibly it can be said, on the ground that women, and especially that the children born of the union of the sexes, must be protected, and must, therefore, have the solemn contract of the husband and father to that effect. I know how long and how powerfully the ideality and sentiment of mankind have clustered as it were in a halo, around this time-honored institution of marriage. And yet I solemnly believe that all that belongs to a dispensation of force and contract, and of low and unworthy sense of mutual ownership, which is passing, and which it is destined rapidly to pass, completely away ; not to leave us without love, nor without the happiness and beauty of the most tender relation of human souls ; nor without security for woman, and ample protection for children ; but to lift us to a higher level in the enjoyment of every blessing. I believe in love with liberty ; in protection without slavery ; in the care and culture of offspring by new and better methods, and without the tragedy of self-immolation on the part of parents. I believe in the family, spiritually constituted, expanded, ampli-

fied, and scientifically and artistically organized, as a unitary home. I believe in the most wonderful transformation of human society as about to come, as even now at the very door, through general progress, science and the influential intervention of the spirit world. I believe in more than all that the millennium has ever signified to the most religious mind; and I believe that in order to prepare minds to contemplate and desire and enact the new and better life, it is necessary that the old and still prevalent superstitious veneration for the legal marriage tie be relaxed and weakened; not to pander to immorality, but as introductory to a nobler manhood and a more glorified womanhood; as, indeed, the veritable gateway to a paradise regained.

“Do not criticise me, therefore, from a commonplace point of view. Question me, first, of the grounds of my faith. Conceive, if you can, the outlook for that humanity which comes trooping through the long, bright vista of futurity as seen by the eyes of a devout spiritualist and transcendental socialist. My whole nature is prophetic. I do not and cannot live merely in the present. Credit, first, the burden of my prophecy; and from the new standing-ground so projected forth into the future, look back upon our times, and so judge of my doctrine; and if, still, you cannot concede either the premises or the conclusion, you may, perhaps, think more kindly of me personally, as an amiable enthusiast, than if you deemed me deliberately wicked in seeking to disturb the foundations of our existing social order.

“I prize dearly the good opinion of my fellow-beings. I would so gladly have you think well of me, and not ill. It is because I love you all, and love your well-being still more than I love you, that I tell you my vision of the future, and that I would willingly disturb your confidence, so long cherished, in the old dead or dying-out past. Believe me honest, my dear friends, and so forgive and think of me lovingly in turn, even if you are compelled still to regard me as deceived. I repeat that I love you all; that I love every human creature and their well-being; and that I believe, with the profoundest conviction, that what I have urged in this discourse is conducive to that end.

“Thus have I explained to you what Social Freedom or, as

some choose to denominate it, Free Love, is, and what its advocates demand. Society says, to grant it is to precipitate itself into anarchy. I oppose to this arbitrary assumption the logic of general freedom, and aver that order and harmony will be secured where anarchy now reigns. The order of nature will soon determine whether society is or I am right. Let that be as it may, I repeat: 'The love that I cannot command is not mine; let me not disturb myself about it, nor attempt to filch it from its rightful owner. A heart that I supposed mine has drifted and gone. Shall I go in pursuit? Shall I forcibly capture the truant and transfix it with the barb of my selfish affection, and pin it to the wall of my chamber? Rather let me leave my doors and windows open, intent only on living so nobly that the best cannot fail to be drawn to me by an irresistible attraction.' "

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE HISTORY OF THE GREAT SCANDAL.

In giving this history to the reader, the author does not claim that it is original, on the contrary it is almost wholly made up from the statements of others, and in their own recorded words, and necessarily the larger part of it from the records of Mrs. Woodhull. Nearly all of it has been printed before, but in fragmentary methods, and through such mediums as do not reach general readers outside a limited circle. We here give it collated in proper order, and as we believe *entire*, and shall give our authorities for all the statements we print, assuming no responsibility, nor expressing any opinions as to their truth or falsity, leaving the readers to form their own opinions from the data we furnish them.

The high standing, and world-wide reputation of the central figure in the group, have caused an unusual, and almost universal interest in all that pertains to this most unfortunate affair, and as the reports of it which have been published are more or less garbled, we believe the public will be glad to have in a concise and connected form, the whole story, with the subsequent action of the parties involved, together with the comments of the press thereupon, and in doing this, the author's aim has been to act the part of a faithful, and impartial historian.

We have spoken of the high standing, and world-wide reputation of the central figure in this history; but he is not the only one who has achieved a wide notoriety, the others, although much younger, are also widely known, and variously estimated, and if the dreams and aspirations of one of them shall ever be half realized, she will be embalmed in history as the Evangel of her sex, *but our readers know as well as we of what stuff dreams are made.*

CHAPTER XXV.

THE DETAILED STATEMENT OF THE WHOLE MATTER BY MRS. WOODHULL.

"I propose, as the commencement of a series of aggressive moral warfare on the social question, to begin in this article with ventilating one of the most stupendous scandals which has ever occurred in any community. I refer to that which has been whispered broad-cast for the last two or three years through the cities of New York and Brooklyn, touching the character and conduct of the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, in his relations with the family of Theodore Tilton. I intend that this article shall burst like a bomb-shell into the ranks of the moralistic social camp.

"I am engaged in officering, and in some sense conducting a social revolution on the marriage question. I have strong convictions to the effect that this institution, as a bond of promise to love one another to the end of life, and forego all other loves or passional gratifications, has outlived its day of usefulness; that the most intelligent, and really virtuous of our citizens, especially in the larger cities of Christendom, have outgrown it; are constantly and systematically unfaithful to it; despise and revolt against it as a slavery in their hearts; and only submit to the semblance of fidelity to it, from the dread of sham public opinion, based on the ideas of the past, and which no longer really represent the convictions of any body. The doctrines of scientific socialism have profoundly penetrated and permeated public opinion. No thought has so rapidly, and completely carried the convictions of the thinking portions of the community as stirpiculture. The absurdity is too palpable, when it is pointed out, that we give a hundred times more attention to the laws of breeding, as applied to horses, cattle and pigs, and even to our barn-yard fowls, than we do to the same laws as

applied to human beings. It is equally obvious, on a little reflection, that stirpiculture, or the scientific propagation and cultivation of the human animal, demands free love or freedom of the varied union of the sexes under the dictates of the highest and best knowledge on the subject, as an essential and precedent condition. These considerations are too palpable to be ignored, and they look to the complete and early supercedure of the old and traditional institution of marriage, by the substitution of some better system for the maintainance of women as mothers, and children as progeny. All intelligent people know these facts and look for the coming of some wiser and better system of social life. The supercedure of marriage in the near future, by some kind of socialistic arrangement, is as much a foregone conclusion with all the best thinkers of to-day as was the approaching dissolution of slavery no more than five or ten years before its actual abolition in the late war

“But in the meantime, men and women tremble on the brink of the revolution and hesitate to avow their convictions, while yet partly aware of their rights, and urged by the legitimate impulses of nature, they act upon the new doctrines, while they profess obedience to the old. In this manner an organized hypocrisy has become the tone of our modern society. Poltroonry, cowardice and deception rule the hour. The continuance for generations, of such utter falsity, touching one of the most sacred interests of humanity will almost eradicate the sense of honesty from the human soul. Every consideration of sound expediency demands that these days be shortened; that somebody lead the van in announcement of the higher order of life.

“Impelled by such views, I entered the combat with old errors, as I believe them to be, and brought forward, in addition to the wise and powerful words which others have uttered on the subject, the arguments which my own inspiration and reflections suggested. No sooner had I done so, than the howl of persecution sounded in my ears. Instead of replying to my arguments, I was assaulted with shameful abuse. I was young and inexperienced in the business of reform, and astounded to find what, as I have since learned from the veterans in the cause, is the usual fact, that the most persistent and

slandrous, and foul-mouthed accusations came from precisely those who, as I often happened to know, stood nearest to me in their convictions, and whose lives, privately, were a protest against the very repression which I denounce. It was a paradox which I could not understand, that I was denounced as utterly bad for affirming the right of others to do as they did; denounced by the very persons whom my doctrines alone could justify, and who claimed, at the same time to be conscientious and good men. My position led nevertheless, to continuous confidences relating to peoples own opinions and lives, and the opinions and lives of others. My mind became charged with a whole literature of astonishing disclosures. The lives of almost a whole army of spiritualistic and social reformers, of all the schools, were laid open before me. But the matter did not stop there. I found that to a great extent the social revolutions was as far advanced among the leading lights of the business and wealthy circles, and of the various professions, not excluding the clergy and the churches as among technical reformers.

“It was, nevertheless, from these very quarters that I was most severely assailed. It was vexatious and trying I confess, for one of my temper, to stand under the galling fire of personalities from parties who should have been my warmest advocates, or who should else have reformed their lives in accordance with a morality which they wished the public to understand they professed.

“I was sorely and repeatedly tempted to retort in personalities to these attacks. But simply as a personality, or personal defense, or spiteful retort, I have almost wholly abstained during these years of sharp conflict from making use of any of the rich resources at my command for that kind of attack.

“But in the meantime the question came to press itself upon my consideration: Had I any right, having assumed the championship of social freedom, to forego the use of half the weapons which the facts, no less than the philosophy of the subject placed at my command for conducting the war through any mere tenderness towards those who were virtual traitors to the truth which they knew, and were surreptitiously acting upon? Had not the sacred cause of human rights and human

well-being a paramount claim over my own conduct? Was I not, in withholding the facts and conniving at a putrid mass of seething falsehood and hypocrisy, in some sense a partaker in these crimes; and was I not, in fact, shrinking from the responsibility of making more, through regard for my own sensitiveness and dislike to be hurt, than from any true sympathy with those who would be called upon to suffer?

"These questions once before my mind, would never be disposed of, until they were fairly settled upon their own merits, and apart, so far as I could separate them, from my own feelings or the feelings of those who were more directly involved. I have come slowly, deliberately, and I may add reluctantly to my conclusions. I went back and studied the history of other reforms. I found that Garrison not only denounced slavery in the abstract, but he attacked it in the concrete. It was not only the sum of all villainies, but was the particular villainy of this, and that, and the other great and influential man, North and South, in the community. Reputations had to suffer. He bravely and persistently called things by their right names. He pointed out and indicated the individual instances of cruelty. He dragged to the light and scathed and stigmatized the individual offenders. He made them a hissing and a by-word, so far as in him lay. He shocked the public sensibilities by actual and vivid pictures of slaveholding atrocities, and sent spies into the enemies' camp to search out the instances. The world cried shame! and said it was scandalous, and stopped their ears, and blinded their eyes, that their own sensibilities might not be hurt by these horrid revelations. They cast the blanket of their charities and sympathies around the real offenders for their misfortune in being brought to the light, and denounced the informer as a malignant and cruel wretch for not covering up scenes too dreadful to be thought upon; as if it were not a thousand times more dreadful that they should be enacted. But the brave Old Cyclops ignored alike their criticisms and their protests, and their real and their mock sensibilities, and hammered away at his anvil, forging thunderbolts of the gods; and nobody now says he was wrong. A new public opinion had to be created, and he knew that people had to be shocked, and that individual personal feelings had to be hurt. As Bis-

mark is reported to have said : ' If an omelet has to be made, some eggs have to be broken. ' Every revolution has its terrific cost, if not in blood and treasure, then still in less tangible, but alike real sentimental injury of thousands of sufferers. The preliminary and paramount question is : Ought the revolution to be made, cost what it may ? Is the cost to humanity greater of permitting the standing evil to exist ? and if so, let the cost be incurred, fall where it must. If justice to humanity demand the given expenditure, then accepting the particular enterprise of reform, we accept all its necessary consequences, and enter upon our work, fraught, it may be, with repugnance to ourselves as it is necessarily with repugnance to others.

"I have said that I came slowly, deliberately and reluctantly to the adoption of this method of warfare. I was also hindered and delayed by the fact that if I entered upon it at all, I saw no way to avoid making the first onslaught in the most distinguished quarter. It would be cowardice in me to unearth the peccadillos of little men, and to leave untouched the derilections and offences of the magnates of social and intellectual power and position. How slowly I have moved in this matter, and how reluctantly it may be inferred, will appear from these little points in history.

"More than two years ago these two cities — New York and Brooklyn — were rife with rumors of an awful scandal in Plymouth Church. These rumors were whispered and covertly alluded to in almost every circle. But the very enormity of the facts, as the world views such matters, hushed the agitation, and prevented exposure. The press, warned by the laws of libel, and by a tacit and in the main honorable *consensus* to ignore all such rumors until they enter the courts, or become otherwise matters of irrepressible notoriety, abstained from any direct notice of the subject, and the rumors themselves were finally stifled or forgotten. A few persons only knew something directly of the facts, and among them, situated as I was, I happened to be one. Already the question pressed on me, whether I ought not to use the event to forward the cause of social freedom, but I only saw clear in the matter to the limited extent of throwing out some feelers to the public on the subject. It

was a matter of long and anxious consultation between me and my cabinet of confidential advisers.

"In June, 1870, *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly* published an article in reply to Henry C. Bowen's attack upon myself in the columns of the *Independent*, the editorship of which had just been vacated by Theodore Tilton. In this article the following paragraph occurred: 'At this very moment awful and herculean efforts are being made in a neighboring city to suppress the most terrible scandal which has ever astonished and convulsed any community. Clergy, congregation and community will be hurled alike into more than all the consternation which the great explosion in Paris carried to that unfortunate city, if this effort at suppression fail.'

"Subsequently I published in both *World* and *Times* an article in which was the following sentence: 'I know a clergyman of eminence in Brooklyn who lives in concubinage with the wife of another clergyman of equal eminence.' This was generally and well understood among the people of the press especially, that both of these references were to this case of Mr. Beecher's, and it came to be generally suspected that I was better informed regarding the facts of the case than others, and was reserving publicity of my knowledge for a more convenient season. This suspicion was heightened nearly into conviction when it transpired that Theodore Tilton was an earnest and apparently conscientious advocate of many of my radical theories, as appeared in his far-famed biography of me, and in numerous other publications in the *Golden Age* and elsewhere. Mr. Tilton's warmest friends were shocked at his course, and when he added to his remarkable proceedings, his brilliant advocacy of my Fourteenth Amendment theory, in his letters to Charles Sumner, Horace Greely and Matt Carpenter, they considered him irremediably committed to the most radical of radicals. Assurance was made doubly sure when he presided at Steinway Hall, when I, for the first time, fully and boldly advanced my free-love doctrines. It was noted, however, that this man who stood before the world so fully committed to the broadest principles of liberty, made it convenient to be conspicuously absent from the convention of the Woman Suffragists at Washington last January. All sorts of rumors were

thereupon rife. Some said he had 'gone back' on his advocacy of free-love; some said that a rupture had taken place between him and the leaders of the suffrage movement, and many were the theories brought forward to explain the facts. But the real cause did not transpire until Mr. Tilton was found at Cincinnati urging as a candidate the very man whom he had recently so severely castigated with his most caustic pen. It was then wisely surmised that political ambition, and the editorial chair of the *Tribune*, and his life-long personal devotion to Mr. Greeley, were the inducements which had sufficed to turn his head and heart away, temporarily at least, from our movement.

"About this time rumors floated out that Mrs. Woodhull, disgusted at the recent conduct of Mr. Tilton, and the advice given him by certain of his friends, was animadverting in not very measured terms upon their conduct. An article specifying matters involving several of these persons obtained considerable circulation, and with other circumstances, such as the definite statement of facts, with names and places, indicated that the time was at hand, even unto the door, when the things that had remained hidden should be brought to light, and the whole affair be made public.

"Sometime in August last there appeared in the *Evening Telegram* a paragraph which hinted broadly at the impending *expose*. About this time a gentleman from abroad, to whom I had related some of the facts in my possession, repeated them to a member of Mr. Beecher's church, who denounced the whole story as an infamous libel; but some days later he acknowledged, both to his friend and me, that he had inquired into the matter, and had learned that it was a 'damning fact.' This gentleman occupies a responsible position, and his word is good for all he utters. Such was the facility with which confirmations were obtained when sought for. When, therefore, those who were conversant with the case saw in the *Boston Herald* and other papers that I had made a public statement regarding the whole matter, they were not in the least surprised. It shows that the press had concluded that it was time to recognize the sensation which, whether they would or not, was destined soon to shake the social structure from its foundation.

"A reporter was then specially detailed to interview me in order, as he said, that the matter might be published in certain of the New York papers. Why that interview has been suppressed is not possible to affirm with certainty, but it is easy to guess. An impecunious reporter can be bought off with a few hundred dollars. And there are those who would readily pay thousands to shut the columns of the press against this exposure. Fortunately I have a nearly verbatim report, as the interviewer prepared it, and in this shape I shall now present it to the public. But before proceeding to the main matter, let me relate more in detail, the facts which finally determined me to enter upon this adventurous and responsible method of agitation.

"In September, 1871, I was elected, at the annual convention at Troy, President of the National Association of Spiritualists. I had never consociated with the Spiritualists, although for many years both a Spiritualist and a medium myself, with a rare and wonderful experience of my own from my childhood up. I went to this convention merely as a spectator, with no previous concert or machinery of any kind, and was myself as absolutely taken by surprise by my nomination and election as could have been any one present. It was said editorially in our paper, September 30, 1871, and said truly: 'Her surprise at her reception, and her nomination to the Presidency of the society, was equalled only by the gratitude which she felt, and ever will feel, at the unexpected and tumultuous kindness with which she was then and there honored beyond her desert.'

"In *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly* of Nov. 11, 1871, I addressed a President's message to the American Association of Spiritualists. In that document I made use of these words: 'A new and mightier power than all the rings and caucusses, than all the venal legislatures and congresses, has already entered the arena. Not only are all reform parties coalescent on the reform plane, but they have already coalesced in spirit, under the new lead, and a nation will be born in a day. They have already taken possession of the public conviction. Somewhat unconsciously, but really, all the people look to the coming of a new era; but all of them are not so well aware as we are that the spirit world has always exerted a great and diversified influence over this, while it is not until quite recently that

the spiritual development of this world has made it possible for the other to maintain real and continuous relations with it.

“ ‘Your enthusiastic acceptance of me, and your election of me as President, was, in a sense, not your own act. It was an event prepared for you, and to which you were impelled by the superior powers to which both you and I are subject. It was only one step in a series of rapid and astounding events which will, in a marvellously short time, change the entire face of the social world.’

“ This and similar to this was the complete avowal which I then made of my faith in the spiritual ordering of human events, and especially of a grand series of events now in actual and rapid progress, and tending to culminate in the complete dissolution of the old social order, and the institution of a new and celestial order of humanity in the world. And let me now take occasion to affirm, that all the, otherwise viewed, terrible events which I am about to recite as having occurred in Plymouth Church, are merely parts of the same drama which have been cautiously and laboriously prepared to astound men into the consciousness of the possibilities of a better life ; and that I believe that all the parties to this *embroglio* have been, throughout, the unconscious agents of the higher powers. It is this belief more than anything else, which finally reconciles me to enact my part in the matter, which is that of mere *nuncio* to the world of the facts which have happened, and so of the new step in the dissolution of the Old, and in the inauguration of the New.

“ At a large and enthusiastic National Convention of the reformers of all schools held in Apollo Hall, New York, the 11th and 12th of May, 1872, I was put in nomination as the candidate of the Equal Rights Party for the Presidency of the United States. Despite the brilliant promise of appearances at the inception of this movement, a counter current of fatality seemed from that time to attend both it and me. The press, suddenly divided between the other two great parties, refused all notice of the new reformatory movement ; a series of pecuniary disasters stripped us for the time being of the means of continuing our own weekly publication, and forced us into a desperate struggle for mere existence. I had not even the means of com-

municating my condition to my own circle of friends. At the same time my health failed from mere exhaustion. The inauguration of the new party, and my nomination, seemed to fall dead upon the country; and to cap the climax, a new batch of slanders and injurious innuendoes permeated the community in respect to my condition and character.

"Circumstances being in this state, the year rolled round, and the next annual convention of the National Association of Spiritualists occurred in Sept., 1872, at Boston. I went there — dragged by the sense of duty — tired, sick and discouraged as to my own future, to surrender my charge as President of the Association, feeling as though I were distrusted and unpopular, and with no consolation but the consciousness of having striven to do right, and my abiding faith in the wisdom and help of the spirit world.

"Arrived at the great assemblage, I felt around me everywhere, not indeed a positive hostility, not even a fixed spirit of unfriendliness, but one of painful uncertainty and doubt. I listened to the speeches of others and tried to gather the sentiment of the great meeting. I rose finally to my feet to render an account of my stewardship, to surrender the charge, and retire. Standing there before that audience I was seized by one of those overwhelming gusts of inspiration which sometimes come upon me, from I know not where; taken out of myself; hurried away from the immediate question of discussion, and made, by some stronger power than I, to pour out into the ears of that assembly, and, as I was told subsequently, in a rhapsody of indignant eloquence, with circumstantial detail, the whole history of the Beecher and Tilton scandal in Plymouth Church, and to announce in prophetic terms something of the bearing of those events upon the future of Spiritualism. I know perhaps less than any of those present, all that I did actually say. They tell me that I used some naughty words upon that occasion. All I know is, that if I swore, *I did not swear profanely*. Some said with tears streaming from their eyes that *I swore divinely*. That I could not have shocked or horrified the audience was shown by the fact that in the immense hall, packed to the ceiling, and as absolutely to my own surprise as at my first election in Troy, I was re-elected President of the Associa-

tion. Still impressed by my own previous convictions, that my labors in that connection were ended, I promptly declined the office. The convention, however, refused to accept my declination.

"The public press of Boston professed holy horror at the freedom of my speech, and restricted their reports to the narrowest limits, carefully suppressing what I had said of the conduct of the great clergyman. The report went forth, however, through various channels, in a muffled and mutilated form, the general conclusion being probably with the uninformed simply that *Mrs. Woodhull had publicly slandered Mr. Beecher*.

"Added, therefore, to all other considerations, I am now placed in the situation that I must either endure unjustly the imputation of being a slanderer, or I must resume my previously formed purpose, and relate in formal terms, for the whole public, the simple facts of the case as they have come to my knowledge, and so justify, in cool deliberation, the words I uttered, almost unintentionally, and by a sudden impulse at Boston.

"I accept the situation, and enter advisedly upon the task I have undertaken, knowing the responsibilities of the act and its possible consequences. I am impelled by no hostility whatever to Mr. Beecher, nor by any personal pique toward him or any other person. I recognize in the facts a fixed determination in the Spirit world to bring this subject to the light of day for high and important uses to the world. They demand of me my co-operation and they shall have it, no matter what the consequences may be to me personally.

"The following is the re-statement from notes, aided by my recollection, of the interviewing upon this subject by the press reporter already alluded to.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE REPORT OF THE INTERVIEW.

Reporter.—"Mrs. Woodhull, I have called to ask if you are prepared and willing to furnish a full statement of the Beecher-Tilton scandal for publication in the city papers?"

Mrs. Woodhull.—"I do not know that I ought to object to repeating whatever I know in relation to it. You understand, of course, that I take a different view of such matters from those usually avowed by other people. Still I have good reason to think that far more people entertain views corresponding with mine than dare to assert them or openly live up to them."

Reporter.—"How, Mrs. Woodhull, would you state in the most condensed way your opinions on this subject, as they differ from those avowed and ostensibly lived by the public at large?"

Mrs. Woodhull.—"I believe that the marriage institution like slavery and monarchy, and many other things which have been good or necessary in their day, is now *effete*, and in a general sense injurious, instead of being beneficial to the community, although of course it must continue to linger until better institutions can be formed. I mean by marriage, in this connection, any *forced* or obligatory tie between the sexes, any legal intervention or constraint to prevent people from adjusting their own love relations precisely as they do their religious affairs in this country, in complete personal freedom; changing, and improving them from time to time, and according to circumstances."

Reporter.—"I confess, then, that I cannot understand why you of all persons should have any fault to find with Mr. Beecher, even assuming everything to be true of him which I have hitherto heard only vaguely hinted at."

Mrs. Woodhull.—"I have no fault to find with him in any such sense as you mean, nor in any such sense as that in which the world will condemn him. I have no doubt that he has done the very best which he could do under all the circumstances—with his demanding physical nature, and with the terrible restrictions upon a clergyman's life, imposed by that ignorant public opinion about physiological laws, which they, nevertheless, more, perhaps, than any other class, do their best to perpetuate. The fault I find with Mr. Beecher is of a wholly different character, as I have told him repeatedly and frankly, and as he knows very well. It is, indeed, the exact opposite to that for which the world will condemn him. I condemn him because I know, and have had every opportunity to know, that he entertains, on conviction, substantially the same views which I entertain on the social question; that, under the influence of these convictions, he has lived for many years, perhaps for his whole adult life, in a manner which the religious and moralistic public ostensibly, and to some extent really, condemn; that he has permitted himself, nevertheless, to be overawed by public opinion, to profess to believe otherwise than as he does believe, to have helped to maintain for these many years that very social slavery under which he was chafing, and against which he was secretly revolting both in thought and practice; and that he has, in a word, consented, and still consents to be a hypocrite. The fault with which I, therefore, charge him, is not infidelity to the old ideas, but unfaithfulness to the new. He is in heart, in conviction and in life, an ultra socialist reformer; while in seeming and pretension he is the upholder of the old social slavery, and, therefore, does what he can to crush out and oppose me and those who act and believe with me in forwarding the great social revolution. I know, myself, so little of the sentiment of fear, I have so little respect for an ignorant and prejudiced public opinion, I am so accustomed to say the thing that I think, and do the thing that I believe to be right, that I doubt not I am in danger of having far too little sympathy with the real difficulties of a man situated as Mr. Beecher has been, and is, when he contemplates the idea of facing social opprobrium. Speaking from my feelings, I am

prone to denounce him as a poltroon, a coward and a sneak; not, as I tell you, for anything that he has done, and for which the world would condemn him, but for failing to do what it seems to me so clear he ought to do; for failing, in a word, to stand shoulder to shoulder with me and others who are endeavoring to hasten a social regeneration which he believes in."

Reporter.—"You speak very confidently, Mrs. Woodhull, of Mr. Beecher's opinions and life. Will you now please to resume that subject, and tell me exactly what you know of both?"

Mrs. Woodhull.—"I had vaguely heard rumors of some scandal in regard to Mr. Beecher, which I put aside as mere rumor and idle gossip of the hour, and gave to them no attention whatever. The first serious intimation I had that there was something more than mere gossip in the matter came to me in the committee room at Washington, where the suffrage women congregated during the winter of 1870, when I was there to urge my views on the Fourteenth Amendment. It was hinted in the room that some of the women, Mrs. Isabella Beecher Hooker, a sister of Mr Beecher, among the number, would snub Mrs. Woodhull on account of her social opinions and antecedents. Instantly a gentleman, a stranger to me, stepped forward and said: 'It would ill become these women, and especially a Beecher, to talk of antecedents or to cast any smirch upon Mrs. Woodhull, for I am reliably assured that Henry Ward Beecher preaches to at least twenty of his mistresses every Sunday.' I paid no special attention to the remark at the time, as I was very intensely engaged in the business which had called me there; but it afterward forcibly recurred to me, with the thought also that it was strange that such a remark, made in such a presence, had seemed to have a subduing effect, instead of arousing indignation. The women who were there could not have treated me better than they did. Whether this strange remark had any influence in overcoming their objections to me I do not know; but it is certain they were not set against me by it; and, all of them, Mrs. Hooker included, subsequently professed the warmest friendship for me.'

Reporter.—"After this, I presume you sought for the solution of the gentleman's remark."

Mrs. Woodhull.—"No, I did not. It was brought up sub-

sequently, in an intimate conversation between her and me, by Mrs. Paulina Wright Davis, without any seeking on my part, and to my very great surprise. Mrs. Davis had been, it seems, a frequent visitor at Mr. Tilton's house in Brooklyn — they having long been associated in the Woman's Rights movement — and she stood upon certain terms of intimacy in the family Almost at the same time to which I have referred, when I was in Washington, she called, as she told me, at Mr. Tilton's. Mrs. Tilton met her at the door and burst into tears, exclaiming: 'Oh, Mrs. Davis! have you come to see me? For six months I have been shut up from the world, and I thought no one ever would come again to visit me.' In the interview that followed, Mrs. Tilton spoke freely of a long series of intimate, and so-called criminal relations, on her part, with the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher; of the discovery of the facts by Mr. Tilton; of the abuse she had suffered from him in consequence, and of her heart-broken condition. She seemed to allude to the whole thing as to something already generally known, or known in a considerable circle, and impossible to be concealed; and attributed the long absence of Mrs. Davis from the house to her knowledge of the facts. She was, as she stated at the time, recovering from the effects of a miscarriage of a child of six months. The miscarriage was induced by the ill-treatment of Mr. Tilton in his rage at the discovery of her criminal intimacy with Mr. Beecher, and, as he believed, the great probability, that she was *enciente* by Mr. Beecher instead of himself. Mrs. Tilton confessed to Mrs. Davis the intimacy with Mr. Beecher, and that it had been of years' standing. She also said that she had loved Mr. Beecher before she had married Mr. Tilton, and that now the burden of her sorrow was greatly augmented by the knowledge that Mr. Beecher was untrue to her. She had not only to endure the rupture with her husband, but also the certainty that, notwithstanding his repeated assurance of his faithfulness to her, he had recently had illicit intercourse, under most extraordinary circumstances, with another person. Said Mrs. Davis: 'I came away from that house, my soul bowed down with grief at the heart-broken condition of that poor woman, and I felt that I ought not to leave Brooklyn until I had stripped the mask from that infamous, hypocritical scoun-

drel, Beecher.' In May, after returning home, Mrs. Davis wrote me a letter, from which I will read a paragraph to show that we conversed on this subject :

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER.

" ' *Dear Victoria* :— I thought of you half of last night, dreamed of you and prayed for you. I believe you are raised up of God to do a wonderful work, and I believe that you will unmask the hypocrisy of a class that none others dare touch. God help you and save you. The more I think of that *mass of Beecher corruption* the more I desire its opening.

" ' Ever yours, lovingly,

" PAULINA WRIGHT DAVIS.

" ' PROVIDENCE, R. I., May, 1871. ' "

Reporter.—" Did you inform Mrs. Davis of your intention to expose this matter, as she intimates in the letter ? "

Mrs. Woodhull.—" I said in effect to her, that the matter would become public, and that I felt that I should be instrumental in making it so. But I was not decided about the course I should pursue. I next heard the whole story from Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

Reporter.—" Indeed ! Is Mrs. Stanton also mixed up in this affair ? Does she know the facts ? How could the matter have been kept so long quiet when so many people are cognizant of it ?

Mrs. Woodhull.—" The existence of the skeleton in the closet may be very widely known, and many people may have the key to the terrible secret, but still hesitate to open the door for the great outside world to gaze in upon it. This grand woman did indeed know the same facts, and from Mr. Tilton himself. I shall never forget the occasion of her first rehearsal of it to me at my residence, 15 East Thirty-eighth street, in a visit made to me during the Apollo Hall Convention in May, 1871. It seems that Mr. Tilton, in agony at the discovery of what he deemed his wife's perfidy and his pastor's treachery, retreated to Mrs. Stanton's residence at Tenaflly, where he detailed to her the entire story. Said Mrs. Stanton, ' I never saw such a manifestation of mental agony. He raved and tore his hair, and seemed upon the very verge of insanity. ' ' Oh ! ' said he, ' that that damned lecherous scoundrel should have defiled my bed

for ten years, and at the same time have professed to be my best friend! Had he come like a man to me and confessed his guilt, I could perhaps have endured it, but to have him creep like a snake into my house leaving his pollution behind him, and I so blind as not to see, and esteeming him all the while as a saint — oh! it is too much. And when I think how for years she, upon whom I had bestowed all my heart's love, could have lied and deceived me so, I lose all faith in humanity. I do not believe there is any honor, any truth left in anybody in the world.' Mrs. Stanton continued and repeated to me the sad story, which it is unnecessary to recite, as I prefer giving it as Mr. Tilton himself told it me, subsequently, with his own lips."

Reporter.—"Is it possible that Mr. Tilton confided this story to you? It seems too monstrous to be believed!"

Mrs. Woodhull.—"He certainly did. And what is more, I am persuaded that in his inmost mind he will not be otherwise than glad when the skeleton in his closet is revealed to the world, if thereby the abuses which lurk like vipers under the cloak of social conservatism may be exposed and the causes removed. Mr. Tilton looks deeper into the soul of things than most men, and is braver than most."

Reporter.—"How did your acquaintance with Mr. Tilton begin?"

Mrs. Woodhull.—"Upon the information received from Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Stanton I based what I said in the *Weekly*, and in the letters in the *Times* and *World*, referring to the matter, I was nearly determined — though still not quite so — that what I, equally with those who gave me the information, believed, but for wholly other reasons, to be a most important social circumstance, should be exposed, my reasons being, as I have explained to you, not those of the world, and I took that method to cause inquiry and create agitation regarding it. The day that the letter appeared in the *World*, Mr. Tilton came to my office, No. 44 Broad street, and, showing me the letter, asked: 'Whom do you mean by that?' 'Mr. Tilton,' said I. 'I mean you and Mr. Beecher.' I then told him what I knew, what I thought of it, and that I felt that I had a mission to bring it to the knowledge of the world, and that I had nearly determined to do so. I said to him much else on the subject;

and he said: 'Mrs. Woodhull, you are the first person I have ever met who has dared to, or else who could, tell me the truth.' He acknowledged that the facts, as I had heard them, were true, but declared that I did not yet know the extent of the depravity of that man — meaning Mr. Beecher. 'But,' said he, 'do not take any steps now. I have carried my heart as a stone in my breast for months, for the sake of Elizabeth, my wife, who is broken-hearted as I am. I have had courage to endure rather than to add more to her weight of sorrow. For her sake I have allowed that rascal to go unscathed. I have curbed my feelings when every impulse urged me to throttle and strangle him. Let me take you over to Elizabeth, and you will find her in no condition to be dragged before the public and I know you will have compassion on her.' And I went and saw her, and I agreed with him on the propriety of delay."

Reporter.—"Was it during this interview that Mr. Tilton explained to you all that you now know of the matter?"

Mrs. Woodhull.—"Oh, no. His revelations were made subsequently at sundry times, and during months of friendly intercourse, as occasion brought the subject up. I will, however, condense his statements to me, and state the facts as he related them, as consecutively as possible. I kept notes of the conversations as they occurred from time to time, but the matter is so much impressed on my mind that I have no hesitation in relating them from memory."

Reporter.—"Do you not fear that by taking the responsibility of this *expose* you may involve yourself in trouble? Even if all you relate should be true, may not those involved deny it *in toto*, even the fact of their having made the statements?"

Mrs. Woodhull.—"I do not fear anything of the sort. I know this thing must come out, and the statement of the plain ungarnished truth will outweigh all the perjuries that can be invented, if it come to that pass. I have been charged with attempts at blackmailing, but I tell you, sir, there is not money enough in these two cities to purchase my silence in this matter. I believe it is my duty and my mission to carry the torch to light up and destroy the heap of rottenness, which, in the name of religion, marital sanctity, and social purity, now

passes as the social system. I know there are other churches just as false, other pastors just as recreant to their professed ideas of morality — by their immorality you know I mean their hypocrisy. I am glad that just this one case comes to me to be exposed. This is a great congregation. He is a most eminent man. When a beacon is fired on the mountain the little hills are lighted up. This exposition will send inquisition through all the churches and what is termed conservative society."

Reporter.—"You speak like some weird prophetess, madam."

Mrs. Woodhull.—"I am a prophetess — I am an evangel — I am a Saviour, if you would but see it; but I too come not to bring peace, but a sword."

Mrs. Woodhull then resumed, saying: "Mr. Tilton first began to have suspicions of Mr. Beecher on his own return from a long lecturing tour through the west. He questioned his little daughter, privately, in his study regarding what had transpired in his absence. 'The tale of iniquitous horror that was revealed to me was,' he said, 'enough to turn the heart of a stranger to stone, to say nothing of a husband and father.' It was not the fact of the intimacy alone, but in addition to that, the terrible orgies — so he said — of which his house had been made the scene, and the boldness with which matters had been carried on in the presence of his children. 'These things drove me mad,' said he, 'and I went to Elizabeth and confronted her with the child and the damning tale she had told me. My wife did not deny the charge nor attempt any palliation. She was then *enciente*, and I felt sure that the child would not be my child. I stripped the wedding ring from her finger. I tore the picture of Mr. Beecher from my wall and stamped it in pieces. Indeed, I do not know what I did not do. I only look back to it as a time too horrible to retain any exact remembrance of. She miscarried the child and it was buried. For two weeks, night and day, I might have been found walking to and from that grave, in a state bordering on distraction. I could not realize the fact that I was what I was. I stamped the ring with which we had plighted our troth deep into the soil that covered the fruit of my wife's infidelity. I had friends, many and firm and good, but I could not go to them with this grief, and I sup-

pose I should have remained silent through life had not an occasion arisen which demanded that I should seek counsel. Mr. Beecher learned that I had discovered the fact, and what had transpired between Elizabeth and myself, and when I was absent he called at my house and compelled or induced his victim to sign a statement he had prepared, declaring that so far as he, Mr. Beecher, was concerned, there was no truth in my charges, and that there had never been any criminal intimacy between them. Upon learning this, as I did, I felt, of course, again outraged, and could endure secrecy no longer. I had one friend who was like a brother, Mr. Frank Moulton. I went to him and stated the case fully. We were both members of Plymouth Church. My friend took a pistol, went to Mr. Beecher and demanded the letter of Mrs. Tilton, under penalty of instant death. ” ”

“ Mrs. Woodhull here remarked that Mr. Moulton had himself, also since, described to her this interview, with all the piteous and abject beseeching of Mr. Beecher not to be exposed to the public.

“ Mr. Moulton obtained the letter, ” said Mrs. W., “ and told me that he had it in his safe, where he should keep it until required for further use. After this, Mr. Tilton’s house was no house for him, and he seldom slept or eat there, but frequented the house of his friend Moulton, who sympathized deeply with him. Mrs. Tilton was also absent days at a time, and, as Mr. Tilton informed me, seemed bent on destroying her life. I went as I have said to see her, and found her, indeed, a wretched wreck of a woman, whose troubles were greater than she could bear. She made no secret of the facts before me. Mr. Beecher’s selfish, cowardly cruelty in endeavoring to shield himself and create public opinion against Mr. Tilton, added poignancy to her anxieties. She seemed indifferent as to what should become of herself, but labored under fear that murder might be done on her account.

“ This was the condition of affairs at the time that Mr. Tilton came to me. I attempted to show him the true solution of the imbroglio, and the folly that it was for a man like him, a representative man of the ideas of the future, to stand whining over inevitable events connected with this transition age and the

social revolution of which we are in the midst. I told him that the fault and the wrong were neither in Mr. Beecher, nor in Mrs. Tilton, nor in himself; but that it was in the false social institutions under which we still live, while the more advanced men and women of the world have outgrown them in spirit; and that, practically, everybody is living a false life, by professing a conformity which they do not feel and do not live, and which they cannot feel and live any more than the grown boy can re-enter the clothes of his early childhood. I recalled to his attention splendid passages of his own rhetoric, in which he had unconsciously justified all the freedom that he was now condemning, when it came home to his own door, and endeavoring, in the spirit of a tyrant, to repress.

"I ridiculed the maudlin sentiment and mock heroics and 'dreadful suzz' he was exhibiting over an event the most natural in the world, and the most intrinsically innocent; having in it not a bit more of real criminality than the awful wickedness of 'negro-stealing' formerly charged, in perfect good faith, by the slaveholders, on every one who helped the escape of a slave. I assumed at once, and got a sufficient admission, as I always do in such cases, that he was not exactly a vestal virgin himself; that his real life was something very different from the awful 'virtue' he was preaching, especially for women, as if women could 'sin' in this matter without men, and men without women, and which, he pretended, even to himself, to believe in the face and eyes of his own life, and the lives of nearly all the greatest and best men and women that he knew; that the 'dreadful suzz' was merely a bogus sentimentality, pumped in his imagination, because our sickly religious literature, and Sunday-school morality, and pulpit phariseism had humbugged him all his life into the belief that he ought to feel and act in this harlequin and absurd way on such an occasion — that, in a word, neither Mr. Beecher nor Mrs. Tilton had done any wrong, but that it was he who was playing the part of a fool and a tyrant; that it was he and the factitious or manufactured public opinion back of him, that was wrong; that this babyish whining and stage-acting were the real absurdity and disgrace — the unmanly part of the whole transaction, and that we only needed another Cervantes to satirize such stuff as it deserves

to squelch it instantly and forever. I tried to show him that a true manliness would protect and love to protect ; would glory in protecting the absolute freedom of the woman who was loved, whether called wife, mistress, or by any other name, and that the true sense of honor in the future will be, not to know even what relations our lovers have with any and all other persons than ourselves — as true courtesy never seeks to spy over or to pry into other people's private affairs.

“ I believe I succeeded in pointing out to him that his own life was essentially no better than Mr. Beecher's, and that he stood in no position to throw the first stone at Mrs. Tilton, or at her reverend paramour. I showed him again and again that the wrong point, and the radically wrong thing, if not, indeed, quite the only wrong thing in the matter, was the idea of ownership in human beings, which was essentially the same in the two institutions of slavery and marriage. Mrs. Tilton had in turn grown increasedlly unhappy when she found that Mr. Beecher had turned some part of his exuberant affections upon some other object. There was in her, therefore, the same sentiment of the real slaveholder. Let it be once understood that whosoever is true to himself or herself is thereby, and necessarily, true to all others, and the whole social question will be solved. The barter and sale of wives stands on the same moral footing as the barter and sale of slaves. The God-implanted human affections cannot, and will not, be any longer subordinated to these external, legal restrictions and conventional engagements. Every human being belongs to himself or herself by a higher title than any which, by surrenders or arrangements or promises, he or she can confer upon any other human being. Self-ownership is inalienable. These truths are the latest and greatest discoveries in true science.

“ Perhaps Mr. Beecher knows and feels all this, and if so, in that knowledge consists his sole and his real justification, only the world around him has not yet grown to it ; institutions are not yet adapted to it ; and he is not brave enough to bear his open testimony to the truth he knows.

“ All this I said to Mr. Tilton ; and I urged upon him to make this providential circumstance in his life the occasion upon

which he should, himself, come forward to the front and stand with the true champions of social freedom."

Reporter.—"Then Mr. Tilton became, as it were, your pupil, and you instructed him in your theories."

Mrs. Woodhull.—"Yes, I suppose that is a correct statement; and the verification of my views, springing up before my eyes upon this occasion, out of the very midst of religious and moral prejudices, was, I assure you, an interesting study for me, and a profound corroboration of the righteousness of what you call 'my theories.' Mr. Tilton's conduct toward Mr. Beecher and toward his wife began from that time to be so magnanimous and grand—by which I mean simply just and right—so unlike that which most other men's would have been, that it stamped him, in my mind, as one of the noblest souls that lived, and one capable of playing a great *role* in the social revolution, which is now so rapidly progressing.

"I never could, however, induce him to stand wholly, and unreservedly, and on principle, upon the free-love platform; and I always, therefore, feared that he might for a time vacillate or go backward. But he opened his house to Mr. Beecher, saying to him, in the presence of Mrs. Tilton, 'You love each other. Mr. Beecher, this is a distressed woman; if it be in your power to alleviate her condition and make her life less a burden than it now is, be yours the part to do it. You have nothing to fear from me.' From that time Mr. Beecher was, so to speak, the slave of Mr. Tilton and Mr. Moulton. He consulted them in every matter of any importance. It was at this time that Mr. Tilton introduced Mr. Beecher to me, and I met him frequently both at Mr. Tilton's and at Mr. Moulton's. We discussed the social problem freely in all its varied bearings, and I found that Mr. Beecher agreed with nearly all my views upon that question."

Reporter.—"Do you mean to say that Mr. Beecher disapproves of the present marriage system?"

Mrs. Woodhull.—"I mean to say just this—that Mr. Beecher told me that marriage is the grave of love, and that he never married a couple that he did not feel condemned."

Reporter.—"What excuse did Mr. Beecher give for not avowing these sentiments publicly?"

Mrs. Woodhull.—"Oh, the moral coward's inevitable excuse — that of inexpediency. He said he was twenty years ahead of his church; that he preached the truth just as fast as he thought his people could bear it. I said to him, 'Then, Mr. Beecher, you are defrauding your people. You confess that you do not preach the truth as you know it, while they pay for, and persuade themselves you are giving them your best thought.' He replied: 'I know that our whole social system is corrupt. I know that marriage, as it exists to-day, is the curse of society. We shall never have a better state until children are begotten and bred on the scientific plan. Stirpiculture is what we need.' 'Then,' said I, 'Mr. Beecher, why do you not go into your pulpit and preach that science?' He replied: 'If I were to do so I should preach to empty seats. It would be the ruin of my church.' 'Then,' said I, 'you are as big a fraud as any time-serving preacher, and I now believe you are all frauds. I gave you credit for ignorant honesty, but I find you all alike — all trying to hide, or afraid to speak the truth. A sorry pass has this Christian country come to, paying forty thousand ministers to lie to it from Sunday to Sunday, to hide from them the truth that has been given them to promulgate.'"

Reporter.—"It seems you took a good deal of pains to draw Mr. Beecher out."

Mrs. Woodhull.—"I did. I thought him a man who would dare a good deal for the truth, and that, having lived the life he had, and entertaining the private convictions he did, I could perhaps persuade him that it was his true policy to come out and openly avow his principles, and be a thorough consistent radical, and thus justify his life in some measure, if not wholly, to the public."

Reporter.—"Was Mr. Beecher aware that you knew of his relations to Mrs. Tilton?"

Mrs. Woodhull.—"Of course he was. It was because that I knew of them that he first consented to meet me. He could never receive me until he knew that I was aware of the real character he wore under the mask of his reputation. Is it not remarkable how a little knowledge of this sort brings down the most top-lofty from the stilts on which they lift themselves above the common level."

Reporter.—"Do you still regard Mr. Beecher as a moral coward?"

Mrs. Woodhull.—"I have found him destitute of moral courage enough to meet this tremendous demand upon him. In minor things, I know that he has manifested courage. He could not be induced to take the bold step I demanded of him, simply for the sake of truth and righteousness. I did not entirely despair of him until about a year ago. I was then contemplating my Steinway Hall speech on Social Freedom, and prepared it in the hope of being able to persuade Mr. Beecher to preside for me, and thus make a way for himself into a consistent life on the radical platform. I made my speech as soft as I conscientiously could. I toned it down in order that it might not frighten him. When it was in type, I went to his study and gave him a copy and asked him to read it carefully and give me his candid opinion concerning it. Meantime, I had told Mr. Tilton and Mr. Moulton that I was going to ask Mr. Beecher to preside, and they agreed to press the matter with him. I explained to them that the only safety he had was in coming out as soon as possible an advocate of social freedom, and thus palliate, if he could not completely justify, his practices by founding them at least on principle. I told them that this introduction of me would bridge the way. Both the gentlemen agreed with me in this view, and I was for a time almost sure that my desire would be accomplished. A few days before the lecture, I sent a note to Mr. Beecher asking him to preside for me. This alarmed him. He went with it to Messrs. Tilton and Moulton asking advice. They gave it in the affirmative, telling him they considered it eminently fitting that he should pursue the course indicated by me as his only safety; but it was not urged in such a way as to indicate that they had known the request was to have been made. Matters remained undecided until the day of the lecture, when I went over again to press Mr. Beecher to a decision. I had then a long private interview with him, urging all the arguments I could to induce him to consent. He said he agreed perfectly with what I was to say, but that he could not stand on the platform of Steinway Hall and introduce me. He said, 'I should sink through the floor. I am a moral coward on this subject, and I know it, and

I am not fit to stand by you, who go there to speak what you know to be the truth ; I should stand there a living lie.' He got upon the sofa on his knees beside me, and taking my face between his hands, while the tears streamed down his cheeks, begged me to let him off. Becoming thoroughly disgusted with what seemed to me pusillanimity, I left the room under the control of a feeling of contempt for the man, and reported to my friends what he had said. They then took me again with them and endeavored to persuade him. Mr. Tilton said to him : ' Mr. Beecher, some day you have got to fall ; go and introduce this woman and win the radicals of the country, and it will break your fall.' ' Do you think,' said Beecher, ' that this thing will come out to the world ?' Mr. Tilton replied : ' Nothing is more certain in earth or heaven, Mr. Beecher ; and this may be your last chance to save yourself from complete ruin.'

" Mr. Beecher replied : ' I can never endure such a terror. Oh ! if it must come, let me know of it twenty-four hours in advance, that I may take my own life. I cannot, cannot face this thing !'

" Thoroughly out of all patience, I turned on my heel and said : ' Mr. Beecher, if I am compelled to go upon that platform alone, I shall begin by telling the audience why I am alone, and why you are not with me,' and I again left the room. I afterward learned that Mr. Beecher, frightened at what I had said, promised, before parting with Mr. Tilton, that he would preside if he could bring his courage up to the terrible ordeal.

" It was four minutes of the time for me to go forward to the platform at Steinway Hall when Mr. Tilton and Mr. Moulton came into the ante-room asking for Mr. Beecher. When I told them he had not come they expressed astonishment. I told them I should faithfully keep my word, let the consequences be what they might. At that moment word was sent me that there was an organized attempt to break up the meeting, and that threats were being made against my life if I dared to speak what it was understood I intended to speak. Mr. Tilton then insisted on going on the platform with me and presiding, to which I finally agreed, and that I should not at that time mention Mr. Beecher. I shall never forget the brave words he uttered in introducing me. They had a magic influ-

ence on the audience, and drew the sting of those who intended to harm me. However much Mr. Tilton may have since regretted his course regarding me, and whatever he may say about it, I shall always admire the moral courage that enabled him to stand with me on that platform, and face that, in part, defiant audience. It is hard to bear the criticisms of vulgar minds, who can see in social freedom nothing but licentiousness and debauchery, and the inevitable misrepresentation of the entire press, which is as perfectly subsidized against reason and common sense, when social subjects are discussed, as is the religious press when any other science is discussed which is supposed to militate against the bible as the direct word of God to man. The editors are equally bigots, or else as dishonest as the clergy. The nightmare of a public opinion, which they are still professionally engaged in making, enslaves and condemns them both.

"Mrs. Woodhull concluded by saying that since her Steinway Hall speech she had surrendered all hope of easing the fall of Mr. Beecher, that she had not attempted to see him, and had not in fact seen him. She only added one other fact, which was, that Mr. Beecher endeavored to induce Mr. Tilton to withdraw from his membership in Plymouth Church, to leave him, Mr. Beecher, free from the embarrassment of his presence there; and that Mr. Tilton had indignantly rejected the proposition, determined to hold the position with a view to such contingencies as might subsequently occur.

"So much for the interviewing which was to have been published some months ago; but when it failed or was suppressed, I was still so far undecided that I took no steps in the matter, and had no definite plan for the future in respect to it, until the events as I have recited them, which occurred at Boston. Since then I have not doubted that I must make up my mind definitely to act aggressively in this matter, and to use the facts in my knowledge to compel a more wide-spread discussion of the social question. I take the step deliberately, as an agitator and social revolutionist, which is my profession. I commit no breach of confidence, as no confidences have been made to me, except as I have compelled them, with a full knowledge that I was endeavoring to induce or to force the parties to come to the front along with me in the announce-

ment and advocacy of the principles of social revolution. Messrs. Beecher and Tilton, and other half-way reformers, are to me like the border States in the great rebellion. They are liable to fall, with the weight of their influence, on either side in the contest, and I hold it to be legitimate generalship to *compel* them to declare on the side of truth and progress.

My position is justly analagous with that of warfare. The public, Mr. Beecher included, would gladly crush me if they could — will do so if they can — to prevent me from forcing on them considerations of the utmost importance. My mission is, on the other hand, to utter the unpopular truth, and make it efficient by whatsoever legitimate means; and means are legitimate as a war measure, which would be highly reprehensible in a state of peace. I believe, in the law of peace, in the right of privacy, in the sanctity of individual relations. It is nobody's business but their own, in the absolute view, what Mr. Beecher and Mrs. Tilton have done, or may choose at any time to do, as between themselves. And the world needs, too, to be taught just that lesson. I am the champion of that very right of privacy and of individual sovereignty. But, that is only one side of the case. I need, and the world needs, Mr. Beecher's powerful championship of this very right. The world is on the very crisis of its final fight for liberty. The victory may fall on the wrong side, and his own liberty and mine, and the world's, be again crushed out, or repressed for another century for the want of fidelity in him to the new truth. It is not, therefore, Mr. Beecher as the individual that I pursue, but Mr. Beecher as the representative man: Mr. Beecher as a power in the world; and Mr. Beecher as my auxiliary in a great war for freedom, or Mr. Beecher as a violent enemy and a powerful hindrance to all that I am bent on accomplishing.

"To Mr. Beecher, as the individual citizen, I tender, therefore, my humble apology, meaning and deeply feeling what I say, for this or any interference on my part, with his private conduct. I hold that Mr. Tilton himself, that Mrs. Beecher herself, have no more right to enquire, or to know or to spy over, with a view to knowing, what has transpired between Mr. Beecher and Mrs. Tilton than they have to know what I ate for breakfast, or where I shall spend my next evening; and that Mr. Beecher's congregation and the public at large

have just as little right to know or to inquire. I hold that the so-called morality of society is a complicated mass of sheer impertinence and a scandal on the civilization of this advanced century, that the system of social espionage under which we live is damnable, and that the very first axiom of a true morality, is for the people to mind their own business, and learn to respect, religiously, the social freedom and the sacred social privacy of all others; but it was the paradox of Christ, that as the Prince of Peace, he still brought on earth, not peace but a sword. It is the paradox of life that, in order to have peace, we must first have war; and it is that paradox of my position that, believing in the right of privacy and in the perfect right of Mr. Beecher socially, morally and divinely to have sought the embraces of Mrs. Tilton, or of any other woman or women whom he loved and who loved him, and being a promulgator and a public champion of those very rights. I still invade the most secret and sacred affairs of his life, and drag them to the light and expose him to the opprobrium and vilification of the public. I do again, and with deep sincerity, ask his forgiveness. But the case is exceptional, and what I do I do for a great purpose. The social world is in the very agony of its new birth, or, to resume the warlike simile, the leaders of progress are in the very act of storming the last fortress of bigotry and error. Somebody must be hurled into the gap, I have the power, I think to compel Mr. Beecher to go forward and to do the duty for humanity from which he shrinks; and I should, myself, be false to the truth if I were to shrink from compelling him. Whether he sinks or swims in the fiery trial, the agitation by which truth is evolved will have been promoted. And I believe that he will not only survive, but that when forced to the encounter he will rise to the full height of the great enterprise, and will astound and convince the world of the new gospel of freedom by the depth of his experience and the force of his argument.

“The world it seems, will never learn not to compel the retraction of its Galileoes. Mr. Beecher has lacked the courage to be a martyr, but like Galileo, while retracting or concealing and evading, he has known in his heart *that the world still moves*, and I venture to prophesy, as I have indeed full faith, that he and

other parties to this social drama will yet live to be overwhelmed with gratitude to me for having compelled them to this publicity. The age is pregnant with great events, and this may be the very one which shall be, as it were, the crack of doom to our old and worn out, and false and hypocritical social institutions. When the first few waves of public indignation shall have broken over him, when the nine days wonder and astonished clamor of Mrs. Grundy shall have done their worst, and when the pious ejaculations of the sanctimonious shall have been expended, and he finds that he still lives, and that there are brave souls who stand by him, he will, I believe, rise in his whole power and utter the whole truth. I believe I see clearly and prophetically for him in the future, a work, a hundred times greater than all he has accomplished in the past. I believe, as I have said, a wise providence, or, as I term it, and believe it to be, the conscious and well calculated interference of the spirit world, has forecast and prepared these very events as a part of the drama of this great social revolution. Of all the centres of influence on the great broad planet, the destiny that shapes our ends, bent on breaking up an old civilization and ushering in a new one, could have found no such spot for its vantage ground as Plymouth Church, no such man for the hero of the plot as its reverend pastor, and, it may be, no such heroine as the gentle, cultured, and, perhaps, hereafter to be, sainted wife of Plymouth Church's most distinguished layman. Indeed, I think that Mrs. Tilton has had, at least at times, a clearer intuition guiding her, a better sense of right, and more courage than her reverend lover, for on one occasion, Mr. Tilton told me that he took home to her one of my threatening notices, and told her that it meant her and Mr. Beecher, and that the exposure must and would come, and he added that she calmly replied: 'I am prepared for it. If the new social gospel must have its martyrs and if I must be one of them I am prepared for it.'

"In conclusion, let us again consider, for a moment, the right and wrong of this whole transaction. Let us see whether the wrong is not on the side where the public puts the right, and the right on the side where the public puts the wrong. The immense physical potency of Mr. Beecher, and the indomitable urgency of his great nature for the intimacy and embraces of the noble and cultured women about him, instead of being a

bad thing as the world thinks, or thinks that it thinks, or professes to think that it thinks, is one of the grandest and noblest of the endowments of this truly great and representative man. The amative impulse is the physiological basis of character. It is this which emanates zest and magnetic power to his whole audience, through the organism of the great preacher, Plymouth Church has lived and fed, and the healthy vigor of public opinion for the last quarter of a century has been augmented and strengthened from the physical amateness of Henry Ward Beecher. The scientific world know the physiological facts of this nature but they have waited for a weak woman to have the moral courage to tell the world such truths. Passional starvation, enforced on such a nature, so richly endowed, by the ignorance and prejudice of the past, is a horrid cruelty. The bigoted public, to which the great preacher ministered, while literally eating and drinking of his flesh and blood, condemned him in their ignorance to live without food. Every great man of Mr. Beecher's type has had in the past, and will ever have, the need for, and the right to, the loving manifestations of many women, and when the public graduates out of the ignorance and prejudices of its childhood, it will recognize this necessity and its own past injustice. Mr. Beecher's grand and amative nature is not then, the bad element in the whole matter, but intrinsically a good thing, and one of God's best gifts to the world.

"So again, the tender, loving, womanly concessiveness of Mrs. Tilton, her susceptibility to the charms of the great preacher's magnetism, her love of loving and of being loved, none of these were the bad thing which the world thinks them, or thinks that it thinks them, or professes to think that it thinks them to be. On the contrary they are all of them the best thing, the best and most beautiful of things, the loveliest and most divine of things which belong to the patrimony of mankind.

"So again, it was not the coming together of those two loving natures in the most intimate embrace. Nor was it that nature blessed that embrace with the natural fruits of love which was the bad element in this whole transaction. They on the contrary, were good elements, beautiful and divine elements, and among God's best things for man. The evil, and the whole evil in this whole matter, then, lies elsewhere. It lies in a false and artificial or manufactured opinion, in respect to this very question of

what is good or what is evil in such matters. It lies in the belief that society has the right to prohibit, to prescribe and regulate, or in any manner to interfere with the private love manifestations of its members, any more than it has to prescribe their food or their drink. It lies in the belief consequent upon this, that lovers own their lovers, husbands their wives, and wives their husbands, and that they have the right to complain of, to spy over, and to interfere, even to the extent of murder, with every other or outside manifestation of love. It lies in the *compulsory hypocrisy and systematic falsehood* which is thus enforced and inwrought into the very structure of society, and in the consequent and wide spread injury to the whole community.

Mr. Beecher knows all this, and if by my act he is compelled to tell the world that he knows it, and to force them to the conviction that it is all true, he may well thank God that I live, and that circumstances have concurred to emancipate him, despite of himself, from his terrible thralldom, and to emancipate, through him, in the future, millions of others.

"Still in conclusion, let me add, that in my view, and in the view of others who think with me, and of all, as I believe, who think rightly on the subject, Mr. Beecher is to-day, after all that I have felt called upon to reveal of his life, as good, as pure and as noble a man as he ever was in the past, or as the world has held him to be, and that Mrs. Tilton is still the pure, charming, cultured woman. It is, then, the public opinion that is wrong, and not the individuals, who must, nevertheless, for a time suffer its persecution.

"Mrs. Isabella Beecher Hooker has, from the time I met her in Washington, stood my fast friend, and given me manifold proofs of her esteem, knowing as she did both my radical opinions and my free life. I have been told, not by her, but upon what I believe to be perfectly good authority, that she has for months, perhaps for years past, known the life of her brother, and urged him to announce publicly his radical convictions, and assured him that if he would do so, she, at least, would stand by him. I know, too, by intimate intercourse, the opinions and to a great extent the lives, of nearly all the leading reformatory men and women in the land; and I know that Mr. Beecher, passing through this crucial ordeal, retrieving himself and standing upon the most radical platform, need not stand alone for an

hour, but that an army of glorious and emancipated spirits will gather spontaneously and instantaneously around him, and that the new social republic will have been forever established.

Thus closes Mrs. Woodhull's story of the great scandal as published in the *Weekly* of November 2, 1872, and for the publication of which, she and her sister Tennie were arrested and thrown into jail. Their office was searched, and all the copies of this issue seized and confiscated, and the publication of the *Weekly* for a time suppressed.

The subsequent proceedings relating to the matter will hereinafter appear.

CHAPTER XXVII.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

EDITORIAL BY VICTORIA C. WOODHULL IN WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY, JAN. 25, 1873.

"There has been a great deal written and said upon the course pursued by Mr. Beecher since my indictment against him of unfaithfulness to the new social truths, which with me, he holds, but which, so far, he has failed publicly to proclaim. I am sorry, although not disappointed, that the view which perhaps the majority of the people take of the indictment is entirely different from what I desired they should take; yet to sustain the indictment of disloyalty to truth, I was necessarily compelled to resort to the course that has raised quite another question than the one which I aimed to present against Mr. Beecher.

"As an individual, it is simply none of my business what Mr. Beecher's private life is, or has been, any more than it is what his religion or politics is; but it would become the business of brother politicians if he, as one of them should profess to being opposed to slavery, and should still uphold the institution, and devote all his vast power to further its interests, and to hold his fellow-beings in bondage. It is precisely this position in which Mr. Beecher stands, not politically, but socially, and, as an advocate of the new social order in which both of us believe, it becomes not only my business as to what use Mr. Beecher makes of his vast social influence, but the interests of future generations also hang on the balance.

"Many critics say I have struck my warm friends an unwarranted blow. I deny the charge. I had no such intention; was actuated by no such motive as the charge suggests. I hold if Social Freedom belongs to humanity, that I have done both it and them the greatest good that lay in my power. I felt it a duty, and did it fearlessly, and am willing to bear all the

present odium that comes from an imperfect understanding of social science, resting my justification with those who shall come after me, and enjoy the benefits that must flow from the almost fearful agitation that I have premeditatedly aroused.

“I am sorry, also, that Mr. Beecher has made so bad use of the opportunity I presented him; especially since his congregation and friends have seemed to be in close alliance in my movement. Although I assure my friends, and his friends, that there was no preceding collusion on my part with any one in any way connected with Mr. Beecher, I must still admit that if there had been, nothing more to my desire could have been agreed upon than they have actually carried out. Mr. Beecher is justified of them. No one assumes to question his right to his own life any more than did Jesus assume to condemn the *woman* brought to him taken in adultery. Mr. Beecher has, I confess, labored with the most happy results, to thus raise an entire and large congregation from the plane of those who stood ready to condemn the woman, to that upon which the lovely Nazarene stood in regard to them.

“Mr. Beecher has as yet utterly failed to make a great and wise use of the occasion presented him, for which his own teachings had prepared his friends, and upon which I compelled him to a choice; and in this failure he would seem to have justified my fears, that moral courage is a less prominent feature in his character, than is the capacity to perceive new and grand truths. Forced into the position as he was, there was but one course for him to pursue that was certain to ultimate in good to himself; though humanity may be equally benefitted by whatsoever course. Had he been as wise as I hoped he would be, but which he would not permit me to advise him to be, he would have said at once: ‘To all of Mrs. Woodhull’s indictments I plead guilty. I have not broken the bread of life to my flock in the same measure I have received it. I have failed to do this, not on my own account, but from the fear that you, my friends and scholars—your mental stomachs—were not yet ready to digest its strong aliment. I find, however, that I was somewhat mistaken in my estimate of your capacities. Indeed, I ought to have judged you better, since I am so well acquainted with so many of you, and know that, equally with me, you have accepted and lived, as I have,

the truths of the new dispensation. But in extenuation, I would plead that I feared to divide my flock, and while I knew, or ought to have known, that many of you would thrive better on the new and vigorous manna than you have on the stale bread I have administered, I felt that you could live from the latter, until all should be brought to require a change to the former. I hope you, whom I have deprived of what they desired of me, equally with those to whom I have denied the good I had for them, will forgive me for this, my error of judgment, which I assure you, was entirely of the head, and entirely at variance with the promptings of my heart.'

"But Mr. Beecher has not yet missed the opportunity of becoming the Apostle of the New Dispensation, and I am very glad; for it can have a no more able one than he can yet become. In the indictment I spoke quite confidently as to what his course would be. Knowing, as I did, the good understanding that existed between him and many of the most prominent members, male and female, of his church. I could not for a moment imagine he would adhere to so suicidal a course as that he has so far adopted, and entirely ignore an opportunity such as will never again present itself to him.

"The opportunity may, however, be improved by Mr. Beecher and he thus become the hero of the new social order; but his opportunity lies in this: every day he delays making a definite movement in this direction—in a word, every day he fails to take the new position that he must soon take or be disqualified for it, the opportunity which, of right, belongs first to him, is liable to be seized by another, who, almost equally with him, is well situated, though less fully imbued with the principles of individual freedom, and not so well calculated to administer the tremendous responsibilities of the position. Who this is that is Mr. Beecher's rival for the future leadership of social reform is equally evident, as it is evident that Mr. Beecher ought not have so long, as he already has, neglected his opportunity—the grandest that ever fell to the lot of man.

"That Mr. Beecher is not entirely unmindful of what he has lost by not coming immediately to the front, appears from his recent teachings. What he should have taken at a single leap, he is endeavouring to reach by another and circuitous course. In an indirect, though palpable way, he seeks to justify himself

by falling back on Christ, and quoting him on the facts of the issue, direct, while evidently wishing his hearers to think it was done without premeditation. At the regular Friday evening meeting, of the 27th ultimo, in concluding his remarks, and, as though entirely by accident, he used the following significant words, the application of which is altogether too apparent to pass as unintentional on his part. He said: He was in the habit of projecting Christ into heaven, as He had been upon earth, full of tenderness, sympathy and love. Look how Jesus lived with Mary and Martha. How familiar he was. He was not as a stranger. Mary loved Christ, and He permitted her to do so. Everything showed that He was on *singularly intimate terms* with the sisters. If Christ was so familiar and loving with his friends on earth, He would be more so in heaven.

My readers will remember a series of poems published in the *Weekly* entitled "Amours Divines; or Love-Scenes on the Orient," and how terribly I was scathed by the clergy and the press for blaspheming Christ. The poems said nothing more than what Mr. Beecher said in these words. Indeed, the insinuation contained in his language was entirely lacking in the poems. Will the press howl at Mr. Beecher for this too apparent imputation of a love on the part of Jesus for the sisters that he did not feel for all other men and women? If not then indeed can I congratulate it for having made an advance in the direction of common sense. But I think a more frank and direct method than this one of Mr. Beecher's would more become his dignity and manhood, since he evidently meant to say: may I not do what Jesus did — love the Marys and Marthas of this age as he loved the Marys and Marthas of his age — and like him stand uncondemned? I say Amen!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MR. BEECHER AND STIRPICULTURE.

In the story of the "great scandal" Henry Ward Beecher is reported to have said, "I know that our whole social system is corrupt; I know that marriage as it exists to-day is the curse of society. We shall never have a better state of society, until children are begotten and bred on the scientific plan. Stirpiculture is what we need. But if I were to go into my pulpit to teach it, I should speak to empty seats. It would be the ruin of my church."

Yet we find that on the 11th of May, 1873, in his sermon in his church he spoke as follows :

"Spring is the time throughout all the temperate zone when there is a coming forth of life, when the trees and hedges renew their leaves and blossoms, and when the animals rejoice in their own rude way. The feeling of joy and the delight of sense are at this time universal, and when beautiful children — for all children are beautiful to those who own them — in common with animals, gambol and play in a manner that to the thoughtful beholder is extremely pleasing. In the spectacle of the gambols of the animal kingdom there was no feeling of moral responsibility to cloud the enjoyment of the spectacle; but no man could look upon young children and forecast their probable future without a feeling of sadness. He should, therefore, look at the dark side of childhood, because he was convinced that thousands of godly men and women had their joy belittled by this feeling. First, then, children were largely dependent for their chances in life upon their organization, both physical and mental. Men and women of impaired physical constitutions are permitted to have offspring. People come together in the married state with ill-assorted faculties, and with temperaments calculated to make their lives miserable all their life long. There is no angel standing to warn them of their folly. After thousands of years, after science has done all that it can, the instruction that is given to persons about to

marry is very obscure. Probably they are but twenty years of age. How little do they know of themselves, how ill-prepared are they to be wise for their children! What would be the thought of a child who was sent out upon the stormy sea in a schooner fully equipped, as far as locomotive power was concerned, but no one with him to guide the ship, and he was told to do the best he could to make a successful voyage? Yet that is the way many children were sent upon their journey of life—children who are born, in consequence of the ignorance of their parents, without the means of acquiring a knowledge of the laws of the world, society or themselves. Consider, too, how little these are likely to know who are made teachers of children. Consider this, too, in the light of Calvinism, and if you follow the irresistible logic of that system, and follow it out to its conclusion, I cannot see how any man dare enter into the family state. The chances of a failure in life, looked at in this aspect, seem to me as a hundred to one against success.”

Mr. Beecher in this connection read a letter that he had received from a lady, in which she stated that the dread of bringing children into the world to incur such dreadful risks had prevented her from assuming the crown of wifehood, and the joys of maternity. As we said in our biography of Mr. Beecher, “consistency and uniformity are no elements in his character,” and it is quite possible that on the succeeding Sabbath he may have preached quite a contrary doctrine. His impulses at the moment, seem to guide and mold his utterances.

We next offer our readers the famous *Thunderbolt* article, with the comments of Mrs. Woodhull upon it, sandwiched in. The writer of this *Thunderbolt* is a so-called reformer, and the author of a laudatory letter about Mrs. Woodhull to the *Troy Times*, which appears in the sketch of Mrs. Woodhull. It is a curious phenomena in literature, both for and against ‘The Woodhull,’ saying some very naughty things of her, and again eulogising her. We give it as we find it, as we do many other things in this most strange book, leaving our intelligent readers to judge for themselves as to the truth, or falsity of the premises laid down.

The *Thunderbolt* article is like the rest of this book, *strange*, but highly interesting.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Having given our readers the story of the great scandal as related in the preceding chapters, we will now give them as a reflection of the public mind concerning it, the comments of various papers in different parts of the country. "*Vox Populi, Vox Dei*," is an oft repeated quotation, and many really believe that "the voice of the people is the voice of God," and there are those who accept the opposite of this, and affirm, in the words of another familiar quotation, that "common rumor is a common liar." We do not, however, believe that it is safe to accept either of these dictums as infallible in all cases. A public, or a noted character, may, in his or her own generation, be, by common report, the incarnation of all that is bad, and yet the historian in the succeeding generation may clearly demonstrate quite the contrary, and *visa versa*. So it is not always safe to predicate our opinions upon any subject, or any person, upon the current reports of them at the time the history is being enacted; still, by reading and comparing the statements, and opinions of different independent journals in various parts of the country, we may be able to arrive at a fair estimate of the truth.

Probably no man in this country has had, or now has, warmer partizans or more bitter enemies than Henry Ward Beecher. The former have looked up to him as an oracle, a sort of demi-god, and such would require that assurance be made more than doubly sure before they would credit any reports which should militate against his moral or Christian character, and this is a commendable characteristic.

On the other hand there are many who have for years hated him and are, upon the slightest evidence prepared to believe anything, no matter how bad of him.

The course Mr. Beecher has seen fit to adopt in regard to the charges so plainly and circumstantially made against him by

Mrs. Woodhull, has been a source of perplexity to both his friends and his enemies ; for months he entirely ignored them, neither denying or admitting anything. By his friends and partizans this course was interpreted to signify that he was so firmly established in his position as a man, a moral teacher, and a Christian preacher, that to even notice any such imputations as were laid upon him, would be only compromising his dignity ; and that he could afford to point to his record for a quarter of a century as a sufficient answer to any charges which might be brought against him. *Per contra*, his enemies construed his silence as a virtual plea of guilty, not conceiving the possibility of an innocent man remaining silent for a day when his character was thus assailed, and finally after months of reticence he was forced from his position by the publication of the triangular covenant entered into between himself, Bowen and Tilton, his vague and general denial was not sufficiently explicit to satisfy his friends, and only served to confirm his enemies in their former damaging opinions. Mr. Tilton's letter to his "complaining friend" had left an almost indelible impression on the minds of all, both friends and foes, that there was *something* to be explained ; but all this will appear in the succeeding chapters of our book.

But after all is written, and all the available evidence, *pro* and *con*, adduced, it will still remain like the title of one of Bulwer's novels, "A STRANGE STORY."

The first we copy is an editorial of Mrs. Woodhull upon *The Thunderbolt*, and includes Tilton's famous and significant poem, "Sir Marmaduke's Musings," with a statement of the circumstances under which it was written and a key to what it really meant.

"THE THUNDERBOLT."

"A paper bearing the above name has been issued from the press, simultaneously in New York, Albany and Troy, which purports to have been written principally by Edward H. G. Clark, of the latter city, and published by some unknown parties, who, however, are understood to be men of the first rank in social and political circles. Notice of this paper has been given in the *Weekly*, whose readers are undoubtedly expecting it, therefore I do not need to apologize for copying it entire.

"It will be remembered that Mr. Clark has written several criticisms upon the various phases of the Beecher-Tilton scandal, which have been copied into the *Weekly*, not excluding his severe allusions to myself, without comment. But I shall remain silent no longer and permit this conspiracy to proceed, apparently to whitewash somebody, but really to blackwash me, to pass as current stuff without showing its true character and bringing it home to its real source. I shall, therefore, analyze this thunderbolt as severely as my crucible will admit of, notwithstanding he has been led to convey the impression that I am too ignorant to attempt any such thing, and attempting, could only expect to write myself down an ass; however, the public shall have the opportunity to judge between us as to which of us is the greater. But I shall borrow no adjectives with which to do this, as he has felt it necessary to do to accomplish the purposes of the *Thunderbolt*.

"The paper is called the *Thunderbolt*. After a careful and candid reading, however, I do not think the name it bears is justified by its contents, unless, indeed, a thunderbolt may be a general concentration of many lesser bolts which have already been expended, and are gathered together to be hurled anew and *en masse* at a given point for a certain purpose. This paper contains no new facts; indeed, no new arguments regarding existing facts. The several features of the Scandal are concentrated, and—as every one who reads it can well surmise—with a well-defined purpose in view, which I denominate the double one of whitewashing and blackwashing.

"This will become evident when other things which do not appear upon the face of the paper itself are shown. It will be remembered that I recently published a letter from Mr. Clark to George Francis Train, in which he said he had stolen Theodore Tilton's 'true story.' How the stealing of such a document was done, if what I surmise be true, is not hard to conjecture. Some three months ago a strange paper made its appearance entitled the *Rainbow*. The moment I saw it I said, that is the *Golden Age* print, its types, rules, head-lines and all; and so it turned out to be. The moment I saw the *Thunderbolt* I said, that is the *Golden Age* print, its types, rules, head-lines and all; and I believe it will so turn out to be. It bears the

marks of Theodore Tilton too conspicuously to permit one to whom he has so often, as he has to me, pointed out the characteristic points of the *Golden Age* to doubt this. I, therefore have no hesitation in expressing my belief, and resting upon it, that this paper was not only written by the knowledge and consent of Mr. Tilton, but that it was published by him, *or at least composed and electrotyped by him*. If any doubt this let him or her compare the *Thunderbolt* with the *Rainbow*, and both with the *Golden Age*.

"This at first blush may seem improbable, since the *Thunderbolt* is severe upon Mr. Tilton. Evidently, however, he realizes the futility of escape; indeed, that he deserves it all and more, and therefore makes a virtue of necessity and aids in the publication, perhaps even connived to bring it about.

"But what, upon its face, are the purposes of the *Thunderbolt*? Ostensibly they are to show the danger by which the Republic is threatened by the overt acts of the Federal authorities, acting under the inspiration of the Y. M. C. A. in prosecuting Woodhull, Claflin and Blood for obscenity, to protect the reputation of Mr. Beecher, and to relieve Mrs. Tilton from the position into which she was thrown by the publication of the Beecher-Tilton Scandal; but this will scarcely be held to be its real objects by the careful, analytic reader. The reasons to such will appear to be—

1. "To whitewash Mr. Tilton for the part of informer which he has played in exposing Mrs. Tilton's love for and lision with Mr. Beecher, which it performs in a rather dubious manner.

2. "To blackwash me for having given publicity to the Beecher-Tilton Scandal, which had previously only been talked about behind the doors, which it does not do with colors that will wash.

3. "To fix irremediably upon Mr. Beecher the fact of his private devotion to the principles of social freedom, and to brand him to the world as one of the most consummate and hypocritical villains living, which, I fear, is done only too mercilessly.

"These, I say, are undoubtedly the motives that led to the publication of the *Thunderbolt*. But all of them could not have

existed in the mind of Mr. Clark; nor were they all apparent in any of his previous articles written by him and copied into the *Weekly*. But self Mr. Clark him informed me that he was in receipt of letters in which I was severely denounced, and I am informed by another, that Mr. Clark has been 'advised to treat Mrs. Woodhull in the most contemptuous manner.' Here, then, we find the source of the animus which pervades the *Thunderbolt*, and it is the same as that from which I believe the paper really issues.

"Mr. Clark, I have good reasons for believing, had no inconsiderable regard for me personally; but that has been more than overbalanced by the influence that has been brought to bear upon him since he began to write about this matter. When he informed me that he was receiving very bitter letters regarding me, I at once, and frankly replied, asking their source, and saying: 'Give these letters to me to publish in the *Weekly* for the benefit of the public. I denounced as dishonest and cowardly those who would stab me behind my back when they have the opportunity to meet me squarely and openly; and to those terms I now add vicious and malicious, and hurl them all in the faces of any one who has busied him or herself in writing letters about me all over the country, endeavoring to vitiate the truth of my statement of November 2, by falsehood and malice, but failing to submit them for publication in the *Weekly*."

"Therefore, when I find emanating from the pen of a gentleman, who previously held me in esteem, the contemptuous words and the still more contemptible insinuations with which I am described in the *Thunderbolt*, I am forced to the conclusion that the real motives for them lie outside of the person over whose name they stand.

"Another conclusive reason that Mr. Clark is not the real source of the *Thunderbolt*, the responsibility of which he, however, assumes, is that of his own knowledge he would not have laid himself open to the terrible repulse he must now sustain. The *Thunderbolt* is vulnerable at every point.

"Moreover, had the statements been entirely the work of Mr. Clark, I have a sufficiently good opinion of his ability to believe it would not have been so faulty in its construction as to make it certain that, when only one of its chief corner-stones is removed, as it will be, the whole thing will tumble in an

insignificant mass of ruins. Besides, it is contradictory and unreasonable in its positions, and resorts to falsehoods and unwarrantable insinuations to sustain them. I have said to the readers of the *Weekly* that Mr. Clark is a gentleman. I fear they may not be able to agree with me when they shall come to realize the true character of the *Thunderbolt*, which is supposed to represent the character of its writer, but which I hope only represents the terrible pressure to which he has been subjected by those whom he at least has honored in the past. I freely confess that the course taken by Mr. Clark in his previous articles, excepting only a few of what I thought unnecessary epithets used about me, won for him a high place in my esteem; but also I freely confess that the *Thunderbolt* has staggered me. I expected great and good things of it. I did not think it would stoop to pander either to prejudice, position or passion; but that it would be just what ought to be expected from a gentleman who is every inch a man. But if the *Thunderbolt* is found, when subjected to the crucible of stern analysis, to be based upon other than purely and highly moral motives, and to be elaborated for other purposes than the vindication of truth and the establishment of justice, and that these are promoted by falsifications and the use of unjustifiable methods, what must the conclusion be, except that the *Thunderbolt* does not sustain the reputation of Mr. Clark. If it do not, neither he nor his friends ought to censure me for showing it, since neither he nor they can possibly be more disappointed than I shall be.

“And at the very outset, before proceeding to the argument, I am compelled to call attention to a fact which I fear will cast doubt even over other portions of the *Thunderbolt* which ought to stand unchallenged. It is of little consequence to me how it may please critics to treat me personally, if their efforts carry forward the glorious cause to which I am devoted; hence, personally, I might consistently permit the *Thunderbolt* to stand unscathed; but its defects are too apparent to justify me in passing what I refer to without comment, or, when comment is begun, from pressing it persistently to the end. Moreover the glory of the cause of freedom and justice will not allow me to stand publicly convicted by silence, of endeavoring to promote

it by fraud. Therefore, observe the following quotation from the *Thunderbolt*, and if, as I said, it vitiate the whole affair let those who resorted to a subterfuge so vulgar, bear the odium and not me :

"SUSPICIOUS POETRY BY T. T." [MEANING THEODORE TILTON.]

Published in the "Golden Age," November 12, 1872 (just after the Woodhull account of the Beecher-Tilton Scandal.)

"I clasped a woman's breast
As if her heart I knew,
Or fancied would be true,
Who proved — *alas ! she too* —
False like the rest."

"Now why was this quotation made in the *Thunderbolt* — special care being taken to state the date, and to italicize the parenthetical explanation? Evidently to convey the idea that my publication of the scandal had proved me, 'too — false like the rest.' I ask again, can there be any other construction put upon this remarkable quotation? and I answer, no other can be imagined.

"But what are the facts about this poem which I now copy entire from the *Woodhull & Claflin Weekly* of date December 23, 1871, where it was copied from the *Golden Age* of November 12, 1871 :

SIR MARMADUKE'S MUSINGS.

BY THEODORE TILTON.

"I won a noble fame ;
But, with a sudden frown,
The people snatched my crown,
And in the mire trod down
My lofty name.

"I bore a bounteous purse,
And beggars by the way
Then blessed me day by day ;
But I, grown poor as they,
Have now their curse.

"I gained what men call friends ;
But now their love is hate,
And I have learned too late

How mated minds unmate
And friendship ends.

*"I clasped a woman's breast,
As if her heart I knew
Or fancied, would be true,
Who proved — alas, she too! —
False, like the rest.*

"I now am all bereft —
As when some tower doth fall,
With battlement, and wall,
And gate, and bridge and all —
And nothing left.

"But I account it worth
All pangs of fair hopes crossed,
All loves and honors lost,
To gain the heavens at cost
Of losing earth.

"So, lest I be inclined
To render ill for ill,
Henceforth in me instill,
Oh God, a sweet, good will
To all mankind."

SLEEPY HOLLOW, NOVEMBER 1, 1871.

"Mr. Clark is one of the editors of the *Thunderbolt*, and although the poem stood in it, below the article to which his name gives personal responsibility, he is not relieved from the general editorial responsibility. And I can therefore do no less than hold Mr. Clark responsible for this fraud, since a fraud of the most malicious and vicious kind I must show it to be.

"It will be seen that the poem, instead of having been published in the *Golden Age*, November 12, 1872, was really published a year before, in 1871; therefore the explanation (just after the Woodhull account of the Beecher-Tilton Scandal) bears the stamp of a vicious and malicious lie, invented to cast a reflection upon me, and to question the character of the intimacy between M. Tilton and me. If Mr. Clark is responsible for this, or even if he has permitted this to be done by others — he being the only one known in the *Thunderbolt* — I say he must have been insane to thus tamper with figures and

dates and records, and expect it to pass the scrutiny of the world. It might, perhaps, be expected to pass the 'Damphools' of whom Mr. Train treats, but even Mr. Clark's 'ignomramus,' of 48 Broad street, ought not to be counted among so dull a crew as that. As if, however, to court the responsibility of the intentions of this falsehood, Mr. Clark apparently proceeds upon its theory, dragging them conspicuously into another portion of the *Thunderbolt*, for which he cannot escape responsibility. Therefore I see no escape for him from either, and fear he has unwittingly been betrayed into something that a calmer survey of the field, and less reliance upon the honor of those who write bitter letters about me would have saved him.

"Since, however, the inspiration of this poem has been called up and falsely stated, I may, with consistency, give the truth regarding it.

"This poem was written by Mr. Tilton, so he informed me, in Young's Hotel, Boston, where he had gone to lecture in Tremont Temple, on 'Home, Sweet Home,' with a revolver lying beside him, with which he intended to end his misery, leaving the poem behind as an explanation of his suicide. Returning, however, to his better sense, he desisted and returned home, called at my residence, 15 East Thirty-Eighth street, read me the poem in manuscript, and gave me this history of it. It was immediately published in the *Golden Age*, whereupon Mr. Tilton's friends complained bitterly that he had told the whole story of his wife's infidelity by that poem, which ought never to have been written, much less published.

"I therefore hurl the lie and the insinuation in the face of the manufacturer, whoever he may be, and there they shall stick as an everlasting mark of infamy. I do not do this because I would shrink from the insinuation. I have the honor of informing Mr. Tilton, Mr. Clark and the world, that I shall ever be only too happy and proud to acknowledge all the service rendered me by Mr. Tilton; and, moreover, that I never receive or accept service of whatever kind, or contract alliances of any sort, of which I am ashamed to accept the responsibility. And I wish it to be distinctly understood if pretensions have been put forward which any one thinks an honor to himself but a disgrace to me, I shall not hesitate to correct the error into

which men usually fall; or, if it requires it, to show that whatever is to their credit is also to the credit of women. I believe that the world shall come not only to know, but also to recognize that any associations between men and women, cannot at the same time be honorable to the former and disgraceful to the latter; and I have permitted many a lie to go unheeded to teach the world just this fact. It is simply nobody's business what my social relations are, or what they have been, unless I am found advocating publicly one thing while living privately quite a different one.

"But since, as I believe, through the conspiracy of Mr. Tilton, this insinuation has been publicly made in reference to himself, I think I have the right to call upon him to publish a certain letter of mine to him, written on four pages of wrapping paper, which contains a statement that will either prove or disprove what he has thus wantonly thrust before the public. Further on I shall have reason to refer more fully to this matter and of what he has denominated the breach between us, but for which he has assigned a lie as the cause.

"I have thus shown the character of one portion of the *Thunderbolt* which has special reference to me, in order that all other like portions may be critically considered by the reader.

THE GREATEST SOCIAL DRAMA OF MODERN TIMES, THE BEECHER-TILTON SCANDAL!

"This scandal, as reported by Victoria C. Woodhull, is at once a truth and a falsehood; or, as Theodore Tilton has himself explained, a 'true story' underlies 'the false one.' Three months after the Woodhull account had been published, and no one had given the public a direct, authentic denial of it—three months after the country had been insulted in connection with it by the moral and legal fraud of 'obscene literature'—I was stung into writing 'A full account, analysis and criticism of the Beecher-Tilton scandal.' In that article (published in the *Troy Daily Press* of February 11th, and since reproduced in other journals,) the Woodhull account was given in condensed form, as follows:

"'The Beecher-Tilton Scandal Case' is this: Mrs. Woodhull declares there has been a long-continued *liaison* between Mr. Beecher and Mrs. Tilton; that it first came to Mr. Tilton's

knowledge through the revelations of one of his children ; that he accused Mrs. Tilton of it, and received her acknowledgment of guilt ; that he was driven nearly to insanity at the moment, and treated Mrs. Tilton so severely that she miscarried a child, which was considered the offspring of Mr. Beecher. Mr. Tilton kept his grief secret, however, as Mrs. Woodhull asserts, until Mr. Beecher went again to his house, during his absence, and extorted a letter from Mrs. Tilton to the effect that he had never been guilty of the wrong she had acknowledged to her husband. Then Mr. Tilton, doubly outraged, confided his grief to a bosom friend, Mr. Frank Moulton, who went to Beecher's house and forced him, at the mouth of a pistol, to give up the letter.

" This story, in whole or in part, Mrs. Woodhull says, was first revealed to her by Mrs. Paulina Wright Davis, who received it from Mrs. Tilton ; and then by Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who received it from Mr. Tilton. The knowledge of it came to Mrs. Woodhull in the early part of 1870, and she refers to an allusion which she made to it in *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly* at that time. 'Subsequently,' continues Mrs. Woodhull, 'I published a letter in both *World* and *Times*, in which was the following sentence :

" 'I know a clergyman of eminence in Brooklyn who lives in concubinage with the wife of another clergyman of equal eminence.'

" Mrs. Woodhull affirms that the day when this letter appeared in the *World*, Mr. Tilton came to her office, No. 44 Broad street, and showing Mrs. Woodhull the letter, asked her whom she meant, 'Mr. Tilton,' she replied, 'I mean you and Mr. Beecher.'

" According to Mrs. Woodhull's statement, Mr. Tilton then acknowledged that the account was true, and worse than she had heard it. But he said that he was broken-hearted, that his wife was broken-hearted, and that she especially was then in no condition to be dragged before the public. Mr. Tilton took her to see Mrs. Tilton, and both imparted to her the whole story. The same thing was again detailed to her by Mr. Tilton's friend, Mr. Frank Moulton, and finally by Henry Ward Beecher himself.

"Mrs. Woodhull's declared purpose in publishing the

Beecher-Tilton Scandal was to create a 'social revolution.' She wished to show that 'the foremost minds of the age' had 'outgrown the institution of marriage,' rendering to it only the outward homage of hypocrites, not the adherence of conscience or the practice of life. There is no danger that any 'social revolution' will grow to proportions beyond the actual truth and common-sense contained in it. But in one thing Woodhull and Claflin instantly succeeded: they created a

SOCIAL PANIC THAT TURNED NEW YORK INTO A MOB!

"Their scandal, as they have since boasted, was indeed 'a bombshell' that carried dismay on every hand—an infernal machine of letters so terrific 'that many even feared to read it,' while others 'cursed and prayed, laughed and cried, as if the presence of the crack of doom.'

"The plans of this 'Social Revolution,' it seems, were somewhat deeply laid. The issue of *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly* containing the 'bombshell' was dated November 2. 1872. But, anticipating that some steps might be taken to suppress the entire issue when its contents should become known, the paper was dispatched to its subscribers a week in advance, and (if the word of its 'social revolutionists' can be trusted in anything,) 'to the entire list of newspapers in the United States, Canada and Great Britain.' Then, on Monday morning the 28th of October, it was put on sale at the Woodhull headquarters. Before night the demand 'grew to a rush.' During the week it increased to 'a crush,' needing even the regulation of the police. 'Tis said the sales reached a hundred and fifty thousand copies, and promised two millions. For several days newsmen retailed the paper as high as fifty cents. On the day of its suppression two dollars and a half was a common price for it. In some instances single copies brought ten dollars, and one extraordinary lover of literature is reported to have invested forty dollars in a copy. Owners of the paper then leased it to other readers at a dollar a day.

"But by Saturday, November 2, the general panic of 'good society' in New York had so far subsided, that 'some steps' were indeed taken—and with a vengeance—to suppress the Beecher-Tilton Scandal. And 'tis these steps alone that make the scandal of sufficient importance to claim the interference of persons in no way connected with it, and to need the unflin-

ing scrutiny of the public. The 'steps,' then were nothing less than a

DARING CONSPIRACY,

not merely against the audacious and hated women, Woodhull and Claflin, but

AGAINST THE WHOLE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES!

"In no other terms will I ever consent to describe that bastard New York monstrosity, begotten of lust, fear and guilt — the arrest of Woodhull and Claflin for 'publishing obscene literature.'

"If I had myself been situated like Theodore Tilton on the day of that arrest, and the darlings of my household had been so cruelly belied as his 'true story' claims of his own, I don't know but I could have gone into Broad street and cut the throats of Woodhull, Claflin and Blood, with as little compunction as I would shoot a mad dog. But that would have been a business and a risk confined to three or four persons. It would not have been a national fraud, endangering every great principle at the bottom of human liberty. The special friends, however, of Henry Ward Beecher — the skulkers of Plymouth Church and the Young Men's Christian Association — preferred to deflower the laws of their country and the freedom of its people by a gigantic performance of bigotry and chicane. In the shadow of their false pretenses, the Woodhull slanders, however atrocious, have grown comparatively dim and insignificant. The question of the mere rake, whom the moralist might pity and forgive, sinks in the question of the conspirator and traitor whom the patriot must hate.

"A law of the United States, passed June 8, 1872, makes a very proper provision in aid of public morals by branding the transmission of obscene literature through the mails as a misdemeanor. The Act is this:

"No obscene book, pamphlet, picture, print, or other publication of a vulgar or indecent character, or any letter upon the envelope of which, or postal card upon which, scurrilous epithets may have been written or printed, or disloyal devices printed or engrossed, shall be carried in the mail; and any person who shall knowingly deposit, or cause to be deposited, for mailing or delivery, any such obscene publication, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and on conviction thereof shall for every

such offense be fined not more than five hundred dollars, or be imprisoned at hard labor not exceeding one year, or both, at the discretion of the Courts.'

"Whatever sins Woodhull and Claflin had committed in issuing their *Weekly* of November 2, 1872, they had carefully avoided any violation of this statute against obscene literature. Their paper contained a harrowing account of seduction — an instance of such diabolical heartlessness that the noted philanthropist, Parker Pillsbury, has since declared that if its revelations were true, 'no matter though Mrs. Woodhull were an imp of hell, she should have a monument of polished Parian marble as high as Trinity steeple, and every father and mother of daughters should be proud to contribute a stone.' In addition to that nightmare of horrors, the paper contained several bold articles on social, religious and financial themes, in the midst of which was the Beecher-Tilton Scandal — a sad, unexpected story of adultery, but differing little in its details from scores of such stories reported in hundreds of newspapers. There is only one test of obscene literature.

THE PURPOSE OF THE PUBLICATION :

and any other test a free people should resent, if necessary,

WITH BATTLE AND BLOOD !

Any other test would overturn the bible, destroy the classics, and exclude physiology from human knowledge. It would insult the grave of every great thinker and poet, from Plato to Shakespeare and Burns. It would steal the bread and meat of letters, and leave only the baby sugar-tits of a Sunday-school library. The purpose of obscene literature is to pamper lust ; and no fact, no fiction is obscene without this purpose. But the expressed intent of the Woodhull articles was to destroy lust ; and, whether this intent was real or feigned, the articles were so written as almost to stop the breath and freeze the soul. In a word, they were ghastly, sickening *libels*, if false, but no more *obscene* than a picture of the crucifixion.

"Woodhull and Claflin, however, were, two women regarded almost as outlaws. They had become feared as 'black mailers,' and unfragrantly notorious as 'free-lovers.' For such reasons, undoubtedly, the special guardians of Mr. Beecher's reputation thought that the worst of means might be good enough to sweep 'female nuisances' out of Broad street. Public senti-

ment was exasperated, not quite enough for a direct mob, but an indirect mob, slinking behind a pretence of law, might crush its victims with safety. In this position, the legal subterfuge was found in the act of Congress passed to punish the venders of obscene prints. Then

MR. ANTHONY J. COMSTOCK, BACKED BY THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION,

stepped up to manage the dangerous fraud. Mr. Comstock is generally credited with 'good intentions;' and as hell, also, is said to be paved with the same materials, I have never doubted their presence in the man. God seems to have made him partly a fool, in order that the fellow could do a good work as long as he could be kept from getting above his business. The dirty wretches who corrupt young minds by feeding them on licentious books need some little man, by nature a spy and hypocrite, to check their villainous trade. A full-grown honest soul could neither sell the books nor dodge and lie to catch those who do. In such a dilemma the earth has a Comstock.

"Mr. Comstock declares that, in prosecuting Woodhull and Claflin, he has never moved in collusion with Mr. Beecher. In spite of the habit of tongue necessary to his vocation, he probably tells the truth: Mr. Beecher has acted, from the first, through his friends. But one of the affidavits on which the arrest of the two women was procured, was made by one Taliesin William Rees, a clerk in the office of the *Independent*; and that Mr. Henry C. Bowen, the proprietor of that journal, might be trusted to act for Mr. Beecher (when he could *save himself* by the same industry,) will be quite evident by and by to the 'gentle reader' of the *Thunderbolt*. Is it not known that the scheme was planned in Mr. Bowen's office — spies being thence dispatched to Woodhull and Claflin to buy papers, and order them sent to certain persons by post? On receipt of the papers, Mr. A. J. Comstock made his complaint before Commissioner Osborne, and the women were arrested. They were in a carriage at the time, and claim to have been hunting up the officials who had come for them.

"As the charge against them was

A FRAUD, BORN OF A PLOT,

and as they, if no one else, had brains enough to know it, they naturally supposed it could soon be broken. But in this opinion

they measured only the justice of law itself, not the powers of a mob called 'public opinion,' which renders American law useless on so many important occasions. The United States Government, however, treated Woodhull and Claflin with endearing familiarity. It sat in their lap on the way to court, through the supreme gallantry of Marshal Colfax or Bernhard — one of the two Chesterfields who had them in charge. It then hurried them, not into open court, but into a side room where the 'examination' might be private. In this 'star-chamber' they met five persons — District-Attorney Noah Davis, 'a member of Plymouth Church and a family connection of Mr. Beecher;' Assistant District-Attorney General Davies, Commissioner Osborn, and two other gentlemen, one of these being also a member of Plymouth Church. But the 'brazen sisters' sent for counsel, and, insisting on being conducted to the proper court-room, their examination was finally held in public. In

THIS EXAMINATION

the prosecuting blunderer, Gen. Davies, let out the secret that Woodhull and Claflin were not merely guilty of 'circulating obscene literature,' but of a 'gross libel' on a 'gentleman' whose character it was 'well worth the while of the Government of the United States to vindicate.' Interpreted, this lingo meant that a United States Court had been procured to convict, on the pretense of *obscenity*, two women who had *libelled a man* — this man declining to protect himself, except through a conspiracy of his friends and lackeys.

"This 'holy show' of American jurisprudence took place on Saturday, the 2d of November, 1872, and was finally adjourned to the ensuing Monday, the prisoners being held to bail in eight thousand dollars each, with two sureties. 'But when Monday came the Beecher tools of the United States Court *dodged a further examination altogether*. By an unheard-of proceeding, the Grand Jury had pushed in an indictment which took the case out of Commissioner Osborn's jurisdiction. The motive was evident; Mr. Beecher's General Davies had found that his owner could never be persuaded or dragged into court to pursue Woodhull for her 'gross libel,' and that the charge of 'obscenity' was a most ruinous one to try, if Plymouth Church had any further desire to save its Bible. For by far the most 'indecent passage' in *Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly* had been cut out of

the divinely inspired book of Deuteronomy. By this indictment, however, the prisoners were remanded to jail in utter disgrace, the mob of piety and fashion was appeased, and the Young Men's Christian Association was sustained in fraud!

"So much done, it was only necessary to muzzle the New York newspapers (some of whose editors had strong personal reasons for dreading 'black-mailers' if not 'free-lovers,') and to bribe or cheat the Associated Press into sending lies by lightning throughout the country. Both feats were performed. A consultation of leading quills *adopted darkness and falsehood as a deliberate policy*; and as for our 'country press,' that never dares to sneeze unless the metropolitan nose is crammed with snuff. The telegraph even prated about the finding of immodest cartoons; and on the 4th of November the credulous public actually supposed that two women, claiming to be 'reformers,' were guilty of the meanest offense in the calendar of shame. The ablest lawyer in the United States has since given an opinion scouting the whole arraignment, and of course the parties will never be tried, much less convicted. But, on a second arrest, they were taken before another United States Commissioner — Davenport — who was obliged to make some appearance of a 'decision.' And that fearful and wonderful thing was this:

" 'As to the intention of Congress in the framing and passage of the statute under which these proceedings were instituted, I am clear that a case of this character was never contemplated. * * However * * I am disposed to, and shall hold, the prisoners.' "

"And for this 'decision,' the Commissioner declared there was no American precedent, but that an 'English case furnished one.'

"From Commissioner Davenport's ruling, there is just one logical deduction; that this faithful servant of her Majesty, the Queen of Great Britain, should be swiftly retired from the American bench and sent where his English decisions may be rendered in English courts.

"I have dwelt upon the dry details of law, and in the miserable company of its New York expounders, to show beyond a doubt that the ridiculous proceedings against Woodhull and Claflin were simply

THE WORK OF A VIRTUAL MOB.

And in our 'commercial metropolis'—the great city of this Beecher-Comstock rabble—there was only one notable man with brains and pluck enough to care nothing about persons, and to look only at principles. In an age of Daniel Drew, 'Jim' Fisk, and Phelps, Dodge & Co., that man is naturally deemed 'insane.' I refer to George Francis Train. This 'lunatic' instantly perceived the vast public dangers that loomed up in a conspiracy by which the church might shut the mouth of slanderers or truth-tellers alike, disembowel literature, and stay the march of humanity itself.

"'Beecher must have justice,' said Train; 'so must Mr. Tilton—so must the Sisters Claflin.'

"To these women he said:

"'Never approving your doctrine of Free Love, I fought you out of the Woman-Suffrage movement and the International, when you were in prosperity; but now you are in adversity, I am your friend.'

"From his hotel (St. Nicholas) he instantly wrote them a note:

"'I will go your bail. I am satisfied the cowardly Christian community will destroy you, if possible, to cover up the rotten state of society.'

"Events have since proved that the 'mad cap,'

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN,

was the one greatly sound mind in New York.

"In spite of the momentous principles at stake, it soon became evident (as I have already shown) that the great 'churches of commerce' and the Young Men's Christian Association were in league with the greedy, corrupt press of the city, and that all had joined hands to deceive the nation. Not even a public hall could be secured by Mr. Train to speak in.

HE, TOO, WAS GAGGED!

"It was in this exasperating state of affairs that he took desperate measures and issued a newspaper of his own—the *Train Lique*. He rung a score of changes on the expressions called 'obscene' in WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY. He flung them into the streets of the city and dared the authorities to arrest him. He demanded the prosecution of the Bible Publishing Company for printing 'disgusting slanders on Lot, Abraham, Solomon and David.' But the Government footboys

of Mr. A. J. Comstock had become timid and wary. They let Train alone, while the cords were drawn more tightly still around Woodhull and Claflin. In unspeakable disgust Mr. Train then issued his

SECOND TRAIN LIGUE,

in which he scattered about the most shocking parts of the Old Testament, under the most audacious of sensational heads, but used no doubtful words except those having the authority of the bible itself. The work was a coarse one. Only a thorough 'Pagan Preacher' could have done it. It seemed revolting and blasphemous and my own first impression was that Train should be punished for it. But better aware now of the provocation, I have no doubt that history will justify the *Train Ligue* as the natural reaction of Comstock's idiocy, and as a last Democratic test of absolute religious equality. Mr. Train was finally arrested by the State, not the United States authorities, and after the latter had declined to touch him, he was thrown into the Tombs. He pleaded guilty to 'quoting obscenity from the bible,' and refused to leave the Tombs on bail. The Church and the Young Men's Christian Association, again, dared not risk a trial—which would either justify Woodhull and Train or else convict the bible. In such straits, the Beecher-Bowen-Comstock traitors have attempted at last to end their conspiracy by sending George Francis Train to a 'lunatic asylum.'

TO OPPOSE THESE ASSASSINS OF LIBERTY

is now the highest duty that God gives me to see. I would help do it, if necessary, with battle and blood. I will first do what I can with ink and types—going back to the cause of the struggle.

THE BEECHER-TILTON SCANDAL.

"I said that Victoria C. Woodhull's account of it is 'at once a truth and a falsehood.' As for Theodore Tilton's 'true story,' long since promised to the public, that also shall now be judged.

"In a criticism of my own, from which I have already quoted, I said two months ago that Mrs. Woodhull's statement must be accepted as substantially true, for of the six persons on whose authority it was told, not one had uttered a word of direct denial. I have now in my possession two letters from Mrs. Paulina Wright Davis—both dated at Paris, one the 20th. of

November and the other the 28th. — showing that I was mistaken. But a mere extract from one of these letters had been set afloat in the newspapers, and had at last become so tortured by a change of names, that, as I saw it, I knew it must be either a falsehood or a forgery. Mrs. Davis' first letter is this:

“‘PARIS, November 20.

“‘TO JUDGE —

“‘*Dear Friend*:—Yours, with its astounding contents, is just received. Thanks for your consideration.

“‘In relation to the Tilton *versus* Beecher affair I have only this to say: I was never on any terms of intimacy in the family of either party. I never visited at Mr. Tilton's but once in my life, and that was ten years ago, in company with Mr. and Mrs. Johnson. A year or two since I called at Mr. Tilton's house for some books which I had lent Mr. Tilton. I then saw Mrs. Tilton for ten or fifteen minutes. I have met Mrs. Tilton two or three times at the houses of mutual friends, but at no time has there ever been the slightest approach to a confidential conversation between us. Nor have I ever even insinuated that there had been. If Mrs. Tilton had, ever, in my presence, spoken of Mr. Beecher, it has been in terms of respect as a man of honor and her pastor.

“‘I did believe that V. C. Woodhull was going to do a great work for woman. I am grieved that she has failed in what she gave promise of doing.

“‘I am writing in great haste, and must be very brief, that my letter may go to England to-night by a friend, and so reach you at the earliest hour, and set your mind at rest that I could never have originated or spread this scandal.

“‘Yours very truly,

“‘P. W. DAVIS.'”

COMMENTS.

“[A letter differing somewhat from this, but evidently having the same source, went the rounds of the press in December. At that time I pronounced it, so far as it denies the truth of my statement, as false, and I now re-affirm that I have good reasons for stating that this letter has been ‘doctored’ by Mrs. Davis' friends since it was received. Mrs. Davis is an honorable, straight-forward woman, and will not consent to lie. Had I

used her name in this connection against her expressed wish, which I have not, I am sure she would not deny it. Mrs. Davis knew that I intended to use the 'Beecher corruption' to bring on the social revolution, and instead of endeavoring to dissuade, always encouraged me to do so. I therefore again repeat that I believe this letter is a forgery, and I know that at least one of the persons behind Mr. Clark believes it to be so. I shall never believe that Mrs. Davis will consent to have this stand as her letter until I either see her own handwriting to that effect or she tells me herself that it is so. I therefore call upon Mrs. Davis to state to me in writing, which I promise in advance to publish in the *Weekly*, the truth or falsity of this whole matter.

"I know that this letter has been in the hands of Mr. Tilton as well as others from other persons whom I named as my authority; and I also know that had they contained the much-needed contradiction they would have been published authoritatively by him long since. Nevertheless, he took care to have it come to my ears that he had letters completely refuting my statements; but the perusal of the letters to and by others revealed this thin pretense. They perhaps question the language used, *but not the thing stated*. Now let this be disproved if it can be, by the publication of the *original* letters from Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Stanton; all others, as I believe, are forgeries.]

"According to the Woodhull, she received a letter from Mrs. Davis in May, 1871, in which Mrs. D. said:

" 'I believe you are raised up of God to do a wonderful work, and I believe you will unmask the hypocrisy of a class that none others dare touch. God help you and save you. The more I think of that mass of Beecher corruption the more I desire its opening.'

"In Mrs. Davis' second note from Paris, she refers to her letter from which Mrs. Woodhull claimed to have taken this extract, and says:

" 'The reference in my letter I do not remember; but, if there, it was in allusion to statements made by them to me. But I think it was not there.'

COMMENTS.

"[Now, if Mrs. Davis wrote the above, which I do not believe she did, the following may refresh her memory:

" 'HOME, Wednesday.

" 'Dear Victoria :—I have prepared the manuscript and re-

turned it to Mr. Wood. There is a sentence missing at the end of Mrs. Stanton's address, which I have written in pencil. I think if the appendix was begun in the middle of the page it would look better. I wish that a dozen could be sent at once to Mrs. Emily Pitt Stevens, *Pioneer*, San Francisco, California. Pray ask Mr. Andrews, Col. Blood — any one who has time, to see that it comes out right this time. If he would send me a copy before the edition is struck off it would be a good thing.

“‘ It seems to me, on the whole, that it will not be best to send the platform out in this edition — that is, to bind it up with it. The appendix closes properly with the winter's work. The platform belongs to another season.

“‘ How I wish, dear, you could be here a little while, it is so quiet and peaceful. I wonder I ever want to go anywhere — into the turmoil and strife of life.

“‘ I thought of you half of last night, dreamed of you and prayed for you.

“‘ I believe you are raised up of God to do a wonderful work, and I believe that you will unmask the hypocrisy of a class that none others dare touch. God help you and save you. The more I think of that mass of Beecher corruption the more I desire its opening.

“‘ I wish you would send me the names of the two kept women on the platform of Boston. I will not use them till you give me leave, but it will help me to act as I must.

“‘ I suppose you have seen the scrap I inclose ; at all events, it's best you should be armed at all points.

“‘ If Mr. Andrews will give an hour or two to that book it will give me rest. Kind regards to him and Tennie.

“‘ Ever yours lovingly.

“‘ PROVIDENCE, May 29, 1871.

“‘ P. W. DAVIS. ’

“ Immediately after the Washington Convention in January, 1871, Mrs. Davis begun the preparation of ‘ The Twenty Years' History of the Woman Suffrage Movement, ’ which was published under the supervision of Woodhull & Claflin by their printer. This letter refers to that work and was written in May after the Convention in Apollo Hall, and if I remember rightly, was the first one received from her on her return home after that convention.

“Who can read this letter, the original of which in her own handwriting and bearing her own signature, I happen still to have, and believe that Paulina Wright Davis ever wrote the first letter in the *Thunderbolt*, pretending to be from her. I will not attempt here to show the inconsistencies of the several statements contained in the letter dated Paris, November 20, 1872, which that of May, 1871, does not refute, since I have no excuse to review Mrs. Davis until I am satisfied that she has denied something. But I may consistently show the disparity between such points of the two letters as their own language involves. ‘I did believe that V. C. Woodhull was going to do a great work for woman; I am grieved that she has failed in what she gave promise of doing.’ Now, what was this work? Her letter to me fully explains. ‘I believe you are raised up of God to do a wonderful work; and I believe that you will unmask the hypocrisy of a class that none other dare touch. God help and save you. The more I think of that mass of Beecher corruption the more I desire its opening.’ It seems clear that she conceived the great work that I was to do was the very thing I have done and the very thing that Mrs. Davis desired should be done. Where, then, have I failed to do what she believed I was raised up of God to do? And can Mrs. Davis be grieved because I have opened just what she desired should be opened, which ‘none other dare touch?’

“And she was thinking more and more of ‘that mass of Beecher corruption.’ Now, what did that mass consist of? A mass means more than one thing of one kind, and Mrs. Davis is a careful writer, never writing one thing and meaning another. When she said ‘that mass of Beecher corruption’ she meant just what I have stated that she said to me she learned from Mrs. Tilton, not only about herself, but all that has more recently come to the light of day, by the publication of Tilton’s letter to Bowen regarding a member of his own family, which is the foundation for the statement by Mrs. Tilton, that she had recently learned that Mr. Beecher had had intercourse under most extraordinary circumstances with another person. What those extraordinary circumstances were, may be learned by referring to Tilton’s letter to Bowen. In Mr. Bowen’s own language, ‘He took her in his arms by force, threw her down upon the sofa, accomplished his deviltry,’ and left her. * * *

"I repeat that the first knowledge I had of the Beecher-Tilton matter was imparted to me by Mrs. Davis at my office, 44 Broad street, where she called on her way over from Mrs. Tilton's, and related to me what she had just heard from her. But she told me nothing of Mr. Bowen. Whatever I know of him I learned much later, from Mr. Tilton himself. Neither did Mrs. Stanton say anything to me about the Bowen affair, and when I published my first intimation in the *World* and *Times* that 'I knew a clergyman of eminence in Brooklyn who lives in concubinage with the wife of another clergyman of almost equal eminence,' I meant Mr. Beecher and Mr. Tilton. Had I known at that time that Bowen was mixed up in the muddle I should have used it, because he had just made a furious and unwarrantable assault upon me in a leading editorial in the *Independent*. Mrs. Davis, I am certain, did not originate this scandal, but that I first heard some of the particulars from her I have ample proof, which will be advanced should a denial from her ever make it necessary. But I wish parenthetically again to state my position regarding Mrs. Tilton. I conceive that Mrs. Tilton's love for Mr. Beecher was her true marriage, and that her marriage to Mr. Tilton, while loving Mr. Beecher, is prostitution. If I have any cause to criticise her, it is for consenting to remain the legal wife of Mr. Tilton. As I said in the original article, Mrs. Tilton is really far advanced in the principles of social freedom, as I learned from Mr. Tilton himself.

"In view of all this, can anybody believe what Mr. Clark infers from the pretended letters of Mrs. Davis that 'Mrs. Woodhull is flatly denied.' If there is a denial it is Davis against Davis. Besides this, I have a recent letter from Providence, from one who knows some of Mrs. Davis' friends, which says: 'There are not a few of her friends who do not credit the authority of the letter.'

"As far, then, as Woodhull has given Mrs. Paulina Wright Davis for authority in the Beecher-Tilton Scandal, she is fairly and flatly denied.

"The position, however, of Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton is quite different. At Lewiston, Maine, she undoubtedly 'denounced' Mrs. Woodhull's story, as the newspapers declared at the time; and Theodore Tilton holds a letter from her, in which she declines to stand in the precise attitude portrayed by Mrs.

Woodhull. Yet an excellent lady, whose letter I have traced to its source, declared in the *Hartford Times* soon after Mrs. Stanton was interviewed in Maine, that she 'had charged Mr. Beecher, to parties residing in Philadelphia and known to the correspondent, with very much the same offense of which Mrs. Woodhull speaks.' This testimony is confirmed by Edward M. Davis, Esq., the disciple and son-in-law of the venerable Lucretia Mott, and by Mrs. Amelia Bloomer, who asserts that Mrs. Stanton whispered the scandal to her 'a year and a half ago,' and said 'the Woodhull knew all about it.' At Rochester, not long since, Mrs. Stanton publicly refused to deny anything; and, last of all, she has recently sent to me, through a mutual friend, this word: 'Assure Mr. Clark that I care more for justice than for Beecher.' Mrs. Stanton, in short, has been somewhat perverted by Woodhull, and denies the perversion.

COMMENTS.

["Why has the part played by Mrs. Stanton been so niggardly treated by Mr. Clark? It seems to me that she is of sufficient importance to have received much greater consideration. Or does Mr. Clark know that too many people have learned the same facts from her that I learned? People in California and Chicago, as well as in Philadelphia and Iowa, testify to the same things. Mr. Clark says I have lied. In what, Mr. Clark? pray inform me. And if I have lied, do you mean to also say that Mrs. Stanton has lied? But why does Mr. Clark say, 'At Lewiston, Maine, she undoubtedly denounced Mrs. Woodhull's story,' when he knows that she has denied that telegraphic statement of 'two clergymen.'"]

"The following was published in the *Weekly* of Feb. 15:

"The following we clip from the *Springfield Republican's* Boston letter:

"Mrs. Stanton, by the way, has disclosed a curious fact about the dispatch from Lewiston, Maine, sent all over the country, some months since, to contradict Mrs. Woodhull's Beecher slander on Mrs. Stanton's authority. She never authorized such a dispatch, and asserts that the two clergymen at Lewiston who called on her to talk about the matter, quite misrepresented what she said to them. Without going into

the general question of fact, it is understood that Mrs. Stanton's correction of Mrs. Woodhull's account referred only to some expressions of her own there quoted, and she expressly disclaims any statement that Mrs. Woodhull's story was 'untrue in every particular,' which the Lewiston dispatch made Mrs. Stanton say, but which she never has said.'

"There has been a great deal said by the members of Plymouth Church about a letter from Mrs. Stanton in the hands of Mr. Tilton, which they claim is parallel with the Lewiston telegraph dispatch. Now that Mrs. Stanton has said that 'two clergymen' stated untruth in the Lewiston dispatch, will the above-mentioned members please publish the letter, so that the public may see if they too have not, in their zeal for Mr. Beecher, gone as far beyond the truth as their Lewiston friends?

"It will also be remembered that in the 'Justitia' letter published in the *Hartford Times*, and dated November 25, 1872, the writer, in speaking of the reason that this alleged denial could not have been written by her, said: 'I will tell you, Mr. Editor; simply because Mrs. Stanton dare not imperil her own reputation for veracity; for she has herself charged Mr. Beecher to parties residing in this city and known to me, the writer, and elsewhere, with very much the same offenses of which Mrs. Woodhull speaks.'

"In direct connection with the above, we find the following in the *Patriot*, of Chariton, Iowa:

"In the Council Bluffs *Nimpareil* Mrs. Amelia Bloomer says: In the general condemnation of Mrs. Woodhull for publishing the scandal told to her, the question of its truth or falsity is in a great measure lost sight of. A. B. does not believe that Mrs. Woodhull manufactured these stories; and now that the thing is out, she would like to see "the Beecher-Tilton Scandal" tried on its merits. One year and a half ago this scandal was whispered in the ears of A. B. by one of the parties given as authority, by "the Woodhull," and the one so whispering gave Mr. Tilton himself as her authority. She further said that "the Woodhull" knew all about it, and threatened its publication. This agrees, as far as it goes, with the statement of Woodhull, and proves she did not get up the story for the purpose of "blackmailing." A. B. has kept this scandal to her-

self, and never would have revealed her knowledge if it had not come so fully before the public. While deploring, for the sake of all parties concerned, for the sake of the church, for the sake of decency and good morals, that it has ever come to the light, she hopes, now it is out, that truth will be elicited and justice done — that the chief actors may receive their share of punishment, instead of being shielded from censure, while the tale-bearer alone is condemned.'

"It is useless to add more to this. Neither of these refer in the slightest manner to the solution of the matter by the Bowen affair; nor are they based upon 'rumors' or 'halucinations.' It is preposterous simply, to attempt to evade the fact that Mr. Tilton is the authority to more than me for the details of the Beecher-Tilton, not the Beecher-Bowen, Scandal. I have only to ask if Mrs. Stanton could have denied the truth of my statement regarding Mrs. Tilton, would she not have done it long ago? Everybody must unhesitatingly answer yes. But instead of this, her letter to Laura Curtis Bullard, which Mr. Tilton has in his possession, only qualifies the language used, but not the thing said. I believe she claims she did not say that Mr. Tilton called Mr. Beecher a *damned* lecherous scoundrel.

"I am satisfied to let it remain as Mr. Clark concluded, 'Mrs. Stanton, in short, has been somewhat perverted by Woodhull, but denies the perversion.'

'THEODORE TILTON'S LETTER TO HIS "COMPLAINING FRIEND."' One of the strangest epistles on record, and one which every careful reader was immediately obliged to record as a negative confession of much that Mrs. Woodhull asserted.

"'174 LIVINGSTONE ST., BROOKLYN, Dec. 27, 1872.

"*My Complaining Friend*: — Thanks for your good letter of bad advice. You say, "How easy to give the lie to the wicked story and thus end it forever." But stop and consider. The story is a whole library of statements — a hundred or more — and it would be strange if some of them were not correct, though I doubt if any are. To give a general denial to such an encyclopædia of assertions would be as vague and irrelevant as to take up the *Police Gazette*, with its twenty-four pages of illustrations, and say, "This is all a lie." So extensive a libel requires (if answered at all), a special denial of its several parts; and furthermore, it requires, in this particular case, not only a denial

of things misstated, but a truthful explanation of other things that remain unstated and in mystery. In other words, the false story, if met at all, should be confronted and confounded by the true one. Now, my friend, you urge me to speak; but when the truth is a sword, God's mercy sometimes commands it sheathed. If you think I do not burn to defend my wife and little ones, you know not the fiery spirit within me. But my wife's heart is more a fountain of charity, and quenches all resentments. She says: "Let there be no suffering save to ourselves alone." and forbids a vindication to the injury of others. From the beginning she has stood with her hand on my lips, saying, "Hush!" So when you prompt me to speak for her, you countervail her more Christian mandate of silence. Moreover, after all, the chief victim of the public displeasure is myself alone; and so long as this is happily the case, I shall try, with patience, to keep my answer within my own breast, lest it shoot forth like a thunderbolt through other hearts.

"Yours truly,

THEODORE TILTON."

"MR. TILTON'S 'THUNDERBOLT' HAS COME."

"I have tapped the mysterious cloud in which it lay sheathed; and if it now 'shoots' through any 'hearts' let their owners remember the danger of conspiring against the most sacred rights of an American citizen!

"I will remark, at this point, that the defense which Mr. Tilton prepared against Mrs. Woodhull—which he indirectly promised to the public, and then 'concluded to withhold'—is a thick, heavy pile of manuscript, written on foolscap, and bound in flexible black leather. It has every appearance of elaboration—being erased in parts and rewritten—and is very circumstantial. How this 'true story' came into my possession is of no consequence to the public, but can easily be ascertained in the courts, if any of the specially interested parties should have the temerity to press an investigation. I shall give the substance of it, but as briefly as possible, and chiefly, though not wholly, in my own language. Here, then, is

THEODORE TILTON'S 'TRUE STORY.'

"He asserts that, in the fall of 1870—Mrs. Tilton having just returned to her home from a watering-place—she was visited by Mr. Beecher; and that on this occasion the pastor

of Plymouth Church unbridled his fiery passions, and besought of Mrs. Tilton the most intimate relationship accorded by her sex. Such warmth of pastoral attention was declined by Mrs. Tilton — not with the loud anger of ostentatious virtue, but with the mature sadness of common sense. The good lady was surprised, and the true wife reported the occurrence to her husband. Greatly angered and grieved, he requested her to make a memorandum of it. She did so; and I give her own words, literally, as they were written:

“Yesterday afternoon my friend and pastor, Henry Ward Beecher, solicited me to become his wife in all the relations which that term implies.”

“In his manuscript book Mr. Tilton comments, with some evidence of pride, upon the delicate and skillful manner in which Mr. Beecher’s hideous overtures were here expressed. Mrs. Tilton’s language is striking, and is apt to impress itself on the reader’s memory.

COMMENTS.

“[As a correction to this introduction to the ‘true story,’ I ask Mr. Tilton to publish to the world a certain letter received from Mrs. Tilton, during her absence from Brooklyn at ‘a watering-place,’ in the summer of 1871, and refresh his own memory somewhat about the facts therein treated of. I remember them very distinctly. Perhaps he will accommodate Mr. Clark with the loan of that letter. Will Mr. Clark please manage to *steal* that letter if Mr. Tilton will not loan it? I assure you that it will give a great deal of light as to my truth or falsity; and if Mr. Tilton will not loan you the letter, and you cannot manage to steal it, please ask him if that letter did not state that Mrs. Tilton said she had been reading ‘Griffith Gaunt,’ and that night, while on her knees till midnight, she had awakened to the horrible crime she had committed against her husband. I am sorry to be obliged to jog Mr. Tilton’s memory on these points; but Mr. Clark might also ask him if, in that letter, she did not state that she felt that she had been divorced from him, and that she could never live with him again unless they were remarried. Again, it may not be invidious to inquire, what was the cause of the misunderstanding between Mr. and Mrs. Tilton, which could cause Mrs. Tilton to feel divorced? Surely the refusal to accept Mr. Beecher’s kind pro-

posals could not have been a cause for divorce ! Such faithfulness is generally repaid by other treatment than this. But let us have the letter. Do not let this rest upon my word merely when so good proof exists. If Mr. Tilton prepares a 'true story' and premits it to be stolen let it be a 'true one,' not a partly true one, but a wholly true one — a half-truth always being a lie.]

"At the time Mrs. Tilton's memorandum was written, Mr. Tilton was the editor of the New York *Independent* and of the Brooklyn *Union*, receiving five thousand dollars a year from each of these sources, and about five thousand dollars more from still another source, and was in most intimate business relations with Mr. Henry C. Bowen, the eminent publisher, and a fellow member of Plymouth Church. As Mr. Tilton was writing his 'true story,' he could hardly be blamed for a yearning look backward at those halcyon days of the Bowen flesh-pots.

"About six weeks after Mr. Beecher's pastoral interview with Mrs. Tilton, the nature of it was explained by Mr. Tilton to his friend and patron, Mr. Bowen. The confidence was natural; for Mr. Tilton affirms that, during a whole previous year, Mr. Bowen had been denouncing Mr. Beecher as 'a corruptor of Brooklyn society,' and charging him, in unmistakable terms, with 'numerous adulteries and rapes.' Mr. Tilton justifies his own terrible statement, at this juncture, by the affidavit of another gentleman (whose name has thus far been kept out of the scandal,) but who swears that on two occasions he had also heard Mr. Bowen impute these crimes to Mr. Beecher. Again, during a summer respite at his country seat in Woodstock, Conn., Mr. Bowen had written a letter to Mr. Tilton, condemning Mr. Beecher more severely than ever, and bitterly accusing himself of infidelity to his own conscience in having so long delayed an exposure of so base a scoundrel. He added that he should publish Beecher's guilt on returning to the city. Mr. Bowen failed to keep the promise; but he still vented his indignation in private to Mr. Tilton, who finally unbosomed the story of his own household.

"Thereupon Mr. Bowen became unusually excited. He said the time had come to act. He urged Mr. Tilton to write instantly to Mr. Beecher, demanding his retirement from Ply-

mouth Church and his withdrawal from Brooklyn. 'Write that letter,' exclaimed Mr. Bowen, 'and let *me* carry it to the scoundrel for you.' Impelled by such eloquent friendship, Mr. Tilton says he wrote the following note:

" 'HENRY W. BEECHER:

" 'Sir:—For reasons which you well understand, and which I need not therefore recite, I advise and demand that you quit Plymouth pulpit forever, and leave Brooklyn as a residence.

" 'THEODORE TILTON.'

"The note was then handed to Mr. Bowen, according to his vehement solicitation, for delivery to Mr. Beecher.

"In Mrs. Woodhull's account of the Beecher-Tilton Scandal she cites a Frank Moulton as one of her witnesses. This gentleman's name appears also in Mr. Tilton's manuscript-book. He is a member of Plymouth Church. He has long been Mr. Tilton's most intimate friend. He was called into the difficulty at the very first step. A day or two after Mr. Beecher's visit to Mrs. Tilton in the coveted light of a 'wife,' Mr. Tilton consulted Mr. Moulton, it appears, and placed Mrs. Tilton's memorandum in his hands. And now, after sending the note of 'advice and demand' to Mr. Beecher, Mr. Tilton imparted the circumstance to Mr. Moulton.

" 'But, Tilton,' said Mr. Moulton at once, "'did Bowen sign that letter with you?'

" 'No,' replied Mr. Tilton, "'I signed it alone.'

" 'Then you are a ruined man!'

"How Mr. Frank Moulton acquired 'the gift of prophecy,' we need not pause to inquire. But that he understands the 'pillars' of Plymouth Church was soon proved. For when Mr. Tilton's friend, Bowen, reached Brooklyn Heights with the letter which he had so earnestly requested to bear to 'that scoundrel, Beecher,' he certainly delivered it with remarkable suavity, under the circumstances. Said he:

" 'Mr. Beecher—a letter from Tilton. Tilton is your implacable enemy, Mr. Beecher, but I will be your friend.'

"It is unnecessary, perhaps, to explain Mr. H. C. Bowen's motive in this unparalleled act of 'strategy,' not to say treachery. But not long afterward it became known to the 'newspaper world' that Mr. Bowen had concluded to dispense with the services of Mr. Tilton on the *Independent*. To kill off a useless friend, and at the same time grapple a useful enemy

with 'hooks of steel,' is sometimes an object to a shrewd man of business.

"Some eight months after the commencement of the Beecher-Tilton differences, an investigation and a storm were thought to be brooding over Plymouth Church; and Mr. Beecher, fearing that Mrs. Tilton's memorandum (which he had heard of) might be brought to light, made bold to visit her in Mr. Tilton's absence. Although informed that she was sick in bed, he insisted on seeing her, and was finally admitted to her room. Mr. Tilton's 'true story' declares that the great preacher drew a doleful picture of his troubles. He pleaded with Mrs. Tilton that he was on the brink of ruin, and that she alone could save him. Mrs. Tilton finally sat up in bed, with book and paper in hand, and wrote at Mr. Beecher's dictation a few lines, the point of which is that in all his intercourse with her he 'had conducted himself as a gentleman and a Christian.' Flushed with success, the Plymouth shepherd then pressed her to add that the troublesome memorandum in Moulton's hands had been wrested from her when she was 'ill,' and in 'an irresponsible condition.' She gave an oral promise also, as Mr. Tilton adds, that she would not appear against Mr. Beecher in any coming investigation, unless her husband should move in the matter. In 'the Woodhull's' scandal, she speaks of Mrs. Tilton's 'sweet concessiveness.' Much of it seems also evident in Mr. Tilton's 'true story.'

"On Mr. Tilton's return home, Mrs. Tilton again told him what had happened. He assures the reader that he would now have borne the humility of his wife's merciful retraction, had it not been for the concluding portion, which apparently placed him in the position of having compelled her to indite her first memorandum. Mr. Tilton's proud spirit, outraged at the possibility of this appearance of vulgar malice on his part — or even blackmail itself — had recourse at once to his unfailing social strategist, Mr. Moulton. He urged Mr. Moulton to hasten to Mr. Beecher, and force him to give up Mrs. Tilton's last paper.

"Mr. Moulton went; and he had a long, private conversation with his beloved pastor. He requested and insisted that the document should be given up. Among other things he reminded Mr. Beecher that the statement which he had just

worried out of Mrs. Tilton was false on its face — as the lady was known to have been not ‘ill’ and ‘in an irresponsible condition’ when her original memorandum was made, but uncommonly well, as Mr. Beecher remembered — she having just returned home from a summer resort. Mr. Moulton further elucidated to his minister that Mrs. Tilton was now ‘ill’ and in an ‘irresponsible condition,’ instead of on the former occasion.

“Mr. Moulton’s persuasions were not easily answered, though Mr. Beecher still held on to the paper. As the discussion sharpened, however, and Mr. Moulton evinced that he was not to be trifled with, Mr. Beecher finally asked him what he would do with the paper if it should be placed in his hands. ‘I will keep the first memorandum and this one together,’ said Mr. Moulton, ‘and thus prevent you and Tilton from harming each other.’

“‘But,’” said Mr. Beecher, imploringly, “‘Frank, can I, can I confide in you? Will you protect the paper!’”

“‘Yes,’” was the reply; “‘nobody shall have it; I will take care of it.’”

“‘How?’” asked Mr. Beecher.

“‘In every way,’” answered Mr. Moulton; and then, putting his hand on a pistol in his vest pocket, he added, “‘with this, if necessary.’”

“Mr. Beecher thereupon gave up the document, and Mr. Moulton has faithfully kept his promise. But he returned at once to Mr. Tilton, and made a full, circumstantial record of the conference with Mr. Beecher. The record was written in short-hand, but was afterward rendered into ordinary English, and it now occupies several pages of Mr. Tilton’s ‘true story,’ and is highly dramatic reading.

COMMENTS.

“[Here we have as tangled a web as was ever unraveled. But does it explain away the original statement upon these facts? Read both carefully and then consider the following which I purposely omitted stating at the time, as I had no desire to introduce Mr. Beecher to the public in any light other than was necessary for my purpose. But the above is given to the public, as will be believed, by Mr. Tilton’s consent, and I am therefore justified in saying that what it here called

his 'true story' differs in some material points from the story he told me, which was this:

"He said after he had learned of the facts, and while Mrs. Tilton was still dangerously ill from the premature birth of a child induced by his treatment, that he met Mr. Beecher at Frank Moulton's and there confronted him; that they endeavored to compel Mr. Beecher to terms, and that the interview was suddenly terminated by Mr. Beecher begging to be excused for a few moments until he could consult a friend. This was granted. He left them, returning in an hour or so, his manner entirely changed. His suing for mercy was turned into defiance. He simply rang the door bell and said, 'Gentlemen, I do not see fit to prolong this interview; I have got my vindication in my pocket,' and turned upon his heel and incontinently left.

"He said both he and Frank were utterly astonished at the conduct of Mr. Beecher, but it was fully explained when he returned to his home, where Mrs. Tilton in deep distress, stated that Mr. Beecher had been there, and that she had signed some paper she scarcely knew what, but she was afraid it was something that might do harm. It was then that Mr. Moulton went to Mr. Beecher, and in the manner I have already described, demanded the document. No such rendition as the one given in the 'true story' was ever given to me either by Mr. Moulton or Mr. Tilton, and it is entirely inconsistent with his conduct toward Mrs. Tilton, and his grief and rage before me, and especially his conduct when he took me to ride to the grave where was buried, as he said, the fruits of Mr. Beecher's intimacy with his wife, at which time, sitting on the Battle Hill Monument, he went anew over the whole story, including the stamping of the wedding ring into the soil of the grave. It is also utterly inconsistent with the sentiment of the poem in which is 'She, too, false like the rest.' And what was the great grief that caused him to walk the streets of Brooklyn the whole night inconsolable, as he has done night upon night either alone or with Mr. Moulton; and his constantly expressed desire 'to die as he had nothing to live for in this world?' The purported faithfulness of Mrs. Tilton in saving Mr. Beecher from becoming an adulterer ought to have made Mr. Tilton extremely happy in her possession. Or was he distracted because she did resist the persuasions of Mr. Beecher? But I have no

desire at this time to call attention to the other discrepancies between Mr. Tilton's statements to me and his 'true story,' except to say that my statement stands, made by me as I received it, fact after fact from Mr. Tilton himself, most of which were also confirmed by the several witnesses whom I have mentioned. Had Mr. Tilton never told the same story to others than to me, I might feel called upon to go into a detailed proof of the whole matter; but since he has so repeated it to a half-dozen persons whom I know, I do not think it necessary to refute his later and amended statement. The public will place it side by side with mine, and give due weight to the fact that the amended statement was prepared under the bias of an emergency which, perhaps, he did not contemplate when he made the former and unbiased statement to me and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Col. Mix and others; although I ought to say that Mr. Tilton always gave me to understand that he should be glad when the matter was out, but that he should not want to be the one to first move in it.

"In due time Mr. Tilton became acquainted with Mrs. Woodhull. He says he had previously declined an introduction to her; but met her accidentally one day in company with a mutual friend, and was presented to her. He afterward visited her at times, as did most of the other men and women in New York who were connected with the Woman Suffrage movement. On one occasion of a visit at her office she suddenly seized a copy of the *World*, and, thrusting it before him, pointed to this passage in a letter she had written to that journal:

"I know a clergyman of eminence in Brooklyn, who lives in concubinage with the wife of another clergyman of equal eminence."

"Mr. Tilton," said Woodhull, "do you know whom that means?"

"No."

"It means you and Mr. Beecher."

"Mr. Tilton claims that he said nothing, or almost nothing, in reply, but was simply thunderstruck. He instantly perceived that the woman had heard, in an exaggerated form, rumors that had been traveling about for a year or two, and he feared that in her possession they might become very dangerous. He soon

left Mrs. Woodhull, and sought, of course, the Napoleonic Moulton. The result was the deliberate plan of a campaign to get thoroughly on the right side of Woodhull, keep there, and thus close her mouth. He then called upon her frequently—sometimes in company with Moulton, sometimes alone; took her part publicly, and defended her character. He sometimes saw her in such exaltations as he considered states of trance, and her husband in affinity, Colonel Blood, used to read him extracts from the heavens, which Victoria was said to have received (often the night before) from “the spirits.” Mr. Tilton does not deny that he honestly considered Mrs. Woodhull a remarkable woman, with a “mission;” and, if mistaken, he naturally contends that Mr. Beecher, his sister Mrs. Hooker, Mrs. Stanton and many others “trained in the same regiment” of erring mortality.”

[“Mr. Tilton did not meet me accidentally in company with a mutual friend, but he came to my office with Stephen Pearl Andrews and was introduced to me, and this was the only time I ever saw him previous to that when he called with the *World*. To others he has said that upon that occasion I sent for him to come to see me. In his ‘true story’ he has neglected to do this, and he does so because he knows it is not true. I neither sent for him nor thrust the *World* before him when he did come. He came of his own accord with the article in question from the *World*, and asked me: ‘Whom do you mean by that?’ But the idea that an exaggerated rumor that had been traveling about for a year or two, which he could have instantly corrected if false, but which he did not even attempt to do, might become very dangerous in my hands, would be preposterous if it were not ridiculous. I do not think any logical mind can read this part of the ‘true story’ and not conclude, if it be true, that there is still another true story which he at least has not told, and that the magnified proportion of the campaign which was planned to capture me is only to be believed upon the theory that what I knew, which it was necessary should be kept quiet, was not exaggerated rumors merely.

“It must be remembered that this occurred in the spring of 1871, soon after the May Convention in Apollo Hall. It will also be seen by reference to the ‘true story,’ that this imbroglio with Mrs. Tilton began ‘in the fall of 1870;’ that it was ‘six

weeks' thereafter that Mr. Tilton explained the matter to Mr. Bowen, after which the other facts occurred. But it was 'eight months after the commencement of the Beecher-Tilton differences' that Mr. Beecher visited Mrs. Tilton and got the letter from her. Now this would carry the time forward at least to August, 1871, and yet I am found possessed of 'exaggerated rumors' regarding it in May of this same year, before they happened, which 'had already been traveling about for a year or two.' Figures are dangerous things with which to attempt to lie, because they always mean definite things and the same things to all people. In constructing a 'true story,' Mr. Tilton should have made more careful use of such a dangerous agent. Of course he presumes that he can place his own word in opposition to mine, and be believed; but he is not egotist enough to imagine he can arrange figures to suit himself and be able to palm them off as correct when any one is liable to prove them. The failure to keep his time correctly, to my mind, will invalidate his 'true story' to no inconsiderable extent, in the minds even of those who may wish to accept and believe his false one. Mr. Clark ought to have been clear enough to have detected this discrepancy in the 'True' Statement.]

"On statements furnished by Mrs. Woodhull and Colonel Blood, Mr. Tilton finally made the last bold stroke to win the undying gratitude of 44 Broad street by giving his name and the literary finish of his pen to the "Biography of Victoria C. Woodhull." He was mistaken, he now thinks, in that person. With the Woodhull "gratitude" is nothing, "principle" everything; and principle in her case, as in Vanderbilt's, is to "carry a point." Mr. Tilton had a terrible warning of this phase of her character, when some of his lady acquaintances and special friends deemed it necessary, in the early part of 1872, to disown Mrs. Woodhull in the arena of Woman's Rights on account of her social doctrines. The Woodhull instantly flanked the movement by sending the ladies printed slips of their own private histories (in an article called "Tit for Tat,") declaring that if they should disgrace her for teaching 'social freedom,' she would print the article in her *Weekly*, and they should sink with her for practicing the theory.'

COMMENTS.

"[I scarcely know in what manner justly to characterize the

misconstruction contained in the above paragraph. To properly show all the circumstances involved would require an entire paper, which is impossible here ; but as it refers to circumstances that have been variously and widely commented on, and in a manner most prejudicial to me, I feel that I ought not to pass them without the notice they deserve.

“ Mr. Tilton upon several public occasions, long before my publication of the scandal, regretted that he had written my biography, in a manner and with explanations that perhaps ought at the time to have received notice. The statement here, however, is very guarded, compared with some others he has made. Just previous to the writing of that biography, The Victoria League had been formed, and it was found necessary to put some authoritative statement before the world regarding my past life in the form of an autobiography. I put Col. Blood in possession of the material, and requested him to arrange it for me. While he was doing this, Mr. Tilton came forward with the proposition that this must be his work, and he insisted so strenuously on performing it that I consented, and he did it. But he did not take the manuscript prepared by Col. Blood as his only authority. All the important or seemingly extravagant statements he took special pains to verify by other authority, while all the ‘ finish,’ and that which upon its face is his own, and which really gives it all its importance, was the result of his own observation and was his own judgment. He may, for aught I know, have written that biography for some motive unknown to me ; but it is absurd to pretend that it was to keep me from publishing the scandal, the basis for the whole of which, as I have already shown according to his figures, did not at that time exist.

“ But what, as early as the Cincinnati Convention, had occurred to cause him to change his judgment of me? He had found me a ‘ truthful person,’ and one with whom he was proud to be known or connected. Something must have compelled a change. He has stated on some occasions that it was the ‘ Tit for Tat’ above referred to. What was that article? I will state just what it was, and thus at one and the same time correct the erroneous version given above, and show that it was not the cause of the breach between Mr. Tilton and me. A number of women, all of whom belonged to ‘ one set,’ had for two years taken every occasion to let their long and loose tongues

wag in defaming me. I determined to stop it. I grouped them together in an article which I had put in type, sending a proof of it to each of the persons involved. In the next issue of the *Weekly* I wrote an editorial, in which I faithfully promised them if the blackguarding of me did not cease I should publish the article.

"[Not one of these, however, was 'some of his lady acquaintances and special friends,' who disowned me 'in the arena of Woman's Rights' 'on account of my social theories,' since none of them had ever taken any part with the wing of suffragists in which I labored. Nor, was it because they disowned me as a suffragist that I prepared the article, as Mr. Tilton's 'true story' relates? And nobody knows this better than Mr. Tilton himself. He knows it was because I was constantly belied by them as to what Free Love meant to me in practice. The editorial to which I refer sufficiently indicates this, and it was not misunderstood by any of them at whom it was written. I have had no occasion to publish it.]

"This generalship may be defended by the old proverb that "anything is fair in love and war;" but such a blow "under the belt" was severely rebuked by Mrs. Stanton, and was regarded with reasonable terror by Mr. Tilton. He now became fully conscious of Mrs. Woodhull's capacity of destruction, and retired completely from her circle. The impending "crack of doom" was not to be hushed up with "gratitude." Mr. Tilton had himself confided the substance of his "true story" to Mrs. Woodhull, and knew that so much of his fate was in her hands. Still, he affirms that he was astonished beyond measure when she at last magnified it into the unearthly proportions of the Beecher-Tilton Scandal.'

COMMENTS.

"[What does Mr. Tilton mean when he says, 'I was severely rebuked by Mrs. Stanton?' I have Mrs. Stanton's letter to me regarding it; but when he says it is in the form of a rebuke he only again willfully perverts it. I never received a kinder note from Mrs. Stanton than that one, and I therefore hurl this utter disregard for truth in his teeth as another evidence that he has 'a constitutional disregard for truth which is ever showing itself when an opposite course would serve him better.

"Now, as to the 'terror' it inspired in Mr. Tilton, and 'the terrible warning' it was to him, and his 'retiring completely from her circle,' I am perfectly conscious that he was terrified by it, since he came with it to me and said Laura Curtis-Bullard had just left his office, having come there with the article which he held in his hand. He said, 'Strike out this portion,' pointing to a part of it, 'and I will help you kill the rest.' But he played none of the 'heroics' with which he has been in the habit of relating this interview, which he says occurred in his office instead of mine — only another evidence of his constitutional defect. Theodore Tilton never attempted heroics with me but once, and he found they did not have the desired effect, and he at once and forever abandoned their use; but he has become so accustomed to them when others are involved, that when I am not present he forgets himself and assumes them in things which involved me.

"'He had become fully conscious of Mrs. Woodhull's capacity for destruction and retired completely from her circle, and this he presents as the cause of the breach between us to which I refer in the opening of this case. But before proceeding to perform a disagreeable task, I must premise by saying I had hoped that selfish personal considerations on the part of Mr. Tilton, if no higher motive, would have for ever saved me from the necessity of doing this; but since he seems to court distinction, let him have it to his heart's content.'

"I therefore state, as emphatically as I can, that it was not 'Tit for Tat' that caused him to 'retire from her circle.' At the time he came to me with that article I had not seen him for six weeks, and I should not have seen him then had it not been for 'reasonable terror' that something regarding a particular friend of his which it contained was going to be made public.' But he did call quite frequently after that, during the interval until the Cincinnati Convention. The day before he left to attend that Convention he called upon me for the last time.

"He said he was 'going to the Convention to report it for the *Tribune*.'

"I said, 'Theodore you are lying again. You are going to Cincinnati to nominate Mr. Greeley, and I see, clairvoyantly, a coffin following you, in which you will be responsible for putting him, because it will result in his death.'

"He sat looking and listening to me, and for a long time never said a word; but finally, with a sad tenderness I shall never forget, rose and left me, and I have never spoken with him since. Up to that time he had never even hinted that he regretted his associations with me; but, on the contrary, always expressed a deep satisfaction regarding it, the reasons for which I have no desire to make public unless compelled, when I shall not hesitate to do so to the fullest extent.

"But to return to the time prior to the 'Tit for Tat' article. A goodly time before that, I was forced to the conclusion, in spite of all his efforts in behalf of reform, that his inspirations and mine were entirely dissimilar. I was absolutely absorbed in reform projects, and was indifferent to any and all who were not the same; and I could no longer afford to be annoyed in the manner in which I was annoyed by him. As he would not accept a verbal communication from me as meaning anything, I was finally compelled deliberately to write a formal letter, which I know was delivered to him, and a copy of which I now have before me, instructing him that his visits to me, both at my house and office, must be discontinued, plainly stating the reasons for so doing. They were not for any want of esteem and kind regard, because I had a regard amounting almost to affection for him. Besides, I had been his teacher in the principles of the new social dispensation, and I found elements in him that I was hopeful might make him the hero of that dispensation. That hope I never finally abandoned until a few days after the appearance of his letter to 'my complaining friend.' On Christmas day last I wrote him a final appeal endeavoring to rouse him to a sense of what he was losing, and to stimulate him, even at that late moment, to come forward and be the hero:

"CHRISTMAS DAY, NEW YORK CITY, 1872.

"*Theodore*:—The spirit saith unto me, "Write:" "And the truth shall make you free,"—while anything less than that will add to the bondage of the present.

"I told you, a year ago, that within six months you would fall away from me. "By all that's good, never!" you replied. Nevertheless the fall came!

"I told you that you were going to lead your friend to his grave; you thought it would be to the Presidential chair.

He lies buried — a victim to the ill-starred movement led off by you.

“‘ You became a champion of advanced freedom in your support of me; and your name was on the lips and treasured in the heart of every Radical in the world. You repudiated the course that had won this love, and neither Radical nor Conservative stands by you.

“‘ And now I say: There is a single course of redemption left you; and for your own sake I pray you heed it. Accept the situation. Stand by principle, and be not affrighted by public opinion.

“‘ You have the most glorious opportunity ever vouchsafed to man. Strike the hypocrite (if you will) the blow you have at your service; but put your loving, protecting arm about the angel whom he deceived. Dare to defend her freedom, and stand by her, not to the death, but to the new life.

“‘ Think not to gain what you desire, by catering to the hypocrisy, the poltroonery, the cowardice of the present; but strike for the glorious and redeemed souls of the near future, and become their hero.

VICTORIA.’

“Since then I am grieved to confess I have believed him lost, lost to the cause, lost to himself, and lost to all sense of honor and truth. I believed firmly that he would come forward as he had so often said he would, when the time should arrive, and stand by the cause. He knew that the statement of November 2d was to be published, and that I only wanted to receive the command of him, whom I serve, to publish it. Well do I remember an evening when he and I were discussing this very subject, that Col. Blood turned from the desk at which he was writing and said:

“‘ Theodore, do you think you will have the courage to stand in the gap with us when that time shall come?’

“He replied with the most extraordinary asseverations in the affirmative; and when the whole history of the incipency of this scandal shall come to be known, as it soon will, if justice cannot be forced without it, I fear that the once glorious spirit of Theodore Tilton will set in the mud. Nobody, not even those who are now apparently his best friends, will mourn for him more sincerely than I shall; and whatever they may pretend to him now, not one of them more deeply regrets his

position than I do, and none would do more to save him than I would do, short of the sacrifice of truth, honor and justice. And in his soul Theodore Tilton knows this to-day; but he also knows that my sense of outraged justice could not be swerved to save my own life; and here I again say, there is still an avenue of escape for him. He knows what it is, but he will not avail himself of it. 'Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad.' Theodore Tilton rests under their ban. I know whereof I speak when I say that his affirmations 'that he was astonished beyond measure' when the scandal appeared were of the same unapproachable acting, in which long practice has made him perfect, with which he received the announcement that the *Thunderbolt* had appeared; and the inspiration in both instances was the same — knowledge and expectation. Mr. Tilton did confide all the details of the Beecher-Bowen-Proctor Scandal to me, besides a dozen others equally astonishing and confounding; but those that I obtained from him in this way I have not used in my war upon social rottenness, neither shall I unless compelled; but what I have used I was not indebted to his confidence for, since I wrung it from him, perhaps, not so skillfully as he did the Bowen Scandal from the lady involved, nevertheless with sufficient adroitness to become fully possessed of it without being under any obligations to not disclose it.

"Mr. Tilton having disclosed it to me, 'knew so much of his fate was in her hands.' Mr. Tilton could not have considered the force of those few words, otherwise he would never have used them. If his 'true story' is really a true one, and the only true one, what had I to do with fate to him? How could I possibly have been able to do him harm by any use which I might make of the so-called facts of that story? It is one of the most difficult of *roles* to maintain to endeavor to tell a consistent stream of lies about any grave thing. A lie once told needs continual lies to sustain it; and people forget lies, and neglect to always tell the same one. The truth will sometimes slip out unwittingly. This instance is a singularly forcible illustration. My possession of the really true story he might consistently have considered as so much of his fate in my hands; but with his true story only he should have said so much of Mr. Beecher's fate in my hands. I have no doubt

every person will at once perceive this. And with this I may close the analysis of the matter very nearly in the language of Mr. Clark with which he closes the presentation of his *resume* of the 'true story:'

"Such is a careful summary of that 'true story' which Theodore Tilton said he should try to keep within his own heart.

"Changed, however, in this wise:

"[Such is the result of a hasty analysis of the whole story which, if Theodore Tilton did not desire made public, he should from the outset, have confined within his breast.]

"'AS FAR AS MR. BEECHER IS CONCERNED, it will instantly be seen that his virtue, at best, is not always the inclination of his own will. If Mrs. Woodhull has misrepresented him, and Mr. Tilton has turned her falsehood into truth, still it was only through Beecher's failure in carrying out an immoral purpose that Mrs. Woodhull's story is not correct. A correspondent of the *Cincinnati Commercial*—who has evidently been admitted into some of the secrets of Tilton's foolscap volume, and at the same time employed to whitewash Beecher—declares that the "true story" embraces "a period of ten years," implicates "persons who have not publicly figured in it," and "elucidates some things not likely to be known till the Day of Judgment."

"These stilted phrases have some foundation, though it would not be difficult for so plain a man as myself to bring that "Day of Judgment" close to hand, if necessary. I have no wish, however, to drag any cringing mortal before the public in mere wantonness—especially any woman. I regard Henry C. Bowen as Beecher's chief "supe" and conspirator, in combining with the wretched Jesuit of Protestantism, Anthony J. Comstock, to violate American liberty. From my position, Bowen deserves no mercy beyond the bare truth. In regard to other persons, I think the public have no special interest in them, with one exception.'

COMMENTS.

"[Now here the cause which makes the case hang fire in Brooklyn is at last reached. Clark could, if he saw fit, bring the day of judgment close to hand, but he has no wish to drag a cringing woman before the public. Had it been my desire, as the act has been generally interpreted, to destroy the useful-

ness of Beecher and to drive him from Plymouth Church, I could have made such use of the material in my possession as to have accomplished it. He could not have escaped under having me prosecuted on an impossible charge of obscenity. He would either have had to throw himself upon the church and confessed or prosecuted me for libel, which I know very well he would never attempt to do so long as three witnesses now living should live. But such was not any part of my motives, and I only used such facts as I had good reasons for believing would not be very objectionable to any of the parties involved, Beecher alone excepted. And I know that, should he be compelled, as he would have been had Tilton acted well his part, to have acknowledged the whole matter, that Plymouth Church would be compelled to sustain or fall with him. Beecher did not hesitate to say that he knew of fifty members of his congregation who would stand by him in any event.

"But the suppression policy can not succeed. Everything will eventually be made public. It has gone too far. All the facts are in possession of too many persons, some of whom, I think, do wish to kill Beecher, and who will not hesitate to drag even a 'cringing woman' before the public to do it. The only method of salvation, as I frankly informed Beecher, was to come at once to the front and say: 'Well this is true, and now what are you going to do about it?'

"But I frankly confess that I believe the ultimate fate of the now distressed woman, who every hour of her life stands in mortal dread of the facts coming before the public, would be much better if she were herself to come out and solve this whole matter. It will come some time, and the indications now are that it is not far off. There should be no more real disgrace attach to her about the affair, than there should be had she personally been injured in some other manner. No honest person could condemn her for any part she was compelled to play, and for the judgment of the dishonest none should trouble themselves. Therefore, the wise part is to at once ventilate this whole affair before its attempted suppression drags a half dozen other families into its yawning vortex.]

"As I view the whole case, in all its bearings, I deem it right to say that Tilton claims that he has been violently hated by

his wife's mother, Mrs. Morris — a lady who is definitely represented to me as insane.

“This poor lady is said to have circulated, for many years, the most damaging reports against the character of her daughter, and against Beecher and Tilton. The earliest scandals concerning Mrs. Tilton and the Plymouth pastor are said to have proceeded from her. I must add, also, that a long time ago there were rumors, among the special acquaintances of the parties, that Mrs. Tilton was subject to the hallucination that some of Beecher's children were those of her own household. (But Tilton's narrative affords me no hint of this rumor).’

“I think it was very unwise in Tilton to attempt to drag his mother-in-law into the controversy. But what must be said of the ‘rumors’ among the special acquaintances of the parties about Mrs. Tilton's ‘hallucination?’ Those strange rumors remind me at once of the finding of Moses in the bulrushes of the Nile, and of the immaculate conception of Jesus; and I have no doubt if Tilton's ‘true story’ stands, that this last hallucination will pass into history and be accounted by the future as an equally marvelous example of the special providences of the God of the Christians.

“But this hallucination, as I happen very well to know, did not extend to Tilton's brain, but in him it rather assumed the form of madness, venting itself in violence, especially upon the picture of one of the persons involved in the hallucination. Whatever milder forms it may now have assumed in him, I fear its former violence may cast as serious doubts upon the future divinity of this last manifestation as the skeptics of to-day throw around that of eighteen centuries ago.

“What, however, must be the judgment of the future should it come to know that this paper, this *Thunderbolt*, was prepared in the rooms of the *Golden Age*, and when it shall come to be known that the letter of ‘my complaining friend,’ which called out the reply contained in the *Thunderbolt*, was actually written by the dictation of Theodore Tilton, and that at the time it was written he was preparing the way to publish in the *Golden Age* the whole of the ‘true story.’ I do not think I overstate it when I say that no such combination of hypocrisy, duplicity, falsehood and social irregularities ever existed as the future will

show the Beecher-Tilton-Bowen-Proctor Scandal to have been ; and I am ready to stake my future upon its being so.]

“ ‘ And now

‘ WHAT CONCLUSION IS TO BE DRAWN from Tilton’s “thunderbolt” on one hand and Mrs. Woodhull’s vaunted “bombshell” on the other? I am sorry to say I have little confidence in the strict veracity of either account.’

“ [But Clark, apparently unwittingly, has let the cat out of the bag, since does he not say, ‘ Tilton’s *Thunderbolt*?’ That is sufficient. It cannot be Clark’s *Thunderbolt* if it be Tilton’s ; and, moreover, does he not say that he has very little confidence in the strict veracity of it ? And if he has as little in my bombshell, I can afford to wait yet a little longer. I know the truth will come out uppermost, and I court its coming. Almost everybody else who is concerned in the affair seems to be using the most superhuman exertions to ‘ squelch’ the whole thing. So much, at all events, would appear at present to stand in my favor ; and those who have seen fit to daub me all over with contemptuous epithets, will have more cause to be ashamed of them in the future than I have now. I can afford to stand under the implication of having ‘ belied Mrs. Davis,’ and of having ‘ warped and stuffed out’ Mrs. Stanton, because I know that

“ ‘ Ever the right comes uppermost,
And ever is justice done.]’

“ ‘ As for “ the Woodhull” there can be no doubt that she has belied Paulina Wright Davis completely. This excellent lady did believe, to use her own language, “ that V. C. Woodhull was going to do a great work for woman,” and in that belief Mrs. Davis encouraged her by word and deed. About a year ago Mrs. Davis went to Europe, and as late as May of 1872, she seems to have retained an affectionate regard for Mrs. Woodhull. It is supposed that when “ the Woodhull” printed her slips to use against those select advocates of Woman’s Rights who wished to push her aside, one of the slips was sent abroad to Mrs. Davis ; for Mrs. Woodhull has since published a letter (thought to be genuine) which can only be explained by some such cause. Here it is :

“ ‘ *My dear Victoria*.— Driven to bay at last, you have turned, poor hunted child, and dealt a cruel blow on the weak instru-

ments of men — such men as the editors of the *Herald*, *Tribune*, *Sun*, etc. Every one of the women you name has been hounded by these men, and now that it suits them they make cat's-paws of them to hunt you. The first time I ever saw Mrs. Phelps, I was told by a man that she was a woman of damaged reputation. T. W. Higginson said the same thing of Mrs. Blake in a meeting of ladies in Providence. I was urged to avoid these women, but it was not for me to make war on any one who would work for woman's freedom. They have not stood by me in my faith in you. But, dear child, I wish you had let them pass, and had taken hold of those men whose souls are black with crimes and who set up to be the censors of morality. They should be torn from their throne of the judgment of woman's morals, and made to shrink from daring to utter one word against any woman as long as they withhold justice from her. Men are the chief scandal-mongers of the age ; it is they who import all the vile scandals of New York here, and so make society detestable. You are not befooled by them, hence you must be crucified. God in his mercy pity you and give you grace, strength and wisdom to do your work aright. But do not again take hold of the "cat's-paw ;" excoriate the monkeys, the scandal-mongers, the base-hearted, cowardly betrayers of woman's confidence and honor. Give woman a fair field of equality, and then if she is weak, wicked and mean, let her bear her share of the odium.

Ever yours,

"PAULINA WRIGHT DAVIS.

"FLORENCE, ITALY, MAY, 1872."

"This letter — which I consider worthy the head and hear of any woman that ever lived — commits Mrs. Davis to the cause of social fair-play in the broadest sense. She has no fear, surely, for the "face of man ;" and as one man, I always take off my hat to such a woman. Yet Mrs. Davis flatly contradicts Mrs. Woodhull, and declares that if she ever spoke to her of the "Beecher-Tilton Scandal," she relied simply on Mrs. Woodhull's own declarations.

"Mrs. Stanton, again, has now said enough to show that she considers her conversation with Mrs. Woodhull to have been warped, if nothing more, and stuffed out for dramatic effect. Then Theodore Tilton denies "the Woodhull" — that is, when

the letter to his "complaining friend" finds interpretation at last in the *Thunderbolt*.

"This complaining friend is Col. James B. Mix, a well-known journalist long connected with the *Tribune* — a gentleman who has undoubtedly read Tilton's "true story," and who has since rebuked him severely for not fulfilling his declared intention to publish it. In the *Chicago Times* of February 28, Col. Mix has the one remarkable letter, as far as any hint of hidden facts is concerned, that the Beecher-Woodhull excitement has thus far produced. The rest are either thick lamp-black or else thin whitewash. First explaining his position in connection with Tilton, Col. Mix says:

"We never expected again to put pen to paper in this matter. But since you, Theodore Tilton, stand trembling with your written statement in your hand, we deem it an act of friendship to give you that spur which shall start you on the stern path of duty. * * * One would suppose that the Christian Church was founded with the birth of the reverend gentleman who is principally concerned, so mealy-mouthed are the blind idolators who worship at the shrine of Plymouth. * * * For years the sword of Damocles has been suspended above his platform, and yet he has never flinched. One miscreant among his congregation has, figuratively speaking, been shaking the finger of guilt at him for years. * * * People ask why has Beecher not said, "this is all a lie." It is only a little band of dear friends who know of the efforts that have been made during the past winter to shield Beecher from the parasites that have surrounded him, and who now feel that every honorable effort having availed nothing, he must meet the blow."

"Col. Mix — impersonating Diogenes, out with his lantern to look for an honest man — next addresses Beecher directly:

"Why was it that you desired that your *protege* should read you his written statement, which he did but a few nights since at the house of a mutual friend? Why was it necessary for you to correspond with "the Woodhull?" If she is the vile wretch they say she is; and if the letters you have from her contain anything but the woman's inmost thoughts; anything that can be construed into a threat; anything that will bear the construction of blackmail, why not give them to the

world, so that those who love you for your great talents and the good you have accomplished in the world, may breathe freer? Why was it that she and you were together on the Heights, November 19, 1871, except it was that she then expected you to make your "new departure," and become the high priest of that peculiar sect of which she is the champion? What mysterious influence was it that she then possessed over you, that you allowed her to dare to propose that you should introduce her at Steinway Hall? Was it her pure, unadulterated cheek, or did she know "who was who?" Certain it was that she was not dismayed: and she nerved your pupil to do that from which you shrank.

"Did not one of the noblest men * open wide for you another field of usefulness? * * But, alas! Mammon again claimed you. * * The auctioneer, was again on hand, and one by one the most conspicuous spots were secured. * * Why was it that your sister Harriet, Sunday after Sunday, sat at your feet? Was it that another sister, more impulsive, had threatened to mount your platform and plead your cause?"

"Come to the front and centre, Henry Ward Beecher! You are but human. * * You have a constituency outside of Plymouth Church, to which they are but a drop in the bucket. In your proper element, you can unmask the cold-blooded varlets that flaunt their piety on 'Change and in the mart. * * Society was organized on a substantial basis, and no man or woman can overthrow it. Let us have the truth though the heavens fall. Shall it be? Or must a desperate woman be allowed an excuse, through the cowardice of those who have communed with her, to give to the world that which may sear other hearts, and tear open, afresh, wounds that are almost healed?"

"The immense suggestiveness of this letter, taken in connection with its source, supplies all need of excuse for quoting it so liberally. It is the only article from the Beecher-Tilton circle that the Woodhull herself has deigned to notice. And what remarkable notice! She says:

"This is but another attempt on the part of the defense, many others of different bearing having failed, to draw our fire before the turning point. But it will fail, as all others before have failed. * * We shall neither be surprised, annoyed nor driven

into a showing of our hands until the right time comes. But when that time shall come, the "Manricos," "Brooklyns," "Vidies"—the curs who bark at our heels, behind *nom de plumes*—* * these, we say, all these will have good reason to think the last trump has sounded; for we shall then tell the whole truth though the heavens do fall, and though, with the best, we go down in the general ruin.'

"It is this close, deadly fire, and then the locking of bayonets between Col. Mix and the Woodhull, that gives me pause over Mr. Tilton's 'true story;' this, and one thing more; from Brooklyn I am asked this question:

"How can Tilton deny even what you say he does? Mrs. Stanton has not been his only confidant. My friend,——, long ago received from him a story that did not so spare his hearthstone. It was Woodhull's account, or much like it.'

"I have greatly admired Mr. Tilton. I have thought him a hero, erring, perhaps, but loving, forgiving, and abused on many sides. But was that 'true story' written, after all, *on purpose to be hidden*, and to be sprung, by and by, as a trap, on history? Is it another book by a Bolingbroke, who 'loaded his gun,' as Dr. Johnson said, 'but dared not fire it, and so hired a beggarly Scotchman to pull the trigger after he was dead?'

"But Col. Mix, in his article, makes no scruples of describing Mr. Beecher as

'THE MODERN ARBACES'—

insatiate luxury masked in the idol of a god! The picture is either very careless or else very frightful. He tells 'Arbaces' that Mrs. Woodhull knew 'who was who,' and 'nerved his pupil to do' that from which he 'shrank.' Mr. Tilton's 'complaining friend' fears, too, that Mrs. Woodhull may 'sear other hearts, and tear open, afresh, wounds that are almost healed.' Then Mrs. Woodhull herself assures him that she shall yet 'tell the whole truth, though the heavens do fall,' and though she 'goes down with the rest in the general ruin.' Very well; but when those heavens crack and tumble, will the Woodhull 'go down' in the arms of 'Arbaces,' or of the 'pupil,' or of both? I have so little faith in the chastity of Plymouth Church that the two brethren may 'toss up a cent' for the benefit of the doubt.

"And now let us glance over the whole field of the Wood-

hull-Beecher battle, pick up the wounded, bury the dead, and look all the results straight in the face.

"As far as Mr. Beecher is concerned, the most direct, though interested witness, Tilton, affirms that he is not an adulterer, as charged; but that, in spite of his eager intentions to become one, his virtue was preserved by Mrs. Tilton.

"But Beecher's method of magnetizing a sick person into writing down lies for his temporal salvation, is itself as bad as a breach of the Seventh Commandment. It marks at once the perfidious conspirator. It is the old spirit of David putting Uriah in the 'fore front of the battle.' It justifies every suspicion that leagues Beecher with Bowen and Comstock in their raid on American law and the necessities of human progress. No; Plymouth Church may cling to Henry Ward Beecher, asking no questions, and both may go to the devil together. But he is henceforth on the retired list of great names and honest men. 'The Woodhull' has always claimed that his dead silence, as to her, is a 'masterly system of tactics' — a waiting until public sentiment can tide up to his justification in 'social freedom.' She may bottle her soothing-syrup. The man has no self-sacrifice, much less a bit of aggressive heroism. He is not fit to stand even with her in 'reform.' He will rot away in a dead church.

"But he can easily be spared in all other connections. The Beecher family has been great in American history. Forty years ago Lyman Beecher had power to make even Wendell Phillips a Calvinist, though he prudently excused himself, as a shrewd Christian, from joining Garrison and the Abolitionists, on the plea that he already had 'too many irons in the fire.' When the battle for freedom had grown warm, and the ranks were pretty well filled, Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' and Henry Ward Beecher stood vigorously up for old John Brown. A grateful country can never forget such services. The younger Beecher, too, has made Puritanism as broad as the sons of Puritans would let him; but he has always been very careful not to step an inch ahead of assured support. Theodore Parker — the one great thinker of the recent American pulpit — once spoke of Beecher's 'deep emotional nature, so devout and so humane,' and his 'poetic eloquence that is akin to both the sweet-briar and the rose, and all the beauty which

springs up wild amid New England hills.' No thoroughly trained scholar has ever given Beecher credit for anything more than Theodore Parker described.

"His mind is loose and uncertain. He has borrowed a great deal of 'originality' from Emerson, mixed it with sentiment and theology, and fed it to Plymouth Church. But a profound systematic thinker, like Kant or Hegel, would give him the lock-jaw. He is like the recent book 'Ecce Homo,' which furnished the crude average mind of the day with a new conception of Jesus, but was only a pretty toy to real scholars. As an orator and actor, however, Henry Ward Beecher has few equals; and like Butler at the bar, or Phillips on the platform, Beecher can always bring instantly to the pulpit all that is in him. His greatness is his readiness. But when he combines with Bowen and Comstock to save a name by endangering a nation, it is evident that he has been petted and pampered into counting himself a god. When Harriet Beecher Stowe — after digging up Byron to brand 'incest' on the corpse — holds back Isabella Beecher Hooker from admitting her brother's faults, the further usefulness of Mrs. Stowe to the world may also be questioned. And when at last the author of 'Catherine Beecher's Cook Book' demands that some defunct law shall be unburied to imprison Woodhull without the appearance in court of a prosecuting witness, the end has come to an illustrious line. '*Assez de Bonaparte*,' said France in 1814. America is just ready to say: '*Enough of the Beechers!*'"

IN ESTIMATING THEODORE TILTON,

I scarcely know what to think. He has several letters from Beecher, exalting him as the most magnanimous of men and Christians. He would have earned these on the supposition that his 'true story' is not a false one, and he would have doubly earned them, certainly, on the supposition that the worse version of Woodhull has any truth at all in it. Tilton has been the most brilliant young editor in the United States, though he, too, seems dependent on the inspiration of the moment, rather than on any very deep centre of thought. He may yet be pushed into showing that he has not become rotten before getting ripe. But his silence with Beecher, and his

patience with Bowen and Comstock, fill many who would like to love him with doubt and distrust.

“And how, finally, shall

THE THUNDERBOLT FALL ON THE WOODHULL HERSELF?

“I have never seen the dreaded ogre of Broad street but once — a year or two ago — when I conversed with her a few minutes in a public hall. Her sister, Miss Claflin, I have never seen at all. But having taken a deep interest in great principles victimized through these two women, and having honestly sought nothing but truth in scrutinizing the Beecher-Tilton Scandal, this attitude has drawn to me many people, and has opened various sources of information on all sides. I know persons who admire Mrs. Woodhull, those who hate her, those who think her nature distorted, but her work necessary, and those who have watched and studied her, with the care of detectives, for both public and private purposes.

“On seeing her myself, I said (in the *Troy Whig* of September 25, 1871,) that she struck me as a rapt idealist — ‘out of her head’ in the sense of ‘enthusiasm;’ a nature ‘so intense that she might see visions of angels or devils,’ and as many as St. John or Luther. ‘Had she been carefully trained from childhood,’ I added, ‘I must think she would have been a wonderful scholar, poet and thinker. As it is, she is an abnormal growth of democratic institutions, thoroughly sincere, partly insane, and fitted to exaggerate great truths.’ As pretisely this opinion has been reflected back to me by several very acute minds — both men and women — I have no doubt, to-day, that it describes ‘the Woodhull,’ in one mood, pretty closely. But I know, from facts in my possession, that she has other moods in which she loses her remarkable sweetness of voice and all touch of the heavens, to swagger like a pirate and scold like a drab.’

“‘This phase of her character has been so conspicuous at times before close judges of human nature, that they regard her as an ingrained liar and a complete quack. At one time she sinks every vestige of egotism in the absorbed expression of ideas; and at another time she would steal the genius of a friend to aid her in ‘putting on airs.’ It seems as if she loves notoriety more than any other being on earth; yet she loves her notions of duty even more than notoriety. She is ignorant; and her

strong signature in letters and on the backs of photographs, is commonly the handiwork of Col. Blood. It is probable that she never wrote, unaided and alone, any of her 'great speeches' or her stirring editorials—the 'Beecher-Tilton Scandal' being no exception. Yet she is the inspiration, the vitality and the mouthpiece of her clan and 'cause.' Her organ, *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly*, has voices from the 'seventh heaven' and the gabblings of a frog-pond. Its advertisements are gratuitous 'blinds;' and its proprietors have lately had the kindness to publish my own circular without request or leave; yet the amazing journal is crowded with thought, and with needed information that can be got nowhere else. And to-day it stands as the test of a free press, and the possibility of a better breed of men than now make the city of New York a vast *immoral improvement* on Sodom and Gomorrah. Mrs. Woodhull, in short, is like Daniel O'Connell, as judged by 'Bobus Smith.' She ought to be hanged, and then have a monument erected to her memory at the foot of the gallows.'"

COMMENTS.

[“ Were it not for a single point, I should pass without notice ‘The fall of the *Thunderbolt* on Woodhull herself,’ and as that is the special one that—more than all others—causes me to doubt the thorough honor and consistency of Mr. Clark, I will touch it first, although in order of succession it should be last. He says: ‘Its proprietors have lately had the kindness to publish my circular without request or leave. Its advertisements are gratuitous blinds.’ Mr. Clark must surely have forgotten himself to have made this fling at me, to which I make bold to say, the most debauched Bohemian in New York would not have stooped. Even had I published his circular without request or leave, he ought, as a gentleman, to have accepted it as a journalistic courtesy, and refrained from dragging it into this controversy. Besides, what has it to do with the question at issue? Does that have any bearing upon the truth or falsity of the Scandal? I confess I cannot see that it does. My ‘ignorance’ may, however, prevent me from seeing it. What business had Mr. Clark to do this thing? But it happens that I did not publish his circular without request or leave. Mr. Clark, in a letter to me, sent a dozen of his circulars, and in the letter requested me to notice their contents. Instead, however,

of writing any notice, I ordered the circular, or parts of it, published. It may barely be possible that this may have slipped his memory; but upon no other ground can I forgive so outrageous a breach of courtesy.

"And, pray, what have my 'other moods' to do with the effect of 'The *Thunderbolt* upon Woodhull;' and what, pray, upon the truth or falsity of the Scandal, which Mr. Clark has taken specific pains to assert, 'as having honestly sought nothing but truth, in scrutinizing the Beecher-Tilton Scandal?' Suppose I am 'out of my head;' that I am 'an enthusiast;' that I see 'angels' or 'demons;' that 'I swagger like a pirate' and 'scold like a drab,' what has all that to do with arriving at the truth of the Scandal? Can Mr. Clark inform me? Perhaps he may be cajoled into furnishing me the facts in his possession about this swaggering and scolding. If he can, I will make all possible haste to publish them. Come, Mr. Clark, you have said this; now send on the facts, because I am anxious to be as well informed regarding myself upon these points as you seem to be.

"And why does he seek to belittle me by saying I am 'ignorant,' that I never write my 'great speeches' or 'stirring editorials?' How can he know all this? The resort to this contemptible meanness by my enemies, to endeavor to injure me in the esteem of those who can only know me by repute, is the best possible evidence that they can find no better means by which to attempt it. For two years I have stood before the world, almost alone, as the pronounced advocate of social freedom, and I have been the butt of ridicule, of abuse and of censure from almost everybody who writes for the public press, and now, at this late day, when, still almost alone, I am fighting the battle of a free press and free speech against the combined powers of state and church, it was entirely uncalled for on the part of Mr. Clark to enter the arena, and attempt to destroy any part of my strength, and to stab me in the back in the house of my friends. Perhaps this act of unkindness may be the very one to make it impossible to withstand the immense odds pitted against me, and I go a martyr to the Infernalism of the Christianity of the nineteenth century. But I do not intend that it shall accomplish this. I intend that Mr. Clark's effort to aid the enemies of reform in their crusade against it in

my person shall fall dead upon the ears and hearts of every lover of freedom in the country. Had I been strong financially, and backed up by powerful friends; had I been a man even lacking these, the reformatory world might have forgiven Mr. Clark this ungenerous aid to the enemy; but lacking all these, having to struggle personally against all sorts of obstacles, and with few friends who have the moral courage to stand pronouncedly and boldly with me, it was a most cowardly attack, and I am sorry, for Mr. Clark's sake, that the bitterness of Theodore Tilton or of any body else should have been so potent with him as to induce him to stoop so ungenerously; and so on to the end, through all the rest of his presentation of me personally; but I refrain from following him. The judgment of the reformers of the world will, however, do so, and it will be inexorable, since they will come, sooner or later, to know that Mrs. Woodhull is not 'only a tremendous horn that Col. Blood is now blowing in front of Jericho,' but that she, of all persons, insists on blowing her own horn."]

"Does all this seem like a

CONTRADICTION OR A JOKE?

very likely—to the puny-souled babes, suckled on the dish-water that is nowadays called 'religion,' 'theology,' 'morality.' The Sunday school, and the Young Men's Christian Association divide mankind into two classes—the good and the bad. But their Jesus said: 'There is none good but one—the Father;' and the Son went down to sympathize with publicans and harlots.

"The world should have done, once for all, with expecting to find a saint who is all sanctity, or a sinner who is all sin. The conception is an old humbug, clasped to the bosom of snobs to double their natural hypocrisy. God made the world—every thought and every thing—out of two opposites. Philosophy, in a Hegel, analyses them into abstracts, calls them "being" and "nothing," poses these abstracts in necessary evolution, and then synthesises the whole solid world back again. Common sense sees the same thing in every human being, and calls it good and evil. In strong people, especially, it is stiffly mixed. "Every literary man," said Landor, "has the spice of a scoundrel in him." The most useful American writer during four or five years of our "Great Rebellion," is a natural miser,

and bummer, and "dead-beat"—and he is my friend, and I love him heartily. If Beecher himself would only be honest, and not try to garrote the prospects of his race to cover his own frailties, I could hug him in ten minutes. But he prefers the "orthodox" embraces of "twenty mistresses" and a few millions of fools.

"But of all

INCARNATE MIXTURES OF MANNA AND HELLEBORE that are now going "to and fro on the earth and walking up and down in it," the Woodhull appears to be the most extreme. According to her story (Tilton's biography) she was conceived in the phrenzy of a Methodist revival and born in a treacherous nest of human catamounts. She was marked from the womb with preternatural excitement. The baby played with ghosts. She dug in the garden with the devil's foot on her spade, to hurry her up. The child of fourteen married to please a rake's whim, and lived fifteen years for a man she ought to have left in a week. She was a little of everything to earn hard bread—handmaid and shop girl, actress and clairvoyant healer of general aches. What else, poor soul, they tell me, is not down in the book. She was crushed and cursed in motherhood with an idiot-boy. She was taunted with marital infidelity by a husband who was himself the popinjay of strumpets.

"This poor, imp-ridden, heart-burned woman turned at last against the social fate that had crushed her; and, having been its manifold victim, she knew all its sores and all its weapons. Her treatment of its diseases is new; she cures seduction by killing reputation, and lances adultery with a "social revolution."

SHE IS ACCUSED OF LEVYING BLACKMAIL, and special detectives of Wall street claim to hold indictments against her, hidden in their safes. But if such papers were of any effect, when New York would pay a million dollars for a legal pretext to send the woman to Sing Sing, the detectives must have blackmailed somebody for two millions, in the interest of burning the indictments up. That Mrs. Woodhull is at all "nice" in business honor, I doubt. If she would use the name of Mrs. Paulina Wright Davis falsely, to strengthen even an essential truth, she would suborn a friend's purse to carry out some other "mission."

"But that holy horror should gripe the bowels of the whole New York press at the two-penny corruptions of Woodhull & Claflin, is enough to make the mummy of Bennett wink with its cock-eye. The *Herald* was born in smut and libel, and now keeps a regular assignation-house in its columns. Yet, perhaps, 'tis the most manly of all the great city dailies. How many times was the *World* blatant with threats at the Tammany Ring, and then sopped into silence? Whitelaw Reid has lately elected himself editor and publisher of the *Tribune*, with half a million dollars behind him. Who owns the dog now that nosed Greeley into his grave? When the *Tribune* truckles to Jay Gould, calls for the hanging of Stokes, and plays into the hands of David Dudley Field, a little blackmailing would dignify its character. Faugh! the American press has been the mere skunk of the Church, bribed by its subscription-list to save Beecher in a universal stench of blackmail!

BUT THE WOODHULL'S DOCTRINE OF FREE LOVE — the one thing "beastly and abominable" that now inhabits the earth!

"Well, I praise the Lord that I have never had any personal use for this doctrine. The "effete system of marriage," as Woodhull and Claflin sometimes call it, has always been good enough for me, in spirit and in letter. And there can be no possibility that the love of average human beings will ever fall into chaotic license — the common *mis*-understanding of "free-love" — and which the poet Wordsworth once described to Emerson as "the crossing of flies in the air." But for even the earnest opponents of a theory, it is well to know what the theory is.

"Such, however, is not the current method of opposing "social freedom." The rule in this case is to shut both eyes, strike out with all your might, and hit — nothing. That is, the fops and dolls — the nincompoops in general — who make up what is called "society," are without the mental capacity to understand what free-love means. The whole world is a big brothel: — that is their conception. And they can't be cured of it. The true idea would burst open their little heads. With them, too, "free-love" is now the last rotten egg they can find to throw at people who do know something. Though enlisted for any war against free-love, in the sense of unchained lust, and though

distrusting and opposing any departure from monogamy in marriage, I have no desire to stand in an infant-class of idiots, who answer an argument, first by misconceiving it, and then by turning up the end of a pug nose.

“ ‘ Besides, there is much in the movement called “social freedom” that should be admitted at once, as simple justice, in the practical application of rights and morals.

“ In a recent article, for instance, by Tennie C. Claflin (to take an authority sufficiently obnoxious), she claims this :

“ ‘ If the loss of purity is a disgrace to unmarried women, then the same should be held of men ; if the mother of a child out of legal wedlock is ostracised, then the father should share the same fate. * * If a life of female prostitution is wrong, a life of male prostitution is equally wrong. If Contagious Diseases Acts are passed, they should operate equally on both sexes ; if women are inspected, men should be inspected ; if the names of women are recorded and open to inspection, the names of men should stand on the same record. * * On the other hand, if the male debauchee is allowed to circulate in respectable society and marry women with unsoiled robes, then the female debauchee should be allowed the same privileges and treated in the same manner.’

“ ‘ The Young Men’s Christian Association of New York have endeavored to prevent the equal chastity of the sexes, by suppressing Miss Claflin’s article as ‘obscene.’ But there is more of the Christian religion in it, and more good sense, than in Dodge and Comstock’s entire band of theological Hessians.

“ But directly in regard to the doctrine of ‘free-love,’ again, it is necessary for an intelligent opponent to acknowledge that ’tis not merely a Woodhull that belives in new social relations for men and women, but ’tis many of the most capacious minds and hearts on earth, from John Stuart Mill to Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Woodhull is only a tremendous horn that Colonel Blood is now blowing in front of Jericho.

“ ‘When Mrs. Stanton stood up in New York, after the trial of McFarland for killing Richardson, and said that no brute should be the dreaded owner of a woman’s body and soul, she stated the principle of social freedom as understood by its own expounders. Mrs. Stanton felt that no statute in a book was

so sacred as that crushed woman's right to her own individuality.

“‘SOCIAL FREEDOM,’ THEN,

from one view, is merely the extreme logical end of democracy — absolute individual sovereignty — single self-ownership. No bond, no custom, no law can righteously deny it, Yet this truth, after all, is only half a truth, and the other half is the duty which every individual — every self-sovereign — owes to his neighbor — that is, to society.

“‘Love,’ says the Woodhull, should be ‘free,’ precisely ‘like worship.’ The world has outgrown laws to govern religion, and leaves conscience unfettered. The fetters of constraint should be broken from marriage, and the parties allowed to mind their own business.

“Such is the argument. But the world has not outgrown all laws concerning worship. It prevents one congregation from disturbing another, or taking possession of their church. And in regard to marriage, has society no ‘inalienable rights?’ Marriage is not a relation of two individuals solely, but of their children as well. And has my neighbor no right to protect himself against the enforced support of my children? Undoubtedly there is no mysterious and cerulean sacredness in the relation of sex; it is a human affair, amenable to human justice.

“‘Twould now be useless to treat it otherwise; for general liberty has become so broad that strong persons, justified to themselves, take their lives in their own hands, defying society if necessary and conquering it by ability and success, as Mr. and Mrs. Lewes have done even in the midst of English conversation. The sentiment of love is perhaps the most important in the happiness of life. Nor is it ever perfect without the expectation of performance. So ‘tis easy enough to see that two human beings will not generally give themselves up to each other in the closest of intimacy and responsibility, without as much formality, at least, as they would take in “passing receipts” over the transfer of a horse or a pig. Still, the tendency in America is doubtless to multiply the facilities of divorce; and the laws will probably end in according all the “sovereignty” that two parties to a “civil contract” mutually desire, and that the interests of offspring will permit.

IN THE BEECHER-TILTON SCANDAL, HOWEVER, the Woodhull sets up an illustration of “social freedom” that

delight the soul of Stephen Pearl Andrews, but would empty the very meaning of virtue out of the world. Claiming all she does of Beecher, she claims with it that *no wrong was done, except in the deceit of the doing and the hypocrisy of hiding the deed*. A man who feeds Plymouth Church with his soul, *needs* the magnetic sustenance of "many women." It is all lovely to Woodhull — all serene and beautiful. The only fault would be in a Tilton's monopolizing some poor woman, so that she should not be comforted by her pastor, and so that he should be deprived of elixir for new prayers and sermons.'"

"[Mr. Clark doesn't understand my indictment against Mr. Beecher at all. I do not claim that 'no wrong was done except the deceit of the doing and the hypocrisy of hiding the deed.' I said it was nobody's business what Mr. Beecher and Mrs. Tilton did as lovers, and I say so still. Simply as such I had no right to touch the matter; but when they practiced the theories I advocate, and then denounced me for advocating them, it became my business, and I not only had a right, but to me it became a duty, that I strip off the hypocritical mask. Mr. Beecher, with Plymouth Church, stood a mighty barrier in the way of the progress of social freedom. I essayed to remove it, and from present prospects it appears likely that they will, as I hoped, join the already rapidly moving cause of social reform."]

"Here is the Oneida Community let loose — Free-Love for the saints without even the advantages of material communism. Fourier himself puts Ninon de L'Enclos, Beecher and the Woodhulls in a separate "phalanx" of their own kind, though he insists that some such people will always exist as exceptions to the race. They have got out of their "phalanx," it seems, and have gone to "reforming things."

"Woodhull, Claflin and Blood are quite as remarkable a "trinity" as they assume to be, and the last is by no means the least, but one of the most overcharged and untiring fanatics that ever lived. He honestly thinks that the "true courtesy of the future" will be "not even to know what relations our lovers have with any and all other persons." If his wife (by affinity) sees fit to commit a few great preachers and editors to "free love" by committing them to the currents of her own magnetism, his relentless consistency permits him to see only the glory

of the "cause." A queer bulb is the human head, and it takes all manner of people to make a New York.' "

[" I am happy to be able to say that upon this point Mr. Clark has been equal to the comprehension of just what we hold as 'true courtesy.' Neither Col. Blood or myself is simply a pretender. We not only believe but live the theories we teach, and the results to us of this course have been demonstration beyond all doubt of the truth and the benefit to the human race of the principles of freedom extended to the social relations. I am happy and proud to say to the world that whatever our individual happiness requires is the mutual happiness of both to accord, and not only to accord but to aid in obtaining. We do not do this for the 'cause,' however; we do this for ourselves, since in so doing we find not only the happiness we seek, but also the means by which to avert all the shoals upon which so many souls are socially wrecked. If this be a 'queer bulb,' I say the sooner the world has it well developed the sooner such scandals as this is which is now being 'smoked' out will cease to occur to show how really low we all are in the scale of social evolution. "]

" " But, as Mrs. Paulina Wright Davis says, the Woodhull is not to be "*befooled*." The woman's bitter experience has taught her all the sickness of the times. "Free love" and "stirpiculture" are rather striking remedies for it. But in an age of Tweed and Oakes Ames; Challis, Comstock and God-in-the-Constitution; Oakey Hall, model artists and Rosensweig; industrious fleas and Dr. Houston; Beecher, Bowen, the Tombs and the *Police Gazette* — in such an age the world can't change for the worse. Free love may possibly be its last hope. At any rate, if a young woman of thirty-four years, and another of thirty, with one Missouri Colonel behind them, can frighten the whole American people out of free speech, a free press and an honest court house, "stirpiculture" is needed at once for the begetting of some tolerable race of men.

E. H. G. CLARK. ' "

CHAPTER XXX.

TILTON INTERVIEWED BY A "CHICAGO TIMES" REPORTER.

We will now follow up *The Thunderbolt*, which purports to give Tilton's "True Story," with an account of an interview with Theodore Tilton by a correspondent of the *Chicago Times*, and published in that paper May 5th, 1873.

There was much beside the interview in the *Times* correspondence, but we admit it, as it is substantially the same as appears in other chapters. It will be observed that the *Times* correspondent gives quite a different version from the "True Story" as boiled down, and served up in Clark's *Thunderbolt*. It would be a hopeless task, were we to attempt to reconcile the incongruities which appear in the various statements of those who have all, (as they claim) told the *exact truth* in regard to this matter. How many more conflicting statements will be evolved in the investigation which is now in progress in Plymouth Church, we cannot even surmise.

TILTON INTERVIEWED.

"I interviewed Tilton this afternoon, and was dumbfounded as we walked the heights, observed by all we met. He said he was never more in the dark any time during the past year than now. Letter after letter has appeared in the papers, of which he was given as the author, and of which he said he knew nothing. He does not deny the contents of his letter to Bowen, dated January 1 1871, but says that it is not a correct copy. He denies any personal knowledge of E. H. G. Clark of the *Troy Whig*, and has no positive knowledge of ever having met the gentlemen; believes that a man named Clark did once bring him a letter of introduction from James Redpath, but has entirely forgotten the circumstance. He criticised the article in the *Review*, pointed out several minor inaccuracies, but did not deny the general truthfulness of the account. Several passages alluding to Mr. Beecher's proposals to his wife he did most

emphatically deny, and yet he read those self-same passages to me from his own manuscript last Thanksgiving day. It was evident Mr. Tilton was on his guard, and purposely evading and denying this, too, at an interview to which I was invited by him, he well knowing my character as a journalist, and evidently expecting me to make use of anything he might communicate. He played the role of a bravado to perfection, and said that he didn't care a snap about what the papers said, or what Mesdames Woodhull and Claflin or Col. Blood did. There did not exist, he said, a single scrap of paper emanating from his pen which he was not willing to have given to the world at any time, whether addressed to man or woman. Allusion being made by me to the manuscript statement of his case, which he had read to me last winter, and which was intended at the time for private circulation, and possibly publication, he said that there were at that time certain contingencies existing which affected not himself but others, but that now happily these were all removed. Notwithstanding this statement, my recollection is perfect that what Tilton read to me as his story, tallies exactly with what the *Thunaerbolt* says in reference to Mr. Beecher soliciting Mrs. Tilton to extend to him the favors of wifehood; and furthermore, that the letter from Tilton to Bowen, but recently published, was there *in extenso*, the one case being that in which the honor of his wife was attacked, the other springing from a business and salary relation with H. C. Bowen. Mr. Tilton then alluded to the fact well known to those who are *au fait* in this matter, that Mr. Bowen's first wife, now dead eleven years, was also a victim to Mr. Beecher's lust, which very reasonably accounts for the vindictive spirit shown by Mr. Bowen when he urged Tilton to write that demand for Beecher's resignation which he so obligingly carried, and which he was smart enough not to sign. In view of the fact in this connection that notwithstanding the hot shot the *Eagle* is pouring into the *Union*, of which Bowen is proprietor, calling him the slanderer of his pastor daily; and in view, furthermore, that last Wednesday Mr. Beecher's friends offered one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars for the purchase of a controlling interest in the *Union*, the situation is certainly suggestive.

"Not the least disgraceful feature, therefore, of this thoroughly disgraceful affair, is the barefaced attempt of Beecher's friends

to hide the shame of the dead wife with the glamour of gold. It may be well to mention here a fact not generally known. During the incarceration of Woodhull and Claflin in the Ludlow street jail, where they were visited daily by Geo. F. Train, a gentleman from western Pennsylvania, named W——k, ex-minister, and ex-lawyer, and now a successful coal operator, also called upon them and heard their story. Thence he went to Tilton and interviewed him. Tilton read him the statement now published in the *Thunderbolt* previously read to me, and supplemented that reading by the recital of a gross rape by Mr. Beecher upon the person of a celebrated literary lady of this city by the name of Proctor, dressing the story up in glowing and dramatic colors. This is the case alluded to in the letter from Tilton to Bowen, lately published, in which the grossness of the rape was concealed by the characteristic stars. W——k, himself, is my authority for this; and further that Tilton told him that upon learning of this rape from Mr. Bowen, Tilton called upon Miss Proctor and asked her if she had told Bowen of the outrage, and that she said she had, and immediately swooned at his feet. On recovering her consciousness he promptly asked her whether she had communicated the intelligence to Bowen verbally or in writing, and she answered verbally. Mr. Tilton admitted to me to-day that he had such an interview with W——k, had told W——k of his interview with Miss Proctor, but evaded direct questions about the lady, and maintained the story was exaggerated. All this time we were walking along the streets, Tilton carrying the *Review* in his hand, title out. He sought the most frequented thoroughfares, just as the churches were dismissing their congregations, and seemed in no way to be annoyed by his conspicuousness. He chatted pleasantly, and several times laughed heartily at what the paper said about him, intimating that the *Thunderbolt's* 'true story' was put together by some clever hand from the pilfering memories of those to whom he had read his statement. He said the original statement called his 'true story' was in the custody of Mr. Frank Moulton, which remark was confirmed by Mr. Moulton himself. Mr. Clark also says in his paper that he, when called upon, will show satisfactorily where he got the statement he published. When parting from Mr. Tilton he asked me in a careless, off-hand manner how the town talked

about the scandal. I told him this: 'Every man I had met that morning, among them several prominent members of Plymouth Church, believed it now, while they never did before, and gave as their opinion that Mr. Beecher must come down from his pulpit.

"It is difficult to get at the feeling of the church, but I may remark in conclusion that a nephew of H. C. Bowen, a prominent member of 'Change, has offered to wager five thousand dollars that in this social tilt his uncle is bound to win."

The next article which we copy is from the *Brooklyn Eagle* which, as will be seen is particularly severe upon Mr. Henry C. Bowen, who notwithstanding his intimate relations with Mr. Beecher for more than a quarter of a century is charged with being the first one to give currency to the reports reflecting upon Mr. Beecher's moral character. It will be seen in another part of this work, that it was Mr. Bowen, (although the most prominent member and pillar of Beecher's church) who has for years charged him with the grossest immoralities, and in one instance of a crime which in some states is punished with death, and in all others with long imprisonment, and that it was he, who goaded Mr. Tilton to demand Mr. Beecher's vacation of his office as Pastor of Plymouth Church, not only, but also that he should remove his residence from Brooklyn. According to Woodhull's story, Tilton says that Bowen charged Beecher with debauching his now deceased wife, and also of committing the revolting crime of rape upon the person of a literary lady of no mean reputation, well and favorably known to the reading public for many years, and who used to be an inmate of Mr. Bowen's household. This brief statement will explain some transactions which will be recorded further on.

It is just that we should state in this connection that the paper from which we now quote, is a rival sheet to the *Brooklyn Union* published by Mr. Bowen, and that for a long time there has been a "plentiful lack" of brotherly love existing between the two papers:

[From the "*Brooklyn Eagle*," April 12.]

"If a dozen of the oldest and best-informed citizens of Brooklyn were required to name the man in this community whose character was most vulnerable, ten at least of the twelve, would agree in presenting the name of Henry C. Bowen. This man

has crawled on to an advanced age, and his whole life is unredeemed by a single act which was not prompted by a sordid motive. At this particular time there are especial reasons why he should shrink from challenging criticism, and especially at the hands of men who live by the profession of journalism, which he and his, have done their very best to drag down to the level of a venal trade. It is known in every newspaper office in these two cities, that Henry C. Bowen is the author of, perhaps all that is tangible in the slanders on the life and morals of the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher — slanders which have permeated recently, in one form or another, every circle of society in these cities. It is equally well known that, in order to blast the reputation of the pastor whose ministrations he still ostentatiously professes to profit by, Henry C. Bowen was prepared to subject to the world's pity or scorn, a member of his own household. These slanders have never yet been made public in all their hideous enormity, because the press, with a unanimity and a magnanimity which rose to the level of chivalry, shrunk from performing what was, perhaps, its duty, and saved the worthless Bowen in order to shield from accusation even, the character of Mr. Beecher — a man whose intellectual endowments are a source of common pride to his countrymen of every party, class and creed. Emboldened by this impunity, this man Bowen has used his feeble newspaper, published in this city — a newspaper kept alive by fraudulent pretenses to circulation and influence — to bring into public contempt, if possible, the character of a number of Brooklyn's best known and most respected citizens.

“No amount of charity — no consideration for the men Bowen has slandered, from Mr. Beecher down, can any longer be expected to shield him from the pillory of public scorn in which he deserves to be placed. We are prepared, of course, to find Bowen shuffling responsibility on the emasculated idiot who bears his name, and on the Bohemians who are subjected to the degradation of being compelled to lick into shape the inane malignity of ‘this successor of his father's fame,’ but we will hold to accountability the monumental slanderer, against whose malice the ministerial character and the ties of blood afforded no protection. If in the routine of public affairs the dismissal of a contumacious and inefficient employe, leads to

the full exposure of a hypocritical sneak, it will result in clearing the local atmosphere of a cloud of slander, which has depressed the spirit of a Christian community, and emboldened the vicious by encouraging them

“‘ To scorn the hypocrites who only hid
The deeds the bolder spirits plainly did.’

COMMENTS ON THE FOREGOING BY THE WOODHULL.

“ This evidently means business. It is keen without being satiric, and clearly is uncompromising. Henry C. Bowen will be forced to the wall and made to defend himself or be run down. The question is, will he quietly suffer death and permit others to go unscathed? We do not believe Henry C. Bowen to be made of Christ stuff. He will not suffer crucifixion and say, ‘ Thy will, not mine. ’

“ But what does the *Eagle* mean? We are not aware of any slanders ‘ which have recently permeated every circle of society ’ that had origin in Mr. Bowen. We have heard many rumors for which Mr. Bowen has the credit of being authority. And that the *Eagle* refers to them is patent, because he says it was a member of Mr. Bowen’s own household who is involved.

“ Has the *Eagle* been made acquainted with the contents of the Woodstock letter, which Mr. Bowen was unwise enough to write to Mr. Tilton, and which a commission of Mr. Beecher’s friends decided that Mr. Tilton must give up before he should receive from Mr. Bowen the money he claimed as due him?

“ And if the *Eagle* is acquainted with the contents of that letter, as all the said Commissioners are, why will it not inform the public if it charges the crime of rape, involving Mr. Beecher and a member of Mr. Bowen’s household, as rumor has it, and thus forever set this terrible matter at rest?

“ It would seem that something remains to be told, since the *Eagle* says, ‘ These slanders have never been made public in all their hideous enormity, because the press shrunk from performing what was, perhaps, its duty. ’ We have never credited nor given currency to the Bowen scandals, since their authority to us rested with a single person; and it is only by the affirmation of two or more that all this could be established. But if the *Eagle* have a well-grounded knowledge, it may be prepared to perform its duty and compel the mask that exists *somewhere* to fall. In the meantime we commend the *Eagle* article to the

consideration of those who recently have comforted themselves by the hope that the Beecher-Tilton-Bowen Scandal is dead. We predict that it is just beginning to have life."

[*From the Mercury and Mail, Middletown, N. Y., May 16.*]

THE BEECHER-TILTON SCANDAL.

"The New York Sunday dailies are full of the Beecher-Tilton Scandal. This disgusting business must be ended one way or the other. Either Mr. Beecher must clear up these allegations against his character, or vacate the editorial chair of the *Christian Union* and the pulpit of Plymouth. He may be, we trust is, entirely innocent, but he has no right any longer to ignore the situation.'

"The opinion expressed and the contingency named in the above paragraph, which we copy from the *Interior*, one of the ablest religious journals of the country, will be approved and indorsed not only by the enemies of Mr. Beecher, but by his friends as well, and by all persons of every class and sect who prize public and private virtue, decency and consistency of character.

"This scandal is known and read wherever the English language is read or spoken, if, indeed, it has not already been translated and reproduced in every civilized tongue the world over. Probably the name of no American citizen is oftener on people's lips, both at home and abroad, than that of Henry Ward Beecher. It is a name associated, in two hemispheres, with valorous words and good deeds in the realms of religion, moral progress, and enterprises and actions looking to the well-being and elevation of mankind.

"For more than a quarter of a century he has honorably maintained a hold upon public attention and esteem as a guide and teacher to young and old; and his influence has been widely felt in controlling and regulating affairs in Church, State and Nation. And in these different spheres of action he has tacitly, if not by frank assertion, claimed to be commissioned and inspired from the highest of all sources. Calling no man master, his independence of speech and spasmodic outbursts of eccentricity in the handling of things held to be sacred by a long line of prophets, priests and ministers who have gone before

him, have called down upon him the sharp criticism and the fiery rebuke of his contemporaries in and out of the sacred office. But until the opening of this vial of scandal, whose odors the world is to-day snuffing up its nostrils, not a word has been breathed regarding his infidelity to the tenets and observances which are held to be essential to the purity of domestic life and the untainted preservation of marriage vows and marital relations.

"But all this is changed. The most serious and startling charges affecting his good name in the dearest and most sacred relation of life have been made and published, world wide, against him. Unhappily, to these charges he makes no response. From the first he has remained silent; and up to this hour we have no word from his lips, or, so far as we know, from any friend authorized to speak for him, in affirmation of his innocence.

"Mr. Beecher has not been called to put in a plea at the bar of any court of justice, but his attitude is that of one arraigned at the bar of public opinion. And there he *must* plead or ultimately go down. His silence is strength to his enemies, and so painfully significant, that at last it may be tortured, even by those who respect and love him, into dumb confession of his guilt.

"Mr. Beecher is not so elevated above the heads of common humanity that he can safely trust to 'dignified silence' to carry him safely through the sea of troubles which surround and threaten him. 'If,' said Mr. Beecher, on one occasion, 'you are passing along the streets and a chambermaid deluges you with a pail of slops, what are you to do? Simply wash yourself, and pass on.' Mr. Beecher should make a practical improvement of his lesson. Let him 'wash himself,' or, peradventure, he may 'pass on' to a future of regret and shame."

[*From the De Ruyter (New York) New Era, May 8, 1873.*]

"The Beecher-Tilton-Bowen Scandal is getting worse. The excitement increases and Brooklyn is a good deal riled. Making up faces at Mrs. Woodhull and calling her names that cannot be printed, do not help the thing. It is said that much difficulty is experienced by those who seek to arraign Mr. Beecher because of his getting behind the example of the old patriarchs,

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob ; also David and Solomon. It does afflict us to acknowledge that the little affair between 'the sweet singer of Israel' and Uriah's wife was the same as the scandal alleged of Henry Ward and Mrs. Tilton ; but then these irregularities were permitted in the olden time, it is said, 'by reason of the hardness of their hearts.' Now it is different, or should be. In answer to certain wicked questions presented by the Jews it was declared that in heaven there was 'neither marrying nor giving in marriage, but they were as the angels are,' free. So says Mrs. Woodhull. By all of which we are shocked. What are we coming to?"

[*From the Westfield (Mass.) News Letter, May 16, 1873.*]

BEECHER AND WOODHULL.

"The last number of Woodhull and Claflin's *Weekly* is decidedly hot; and even more pronounced than that of November 2d, which caused the arrest of its editors and publishers on a charge which the ablest lawyers in the land have pronounced untenable—that of obscenity. That they were liable to proceedings for libel is unquestionable. If the charges are untrue, as is fashionable to believe, they are deserving of condign punishment ; if true, they are as surely entitled to the gratitude of society for unmasking hypocrisy in high places, and showing to the world the rottenness of the so-called upper-crust—of those who pretend one thing and practice the opposite—notwithstanding they are regarded as fit examples for the masses to imitate.

"In this number of May 17, not only are the original charges reiterated in full, with a variety of circumstantial detail, but additional particulars are cited, charging the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher not only with adultery, but with forcibly compelling a female to yield to his 'deviltry.' Charges like these are not apt to be idly made ; assuredly not against those in high places, for fear of the consequences.

"In this case, no legitimate effort has been made to controvert the statements hurled upon an astounded community more than six months since, with regard to the asserted doings of prominent members of Plymouth Church, which were in violation of the laws of the land and the professed belief of

society. None gave credence to such astounding statements at the time, and Mrs. Woodhull and her set were damned to the deepest depths of infamy for presuming to cast such reflections upon an eminent citizen whose character high officials deemed it well worthy the while of the government to vindicate; and to accomplish this purpose, the suppression of the Free-Love weekly was attempted, and its proprietors arrested on the absurd charge of obscenity, and hauled to prison. The truth is, however, that there is less obscenity—if there be any—in the columns of the noted weekly than in those of most daily papers. The charges of marital infidelity are earnestly made, and the testimony of several prominent witnesses cited, none of whom up to this time, so far as we know, have directly denied the allegations, and some of whom have *refused* to deny them.

“The pastor of Plymouth Church is revered by the people, and there are no individuals, nor set of individuals, whose word would be more implicitly relied upon than his. But he has vouchsafed no denial of the charges. He has made no effort to prove the charges false, and the impression is gaining currency that there is ‘something rotten in Denmark.’

“Little sympathy is felt for the Woodhull, for her doctrines run counter to the professions of society, however it may be with regard to the practice. They are probably as unpopular as were the doctrines of the anti-slavery agitators, when they commenced their crusade against negro slavery. Mrs. Woodhull may be, for ought we know, a vile woman, a fanatic, crazed on the subject of love and personal liberty, but she certainly seems to be free from the charge of hypocrisy. She seems fearless as the martyrs and reformers of any age, and hurls her one idea, absolute personal liberty, at society in a manner that demands attention. It is not simply private character that is at stake, it is a question of two theories, or principles; the old theory of the divine sacredness of marriage, or its abrogation, and the substitution of co-partnership. All acknowledge that marriage vows are too frequently broken, that constancy is often the exception rather than the rule, that ill assorted and unhappy marriages are too frequent. To cure these evils she proposes its virtual abolition.

“The institution of marriage, however, notwithstanding the

misery that too often accompanies it, in place of the expected happiness, is too strongly intrenched in the customs, habits and beliefs of the people to be idly forsaken for new and untried theories; though there is an increasing disposition to modify the laws of divorce, to make the man and the woman more nearly equal partners, and a strong tendency to regard marriage as a civil contract, rather than as a divine institution. One thing, however, is certain; the truth, the right, cannot fear or suffer from the most thorough and honest consideration; and, if it has not been so in the past, we expect in the future Henry Ward Beecher's preaching may correspond with his practice."

THE BEECHER-WOODHULL MATTER.

"A Western paper, the *Chicago Advance*, prints an article on the Beecher-Woodhull-Tilton-Claflin-Moulton (and all the rest) Scandal, in which is this paragraph:

"Few, if any, intelligent people have been found to believe the Woodhull charges against Mr. Beecher. But recent publications show only too plainly that they did not originate with her, and confirm the convictions of those who have believed from the first that it was and is a grave mistake for Mr. Beecher to meet them with silence, on the ground that his accuser is too vile for recognition. Reputable papers publish only allusions to the stories that are afloat, but the disreputable ones, like the *Chicago Times*, gloat over the garnished details, and industriously fan the suspicion that there is a conspiracy of the Christian community to suppress the facts. We say it reluctantly, but confidently, that the world will be compelled to believe that there is something wrong somewhere if Plymouth Church, at least, shall take no action to clear up the scandal which involves its three most prominent members, and involves them in a way that will not allow the public to believe that all three ought to be "in good and regular standing.'"

CHAPTER XXXI.

[*From the Brooklyn Sunday Press, June 1.*]

BEECHER-BOWEN-TILTON — THE MOUSE OF DENIAL THAT A MOUNTAIN OF CHARGE BROUGHT FORTH — THEIR JOINT CONFESSION — BEECHER'S FRIENDS AND WHAT THEY HAVE DONE FOR HIM — A TERRIBLE PICTURE OF PERJURY AND INSINCERITY — HENRY C. BOWEN THE INSTRUMENT OF EXPOSURE.

"One of Mr. Beecher's injudicious friends has partially anticipated us in our necessary work of analyzing the pretensions to virtue and religious influence put forward by that co-operative society of sycophants — the Plymouth Church 'Ring.' We were about to adduce as one of the evidences of corruption in that body, the extraordinary concoction of words behind which Beecher, Bowen and Tilton vainly hope to take refuge, as the ostrich, with its head in the sand, hopes to escape its pursuers. No wonder the absurdly ineffectual 'card' was published without Beecher's consent. Whatever Beecher's passions have had to do with his religious convictions, we have never impeached his common sense. And no one above the degree of an absolute idiot can suppose that a man in Beecher's position will be anything but ruined by the bombastic document which bears the signatures of the three arch-hypocrites of the century. The almost diabolical insincerity of the 'covenant' is proof enough of the value of Plymouth Church as a school of morality, while as a laughter-provoking instrument it is not far behind the conspiracy trio in *La Grand Duchesse*. Where can the man be found who, after having read this 'covenant' with astonishment, and who, after he has been assured that it is no clumsy hoax, will not pronounce the three men who drafted it and signed it, the three monumental hypocrites of this or any other age? The humbug is almost tragical in its dimensions. Mr. Beecher surely is too near that sepulchral silence and help-

lessness from which his sister dragged the festering corpse of Lord Byron, to indulge in such a fearful jest at the expense of religion — at the expense of those who really worship his presence and cherish his utterances like the voice of God. Mrs. Stowe dug a dead man out of his grave with her very fingernails, to prove him guilty of incest. Her brother, while in the flesh, hugs to his breast the two men who have pronounced him the ravisher of their relatives, while they, self proclaimed cowards, allied to each other only by their common infamy, set down in writing their promise never to allude to his crimes again. Verily a sweet savored trio this: the preacher who, says Bowen, violated, among his other victims, a married woman and drove her husband to his grave by the knowledge of her shame; Bowen whose own dead and living kindred have not been safe from his scandalous tongue, in relation to the Beecher infamy; and Tilton, kicked out of Bowen's office, because he would not comply with Bowen's furious demand for Beecher's ruin, and as Bowen says, because he converted those offices into places of criminal assignation. A noble trio: the man who showed the horns he swore his preacher planted, to the lewdest woman of the day; the bankrupt Shylock, who is so deep in lies and libel that his own flesh and blood have been drowned in what he now pronounces perjury; and the moralist, with a national fame, whose silence has plead 'guilty' to the double indictment for rapes, urged against him by the two wretched creatures who, knowing they have to sink, sink with the shadows of his past, wrapping them round, and 'the old relations of love, respect and reliance resumed and restored.

"This hideously insincere conspiracy to bury by stealth, the shame, which these three moralists have strangled, is all the uglier and all the more monstrous for close examination.

"The first paragraph recites the *raison d'être* of the Beecher-Tilton-Bowen 'covenant,' as follows:

"'We three men, earnestly desiring to remove all causes of offense existing between us, real or fancied; and to make Christian reparation for injuries done or supposed to be done; and to efface the disturbed past and to provide concord, good will and love, for the future, do declare and covenant, each to the other, as follows:'

"What are the 'causes of offense?' Were they, on Beecher's

part, the shame and suffering he imported into the families of Bowen and Tilton? Were they, on Bowen's part, the distinct and circumstantial charges of rape—for at such a crisis the plainest language is the best—which Bowen alleged against Beecher? Were they on Tilton's part, the confidential disclosures of his own dishonor and of Beecher's conduct to his wife, which he made to Mrs. Woodhull? What were the 'injuries done' which needed Christian reparation? Were they Beecher's deportment to the Bowen family, and Beecher's treatment of Bowen? Were they Bowen's letter to Tilton, and Bowen's message to Beecher? Were they 'the insane ravings' of Mrs. Tilton? Were they Tilton's maudlin talks with Mrs. Woodhull? Were they Bowen's assertions that Tilton had to leave the *Union* office because it became the resort of giddy and frenetic women? Were they Tilton's threats to Bowen, that if he did not pay his overdue salary, he would 'get even' with Bowen, by publishing Bowen's reminiscences of Beecher? If so, indeed, they needed 'Christian reparation,' or something equally fragrant to deodorize the precincts of Plymouth Church.

"But what form was the Christian reparation to assume? What did the phrase signify? Did it mean that Bowen should sue for pardon, and swear by the ashes of the mother of his sons that he had wilfully, deliberately, malignantly lied, even as Judas Iscariot did not dare to lie before Pontius Pilate? Did it mean that Tilton should, with tears of blood, affirm the insanity of his own wife, the innocence of Beecher, and finally, the exquisite virtue of Bowen in proclaiming Beecher guilty of those very enormities which it behove Tilton himself to avow that Beecher had never perpetrated? Did it mean that Tilton should confess to Bowen, that he did leave the employ of Bowen, because his own licentiousness was beyond control, and should implore the pardon of Bowen for having converted Bowen's offices into something little better than a brothel, according to the testimony of Bowen himself? Did it mean that Beecher should confess to the two men who, each the deadly enemy of the other, united in charging him with their joint shame, that his guilt had been great, but that his sufferings had been almost greater? Did it mean that Beecher should make a clean breast of all the offenses deliberately arranged

against him by Bowen and Tilton, and did it mean that Bowen and Tilton should agree to swallow the nastiness that had flowed from their own mouths against Beecher, because Beecher was the depository of fatal secrets, in which they themselves were infamously concerned?

"Next, let us consider what the worst of these three men, and the most treacherous, has to say in the 'covenant':"

"I, Henry C. Bowen, having given credit, perhaps without due consideration, to tales and inuendoes affecting Henry Ward Beecher, and being influenced by them, as was natural to a man who receives impressions suddenly, to the extent of repeating them (guardedly, however, and within limitations, and not for the purpose of injuring him, but strictly in the confidence of consultation), now feel that therein I did him wrong. Therefore, I disavow all the charges and imputations that have been attributed to me as having been by me made against Henry Ward Beecher; and I declare, fully and without reserve, that I know nothing which should prevent me from extending to him my most cordial friendship, confidence and Christian fellowship. And I expressly withdraw all the charges, imputations and inuendoes imputed as having been made and uttered by me and set forth in a letter written to me by Theodore Tilton on the first day of January, 1871 (a copy of which letter is hereto annexed); and I sincerely regret having made any imputations, charges, or inuendoes unfavorable to the Christian character of Mr. Beecher. And I covenant and promise that for all future time I will never, by word or deed, recur to, repeat, or allude to any or either of said charges, imputations and inuendoes."

"Why does Bowen say '*perhaps* without due consideration?' He is not absolutely positive, then, that he acted 'without due consideration.' He may have been duly 'considerate' and he may not. They were 'tales and inuendoes,' that this shrewd scoundrel was inspired by, according to his 'covenant' of 1872. On June the 16th, 1863, however, nine years before, he wrote as follows:

"I sometimes feel that I must break silence — that I must no longer suffer as a dumb man and be made to bear a load of grief most unjustly. One word from me would make — a rebellion throughout Christendom, I had almost said, and you know it. You have just a little of the evidence from the great volume

in my possession. I am not pursuing a phantom, but solemnly brooding over an awful reality.'

"In 1863, therefore, it was 'a great volume' in his possession, and 'an awful reality.' In 1872 it was 'tales and inuendoes.' It will surprise people who know Bowen to learn that he is liable to 'receive impressions suddenly.' Bowen has always been credited with the very toughest of mental and spiritual toughness. It was probably this dangerous liability to 'receiving impressions suddenly' which 'influenced' him 'to the extent' of explaining Tilton's ignominious expulsion from his employ, by the statement that Tilton had personally misconducted himself in a grossly indecent manner. Bowen 'repeated the tales and inuendoes guardedly and within limitations, and not for the purpose of injuring Mr. Beecher, but strictly in the confidence of consultation.' Let us see how Tilton describes his prodigal brother's 'guarded repetition' of 'the tales and inuendoes' of 1872, and the 'great volume' and 'awful reality' of 1863:

"It was during the early part of the rebellion, if I recollect aright, when you first intimated to me that the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher had committed acts of adultery, for which, if you should expose him, he would be driven from the pulpit. From that time onward your references to the subject were frequent and always accompanied with the exhibition of deep-seated injury to your heart.

* * * * *

"On frequent intervals from this till now, you have repeated the statement that you could at any moment expel Henry Ward Beecher from Brooklyn. You have reiterated the same thing, not only to me, but to others. Moreover, during the year just closed, your letters on the subject were marked with more feeling than heretofore, and were not unfrequently coupled with your emphatic declaration that Mr. Beecher ought not to be allowed to occupy a public position as a Christian teacher and preacher.

"On the 25th of December, 1870, at an interview in your house, at which Mr. Oliver Johnson and I were present, you spoke freely and indignantly against Mr. Beecher as an unsafe visitor in the families of his congregation. You alluded by name to a woman, now a widow, whose husband's death you

did not doubt was hastened by his knowledge that Mr. Beecher had maintained with her an improper intimacy. As if to leave no doubt on the minds of either Mr. Johnson or myself, you informed us that Mr. Beecher had made to you a confession of guilt, and had with tears implored your forgiveness. After Mr. Johnson retired from this interview, you related to me the case of a woman of whom you said (as nearly as I can recollect your words) that "Mr. Beecher took her in his arms by force and threw her down upon the sofa" * * *. During your recital of this tale you were filled with anger toward Mr. Beecher. You said, with terrible emphasis, that he ought not to remain a week longer in his pulpit. You immediately suggested that a demand should be made upon him to quit his sacred office. You volunteered to bear to him such a demand, in the form of an open letter, which you would present to him with your own hand, and you pledged yourself to sustain the demand which this letter should make, namely, "That he should, for reasons which he explicitly knew, immediately cease from his ministry at Plymouth Church, and retire from Brooklyn." The first draft of this letter did not contain the phrase, "for reasons that he explicitly knew," and these words, or words to this effect, were incorporated in a second, at your motion. You urged, furthermore, very emphatically, that the letter should demand, not only Mr. Beecher's abdication of his pulpit, but the cessation of his writing for the *Christian Union* — a point on which you were overruled. This letter you presented to Mr. Beecher at Mr. Freeland's house. Shortly after its presentation you sought an interview with me in the editorial office of the *Brooklyn Union*, during which, with unaccountable emotion in your manner, your face livid with rage, you threatened with loud voice that if ever I should inform Mr. Beecher of the statements which you made concerning his adultery, or should compel you to adduce the evidence on which you agreed to sustain the demand for Mr. Beecher's withdrawal from Brooklyn, you would immediately deprive me of my engagement to write for the *Independent* and to edit the *Brooklyn Union*, and that in case I should ever attempt to enter the offices of those journals, you would have me ejected by force. I told you that I should inform Mr. Beecher or anybody else according to the dictates of my own judgment, uninfluenced by any authority from my employers.

You then excitedly retired from my presence. Hardly had your violent words ceased ringing in my ears when I received your summary notices breaking my contract with the *Independent* and the Brooklyn *Union*. To the foregoing narrative of fact I have only to add my surprise and regret at the sudden interruption by your own act of what has been on my part a faithful service of fifteen years.

“‘Truly yours,

THEODORE TILTON.’

“From the early part of the rebellion to January 1, 1871, Bowen was influenced by impressions received suddenly to the extent of daily sounding spiritual alarms of Beecher's gross criminality. It was in 1870 that he capped the climax of his villainy (according to his ‘restored lovers’ — Beecher and Tilton) by insisting on Beecher's removal from Plymouth Church as well as from the editorial control of the paper which rivalled his own *Independent* in point of circulation and profit. But it was not till April, 1872, after having ‘received an impression suddenly to the effect’ that his ‘awful reality’ was, as he now asserts, a phantom, and his ‘great volume’ a tissue of lies, as he and Tilton and Beecher all avow, that he finds he has ‘done Beecher wrong.’ He disavows ‘all the charges and imputations’ that have been ‘attributed to him.’ This hot-blooded youth who ‘gives credit to tales without due consideration,’ and who ‘receives impressions suddenly,’ is too wary to accept the authorship of ‘the charges and imputations.’ He may or may not have made them, and therefore he disavows them. He declares in the covenant of 1872 that I know nothing which should prevent me from extending to Henry Ward Beecher my most cordial friendship, confidence and Christian fellowship. Ugh! the reptile! Who is there in the world vile enough and low enough to accept so slimy a gift as the cordial friendship, confidence and Christian fellowship of Henry C. Bowen? We apologize. Henry Ward Beecher and Theodore Tilton were overjoyed to recover that precious boon when they once lost it. But Bowen does not tell how he disposed of his great volume and his awful reality. Were they only mere phantoms invented to despoil the rival *Christian Union* of Beecher's contributions? Or were they realities? Did Beecher ever stand a secret trial on these charges, which Bowen disavows in 1872, but of which in 1863 he had a volume? And if Beecher was so tried, who

were his judges, and did they pronounce him guiltless? If so, why not produce their white judgment instead of Bowen's nasty signature to a cautious recantation? Or perhaps Bowen knew nothing against Beecher, while he was guardedly repeating to Tilton and others the details of that crime of Beecher's with which he was so strangely familiar? When his tongue was wagging against his own flesh and blood, was he extending to Beecher his friendship, confidence and Christian fellowship? He sincerely regrets having made any imputations, charges or inuendoes unfavorable to the Christian character of Mr. Beecher. Why does he regret his charges and imputations if they were true? And if they were not true, when did he receive an impression suddenly that his 'great volume' was a chapter of lies, and his 'awful reality' a phantom? Finally, in Bowen's contribution to this scandalous round robin we find no allusion to Tilton. All his friendship, confidence and Christian fellowship is reserved for Beecher. Tilton was turned out of the Bowen employ, we must suppose, because he committed the offenses against decency with which Bowen had frequently charged him. This must be the case, or Bowen, caught in the humor to recant, would have retracted as well his publication of another hideous scandal that would astonish the already shocked community with scarcely less force than the dominant sensation. But in spite of his obstinacy in alleging criminal abuse of his position against Tilton, we find Tilton in the next paragraph — after having received his back pay from Bowen — hugging Bowen and Beecher in a frenzy of Christian love:

“‘II. And I, Theodore Tilton, do, of my own free will and friendly spirit toward Henry C. Bowen and Henry Ward Beecher, hereby covenant and agree that I will never again repeat, by word of mouth or otherwise, any of the allegations, or imputations, or inuendoes contained in my letter hereunto annexed, or any other injurious imputations or allegations suggested by or growing out of these; and that I will never again bring up or hint at any cause of difference or ground of complaint heretofore existing between the said Henry C. Bowen and myself, or the said Henry Ward Beecher.’”

“Tilton, it will be noticed, hankers rather after that Lebanonic balsam, the 'friendship, confidence and Christian fellowship of Bowen,' than after reconciliation with Beecher. He promises

to both that he will not repeat any of Bowen's circumstantial charges against Beecher, as contained in his letter to Bowen which we print above, and which, with a threat of its publication, was written to Bowen as a means of wringing from Bowen the back pay which Tilton alleged was due from Bowen to himself.

"What the worldly would call his 'little game' was successful, and after Bowen had reluctantly paid that back salary to Tilton, Tilton suppressed the letter, and it was not his fault that the *Sunday Press* first gave it to the world. But Tilton says not a word of *his own* charges against Beecher. On this point he is singularly mute. He explains none of the extraordinary chain of occurrences which included his wife's return for a while to her mother. He is as silent as the grave about his conversations with Mrs. Woodhull. On this point he cannot touch even in the 'covenant,' framed so artfully as it is for easy consciences. He promises Bowen that he will not relieve him of his duties as informer, and that the long list of charges, with all their *vraisemblance*, which Bowen made to him against Beecher, shall not be allowed to stay abroad. But he does not say that his own indictment of Beecher is false, nor does he refer to that episode in his career which he occasionally explains on the theory of his wife's temporary insanity.

"Finally, we have Beecher's benedictory paragraph, dripping, like Aaron's beard, with the ointment of brotherly love.

"'III. I, Henry Ward Beecher, put the past forever out of sight and out of memory. I deeply regret the causes for suspicion, jealousy and estrangement which have come between us. It is a joy to me to have my old regard for Henry C. Bowen and Theodore Tilton restored, and a happiness to me to resume the old relations of love, respect and alliance to each and both of them. If I have said anything injurious to the reputation of either, or have detracted from their standing and fame as Christian gentlemen and members of my church, I revoke it all, and heartily covenant to repair and reinstate them to the extent of my power.'

"What 'past' does Beecher 'put out of sight and memory forever?' Is it the 'past' which recently escaping from its limbo has wrestled with him in the dark, while he pretended to all men that it had never undergone a resurrection? Why so

indefinite, Mr. Beecher? What 'past' can it be of which a Christian minister, conscious of no guilt, is so afraid that he desires to 'put it out of sight and out of memory forever?' Is it a 'past' stained with shame, or remorse, or sudden grief of some sort? And what 'causes' for 'suspicion, jealousy and estrangement' could have come between Beecher on the one side and Tilton and Bowen on the other, except those which Bowen and Tilton have so diligently affirmed. One of those 'causes' may have been Bowen's 'guarded repetition' to Tilton of his 'awful reality' and the unclosing of his 'great volume.' Such conduct on Bowen's part would have been excessively likely to estrange Beecher from Bowen. But what 'cause' for Tilton's 'suspicion and jealousy' did Beecher give? Tilton cleverly escapes the necessity of alluding to this part of the 'covenant' by omitting all mention of any offense committed against himself and his honor by Beecher. But Beecher is not so shrewd apparently as Tilton. He confesses that there have been 'causes' for Tilton's 'suspicion and jealousy,' and for 'the estrangement' which naturally followed such 'suspicion and jealousy.' What could be the cause of the suspicion? And was Tilton's jealousy of Beecher the keen sting of marital dishonor, or was it a mere intellectual envy of Beecher's genius and popularity? Could it be possible that Beecher envied Tilton? Supposing anything so monstrous, it is inconceivable that estrangement should be the result of such 'suspicion and jealousy,' when the anxiety of Tilton and Beecher to play once more the part of brothers became so strong that it even included that notorious proprietor of 'great volumes' and 'awful realities,' Henry C. Bowen himself. Were the 'ravings' of Mrs. Tilton, that delicate, nervous woman, on whose frail shoulders most of this ponderous 'covenant' rests, one of the 'causes for suspicion and jealousy' which Beecher 'deeply regrets?' He finds a joy in having his 'old regard for Henry C. Bowen and Theodore Tilton restored.' So they have nothing to forgive Beecher, while Beecher is delighted to resume his 'old relations' with them. We cannot understand how those old relations were snapped by Bowen. That 'great volume' and 'awful reality' was enough to demolish the sturdiest friendship. No man in Beecher's place could have endured with good temper such a minute relation of brutality as that which Bowen 'guardedly

repeated' to Tilton, and in which Beecher figured so hideously and conspicuously. But what bone of contention lay between Tilton and Beecher? Was it the story of his own shame which Tilton took to Mrs. Woodhull? If so, Tilton says nothing of it in his part of the 'covenant.' Neither, so far as we are aware, has he ever retracted it. Does Tilton still believe in Beecher's guilt in this regard, and does Beecher force his friendship and his 'old regard' on him in spite of himself? Is it, with all due reverence, something of the spirit which inspires the criminal under the gallows tree to forgive the District-Attorney who procured his conviction?

"If both these brethren have lied about himself while quarrelling over a money bargain, is Beecher so mean a man and one so indifferent to his own character, that in the parlor of a private house he consents to patch up a treaty of peace with those who attempted to 'bluff' each other, with his ruin and exposure for a trump card? Is the sanctity of his pastoral relation so cheap to him that, knowing his own innocence, he allows Bowen and Tilton, after gnawing at his morality, not only to again share the sacrament with him, but as well to enjoy his 'old regard and respect and reliance.' Christ was dumb when the high priest's servants struck him, but he did not express his 'deep regret' to Judas Iscariot for losing his friendship. Does any living soul believe that Beecher loves, respects or relies upon Bowen?

"What could Beecher have said injurious to the reputation of Tilton or Bowen? Did he ever denounce either of them as cowardly scoundrels? Did he ever express himself as vigorously of their personal quarrels as any other man, with his soul conscious of its virtue, would certainly have done? Did he ever stigmatize, fortified with a knowledge of his own innocence, the monstrous duplicity of the two men who were ready to sell him out in the matter of a money difference? Could even a minister refrain from expressing in mundane phrase his loathing of the creatures who were ready to make his fame a counter in the sordid game of a lawsuit? Bah! It can be no manly spirit which welcomes in secret the return to friendship of those who turned that friendship to such base account.

"The world will not be deceived by this tinsel-work. Had Beecher been slandered in the first instance, and given the per-

jurors to the law, he would have emerged from the hideous fog, as white and pure as his friends once thought he was. Had a poor wretch picked his plethoric pocket he would have sent for an officer and consigned the thief to his just punishment. But when the property he loses is his character, and when the felons are men of wealth and note, he grants the robbers an interview, and, to speak of this 'covenant' in the kindest manner, compromises the crime. As it is, the wretchedly written and foolishly inconsistent compact between Beecher, Bowen and Tilton is the epitaph of their good fame in this community. Not a charge has been met, not a retraction has been made, not a word of indemnity to the grievously wronged congregation of Plymouth Church has been breathed. All that has been done has been the concoction of a back-room settlement to stifle exposure, and it is because one of the triumvirate has, as a matter of course, proved false to his guarantee of mutual protection that the religious world is taught with what little principle a church can be governed.

TILTON'S REASONS FOR CONCEALMENT.

"Over two years ago Theodore Tilton, who desires it to be understood that he retracts nothing of his charges against Henry Ward Beecher, was sued by his wife for a divorce, she alleging against him the crime of adultery and seeking a maternal refuge from his treatment of her. The documents in the case repose in the possession of Alden J. Spooner, of this city, and Mrs. Tilton was induced to withdraw her complaint by a pointed allusion to her relations with Beecher. Mrs. Woodhull, before being further prosecuted by Mr. Beecher's disciple and friend, Anthony J. Comstock, will, perhaps, remember this incident in the history of the man whom Beecher hugs again to his lacerated heart.

THE BEECHER-BOWEN-TILTON 'COVENANT.'

"We have very little to suggest with reference to the exhaustive review of the 'covenant' printed on our first page. If Mr. Beecher feels aggrieved at the discovery of so little sympathy for him in his almost Gethsemanic agony, he must remember that when every heart kindled with just wrath for Bowen, awaiting only his manly denial to give a sanctity to that flame

of indignation, he kept a cowardly silence. The fire is now hot for his trial. We trust he will pass through the furnace, and emerge from it in the white linen of the saints.

THE PRICE OF THE 'COVENANT.'

"Just as Henry Ward Beecher's alleged crimes were first made ready for the public eye, by Bowen and Tilton in a money dispute, so money was one of the conditions of the round-robin signed by Beecher, Bowen and Tilton. The Judas Iscariot of the trio paid Tilton twenty thousand dollars to sign the agreement, and so cancel the charges against Beecher, which Bowen had been circulating with industry, and Beecher remitted Bowen a debt of five thousand dollars which Bowen owed Beecher for services on the *Independent*, on condition that Bowen should also sign the retraction he never intended to abide by.

THE AUTHOR OF THE 'COVENANT.'

"The so-called 'covenant,' in which Beecher, Bowen and Tilton were to forget and forgive each the other's offenses against himself, was drawn up by T. D. Sherman, of Plymouth Church. It was signed in Mr. Freeland's house, and was kept as closely concealed as possible. It was given to the press by a warm, personal friend of Tilton, whose wisdom and sagacity have, in this instance, clearly overreached themselves. 'Suffolk' was reticent until the crisis was nearly past, and then launched the 'covenant' on the stream of public debate.

BOWEN ABOUT TO SPEAK.

"On Friday, Henry E. Bowen, son of Henry C. Bowen, and nominal editor of the *Union*, telegraphed to his father:

"'It is out. What shall I do?' HENRY E. BOWEN.'"

"The father replied from Indianapolis:

"'Do nothing.' HENRY C. BOWEN.'"

"But yesterday evening Henry C. Bowen telegraphed to his son:

"'I am glad I am free. Shall be home Monday or Tuesday.'

"Henry C. Bowen asserts he will withdraw all his promises of concealment, and will confess all that he knows about Beecher.

WHY BOWEN CASHIERED TILTON.

"When Theodore Tilton was discharged by Henry C. Bowen from the *Union* and the *Independent*, Henry C. Bowen, being pressed for an explanation, stated that Tilton was dismissed from his employ for improper overtures to a lady engaged in his office, as well as for flagrant acts of immorality, in which persons of good standing in this community were also implicated. And it was this same Theodore Tilton, who afterward said that, of 'his good will' to Bowen, he would never repeat the latter's charges against Beecher, having received twenty thousand dollars in the *interim*.

"*Moulton*. — Francis Moulton once had the reputation of being a shrewd man. But the Beecher-Bowen-Tilton matter has demolished that reputation. Just at the wrong moment when Bowen's back was turned, Moulton caused the publication of that fatal 'covenant.' Now, no one possibly repents it more bitterly than he. The cowards ran away from Fate, not daring to meet her, and when she caught up with the fugitives their best friends fell in the general slaughter.

CHAPTER XXXII.

[*From the Brooklyn Sunday Review, June 1, 1873*]

THE BEECHER SCANDAL.

VIRTUAL TERMINATION OF THE CASE—RETRACTION OF THE CHARGES AGAINST THE PASTOR BY THEIR AUTHOR—GENERAL ACCOUNT OF THE COMPLICATION.

“When, some eight months ago, charges which respectable journals hesitate even to name were published in the columns of Woodhull and Claflin’s *Weekly* against the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher of this city, the community as a whole felt not more astonished than indignant. To have accepted them as in any measure true would have necessitated the belief in hypocrisy of proportions never before dreamed of; to look upon them as owing parentage solely to the malice of the writer’s mind, required an assumption of infamy against Mrs. Woodhull which not the most violent of her enemies had dared to associate with her name. Recognizing this, the conviction became general that while Mr. Beecher was innocent, some person concealed from the public eye, with a design not to be comprehended, had woven the tale and imposed it upon her over-credulous and not too-sensitive mind. Mr. Beecher’s spotless life as a minister, his eminent services as a citizen, and unceasing contributions toward the elevation of public thought, as a thinker, more than logically offset and neutralized the slanders in reflecting minds; but in his very conspicuity and power was seen to reside the temptation likely to spur groveling, avaricious and unscrupulous cunning to the promulgation of audacious lies, calculated to destroy his influence and blast his reputation. ‘Who is to be held responsible for this work?’ became a common question. The interrogatory owed form not to idle curiosity, but to a desire on the part of men and women believing in things of good repute, to see deserved punishment visited upon the guilty, and

even such tarnish as may be inflicted by evil breath upon any name removed from that of Mr. Beecher.

"For a time it seemed as if the whole matter must remain a mystery. Mr. Beecher and his friends declined to speak upon the subject, and those who gave publication to the story had evidently told all they knew. In this condition were affairs when the *Review*, after patient and unobtrusive investigation, learned, almost to a certainty, that Henry C. Bowen, editor of the *Independent* and of the Brooklyn *Daily Union*, was the author of the slander.

"Not, however, until moral certainty had been carried to the point of demonstration was there a word in these columns written in this relation against him. It was felt that no matter what his faults, to have acted upon anything short of noontide evidence, would have been only less outrageous than that which he is now by his own confession seen to have committed against his pastor. To the circulation of an unproven charge destined to do evil, there must be either deliberate malice or thoughtless imbecility, and as the *Review* desired the fame for neither, it waited for the facts. The facts were obtained, and the people of Brooklyn were told that Henry C. Bowen was the man responsible for the infamous allegations.

"On the heels of the *Review's* discovery came the publication of Mr. Theodore Tilton's letter, detailing with all the circumstantiality of unmixed and exact truth the time when and place where Bowen had started the slander in the direction of journalism. Since then the *Review* has not hesitated to point out what in its judgment was the duty at once of Plymouth Church and the community in the premises. As if, however, to wipe out every semblance of doubt on the subject and forever set at rest the character of Mr. Beecher's fair seeming enemy, our readers are to-day presented with Bowen's retraction, signed with his own hand, and witnessed by both Mr. Tilton and Mr. Beecher. After the amount of discussion to which this whole matter has been subject, the retraction hardly seems to require anything either in the nature of elucidation or confirmation. Standing alone, it tells as clearly as language can that Mr. Bowen charged Mr. Beecher with adultery, and that he, Bowen, lied deliberately when he did so.

BUT as no event can be properly understood apart from the events which may be said to constitute its context, there is a certain amount of historical interest at least in the following authoritative narrative, copied in part from the *Eagle* :

"After many years of trust on the one side and betrayal on the other, it occurred to Mr. Bowen that an honest penny could be turned by having Mr. Beecher edit the *Independent*. He called upon Mr. Beecher, stated his object, and after expatiating upon the grand opportunities which a journal like the *Independent* afforded in the right hands for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, requested him to become its editor. He accepted the offer, and how the work was performed is a matter of common knowledge. The *Independent* from insignificance was raised to power under Mr. Beecher's editorship, and between his name and labors the proprietor passed from bankruptcy to affluence. During the early part of his connection with the *Independent*, Mr. Beecher was recognized by Bowen as one whose reputation he could not afford to injure in any way without pecuniarily affecting himself, for his fortune was the paper, and the paper was practically Mr. Beecher. For personal reasons, however, Mr. Beecher saw fit to resign his editorial chair, and with that resignation Mr. Bowen saw fit to renew his slanders. He was afraid of rivalry in the religious publication business, and thinking that Mr. Beecher's alliance with another paper would seal the fate of the *Independent*, he set deliberately about the work of sealing Mr. Beecher's fate by blasting his reputation. That Bowen's fears were not groundless, is shown by the fact that several editorial offers were made to Mr. Beecher the moment it was known he had become disconnected with the *Independent*. [Here, by way of parenthesis, it may be stated that the immediate cause of Mr. Beecher's withdrawal from the *Independent* was a political one. While he was yet editor of it, but during his absence, it assailed him fiercely for his Cleveland letter. He did not like that treatment, and not liking it, resigned; although so disgusted had he become with Bowen's management in other respects, that some other pretext would shortly have been adopted for retirement from the association.] As has been intimated, when Mr. Beecher withdrew, Mr. Bowen commenced to slander him, not openly, but behind

his back. Mr. Tilton's letter indicates the character of the stories told. This proceeded for months before any one informed Mr. Beecher what was going on. It was a delicate matter which nobody seemed disposed to handle. Finally, one of the more prominent members of Plymouth Church called upon Mr. Beecher and said that Bowen was telling fearful stories about him. Beecher was disposed to treat the matter lightly, but the member was so strenuous on the point that Mr. Beecher said, 'Well, I shall appoint Mr. H. B. Claflin, Mr. Freeland and Mr. Howard a committee of three to hear these charges. You tell them all you know about them, and if Bowen will, let him do the same, and if they say there is anything requiring action on my part I will act.'

"The member never returned to say what the result was, but Mr. Claflin upon inquiry told Mr. Beecher some time after that there was nothing in it but idle rumor; nothing which should occasion in him any uneasiness.

"For two or three months previous to this there had not been much cordiality of feeling existing between Bowen and Beecher. Now, however, what little had been left was wholly extinguished.

"Their paths, metaphorically speaking, lay in different directions. So marked did this coolness become that it became matter of common observation among 'the brethren,' and the brethren being on the side of Mr. Beecher and not at all in sympathy with any one disposed to darken his character, they also assumed an icy demeanor toward the proprietor of the *Independent*. This had continued for fully eight months when Mr. Freeland called upon Mr. Beecher one evening, and in a manner that showed his sympathy had been greatly excited, said:

"'Mr. Beecher, can't you do something for Mr. Bowen, he feels terrible?'

"'What,' said Mr. Beecher, 'can I do? I will do anything I can for him up to the line of truth and honor. I am not responsible for any existing misunderstanding, and I shan't be responsible for its continuance.'

"Mr. Freeland said, by way of rejoinder to this, that Bowen felt that he was under the ban of society, that his brethren were looking upon him with disfavor, and that nothing but Mr.

Beecher's smile could again make the sun of their good-will to shine upon him.

"To this Mr. Beecher said: 'What shall I do?'

"Mr. Freeland then said that he would invite Mr. Bowen to come to his house, and that he, Beecher, should also attend, and that when there all past differences could be smoothed over.

"This Mr. Beecher agreed to, and this was done. After talking upon some general subjects Beecher, finding himself with Bowen in a corner alone, asked him to open his heart and tell him the cause of his hard feeling, if he had any.

"To the astonishment, though not to the dismay, of Mr. Beecher, Bowen drew from his pocket a paper with some notes, and after intimating that he expected such an invitation proceeded deliberately to submit what for want of a better, came to be called the points of settlement.

"The substance of these points was that he, Bowen, felt aggrieved at Beecher's withdrawal from the *Independent*, and that he asked him to, if not write, at least allow his sermons to be published in it.

"He complained of the coldness of the brethren, and desired Beecher specially to commend him to their favor.

"He also said that his home had been less pleasant to him since Beecher had ceased visiting it—asked him to renew his visits, and write a letter which he, Bowen, might read to his wife, showing that he was once more in the confidence and esteem of his pastor.

"To all these points Mr. Beecher agreed. His sermons were published in the *Independent*, and he wrote a card, which was published, authorizing the *Independent* so to publish; he commended Bowen at prayer meeting as one of the old members of the church, deserving well of those who had come into the inheritance; he wrote the letter, expressive of confidence desired, and finally visited the family. The night on which all this was arranged, Bowen and Beecher walked through the streets of Brooklyn arm in arm, and discussing with tears in their eyes, old troubles, old triumphs, and the possibilities of future good. Bowen could not tell how happy he felt. He had, he said, but a few years to live, and these he desired to turn wholly to moral account. In this resolve he was of course encouraged by Mr. Beecher.

"After such a making up as this, judge of Beecher's astonishment to learn hardly a week later, that Bowen, on being congratulated upon the reconciliation, denied the whole thing, and declared that so far from caring for him, he had evidence in his hands which would in twenty-four hours drive him out of Brooklyn. This statement was made to J. T. Howard. Not a week before, Bowen had pleaded weakness, credulity and everything else by way of forgiveness, and Beecher had consented to bury the whole of it. A week later, with the ink hardly dry on the solicited letter, he renews in aggravated form all his previous slanders, and declares the man whose smile he had wept to win, a victim depending upon his mercy.

"Why should Bowen have changed so suddenly in his tone, it may be asked. Briefly, because he learned Beecher had resolved to become editor of the *Christian Union*. He feared a rivalry. Rivalry, with Beecher at its head, sent a pang through every nerve of his avaricious soul, and to disarm it, he believed all available means, right means.

"The matter, so far as Beecher's reputation was concerned, now became serious, and the friends of Beecher determined to visit condign punishment on the guilty head. Bowen had not bargained for this; his object was to work in secret, not openly, and therefore he became afraid. In his fear he went to Theodore Tilton and told him never to repeat what he, Bowen had said of Beecher.

"Tilton replied, he should suit himself on that subject. Bowen, enraged at this and violating two contracts, discharged Tilton almost on the spot. The results of that discharge are apparent; Tilton brought suit to recover about twenty thousand dollars breach of contract. Bowen was disposed to fight, and would have fought had not Tilton written the subjoined letter and threatened to publish it. To prevent its publication, Bowen drew his check for Tilton's claim. Upon the heels of this little piece of commerce the retraction now published was drawn up. Beecher was inclined to be merciful, and Bowen rolled in the dust of repentance, but Beecher's friends saw that while Bowen might be silent, some definite protection against him in the future was required. Of this Bowen was told; his past course was recited to him, the forbearance shown mentioned, and the assurance given that upon all the past silence

should be maintained unless he broke faith in the future. With this understanding he signed the retraction, a retraction, no matter how viewed, that places him at once in the light of a liar and a slanderer.

"The signature of this, one would have supposed would have been perfect estoppel on Bowen: but no, he continued with all the old time effrontery in his old way. When the 'Beecher Scandal' proper got afloat, he intimated everywhere that it was true. And even went so far as to state that Beecher did not speak because he dare not. He spoke of carrying burdens that did not belong to him, and intimated that nothing but an obligation to remain silent kept his tongue still. He gave it to be understood everywhere, that at any moment he could put himself right before the world, but that in doing so he would damn Beecher. In these declarations Beecher's friends recognized a spirit not to be trusted in any way, and in mere self-defense they have therefore been compelled to make public the facts as herein set forth. By way of preliminary to the publication, Beecher wrote a letter to Bowen ten days ago, clearing him from all obligation to be silent, and bidding him if he could in any way help himself to do it by the wildest possible utterance. Bowen did not care to avail himself of that liberty, although the letter containing it was read in the presence of H. B. Claflin and Frank Moulton.

"With these statements the retraction will be more fully comprehended than without them.

THE DOCUMENTS.

"The following is the letter of explanation from the gentleman who furnished the subjoined documents to the press:

"*Sir*:—It is high time that the torrent of slander against Henry Ward Beecher be arrested. I have in my possession a copy of the disavowal of all the charges and imputations against Mr. Beecher ever made by Henry C. Bowen, which was executed on the 2d of April, 1872. Without Mr. Beecher's knowledge, I have held this in my hands from that time to this, and now, without his knowledge, I give this document to the world, and estop and convict the principal offender against truth, public decency and the rights of reputation.

"My inducement to do this is the fact that Mr. Bowen has of late repeatedly declared that he had never disavowed his charges against Mr. Beecher, but that he yet insisted on their

truth. And now the public can understand the brave silence which the great preacher has kept under this protracted storm of slander. He has covenanted to bury the past and to maintain peace and brotherhood. The violation of that agreement by Henry C. Bowen unseals my mouth if it does not open the lips of the pastor of Plymouth Church.

“‘NEW YORK, May 29, 1873.

SUFFOLK.’

THE DISAVOWAL.

“‘We three men, earnestly desiring to remove all causes of offense existing between us, real or fancied, and to make Christian reparation for injuries done or supposed to be done, and to efface the disturbed past, and to provide concord, good will and love for the future, do declare and covenant, each to the other, as follows :

“‘I. I, Henry C. Bowen, having given credit, perhaps without due consideration, to tales and inuendoes affecting Henry Ward Beecher, and being influenced by them, as was natural to a man who receives impressions suddenly, to the extent of repeating them (guardedly however, and within limitations, and not for the purpose of injuring him, but strictly in the confidence of consultation), now feel that therein I did him wrong. Therefore I disavow all the charges and imputations that have been attributed to me as having been by me made against Henry Ward Beecher, and I declare, fully and without reserve, that I know nothing which should prevent me from extending to him the most cordial friendship, confidence and Christian fellowship. And I expressly withdraw all the charges, imputations and inuendoes imputed as having been made and uttered by me, and set forth in a letter written by me to Theodore Tilton on the 1st of January, 1871 (a copy of which letter is hereto annexed), and I sincerely regret having made any imputations, charges, or inuendoes unfavorable to the Christian character of Mr. Beecher. And I covenant and promise that for all future time I will never, by word or deed, recur to, repeat or allude to any or either of said charges, imputations and inuendoes,

“‘II. And I, Theodore Tilton, do, of my own free will and friendly spirit toward Henry Ward Beecher, hereby covenant and agree that I will never again repeat, by word of mouth or otherwise, any of the allegations, or imputations, or inuendoes

contained in my letters hereunto annexed, or any other injurious imputations or allegations suggested by or growing out of these, and that I will never again bring up or hint at any difference or ground of complaint heretofore existing between the said Henry C. Bowen or myself, or the said Henry Ward Beecher.

“‘III. I, Henry Ward Beecher, put the past for ever out of sight and out of memory. I deeply regret the causes for suspicion, jealousy and estrangement which have come between us. It is a joy for me to have my old regard for Henry C. Bowen and Theodore Tilton, restored, and a happiness to me to resume the old relations of love, respect and reliance to each and both of them. If I have said anything injurious to the reputation of either, or have detracted from their standing and fame as Christian gentlemen and members of my church, I revoke it all, and heartily covenant to repair and reinstate them to the extent of my power.

(Signed)

“‘H. C. BOWEN,

“‘THEODORE TILTON,

“‘H. W. BEECHER.’

“‘BROOKLYN, April 2, 1872.’

“In addition to the foregoing, it need only be added that the deacons of the church have resolved upon an investigation; and that Mr. Bowen must either justify his action or leave the congregation.

“Mr. Henry C. Bowen started five days ago for Indianapolis, Ind., for the benefit of his health. He is expected back in a few days; till then it is not supposed that the public will hear anything about the matter from him. The publication of this statement from Mr. Beecher is the talk of the town. The Plymouth Church deacons held a meeting on Friday evening at the house of Deacon Fitzgerald, and it was resolved to investigate the matter on Mr. Beecher’s recommendation. It is also said that the proof is conclusive as to Bowen’s baseness. However, we hope the mystery surrounding the whole affair will be cleared up.

[*From Woodhull & Claflin’s Weekly.*]

BOWEN’S RETRACTION — EDITORIAL.

“Henry C. Bowen, in a very carefully worded and decidedly ambiguous retraction, acknowledges that he is the virtual jour-

nalistic father of the slanders which have for the past eight months been in circulation against the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. The existence of this retraction has been known to most of the newspaper men of the city for two months at least, but not until within the last few days did it pass into hands that made access to it either safe or certain. With the other facts of the case it was up to that time kept in mystery. Dark hints were thrown out in abundance enough about it by those in whose favor it was, but simple statement was not to be obtained. Now, however, that it is obtained, two questions arise: What shall we do about it? What can we do about it? How much of a retraction is it? evidently enough, so far as Mr. Henry C. Bowen is concerned, there is nothing in the way of punishment but social ostracism; that can be done, and that this will practically be done, is a matter of absolute certainty. Men with characters to lose are not likely to take him into their confidence, and men who find their account in keeping the favor of men of note are not likely to hazard that favor by even appearing to be his friends. Socially, therefore, his doom may be considered as sealed. But Henry C. Bowen, personally, is the least important figure in the drama. The eyes of Brooklyn and, for that matter, of the country, are not upon him, but on the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. The question, therefore, of most vital importance now is as to his future. Can this document be considered as effecting his clearance? Does it remove even suspicion from his character? or does there still remain something to be explained? That considerable yet remains to be explained will hardly be denied by even the warmest of Mr. Beecher's friends. No matter what may be thought of Henry C. Bowen, it is by no means evident that Mr. Beecher was as he should have been when he entered into the compact shown by the document in question.

"Had he been strong in his innocence, no matter what the strength of his charity, would he not have insisted upon something more definite than was obtained? Had he been guilty, could he have obtained much less? Bowen, in going to his own destruction, does not appear to have greatly contributed to Beecher's security. He admits that he acted the part of a vile and malicious slanderer, that he was over hasty in the circulation of unauthenticated stories, but he denies the parentage of

the stories, and expresses no belief as to their absolute falsehood. 'Perhaps,' he says, 'I lent an over-willing ear;' but he nowhere intimates the belief that in his present estimation they were without foundation. It is true he disclaims all knowledge, but knowledge and belief are vastly different things; and a man may have faith in a great many actions that he could not possibly have seen. In a word, this retraction puts Bowen beyond the pale of confidence, but it does not bring Mr. Beecher within it. There is more occasion for speech on Mr. Beecher's part than there ever was before. What are we to think of his conception of a Christian gentleman, when we find him characterizing by that term a man against whose vile tongue he found it necessary to protect himself by written agreement? And what of his protestations of friendship, when we see him covenanting to commend publicly to the good will of unsuspecting church members, the man whose heart he believed to be black with iniquity?

"Did not Mr. Beecher in all this agree to perpetrate a deliberate fraud? According to his own statement it is clear he had found Bowen a man unworthy to be trusted in any relation of life, and yet in his capacity of minister he publicly commends him to trust in the most sacred relations. Does not this demand explanation? Mr. Beecher was undoubtedly at liberty to forgive all the injuries he chose, but he was not at liberty to hold a scheming scoundrel up before the eyes of the young as a person worthy of admiration. Yet this is exactly what he did. Bowen was a deacon in his church; Bowen took an active part in the management of the congregation; and Bowen was to be seen literally in the arms of Mr. Beecher. Now, what did all that mean? If Bowen was the slanderer represented, and Beecher knew it, an outrage was clearly permitted in so tolerating him; if he was fit for such honor, he is to-day the victim of unparalleled persecution. On any hypothesis, however, explanation is needed: and unless the members of Plymouth Church propose to make Christianity a gigantic farce, they will insist upon an explanation.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

[From the *Pittsburgh Leader*, June 8.]

MRS. WOODHULL DYING.

"The telegraph reports that Victoria Woodhull is dying, or at least very dangerously ill. Whether this report is reliable or whether it is merely a characteristic attempt of the 'obscene sisters' to create a public sympathy of which they can avail themselves in their forthcoming trial, we have no means of knowing. If, however, it should be confirmed as genuine, the world will be rid of one of the most remarkable, albeit terrible and dangerous women, who ever lived in it.

"It serves no useful purpose to underrate the great ability of Victoria Woodhull. Those who have read her principal productions, especially those who have perused the awful Beecher-Tilton article, which has given her such a lurid celebrity, cannot but acknowledge to themselves, however much they might like to deny it, that she is a writer of high culture and tremendous power. The readers of her *Weekly* — which, by the way, is by no means suppressed, but comes forth week after week, filled with fulminations against religion, marriage and organized society — feel the fatal fascination of her strong and clear style, however much they may reprobate her argument. And to this ability is added an apparent earnestness of conviction that is difficult to resist, and a fearlessness that the world has rarely seen equalled in man or woman. Her death will be a greater blow to the Communists and Anarchists, of all beliefs and 'isms' that have clustered around her standard, than anything that has ever happened to them. For whatever their theories, we suspect even the strongest-faithed Spiritualist of them all will hardly maintain that Victoria in the spirit could continue the work in writing, speaking and organizing which Victoria in the flesh has fully shown her ability to do.

"But because she will no longer be here to give them life,

will the desperate social heresies, the irreligious beliefs of the Woodhull die with her? We are not sanguine enough to think so. The freedom of opinion and latitude of action which are justly the boast of our country carry with them the permission to live for many opinions and actions which we do not like and which are intrinsically bad. It is not ours to kill them, and God only can and will put them down in his own good time. Of this sort, which we must leave to time and Providence, are the tenets of the followers of Woodhull.

“Will the Great Scandal she has raised die with the Woodhull? We neither believe nor hope that it will. The truth is that this scandal has got out of Woodhull's hands and is now the concern of the church and the nation. The triple agreement of Tilton, Bowen and Beecher proves if there were no other proof, that the charges against the Plymouth pastor originated, not with her but in Plymouth Church. While on the other hand that agreement disproves nothing whatever, but leaves the mystery deeper and darker than ever. That agreement *proves* Bowen to be a scoundrel, Tilton a coward or hypocrite, and Beecher no indignantly innocent man, but at best a too ready forgiver, and apparently a certifier to the Christian character of a man he knew to be a scoundrel. There is, there must be, something behind all this which is yet concealed. Plymouth Church owes it to Beecher, to the Christian church and indeed to the Christian and moral sense of the whole country that a thorough investigation demonstrate what this ‘something behind’ really is. The time for ‘brave silence’ is past; the scandal must be probed and the truth found, whether Mrs. Woodhull lives or dies, or her adherents will have their substantial victory in seeing a profound distrust of the great preacher of America, and through him, of all exemplars of virtue and piety spread through the land.

[From the *Dispatch*, Pittsburgh, Pa.]

A WORD FOR THE WOODHULL.

“It is no thankful task to take up the cudgel in defense of offenders against society, be they men or women, who oppose the tenets of religion, and labor incessantly for the subversion of recognized codes of morality. We are quite well aware of this truth; but however violently it may find force in applica-

tion, we should not be deterred from doing justice no matter how despised the person who thereby is vindicated or high in public opinion stand those against whom such vindication may militate.

"Mrs. Victoria Woodhull is not an exemplary character — perhaps of all individuals who have come prominently before the public within the past five years there is none regarded with more general contempt. Mrs. Woodhull is, in the estimation of many, an unprincipled adventuress, who has gained notoriety by assault upon the fundamental principles of our social usages. It is generally believed that her course has been prompted, not by an irresistible tendency toward championing what she believed to be proper and good, so much as by desire to make herself a national celebrity and at once satisfy a craving for infamous distinction and love for money.

"Still she deserves as fair and accurate judgment as a better woman, and an unjust sentence having on one particular count been passed upon her, it is now warrantable to ask for a writ of error, reversal of that sentence, a *venire de novo*, and acquittal. The special cause upon which Woodhull was grossly injured was that involving the relations of Henry Ward Beecher and Theodore Tilton. Six months ago, in propagating her doctrines of free love, Mrs. Woodhull came forward, and to show that what she claimed to be the weakness of the present marriage system, as opposed to promiscuous sexual relations, published grave charges against the celebrated Plymouth pastor. We need not review these, their general tenor or specifications, here. They will be remembered as involving allegations of gross immorality. Mrs. Woodhull did not avow that she, of her own personal knowledge, knew the offenses were committed. She expressly stated that Theodore Tilton and others had told her of them. Yet, when the publication was made, the holy world raised its hands in horror, pronounced Woodhull an awful liar, declared that she had fabricated the entire story, and that not one of her assertions had foundation in fact.

"But there were those who read her fearful effusion, not through the glasses of prejudiced opinion, but with the clear and searching eyes of experts in the examination of deed and motives. And while the holy world shook its head in feigned

disgust, even as it rolled the morsel of scandal with great gusto under its tongue, these experts felt impelled to the conclusion that whoever sinned or whoever lied in the terrible scandal at issue, Woodhull had only told what had been told her. It was impossible, they saw at a glance, for the most intelligently evil-disposed person to construct a great lie and mark it with the same minuteness of detail that distinguished this. And, again, it did not accord with reason that any one, other than an idiot should build such a slander against the most eminent preacher in the country, and refer, by way of proof, to well known men and women, who, if the narrative was in any part a lie, could and would at a moment's notice have refuted it.

"Still Woodhull was condemned. But now how is it? Why, now she is, so far as concerns her veracity in that famous libel, vindicated. Mr. Beecher, Mr. Bowen and Mr. Tilton, by the covenant recently given to the public, acknowledge that such charges were made against Mr. Beecher before they were retailed at the point of Woodhull's pen. The Woodhull made no charge, on her own responsibility; she simply constituted herself the medium by which those made by others were transmitted to the public. And in doing this she was not animated by malice so much as a desire for the advancement of a doctrine, which, however offensive and wretched in itself, she claimed to believe in.

"Hence it is but fair that the load of obloquy placed upon her shoulders, because of the supposed untruth of her Beecher *expose*, be removed; she has enough to answer for without being subjected to sentence for that of which she has not been guilty. Meantime, to speak very plainly, the best thing Mr. Beecher can do is to step forward and say aye or no whether he be guilty of the offenses ascribed to him or not. 'Brave silence' is a thing of the past. Was it very brave in Mr. Beecher to stand by all the time and witness Mrs. Woodhull denounced as the fabricator of charges which he, Mr. Beecher, must have known did not originate with her? 'Brave silence,' is a good thing under certain circumstances, but we cannot forget there is also a silence of another kind, and that occasionally it is difficult to distinguish between the two. So far as Woodhull is concerned, while it may have been indiscreet on

her part to publish the Beecher Scandal, she can no longer be accused of having woven it from her imagination.

[From the *Albany Evening Journal*, Monday, June 30, 1873.]

WOODHULL-BEECHER-BOWEN.

“ One more chapter in the most extraordinary case, in which Mrs. Woodhull, Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Bowen, of the *Independent*, and Tilton, of the *Golden Age*, are involved, was concluded Thursday. Mrs. Woodhull and her associates were acquitted in the trial on a charge of publishing and circulating obscene literature, by direction of the Judge of the U. S. Court, who said that the prosecution had no case. This is a righteous decision. The prosecution of Mrs. Woodhull was one under false pretenses from the outset. It was not really that anybody believed that she had published anything obscene that she was prosecuted, but because she had made most fearfully damaging charges against Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. This, and this only, was the real cause of the proceedings against her, as every sensible person at all cognizant of the case knows. She was most shamefully oppressed in the preliminary legal proceedings, both by demands for excessive bail and by imprisonment. We do not care whether her ideas and teachings are false or true, sound or unsound, she was fully entitled to all the privileges of any person accused, and these were for a long time denied to her. Now that the prosecution of Mrs. Woodhull has broken down, we may hope that Plymouth Church will take the steps which any other Christian church would have taken long ago in similar circumstances, to vindicate its pastor and clear itself of complicity in this scandal. Plymouth Church, as we said long since, cannot ignore this business. If it does, then it will forfeit the respect of all honest people and be rightly adjudged to be guilty of all Mrs. Woodhull and others have charged. There is no possibility of much longer dodging the issue. That church must act now or stand convicted and condemned as unworthy.

“ There is a very general concurrence of opinion, so far as the press is concerned, in reference to the unfortunate, in fact ruinous position in which Mr. Henry C. Bowen, of the *Independent*, now stands with reference to the Beecher Scandal. When he

called on Mrs. Woodhull last week to seek her assistance, ostensibly in his own vindication, though Mrs. Woodhull declined to trust him, it was announced that he proposed to enter at once on that vindication. But nothing has been heard from him yet. We do not think any one was ever in a worse position than that he now occupies. The rather boastful editor of a very prominent religious newspaper, an officious and foremost member of Mr. Beecher's church, he now stands in the attitude of having first charged Mr. Beecher with atrocious immoralities, of having set Tilton on to repeat and urge these charges, of having kept silent when these charges first became public, of still maintaining that silence, never by so much as a single word having either retracted the charges or done anything to substantiate them. This would put him in a sufficiently bad attitude, but now we have more items to be added. He made a secret bargain with the man whom he had accused and also with the man whom he got to join him in making the accusations, to keep their knowledge to themselves, and never again to mention or allude to the matter; and now, on top of that, he visits in company with another prominent member of Plymouth Church, the woman who made public the charges which Bowen originally made, and asks her to furnish him with evidence to prove them. If all that does not make the most extraordinary case ever heard of, and put Mr. Bowen in the most unenviable position conceivable, then we don't know what facts or circumstances could make such a case or put any man in such a position. Meanwhile Plymouth Church shuts down all inquiry and fellowships all alike, whether they are slanderers or slandered, false or true. And this caps the climax of this most amazing business."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.—EDITORIAL BY VICTORIA C. WOODHULL, JAN'Y 12, 1873.

“ After eight months of persistent silence, under the pressure of circumstances that could not be otherwise met for the time, Mr. Beecher stamps something ‘in general and particular as utterly false.’ But to obtain even a general idea of the meaning of this so-called denial, a retrospective glance at the aspect of affairs, and at the various movements that have occurred since November 2, must be taken, so that the attention will not be diverted from the real issue by this craftily-worded letter of Mr. Beecher’s. In other words, what has heretofore prevented this denial, and what now compels it ?

“ It will be remembered that the substance of the statement of November 2 was that Mr. Beecher had for years maintained sexual natural relations. A variety of circumstances were grouped, involving Paulina Wright Davis, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Theodore Tilton, Frank Moulton, and others, all the facts presented being based upon the evidence of these persons, individually and in groups, and confirmed by various other constructions.

“ No sane person will for an instant doubt that had there been no truth in what had been related, Mr. Beecher would have instantly pronounced the whole statement false. Instead of this, however, he made the most strenuous exertions to obtain denials from the persons given as evidence, realizing that his own words, unsupported by theirs, might call down upon him, from them, a speedy confirmation of the truth of the statements. Failing in this, he did not care to deny anything, and more especially since one of the parties, instead of denying, confirmed the statement, except as to mere phraseology.

“ But something had to be done ; and his friends, Noah Davis, Commissioner Osborn, and the Y. M. C. A. Comstock

came to his rescue. The publishers of the statement, it was proposed, should be arrested upon the charge of sending obscene literature through the mails, which was done. Mr. Beecher was to remain silent, and they were to be convicted and 'sent up' on this charge, and 'the reputation of a revered citizen, which was well worth the while of the United States to vindicate,' was thereby to be cleared of all imputation.

"After waiting nearly eight months, through all sorts of anxieties and fears and threatenings, for this much-to-be-desired consummation, instead of a conviction an acquittal is obtained, and the United States District Court boldly declares that all the proceedings had been made without a particle of law for a basis. This announcement is received by Mr. Beecher, and utterly confounds him, rendering him speechless for some minutes. He finds Comstock had deceived him; 'those women' were not convicted, and a revered citizen's reputation was not vindicated.

"Quickly following this disaster came the further news that charges were preferred against Henry C. Bowen by Mr. West, of Plymouth Church, for having slandered Mr. Beecher. Here was danger near home. How could this be averted? Evidently, if at all, by but one method, viz.: An emphatic personal denial, trusting to luck to be carried safely through. A most singularly unfortunate channel is, however, selected through which to make this public, and as its editorial accompaniment will forever remain an illustration of a peculiar phase of journalism in this age, we will give the denial as it stands, embraced by Mr. Kinsella in the *Brooklyn Eagle* of 30th ultimo:

"But as somewhat antecedent to this, and moreover as somewhat explanatory of some of its remarkable lapses from facts, we also present the following from the same paper:

[*From the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, June 26.*]

BEECHER, BOWEN AND WOODHULL.

"Late in the afternoon of Tuesday last a most remarkable conference was held at the house of the sisters of Woodhull and Claflin. The principal characters in the conference were Horace B. Claflin, Geo. H. Ellery (merchant,) Henry C. Bowen, Victoria C. Woodhull, Henry A. Bowen (broker,) Tennie C. Claflin,

Ed. Bowen (H. C.'s son,) Jas. McDermott (journalist,) Judge Reymart, Judge Wood.

"A short-hand reporter accompanied Henry C. Bowen and took down all that was said. This conference was held at the request of Mr. Bowen, and held for the purpose of eliciting proof in regard to certain charges concerning the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. The parties present were not lured unwillingly into the parlors of Mrs. Woodhull. They understood perfectly where and whom they were going to meet. Before entering into the details of that conference, a few facts concerning the way in which it was brought about will be of interest. Since the publication of the tripartite covenant between Bowen, Beecher and Tilton, the first-named individual has been anxiously looking about for the means of revenge. Hearing that Mr. James McDermott, editor of the Brooklyn Sunday Press, had seen in the possession of Mrs. Woodhull several letters written by Mr. Beecher and containing virtual admissions of guilt, Henry C. Bowen, through a nephew, made McD.'s acquaintance. An interview took place between the two, then Horace B. Claflin, Sr., Dr. Storrs, Bowen, McDermott and two or three others met and discussed the Beecher slander. An earnest effort was made on the part of Bowen and his friends to get possession of Mrs. Woodhull's alleged facts concerning Mr. Beecher's character. Meetings were held at Bowen's house, at the office of the *Independent*, and at other places by Bowen and his friends, but they failed to procure from McDermott the desired letters. Finally, it was suggested that Messrs. Claflin and Bowen should meet Mrs. Woodhull and Tennie Claflin at their residence. The proposition did not come from the sisters, but from one of the gentlemen in pursuit of Mr. Beecher. Mr. Claflin felt a little shy; remembering his position as a church member, he was afraid that his action might be criticised severely. As for Bowen, he was very anxious to meet the sisters. It was agreed that the visitors to Mrs. Woodhull should call upon her in carriages, and keep silent the fact of having met her. So anxious were they she should receive them, that one of Bowen's sons was dispatched to Victoria's lawyer for the purpose of securing a positive promise that the meeting should take place.

"Mrs. Woodhull did not send for Horace B. Claflin or Henry C. Bowen. They came of their own accord.

"Yesterday afternoon the writer called at No. 6 East Thirty-fourth street—a fine looking brown stone front house about half a block from Stewart's marble mansion. The reporter was met at the door by Tennie Claflin. Upon stating that he desired to see Mrs. Woodhull he was conducted into a neatly furnished parlor, the walls of which were decorated with immense oil paintings, one of large size representing the Virgin and Child. Presently Mrs. Woodhull entered the room. Her face was very pale, with the exception of a slight hectic flush upon her cheeks; she looked haggard and tired.

" 'I am feeling very ill,' she said, 'between my labors at the office, the effects of my imprisonment at Ludlow, and the wearisome vexations of fighting against a host of enemies, even though able only to fight women. I feel ill.'

"She indeed looked very ill and weak. It is quite evident that she is wearing out under this continual strain of excitement which she has experienced for the last few months.

"After a brief conversation, the reporter came to the subject in hand. Said he: 'I see by report in a morning paper that a conference was held here yesterday. Is the report a correct one?'

"*Mrs. Woodhull.*—'I do not feel like conversing about these matters, neither do I care to get into print. Heaven knows I have suffered enough abuse already—a great deal for one weak woman to bear.'

"The reporter assured her that as a report had already crept into the papers, nothing would be gained by silence.

" 'Well,' said she, 'the report was quite correct as far as it went, but it was not complete. What was said here yesterday would have filled a paper almost.'

"*Reporter.*—'Was this conference held at your solicitation?'

"*Mrs. W.* (emphatically)—'No! No! No! The proposition to meet me came from the other side.'

"*Reporter.*—'What did Henry C. Bowen come here for?'

"*Mrs. W.*—'He came here for corroborative evidence against Mr. Beecher. I said to him that I was astonished that he should come to me to vindicate his character. Said I to him, in substance, you have been blackguarded from one end of the coun-

try to the other and covered all over with slime. You knew of some of these facts years ago, and yet you have kept silent. I can scarcely believe that you are here to be vindicated. I believe that you are here in the interest of that gigantic fraud, Henry Ward Beecher. You and yours have said that one word from this crowd would stop my persecution. Sir, one word from you commenced it.'

"*Reporter.*—'What did Bowen say?'

"*Mrs. W.*—'He denied having taken part in my persecution.'

"Tennie spoke up here. Said she: 'I said to him, if you had no hand in my persecution, how is it that you sent for those papers which were used against me?'

"*Reporter.*—'What reply did he make?'

"*Tennie.*—'He said that when he saw anything interesting or spicy in our paper he was in the habit of sending for three or four copies.'

"*Reporter.*—'What questions did Bowen ask you?'

"*Mrs. W.*—'He said that he understood that I had evidence in my possession which would throw a great light on this Beecher business. He said quite clearly that with these facts he desired to vindicate his honor and that of his children. I told him that I had asked no one to help me vindicate myself; that eight months ago I commenced this fight and stood my ground without assistance. Said I, you are all millionaires; you and the press, with a few noble exceptions, have hounded and blackguarded me as no woman was ever hounded before. But I have touched bottom at last. I am on the incoming tide. Why come to me to vindicate you?'

"There was a sound of exultation in her voice.

"*Reporter.*—'Did Bowen ask you any further questions?'

"*Mrs. W.*—'He asked me if I had any correspondence with Beecher, and what the purport of the letters were?'

"*Reporter.*—'How did you reply?'

"*Mrs. W.*—'I informed him that I proposed to keep the purport of those letters to myself—and that any one of sense would have known that after several month's intimacy with Mr. Beecher, being with him frequently and alone, that our correspondence was not one of mere platonic affection. Still, I said, I am proud of my alliance with Mr. Tilton and Beecher. Right here let me say that I am only giving you the substance of

what I said. If I misrepresent anything, the stenographer who was here with Mr. Bowen can correct me. Now, as for Mr. Beecher, I have no personal enmity against him; what I am doing is not dictated by spite, but by principle, knowing from intimate acquaintance that Mr. Beecher is a Free Lover, and as he at different times proclaimed himself to be."

"*Reporter.*—'Where?'

"*Mrs. W.*—'I well remember one evening, in discussing these principles of social freedom in Theodore Tilton's front parlor bedroom, upstairs, Mr. Beecher said, with a great deal of unction, 'Mrs. Woodhull, we shall never have a better state of society until children are born on the scientific plan. What we want is stirpiculture.' I said, why not go into the pulpit and preach what you have said to me. He replied that he was years in advance of his congregation, and that if he should preach what he felt and knew to be the truth, he would preach to empty benches.'

"Mrs. Laura Cuppy Smith, a well known exponent of the women's rights doctrines, came into the room at this juncture. After being introduced to the writer she took occasion to refer to Paulina Wright Davis, a lecturess who has been reported as having given the lie to Mrs. Woodhull's charges. Mrs. Smith said she had recently had a conversation with Mrs. Davis, in which the latter denied the statement imputed to her. She further said she considered Mrs. Woodhull one of the best and truest of women.

"The reporter then went back to the subject of the conference. He asked if any of Mr. Beecher's letters to Mrs. Woodhull had been shown.

"*Mrs. W.*—'At the solicitation of Horace B. Claflin and Henry C. Bowen, I took back my declaration that I would not show the letters, and exhibited them to Bowen and Claflin.'

"*Reporter.*—'Did you let them read the contents?'

"*Mrs. W.*—'I did not. I let them see the signature and they each recognized the handwriting of Mr. Beecher. Mr. Bowen insisted on my giving the letters up, but I refused.'

"*Reporter.*—'Did Bowen threaten Mr. Beecher's expulsion?'

"*Mrs. W.*—'He made a very manly speech, in which he promised to vindicate his own and children's honor. In substance he said he had known of some of the evidence against Beecher

for years. What he wanted was corroborative evidence. If you have known of these facts for years why don't you take the bull by the horns yourself Mr. Bowen? He answered that his lips were now unsealed.'

*"Reporter.—*Did Mr. Claflin speak?"

"Mrs. W.—'Yes. I said to him, I am astonished to find you here. I imagined you the warm friend of Mr. Beecher, for I remember one of the first I met walking together just after I came out of Ludlow-street Jail was you and Mr. Beecher, Mr. Claflin said I must be mistaken; that he hadn't traveled with Mr. Beecher for several years. He added that he was here as a friend of Mr. Bowen. As for Mr. Bowen himself, that gentleman said he was here in the interest of Henry C. Bowen solely; that he wanted to go to his grave without a spot on his honor, and that he desired to justify the memory of the dead. He spoke very feelingly. It was a noble speech, and Mr. Ellery jumped to his feet, caught him by the hand and said, 'Mr. Bowen I think better of you for this.'"

*"Reporter.—*Did he say he was ready to move in the matter?"

"Mrs. W.—'If the man did not lie he will.'

*"Reporter.—*Did he explain his long silence?"

"Mrs. W.—'He said that he had felt in honor bound to keep silent; but now that others in whom he had trusted had talked, he felt that he must say something. His lips were now unsealed, and his dearest friends urged him to action. I said to him that I could not understand how he could go to church Sunday after Sunday and look in the face of this man who was reported to have debauched his wife, and then sit with sealed lips.'

*"Reporter.—*Did he give any reasons for his silence?"

"Mrs. W.—'He gave real reasons, but said he felt in honor bound to keep quiet.'

*"Reporter.—*How did the conference end?"

"Mrs. W.—'The final arbitration of the matter was left to George H. Ellery, of 38 Broadway. He is a man of wealth, and the peer of any man who sat in that conference. He has in his possession the corroborative evidence needed. To show you what my friend thought of this conference, please read this letter. I received it too late to act on it:

"NEW YORK, MONDAY, JUNE 23, 1873.

"TO VICTORIA WOODHULL:

"*Dear Madam*— I do not favor the proposed meeting at your house to-morrow evening.

"After all persecutions are abandoned by the friends and patrons of "Plymouth Church," it will be time enough to consider your future policy in relation to the pastor and other dignitaries of that concern. You are in no physical condition at this time to meet even those in whom you have confidence; you require above every thing rest for your tired brain, and I should think and say, if in any other woman, exhausted heart. Your safest guides are your lawyers. If however, you have given your word to meet these persons, then send them notice that you have requested Geo. H. Ellery, of 110 Second avenue, to be present.

With sincere regard, etc,

"GEO. H. ELLERY."

"Mr. Ellery was present, and so was one of Mrs. Woodhull's counsel."

"*Reporter*.—'You are quite sure what Bowen came here for?'"

"*Mrs. W.*—'He said that he had come specially from Woodstock to meet me; that he was here for corroborative evidence of Mr. Beecher's guilt, and that his lips were now unsealed.'"

"With this remark the interview ended. As the reporter turned to leave, Mrs. Woodhull said, in a tremulous sort of way: 'Remember that I am a woman who has stood up under abuse that would have crushed many. The press has been very cruel, but I do not complain, for time will right me. I simply ask that you will not distort my language or indulge in unkind insinuations. On the one side a prison stares me in the face—on the other I am met by the denunciations of the most powerful of enemies. Yet I have courage still, for truth will triumph. I shall yet be vindicated.'"

[*From the Brooklyn Eagle, June 30.*]

THE BOWEN-WOODHULL COMBINATION—MR. BEECHER SPEAKS.

"The *Eagle's* comment upon this matter and on its latest extraordinary aspects especially, has been based upon a confident hazard of established character and publicly spotless life, against 'charges' that never rose to the level of statement, and inunedoes which sprang from the most notable fellowship of

antipathies ever recorded. As a newspaper, on principle hospitable to all publishable facts, we have withheld nothing definite or tangible relating to this case, nor on the other hand been the chronicler of the small beer of abuse and gossip which has been as devoid of coherence as of respectable parentage. We have all along believed that we would be doing Christianity and sound morals a service, could we reduce this mass of calumny to a form that admitted of reply and refutation, or suitably outlaw it by fastening it upon its real author. The latter was no sooner accomplished than the author was revealed repudiating his own tissue of statements. To the inchoate and rank mess of contradictions was added the recantation of them by their self-proclaimed father. Thus the thing stood till the late extraordinary confederacy of persons to revitalize assertions which the principal of them had originated, and which had died on his hands. That confederacy was fruitful of nothing but dramatic agreement on a fell purpose, of dramatic contrast of character and of farcical failure of results. We characterized it as it deserved, regretting we had only airy visions to strike at, and that even by a junction so unusual the substance of no fact was imported into the case. As it struck us, must it have struck all reasoning readers. So must it have specially struck him with whose character it had most to do, and enmity to whom, was bond enough to unite the most anomalous beings that ever banded for a mutual design. Yet Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, who might have justifiably waited for these conspirators against his repose and honor to do something to entitle them to consideration, has seen fit, once and for all, to meet them in advance of more than the declaration of their intent, in the only way the indefiniteness and sweeping generalization of their averments allowed. We are sure that we do the cause of family peace, personal rights and Christian morality no small service to-day, in being able hereunder to publish the following explicit and emphatic denial and defiance in detail and in gross to his assailants, by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher:

“ *To the Editor of the Brooklyn Eagle* — In a long and active life in Brooklyn it has rarely happened that the *Eagle* and myself have been in accord on questions of common concern to our fellow citizens. I am for this reason impelled to acknowledge the unsolicited confidence and regard of which the columns of

the *Eagle* of late bear testimony. I have just returned to the city to learn that application has been made to Mrs. Victoria Woodhull for letters of mine supposed to contain information respecting certain infamous stories against me. I have no objection to have the *Eagle* state in any way it deems fit, that Mrs. Woodhull, or any other person or persons who may have letters of mine in their possession, have my cordial consent to publish them. In this connection, and at this time, I will only add that the stories and rumors which have for some time past been circulated about me, are grossly untrue, and I stamp them in general and in particular as utterly false.

“Respectfully,

“‘HENRY WARD BEECHER.’

“The confederacy of accusers can now have no excuse for not accepting this frank invitation to take all the world into their confidence. They can no longer dissemble resources which they have not. They must burrow in the earth or show their empty palms to the clear light of day. A man who has worn his life on his sleeve asks them to step to the front. They must do so, or forever after hold their peace, content if it can be got, with the contemptuous charity of a world too proud of the services of him they asperse to long remember those who would have made the destruction of his character the reconstruction of their own.

“Our gratification at this exact and opportune encounter of the case by Mr. Beecher is double in its causes. In it speaks the man with whom we have seldom agreed, except in an estimate of the value of character and in a common comprehension of the fairness and benevolence of the good people of this good city. There also remains this supreme satisfaction, that in laboring, though opponents, to do Mr. Beecher simple justice in this crisis of calumny through which he has passed, we have held the public sentiment of Brooklyn not only firm to the right and true, but held it to them, as identified with the career of our most distinguished citizen — one of the few who shed on Brooklyn a lustre that advances her fame throughout the world, and from whom in history our city, for having had him, will derive a peculiar greatness. To few Brooklynites need this be said, for they intuitionally, gratefully divine it so. But even those who have been hospitable to the slanders which may have

had a mission of discipline though suffering in them, would, the day after success had crowned their efforts, feel themselves the most atrocious of moral assassins and the meanest of men. For that from which we saved even the enemies of Henry Ward Beecher, they should be thankful, and will live to say so if they better their present character, as we hope. The rest of Brooklyn which has stood with us in this war of character against calumny will require no further stimulus to make their happiness, as have been their labors, identical with our own."

COMMENTS.

"Mr. Beecher says all stories and rumors that have appeared involving him in the past few months are utterly false.

"Does he refer to this:

"The position, however, of Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton is quite different. At Lewiston, Maine, she undoubtedly "denounced" Mrs. Woodhull's story, as the newspapers declared at the time; and Theodore Tilton holds a letter from her, in which she declines to stand in the precise attitude portrayed by Mrs. Woodhull. Yet an excellent lady, whose letter I have traced to its source, declared in the *Hartford Times* soon after Mrs. Stanton was interviewed in Maine, that she had "charged Mr. Beecher, to parties residing in Philadelphia and known to the correspondent, with very much the same offense of which Mrs. Woodhull speaks." This testimony is confirmed by Edward M. Davis, Esq., the disciple and son-in-law of the venerable Lucretia Mott, and by Mrs. Amelia Bloomer, who asserts that Mrs. Stanton whispered the scandal to her "a year and a half ago," and said "the Woodhull knew all about it." At Rochester, not long since, Mrs. Stanton publicly refused to deny anything; and last of all, she has recently sent to me, through a mutual friend, this word: "Assure Mr. Clark that I care more for justice than for Beecher." Mrs. Stanton in short has been somewhat perverted by Woodhull and denies the perversion.'

"Or, perhaps, it is this:

'THEODORE TILTON'S 'TRUE STORY.'

"He asserts that, in the fall of 1870 — Mrs. Tilton having just returned to her home from a watering-place — she was visited by Mr. Beecher; and that on this occasion the pastor of Plymouth Church unbridled his fiery passions, and besought of

Mrs. Tilton the most intimate relationship accorded by her sex. Such warmth of pastoral attention was declined by Mrs. Tilton, not with the loud anger of ostentatious virtue, but with the mature sadness of common sense. The good lady was surprised, and the true wife reported the occurrence to her husband. Greatly angered and grieved, he requested her to make a memorandum of it. She did so; and I give her own words, literally, as they were written :

“‘Yesterday afternoon my friend and pastor, Henry Ward Beecher, solicited me to become his wife in all the relations which that term implies.’

“In his manuscript book Mr. Tilton comments, with some evidence of pride, upon the delicate and skillful manner in which Mr. Beecher’s hideous overtures were here expressed. Mrs. Tilton’s language, is striking, and is apt to impress itself on the reader’s memory.

“Or, is it to this :

“THEODORE TILTON’S LETTER TO HIS ‘COMPLAINING FRIEND :’ ”

“One of the strangest epistles on record, and one which every careful reader was immediately obliged to record as a *negative confession of much that Mrs. Woodhull asserted :*

“ ‘ 174 LIVINGSTONE ST., BROOKLYN, Dec. 27, 1872.

“ ‘ *My Complaining Friend.*—Thanks for your good letter of bad advice. You say, “How easy to give the lie to the wicked story and thus end it forever.” But stop and consider. The story is a whole library of statements—a hundred or more—and it would be strange if some of them were not correct, though I doubt if any are. To give a general denial to such an encyclopædia of assertions would be as vague and irrelevant as to take up the *Police Gazette*, with its twenty-four pages of illustrations, and say, “This is all a lie.” So extensive a libel requires (if answered at all) a special denial of its several parts; and furthermore, it requires, in this particular case, not only a denial of things misstated, but a truthful explanation of other things that remain unstated and in mystery. In other words, the false story (if met at all) should be confronted and confounded by the true one. Now, my friend, you urge me to speak; but when the truth is a sword, God’s mercy sometimes commands it

sheathed. If you think I do not burn to defend my wife and little ones, you know not the fiery spirit within me. But my wife's heart is more a fountain of charity, and quenches all resentments. She says: "Let there be no suffering save to ourselves alone," and forbids a vindication to the injury of others. From the beginning she has stood, with her hand on my lips, saying, "Hush!" So when you prompt me to speak for her, you countervail her more Christian mandate of silence. Moreover, after all, the chief victim of the public displeasure is myself alone; and so long as this is happily the case, I shall try, with patience, to keep my answer within my own breast, lest it shoot forth like a thunderbolt through other hearts.

"Yours, truly,

"THEODORE TILTON."

"And if not, this:

"Some eight months after the commencement of the Beecher-Tilton differences, an investigation and a storm were thought to be brooding over Plymouth Church; and Mr. Beecher, fearing that Mrs. Tilton's memorandum (which he had heard of) might be brought to light, made bold to visit her in Mr. Tilton's absence. Although informed that she was sick in bed, he insisted on seeing her, and was finally admitted to her room. Mr. Tilton's 'true story' declares that the great preacher drew a doleful picture of his troubles. He pleaded with Mrs. Tilton that he was on the verge of ruin, and that she alone could save him. Mrs. Tilton finally sat up in bed, with book and paper in hand, and wrote at Mr. Beecher's dictation a few lines, the point of which is that in all his intercourse with her he '*had conducted himself as a gentleman and a Christian.*' Flushed with success, the Plymouth shepherd then pressed her to add that the troublesome memorandum in Moulton's hands had been wrested from her when she was 'ill.' and in 'an irresponsible condition.' She gave an oral promise also, as Mr. Tilton adds, that she would not appear against Mr. Beecher in any coming investigation, unless her husband should move in the matter. In 'the Woodhull's' scandal, she speaks of Mrs. Tilton's 'sweet concessiveness.' Much of it seems also evident in Mr. Tilton's 'true story.'

"On Mr. Tilton's return home, Mrs. Tilton again told him

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what had happened. He assures the reader that he would now have borne the humility of his wife's merciful retraction, had it not been for the concluding portion, which apparently placed him in the position of having compelled her to indite her first memorandum. Mr. Tilton's proud spirit, outraged at the possibility of this appearance of vulgar malice on his part — or even blackmail itself — had recourse at once to his unfailing social strategist, Mr. Moulton. He urged Mr. Moulton to hasten to Mr. Beecher and force him to give up Mrs. Tilton's last paper.

"Mr. Moulton went; and he had a long private conversation with his beloved pastor. He requested and insisted that the document should be given up. Among other things he reminded Mr. Beecher that the statement which he had just worried out of Mrs. Tilton was false on its face — as the lady was known to have been not 'ill' and 'in an irresponsible condition' when her original memorandum was made, but uncommonly well, as Mr. Beecher remembered — she having just returned home from a summer resort. Mr. Moulton further elucidated to his minister that Mrs. Tilton was now 'ill' and in an 'irresponsible condition,' instead of on the former occasion.

"Mr. Moulton's persuasions were not easily answered, though Mr. Beecher still held on to the paper. As the discussion sharpened, however, and Mr. Moulton evinced that he was not to be trifled with, Mr. Beecher finally asked him what he would do with the paper if it should be placed in his hands. 'I will keep the first memorandum and this one together,' said Moulton, 'and thus prevent you and Tilton from harming each other.'

"The following is a rumor; perhaps it is to this:

"This poor lady is said to have circulated, for many years, the most damaging reports against the character of her daughter, and against Mr. Beecher and Mr. Tilton. The earliest scandals concerning Mrs. Tilton and the Plymouth pastor are said to have proceeded from her. I must add, also, that a long time ago there were rumors, among the special acquaintances of the parties, that Mrs. Tilton was subject to the hallucination that some of Beecher's children were those of her own household.

"Or does he include this?

"BROOKLYN, June 1, 1871.

"MR. HENRY C. BOWEN:

"Sir — It was during the early part of the rebellion, if I recol-

lect aright, when you first intimated to me that Rev. Henry Ward Beecher had committed acts of adultery for which, if you should expose him, he would be driven from his pulpit. From that time onward your references to this subject were frequent and always accompanied with the exhibition of deep-seated injury to your heart. In a letter which you addressed to me from Woodstock, June the 16th, 1863, referring to this subject, you said: "I sometimes feel that I must break silence; that I must no longer suffer as a dumb man and be made to bear a load of grief most unjustly. One word from me would make—a rebellion throughout Christendom, I had almost said, and you know it. You have just a bit of the evidence from the great volume in my possession. I am not pursuing a phantom, but solemnly brooding over an awful reality."

"Subsequent to this letter and on frequent intervals, from this till now, you have repeated the statement that you could at any moment expel Henry Ward Beecher from Brooklyn. You have reiterated the same thing not only to me, but to others. Moreover, during the year just closed, your letters on the subject were marked with more feeling than heretofore, and were not unfrequently coupled with your emphatic declaration, that Mr. Beecher ought not to be allowed to occupy a public position as a Christian teacher and preacher.

"On the 15th of December, 1870, at an interview in your house, at which Mr. Oliver Johnson and I were present, you spoke freely and indignantly against Beecher as an unsafe visitor in the families of his congregation. You alluded by name to a woman, now a widow, whose husband's death you did not doubt was hastened by his knowledge that Beecher had maintained with her an improper intimacy. As if to leave no doubt on the minds of either Mr. Johnson or myself, you informed us that Beecher had made to you a confession of guilt, and had, with tears, implored your forgiveness. * * * During your recital of this tale you were filled with anger toward Beecher. You said, with terrible emphasis, that he ought not to remain a week longer in his pulpit.

"Truly yours,

"THEODORE TILTON.

"And to what does this refer:

"In the *Golden Age* of April 19, Theodore expresses himself

thus freely regarding Henry Ward, in noticing his last volume of sermons :

“ ‘ These productions are for those who like them ; and the audience is large. But we have ceased to belong to it. In our opinion Mr. Beecher is really as radical as Dr. Chapin, Dr. Bellows, or Dean Stanley ; but his sermons do not faithfully represent their author’s advanced thought. Each successive Sunday’s effort (reproduced in Monday’s pamphlet) is simply the conventional clinging of his hands to creeds and dogmas from which his head and heart are turned almost wholly away. Without meaning to use a disparaging phrase, we know not how to characterize this sort of public behavior as anything short of moral insincerity. Certain it is that Mr. Beecher, during a few years past, has lost the hold over the Orthodox church which he once maintained, and has made no corresponding gain among the Liberal sects. He is an instance of a man who, seeking to save his life, is losing it. Long acknowledged as the most brilliant, popular preacher in the country — a compliment which nobody, not in any sect, begrudges him, but cheerfully pays — he is nevertheless, year by year, declining in moral weight, not only with the church but in the community at large. To think one thing and say another — to hold one philosophy in public and another in private — to offer one morality to the multitude and keep another for one’s self — is a degradation to no man so much as to a minister, and a blot upon nothing so much as upon religion. Nevertheless there is so much in these pages showing that Mr. Beecher frequently forgets that he is a priest, and remembers that he is a man, and there are so many happy thoughts shooting like sunbeams through all he says, that he will always remain one of the noble specimens of what God can do in making a human being with a plentiful lack of conscience and courage, but with an overflowing fullness of fancy and wit.’ ”

“ ‘ Moral insincerity ; ’ ‘ declining in moral weight ; ’ ‘ to think one thing and say another ; ’ ‘ to hold one philosophy in public and another in private ; ’ ‘ to offer one morality to the multitude and keep another for one’s self ; ’ ‘ plentiful lack of conscience and courage ! ’ This is plain talk, and we ask what more have we said of the great Plymouth orator, except to give facts to

illustrate our points, mainly furnished us by Theodore himself — directly or indirectly? What does it all mean?

“It may possibly be, however, that Mr. Beecher, when he made his sweeping denial, had in view the famous

COVENANT:

“‘We three men, earnestly desiring to remove all causes of offense existing between us, real or fancied, and to make Christian reparation for injuries done or supposed to be done, and to efface the disturbed past, and to provide concord, good will and love for the future, do declare and covenant, each to the other as follows:

I. “‘I, Henry C. Bowen, having given credit, perhaps without due consideration, to tales and inuendoes affecting Henry Ward Beecher, and being influenced by them, as was natural to a man who receives impressions suddenly, to the extent of repeating them (guardedly, however, and within limitations, and not for the purpose of injuring him, but strictly in the confidence of consultation,) now feel that therein I did him wrong. Therefore I disavow all the charges and imputations that have been attributed to me as having been by me made against Henry Ward Beecher, and I declare, fully and without reserve, that I know nothing which should prevent me from extending to him the most cordial friendship, confidence and Christian fellowship. And I expressly withdraw all the charges, imputations and inuendoes imputed as having been made and uttered by me, and set forth in a letter written by me to Theodore Tilton on the 1st of January, 1871, (a copy of which letter is hereto annexed,) and I sincerely regret having made any imputations, charges, or inuendoes unfavorable to the Christian character of Mr. Beecher. And I covenant and promise that for all future time I will never, by word or deed, recur to, repeat, or allude to any or either of said charges, imputations and inuendoes.

“‘II. And I, Theodore Tilton, do, of my own free will and friendly spirit toward Henry Ward Beecher, hereby covenant and agree that I will never again repeat, by word of mouth or otherwise, any of the allegations, or imputations, or inuendoes, contained in my letters hereunto annexed, or any other injurious imputations or allegations suggested by or growing out of these, and that I will never again bring up or hint at any difference or ground of complaint heretofore existing between the

said Henry C. Bowen or myself, or the said Henry Ward Beecher.

III. I, Henry Ward Beecher, put the past forever out of sight and out of memory. I deeply regret the causes for suspicion, jealousy and estrangement which have come between us. It is a joy for me to have my old regard for Henry C. Bowen and Theodore Tilton restored, and a happiness to me to resume the old relations of love, respect and reliance to each and both of them. If I have said anything injurious to the reputation of either, or have detracted from their standing and fame as Christian gentlemen and members of my church, I revoke it all, and heartily covenant to repair and reinstate them to the extent of my power.

(Signed)

“H. C. BOWEN,

“THEODORE TILTON,

“H. W. BEECHER.

“‘BROOKLYN, April 9, 1872.’

“But Mr. Bowen's self gratulation regarding the part he has played in this matter seems to be of that sort known as sudden conversion. One would scarcely imagine, from reading these watery effusions by which he embraces Mr. Beecher's letter, that very nearly the same facts, published in various forms regarding Mr. Beecher, had been in type in the *Eagle* office as many as three times during the year preceding November 2. Nevertheless, this is no more strange than true.

“Moreover, how does this gratulation comport with the fact as stated by Mr. Kinsella to many persons that, during the time in which he was firing hot shot into Mr. Beecher almost every day, that he came to his office, and ‘with tears on his cheek, begging him to respect his gray hairs and his twenty-five years services in Brooklyn.’

“Perhaps Mr. Kinsella may imagine that this is one of the rumors that Mr. Beecher stamps as ‘utterly false,’ but really, how one who knows so much of this case as the editor of the *Eagle*, could have written the ‘leader’ of June 30, is a stretch of imagery for which we confess ourselves incapable; and we beg leave to recall him from the fanciful wandering from the main points, in which he indulges, back to the real issue. Nobody of whom we have any knowledge has ever pretended to claim that Mr. Beecher's letters contained all the proofs required

by Mr. Bowen, at this special juncture ; and the ' cordial consent ' granted, is altogether too eagerly proffered ; but we can scarcely credit it, that Mr. Beecher has been so hardly pressed as to be compelled to so small a resort as to attempt to divert the public attention from the real issue to that of the non-publication of Mr. Beecher's letters, in the reference to which all mention of other documentary evidence has been carefully avoided. The threatened investigation was a danger in his own camp that had to be met and squelched. A personal denial was the only alternative. It was made, and in our opinion it will prove the worst thing that has yet been done to save Mr Beecher.

CHAPTER XXXV.

It is probably quite unnecessary for us to repeat what we have essentially said several times, that we do not, by the act of reproducing articles from various journals indorse their sentiments. We give the following with the same reservation, as the views and sentiments of one of the most radical journals in the west, leaving it for our readers to decide what is wheat, and what is chaff.

[*From the Independent, Morrison, Ill., June 14.*]

"Victoria C. Woodhull dropped dead of heart disease, last evening, at her house in New York city. Her notorious career as an advocate of woman's rights, her espousal and practice of the most abandoned doctrines of Free Love, and her shameless conduct of the weekly periodical she published, are familiar to the public. Her greatest notority of late years has been in connection with the charges against the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, which she retailed so offensively and pertinaciously. Her death removes one of the greatest fomenters of that scandal."—*Chicago Tribune*.

"If independent journalism is libeling women after they are dead, we predict it will never meet with much encouragement in this country. Bad and intolerant as society is, and unrelenting in its persecutions of those who rebel against its wicked customs and usages, there is yet an element of justice latent in its bosom that recoils at the stabbing of the reputations of its murdered victims in the grave. The little handful of dust, with the memories of the foibles and follies of the spirit that animated it, is generally permitted to rest in the grave. The editor of the *Tribune*, too cowardly to attack the living, pounces at the first opportunity upon the dead, and seeks a gratification of his instincts by devouring at one effort the reputation of Victoria C. Woodhull, accusing her of practicing the most abandoned doctrines of Free Love, and of 'shameless conduct'

in publishing her paper. The most abandoned practice of the *Tribune's* idea of Free Love is understood to mean 'common prostitution,' and this, every one that reads the advertising columns of the *Tribune* carefully, will understand. Then, when that paper declares that Mrs. Woodhull practiced the most abandoned doctrines of Free Love, it says to its readers that she was a common prostitute. Perhaps the editor of the *Tribune* knows more about this than the many respectable people in New York city, who have been intimately associated with her, not excepting Theodore Tilton (if he may be called respectable,) Mrs. Lucretia Mott, Mrs. Stanton, Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Isabella Hooker, and others who have repeatedly borne testimony to her purity of character. There has never been any specific act charged against Mrs. Woodhull by any responsible person, of immoral conduct; all the calumnies and slanders hurled at her have been on general principles, vague, indefinite and without responsibility. But now, when the *Tribune* supposed her dead, and therefore safe to libel and defame her character, it writes her obituary in the language we have quoted above. The *Tribune* most emphatically lies when it says.

"Her greatest notoriety of late years has been in connection with the charges against the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher.' The name of Mrs. Woodhull has not, publicly at least, been connected with the Beecher scandal till within the last six months. That scandal was 'offensively retailed' by Henry C. Bowen and Theodore Tilton before Mrs. Woodhull even went to New York; and she had a notoriety as an advocate of woman's rights, before any gentleman was made a custodian of the covenant. Mr. H. C. Bowen and not Mrs. Woodhull is one of the greatest fomenters of that scandal, and yet we do not hear him denounced; he is a respectable gentleman, the publisher of a respectable newspaper, representing the interests of the Republican party, and the money power of the nation, and therefore if he should die, his death would be considered a great calamity to all the country, except Beecher and his precious lambs of Plymouth fold; but Mrs. Woodhull was an intelligent and most effective advocate of the rights of the people. Whatever judgment may be passed upon her free love theories, her ideas on the subject of financial and political reform were sound and logical. Of her free love doctrine we can only say it is good

enough for us; let those who cannot govern themselves by the intellect and reason, be bound 'by the cords of a man,' if they want love like money, to pay a high interest, and to be an article of commerce like other commodities, let them have it so. Such a system they have got, and how beautifully it works! They marry for money and get divorced for money, and that makes business for ministers, editors and lawyers. Nevertheless we believe all love should be free love, all exchange of commodities, free exchange, all government, and all religion free religion, based on the law of justice and responsibility, and have an idea that in many respects Mrs. Woodhull's creed was similar. She had her follies and faults, and who of us has not? She was a wronged and oppressed woman. Society sought to crush and destroy her, and she turned and fought it; it was an equal contest. There has never been a reformer, from the days of John the Baptist to the present time, but what was in danger of losing his or her head, or of being ostracised from society, and branded with the name of fool or madman, if that reformer had a head worth taking, or a reputation worth branding. He who attacks the wrongs of society, must never beg or ask for quarter; he must accept the situation. * * *

"But Mrs. W. is not yet dead, and may live to write the epitaph of the editor of the Chicago *Tribune* in the *Woodhull & Claflin Weekly*. If she does, she will not need to say his shameless conduct of the daily journal he edited is familiar to the public.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

It will be remembered by many, and perhaps all of our readers that in June 1873, Mrs. Woodhull was suddenly stricken down and was supposed to be dead or dying, and the fact was generally noticed by the press throughout the country, and the notices were generally supplemented by some criticisms upon her life and character. We copy several of these articles from prominent journals, and begin with an editorial from her own paper. It was written probably by Col. Blood.

VICTORIA C. WOODHULL.

“ ‘ Truth forever on the scaffold :

Wrong forever on the throne.’—LOWELL.

“ Victoria lies prostrate: her tenure of life so brittle that it is liable to snap at any moment. Suddenly overcome on Friday last, she yet lingers on the borders of the spiritual, as though not yet convinced that her mission in the earthly is completed, and as though regretful to go and leave it unfinished.

“ To the readers of the *Weekly* it is needless to write words of praise for Victoria. All of them know and recognize the mighty labor she has performed, and those who do not know her, need but turn backward through these pages to see the handiwork of a master mind controlled by an indomitable spirit. And yet no one knows or can know Victoria. A person never lived more misjudged than she is. Some of her noblest traits have been made out of her enemies to be almost Satanic, while her best friends sometimes fear her terrible candor and truthfulness.

“ But Victoria has not yet left us, and she may live to become more a terror to her enemies and less a paradox to her friends; and enemies and friends are here used to mean those who are so in principle. She knows nothing of personal friendship or personal enmity in the concrete. Some who hate her

she considers her best friends, and some who love her she can endure only by suffrance. A strong, strange character, too strange and strong to be comprehended except by the very few.

" Her present difficulty is of the heart — functional disease of the valves of the auricles, brought on years ago by continuous sorrow and anxiety. At the time of the writer's first acquaintance with her she was in the habit of frequent attacks, upon unusual mental excitement, though they were not considered dangerous, which finally, in about a year's time, under judicious treatment and happier conditions disappeared almost altogether, and until the past year have seldom given her trouble.

" The continued anxieties of the past year, however, have developed it in a more serious form than that of the past. The causes that led to the suspension of the *Weekly* a year ago, together with the suspension, were probably the beginning of the present aggravation of the disease. The early hopes she had built upon a consolidation of all the various reform parties into a grand party of reform, contributed to feed the fire begun by intense pecuniary anxiety; while being compelled to give up her home in Thirty-eighth street, to be as it were almost without a where to lay her head, and to submit to deprivations and hardships in various ways, told fearfully upon her general health, as well as aggravated her special disease.

" Then again, the terrible ordeal of denunciation through which she has been compelled to pass, because of her belief in and advocacy of, the extension of freedom beyond religion and politics to the social domain. Perhaps no other woman in the world was ever so thoroughly and persistently misunderstood and misrepresented upon any question as she has been, and still is, upon this one of social freedom; and certainly no other woman was ever so bitterly abused and denounced so wholly without reason. The most beautiful points of her theories are barbed by her enemies, by dipping them in the slime of their own imaginings, and then thrust into her as her own, making her soul to shrink from the vile contact; and yet the cry is raised: 'It is hers. Let her bear the sting.'

" Her words flowing fiercely from the altar of her soul, where burns the incense of truth divine, are sunk in the frozen sloughs

of debauchery, and then blazoned to the world as damning her. The divinest flights of spirituality emanating from her heart, purified of dross and corruption by years of fiery trials, are hurled into the lowest depths of sensualism, and then dragged forth to be labeled Woodhull. And yet if there is a person living entirely removed from the domain of mere sensuality, that person is she. But the world has mistaken the extreme, placing that which is far removed above the common level, down in the filth of slums, where spirituality is unknown and where intellect ministers to the lowest orders of happiness. Is it then to be wondered at that the cruel branding she has had, has sunk deep into her soul and eaten away at her heart? Is it not the rather to be wondered at, that she has been able to contend with the world as she has, with a heroism sometimes seeming almost fanaticism?

"She is generally supposed to be bold, self-reliant, even brazen; while her whole nature is delicate, shrinking and sensitive to the extreme. That which gives her the strength to stand before the world, daring its severest frowns and most biting criticism, is pure moral courage and devotion to truth. And the fact that this is her source of inspiration, makes the effect of the frowns and calumny upon her a thousand times more terrible than if she were physically hardened against them. The world may never learn and appreciate this fact in Victoria; but if it ever do, it will honor her proportionately as it has dishonored her, and will make haste to repay the sorrows it has caused her by permitting her to render it the services in which she would find delight.

"The immediate causes of her present prostration date from the time of her first arrest, November 2. She had published the *Weekly* of that date, only after long and careful consideration, and finally from a sense of duty in obedience to what to her was a command. It was a part of the great social warfare that is being waged, by the means of which universal freedom is to be born into the world. She did not know that she was to be cast into prison and indicted for an offense punishable by imprisonment in the penitentiary. She knew she was to publish only the truth; and she did not realize that that could involve her in difficulty. She was not aware that the State—the Government—was in combination with the Church, to vin-

dicating the reputation of any revered citizen whose practices might be exposed as running counter to his teachings. Nor was she aware of the existence of an obscene Beardsley, who debouching from his den, casts the slime of his vocation over the garments of the poets, philosophers and reformers.

"But she learned immediately she published the truths of November 2 that the hounds had been let loose, and they seized upon and cast her into prison almost before she realized what was about to be done. Indeed, she has often told me she thought such a thing impossible, until she heard the click of the lock that confined her in a 'six-by-eight' cell. But with this she sank to the floor, and here began the immediate cause of her present situation.

"Previous to this she had had numerous friends; but the causes that made it necessary that her arrest upon a charge of crime should be accomplished, to save the persons whom she had involved, overcame their courage, and she stood in prison almost alone in the world and apparently friendless, and as the authorities imagined, about to fall an easy victim to the prepared programme. But it required a few days only to disabuse their minds of the error into which they have fallen. Immediately the first shock had spent its force a reaction set in in her favor, and it has continued gaining in volume and power, until it is now made patent to the world, by many more terrible details than were those in which she dealt, that there is 'something rotten in Denmark.'

"But she felt keenly the month's imprisonment. At first she refused bail, trusting to the honorable coming forward of a sufficient number of persons who were perfectly familiar with all the details she had related, and upon which her imprisonment was based. A half dozen voices, for which she waited, raised at any time, as they could have been raised, would either have released her from Ludlow or have demolished the jail. But she waited in vain, and the conviction at last settled over her that she must fight the battle alone, and she girded up her strength, fully determined to do so, on to victorious justification, unless her strength should prove insufficient. It was this conviction in her soul, that those who could prevent it, would stand silently by and permit her to be convicted and sent to

prison, that weighed upon her perhaps more heavily than everything else. This touched and wounded her in her affections, where she is most vulnerable, and in a manner that precluded any mention upon her part. She can resist, undismayed the whole world as open enemies, but the weakness of a should-be friend stabs her to the heart; and it is to these stabs, from which, for the last six months, she has almost constantly suffered, together with the indignities above referred to, that she owes her present prostration.

THE STATEMENT OF THE CASE.

"During Monday and Tuesday of last week, while she was in Court, the evidences there shown of the intention of the prosecution to push matters rapidly to a climax roused her whole nature in protestation against the contemplated outrage; and when she saw, with a single exception, that the city press was silent regarding it, she felt that it would indeed require superhuman exertions to prevent the actual consummation of the plans of the prosecution. Many a case is rushed through the Courts, the injustice of which never comes to the knowledge of the people; and in this case the prosecution might imagine it could be done and the truth about it concealed from the public. Moreover, when, in preparing her cases for trial, she found people who, eight months ago, talked freely and fully of their knowledge of all the facts at which she wished to arrive, now struck with a dumb moral ague, she began to think almost the whole world was in league against her. But she remembered that

" ' Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again ;
The eternal years of God are hers ;
While error, wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies among her worshippers.' "

and bravely faced the opposition. On Wednesday Dr. Comins, her trusted physician, warned her that she must desist from this terrible mental strife and relax her physical exertions, or she would be stricken down suddenly. She replied, 'It is simply impossible; I cannot leave a thing undone, an effort untried, to confound my enemies; and if my strength fail me, it must. I do not know how to act differently.'

"And sure enough, on Friday evening it came. She left the office in Broad street about five o'clock, in a rain storm. In the stage on the way up town she complained of more than

usual difficulty about the heart, but attached no special importance to it. She merely drank a cup of tea at the supper-table, and when retiring to her room was overcome, and fell so suddenly and heavily that the whole house was aroused and rushed to her side. She was perfectly unconscious. She was carried quickly to her bed and restoratives administered, but there was no reaction. Apparently she was dead. Dr. Comins was immediately sent for, and in a half hour from the time of the attack was with her. On learning the incidents preceding the fall, he made a careful examination. There was no pulsation at the wrist, and no movement of the lungs, but a slight movement of the heart was discovered, whereupon he set actively at work to revive her. The movements of her body brought blood from her mouth, but not in sufficient quantity to prove alarming. She had probably ruptured a blood vessel of her lungs, and this may have been the simple fact that saved her life.

"In a half hour circulation was again restored; but she remained unconscious, with small quantities of blood flowing from her mouth upon the slightest movement of her body, during the entire night, the next day, and till nearly one o'clock Sunday morning, when she aroused into consciousness and gradually to a comprehension of her situation. The first intelligent word she whispered in the ear of the writer was: 'If my work is done, say to my friends to not let the cause to which I have given my life, die with me; and that I shall still live in the *Weekly*; and if they love me they will also love it and make it a mighty power in the land.'

"When she was first stricken, Tennie, in her grief, hastily telegraphed to an intimate friend that Victoria was dead; and this is how it came to be so announced over the country by telegraph. This error was corrected as soon as possible after she revived, and it is very much regretted that it occurred.

"The New York *Sun* was the only morning paper that had a full account of her attack and condition. The news flew over the city in the morning, and instantly from every quarter the anxious inquiries of friends began to flow in, requiring two persons constantly to attend them; and almost as early, dispatches of inquiry from other cities, in which it had been announced by telegraph, also began to come over the wires; and all this, inter-

persed with bouquets and baskets of flowers, continued without interruption up to midnight on Saturday. The *Sun* has a usual circulation of about one hundred and thirty thousand copies; but this day it reached double that number — a fact taken in connection with the further fact of the anxiety that existed all over the country regarding her, which shows, in spite of all the existing prejudices, and whatever people may say, and though it may never come to their realization until she shall have passed away, that Victoria lives in the hearts of the people.

“ During Sunday night, and Monday up till three o'clock, she continued gradually to revive; at this time, however, a fever set in, and she passed a bad night, and fears were entertained during Tuesday that a serious relapse might ensue; there was an intense pressure upon the brain, with symptoms of cerebral congestion, and occasional fits of unconsciousness. These symptoms, however, became modified during the former part of the night, and at three o'clock she passed into a calm and peaceful sleep, from which she roused at six o'clock Wednesday morning, considerably refreshed and perfectly conscious. She continued to improve during the day, and at the time of this writing, six o'clock Wednesday afternoon, she is comparatively free from suffering and able to be bolstered up in bed.

[*From the N. Y. Express, June 7.*]

MRS. VICTORIA C. WOODHULL LINGERING BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH.

“ Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull, the well-known female broker, who was suddenly stricken down by heart disease, last evening, at her residence, No. 6 East Thirty-fourth street, is still in a precarious condition. Col. Blood and Miss Tennie C. Claffin remaining by her bedside all night ministering to her wants. To-day she is quite conscious, but is not allowed to speak or move, as the slightest exertion might prove fatal. Sedative medicine was administered to her during the night to prevent any inflammation, and allay, as far as possible, all excitement. Blood occasionally oozes from her lips, and the physicians are satisfied that she burst a blood-vessel near the heart. They add that for the next twenty-four hours she will continue in a critical condition, and at the end of that time they will be able to

say with certainty whether she will recover from this attack or not. Meantime, her death may take place at any moment.

"Miss Tennie C. Claflin says that her sister has been overworked of late, and that the excitement attending on the various trials in which she is defendant, has preyed upon her system much more than was believed by the unobservant public. Yesterday afternoon a gentleman called at their office and told them that two new indictments had been found against them. This intelligence gave Mrs. Woodhull a terrible shock and she seemed for the rest of the day, up to the final catastrophe, like one in a dream."

[*From the Graphic, June 7.*]

VICTORIA C. WOODHULL.

"Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull is reported to be in a dying condition. It is thought that she cannot survive the day. The severe strains of business and public life, and the severer trials through which she has been called to pass, have naturally enough overtaxed the strength of a constitution never strong and peculiarly sensitive and excitable. Mrs. Woodhull is an exceptionally endowed and truly remarkable woman. Her career has been as wonderful as it is open to censure. Her influence over people of intelligence and refinement, women as well as men, amounting in some instances almost to fascination, and in spite of theories and actions that they condemned, is a phenomenon which has yet to be satisfactorily explained. There is little question that, had she been nurtured in a good home and among refined people and refining influences, and thoroughly educated under competent teachers, she would have become one of the most noted women of this generation. Had her ill-directed personal force, her enormous ambition, her enthusiasm — which sometimes arose to a wild fanaticism — been inspired with true ideas and kept in proper check by a sound judgment and cultivated taste and active conscience, she would have been the pioneer of some great reform or the apostle of some needed charity, and not the advocate of crude social ideas and the leader of a wild crusade against the present social order and our current ideas of propriety and ethics. Her mis-directed zeal has made her a revolutionist instead of a reno-

vator, and her course has been something of a public calamity at the least, however she may have been the victim of circumstances and the subject of hallucinations, and however the beneficent forces of nature may heal the wounds she rudely made."

[*From the N. Y. Sun, June 9.*]

MRS. WOODHULL'S CONDITION.

"The *Sun's* article on Saturday on the severe illness of Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull startled her friends, and hosts of them hastened to her residence at No. 6 East Thirty-fourth street. Many who called had never seen her, but had long taken an interest in her and wished to offer their condolences to the family. Telegrams and letters poured in, and several baskets of flowers, with kindly written notes attached, were received. It was rumored in the morning that she was dead, and her office in Broad-street was besieged by anxious inquirers. She lay motionless throughout Friday night, Miss Claflin, Col. Blood, and Dr. J. M. Comins, of 148 East Twenty-sixth street, attending her.

"Early on Saturday morning, Mrs. Woodhull had so far recovered as to give directions in whispers to her sister and Col. Blood about their business in the event of her death. She added, she hoped that then the world might understand her, and know that she was not the bad woman that she was represented by many to be. Her physician bade Miss Claflin and Col. Blood to admit no one to the room, not even the other members of the family. Up to a late hour on Saturday night telegrams from all parts of the country inquiring concerning her condition reached the house, and friends continued to call. All day yesterday it was the same. Her condition was much improved, although she was too weak from loss of blood to move her limbs. She frequently motioned to her sister and Col. Blood, who were at her bedside, and bade them draw nearer. At such times she spoke of the lawsuits in which they are involved, and hoped that she might be able to go to court on Monday, the 16th. She wished to have the cases tried once for all, so that she might know her fate, and requested that everything should be done to secure the attendance of their witnesses. Toward evening she slept, and late last night was

easy. Her physician hopes she will recover, although, he says, the least shock at this time may take her off."

[*From the New York Star, June 8.*]

"Mrs. Victoria Woodhull called at the *Star* office on Friday afternoon, and in her peculiar manner pleaded against the cruel injustice with which she was treated by District-Attorney Phelps, predicted her conviction and sentence in the Challis libel case, and requested the insertion of a card in Saturday's edition of the *Star*. Shortly after that she was struck down by apoplexy or heart disease, and yesterday lay at the point of death, to the utter dismay of her family and friends. If Mrs. Woodhull had been born and educated in a different sphere — if her surroundings had been refined and inspiring — she would have developed into a great and glorious character. As it was, she simply leaped from one excitement to another, wasting her life, exhausting her vitality, and scattering over worthless 'causes' energy and momentum sufficient to carry to success any one of a dozen 'movements.' In person she was very attractive. Ten years ago she was a truly beautiful woman — graceful, winning, always ready for a frolic, kind in her manner and generous to a fault. Her private affairs were somewhat unnecessarily thrust before the public by pretended friends, and claims were idiotically put forth in her behalf which reacted to her damage. The course of her paper did much more to injure her than those it assaulted, and while there was very possibly a grain of truth in the stories it told about sundry parties, there was so much gross exaggeration, and in many instances so much that was absolutely false, even the grain of truth was disbelieved.

"The last article penned by her personally was a card to the editor of the *Star*, published yesterday.

"To the excitement growing out of her belief in the 'railroading' intent of the District Attorney her sudden prostration was doubtless due. She was worked up to a pitch of intensity beyond endurance, which, in addition to the fearful heat and her natural apprehension of almost immediate imprisonment, undoubtedly brought upon her the fatal blow.

"The *Star* has never agreed with Mrs. Woodhull in any of

the doctrines she taught, and some of which she would have scorned to follow ; but it would be a bit of hypocrisy entirely foreign to its habit if it should fail to remember the good there was in her, the filial devotion which made her life at times a slavery, the fidelity with which she adhered to those who had befriended her, and the energy, perseverance and ability which, however misdirected, she brought to the consummation of her plan. Many harsh and rude things will be said and written of her by men and women not half so true in the domestic relations of life, and if only he or she should assault her who is without sin among us, there wouldn't be stones enough thrown to build even a modest monument.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

[*From Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly, May 17, 1873.*]

THE BEAUTIES (INFAMIES) OF MODERN JOURNALISM.

"If anything were wanting to convince the searcher for causes for revolution, that it is not only at our doors, but that it is necessary to the welfare of the people that it come quickly, it may be found in an analysis of modern journalism. Never was there such an infernal despotism foisted upon a people as, in the name of liberty, there has been foisted upon this country by the public press. There are not a dozen journals in the six thousand published in the country which are conducted upon the principle of freedom of the press and justice to the involved.

"But this was never developed until we came before the public as advocates of social freedom. With this advent, the press almost unanimously have permitted their columns to be used by any and everybody who had a foul word to say about us, and when these were wanting the editors themselves have supplied the deficiency by dipping their pens in gall and writing it. There is scarcely a journal in the country which, at some time, has not written us down in some vile manner, and yet never a single one of them has had any facts upon which to base its infamous slanders. When this tirade against us first began, we attempted to reply in the columns of the papers in which we were attacked; but the almost universal result has been that our manuscript has found its way into the waste basket instead of into the paper. To this, however, there has been now and then an exception, prominent among which we name the Springfield (Mass.) *Republican*, which said to us, 'Our columns are open to the reply of any who are attacked in them.' But this honorable rule is discarded in most other more pretentious journals; while some there are which have made it their especial duty to glean every possible mean thing that could be

found against us and parade it in their columns, presenting the most outrageous lies and infamous slanders and utterly refusing even a single word of denial.

"Especially has this been true since the high-handed career of the Government in arresting us for obscenity at the command of its superior — the Y. M. C. A. — whose tool merely it is fast degenerating to be. The lies conceived in the debauched brains of some moral, pattern editorial writer and publisher in a 'big daily,' is copied by all the papers in the country, and the people made to believe by it that we are worse than the imps of those who belong to the God of the Y. M. C. A. — that merciful Father who from the beginning prepared to roast ninety one hundredths of his children in hell eternally.

"To illustrate how this thing works, we will give some recent examples :

"The following letter appeared in the New York *Tribune*, of March 28. This letter was quickly copied by the editors of the *Sun* (they, too, are immaculate, virtuous and possessed of all the virtues of modern morality, as we well know ;) and then by numerous journals throughout, last and least of all of which is the *Religio-Philosophic Journal*, of Chicago, Ill., edited by another purely moral man, sexually, as we and many others well know. But here is the letter :

'A WORD TO THE LADIES OF NEW YORK.'

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE TRIBUNE:

"Sir—An emergency involving the delicacy and honor of my sex makes it my duty to submit the following facts to the ladies of this city :

"Nearly two years ago, at the request of a friend who had perfect confidence in her truth and purity, I accepted an invitation from Victoria Woodhull to ride with her in Central Park. The result was an impression that she was either insane or the hapless victim of malignant spirits. For she calmly informed me that several distinguished editors, clergymen and lady authors of this city, some of them my personal friends, and all of them models of domestic purity and virtue, not only held her opinions on free love, but practiced accordingly, and that it was only a lack of moral courage which prevented their open avowal of such opinions. I concealed all this, excepting from a few personal friends, because it is cruelty and a disgrace to any

persons of delicacy and refinement, especially to ladies, to have their names and character publicly subjected to inquiry as to such practices. Since that interview this woman or her associates have been carrying out a plan for making money by maligning or threatening conspicuous persons of such purity and sensibility that it would be expected they or their friends would pay large sums rather than come in collision with such antagonists and their filthy weapons.

“Such an operation carried out in New York would extend indefinitely. The proper way of meeting this evil is to secure the enforcement of an existing law, by which an officer of the State, and not the person assailed, may prosecute any who circulate aspersions of character which they cannot prove to be true, it being made, in such cases as this, a penitentiary offense. When such a law is well executed, and when imprisonment for life, without power of pardon in any human hands, shall be the penalty for murder, then the present exasperating surges of society will be assuaged, and the dove and olive branch appear. American women possess a power little appreciated or exercised ; for it is certain that there is no beneficent law which they would unite in asking to have enacted or enforced which would not readily be granted. For this reason the influence of the ladies of this city is besought to secure in this conspicuous case the enforcement of the penalty for the most cruel slander that many have already suffered, and which is still threatened to others. The officers of law whose duty it is to abate this evil are at hand, and their ear can be reached by many a woman whom they respect. At the same time our clergymen can be entreated to lend their co-operation by teaching from the pulpit (what many do not know) that helping to circulate aspersions of character which they cannot prove to be true is a violation both of the Decalogue and of civil law.

“‘CATHARINE E. BEECHER.’

“‘NEW YORK, March 26, 1873.

“To this we immediately made the following explicit reply and submitted it at once to Mr. Reid and Mr. Dana, with the request that it should be published immediately so as to expose the infamous lie concocted by this woman before it should be copied extensively :

“‘TO THE EDITORS OF THE TRIBUNE AND SUN :

“ ‘An emergency, involving the honor and veracity of one of my sex, makes it my duty to submit the following facts to the men and women of this country ; but before proceeding to the facts I will state what the emergency is, so that none can be in doubt as to what it may be, as all are left to be by Miss Beecher in her gratuitous attack upon me in the *Tribune* on Friday last.

“ ‘Now what Miss Beecher has stated is either true or false. If true, she has done well ; if not, she is as infamous as she has been, and still is, endeavoring to make the world believe me to be. I propose to show not only that the foundation of her statement is false, but that her elucidations are also equally as fallacious ; and moreover, that she has made an accusation both false and libelous which she, if not those who gave it currency, may yet have occasion to learn to their sorrow.

“ ‘But to the facts. To what credit, let me ask, is a statement entitled that begins by an absolute falsehood, as does this one of Catharine Beecher ? She says, “At the request of a friend I accepted an invitation from Victoria Woodhull to ride in Central Park.” I repeat, that this is false, the converse being true. Here is the truth : Without having seen or known me, Miss Beecher, as Isabella-Beecher Hooker informed me, was in the habit of making unguarded statements about my life and social theories, by which she said Miss Beecher was doing me immense harm with people not personally acquainted with me. Mrs. Hooker had remonstrated with her, saying that she did not understand me, and that she ought to be more careful in her statements of things of which she was not competently informed, or of which she was ignorant. Mrs. Hooker desired me to see Miss Beecher, as she had expressed a wish to that effect, and said that she would stand corrected if she found she was wrong. I acquiesced. Soon after I received a letter from Mrs. Hooker in which she informed me that, at a convenient time, Miss Beecher would send for me to ride with her. She did send me a note which I still have, appointing the time. I did ride with her in the park, but I was invited to do so. I did not invite her. For the truth of this Mrs. Hooker is competent authority, without giving any weight to my own testimony.

“ ‘During that ride, at her request, I frankly stated my views upon the social question, as I am ready to do to any inquirer.

I told her I believed, and that nature confirmed it, that all sexual commerce not founded on love is prostitution, whether in or out of marriage; that to maintain marriage where love is wanting is to me the very worst form of prostitution, because it entails diseased children upon the world; and that wherever there is love there is no prostitution. I also frankly told her what I knew about her brother, Henry Ward Beecher, and other eminent men and women, to show her that many good and great people had already accepted, and were living, the theory of social freedom, though not yet ready to become its avowed advocates, one of whom I am.

“‘ She replied: That such doctrines were the rankest heresies, and that marriage, being divine, could never be sundered. She said: If a woman is compelled to leave her husband, she should take her children and retire into solitude for life, and never think of another man. She took upon herself to vouch for Mr. Beecher’s faithfulness to his marriage vows, though I compelled her to admit she had no positive knowledge which could justify her in so doing; but she “*knew*” that, although her brother was an unhappy, he was nevertheless a true husband. She said, (and the same has been repeated to me by other members of the Beecher family) that Mrs. Beecher was a virago — a constitutional liar — and so terrible a woman altogether that his friends seldom visited her house.

“‘ I replied: What you tell me that I did not previously know is sufficient to make it almost absolutely certain that what I do know must have been so; and if you were a proper person to judge, which I grant you are not, you should see that the facts you state are fatal to your theory of faithfulness to marriage. This seemed to awaken a new thought in her mind, for she became very abusive, calling me many hard names. When we parted, she said: Remember, Victoria Woodhull, that I shall strike you dead! I replied: Strike as much and as hard as you please, only don’t do it in the dark, so that I cannot know who is my enemy.

“‘ She retorted: I will strike you in every way I can; and will kill you, if possible [all of this I repeated to Isabella Beecher Hooker at the time;] but I see she imagined the malignant spirits manifested by herself were mine instead of hers. She was drunk of them, and, as drunkards invariably do, thought

that they were confronting instead of being possessed by her.

“ ‘ Shortly after this ride, I went to Hartford (her home) to speak on suffrage, not intending to even mention my social views. Miss Beecher thereupon wrote letters to all the Hartford papers, in which she warned all people from going to hear me, making nearly the same statements as those contained in her recent *Tribune* article, and sending others of a villifying and libellous character.

“ ‘ As you well know, I have repeatedly, both in my paper and on the public rostrum, given the lie direct to the allegations about extorting money, and have defied those who deal in them to advance a single instance. It has never been done. Nevertheless, the assertion continues to be made, as if it can be continued indefinitely with utter impunity. Are you, sir, sufficiently informed to warrant the responsibility of that charge? Because I have permitted the press to originate and circulate all manner of things about my social life without rebuking it for meddling with what is nobody’s business but my own, is it imagined I shall also permit it to charge base crimes against me and to go unscathed? If so, a slight mistake is made.

“ ‘ The only possible shadow of foundation Miss Beecher can find upon which to accuse me of threatening is something I would not have made public had she not compelled me. It is this: About a year ago I concluded to shut the mouths of a clique of loose and loud-tongued women who were continually stabbing me behind my back and making me a fiend incarnate to the eyes of the people. I grouped the clique together in an article of which I sent each member a printed slip, and in the following issue of the *Weekly* I wrote an editorial, in which I gave distinct notice that if the abuse of which I had cause to complain did not cease, I should retort by the publication of the article. Suffice it, the filthy fountains suddenly ceased to vomit forth their slime, and I have had no occasion to publish the article; but if it still arise, I shall not hesitate to do so.

“ ‘ I have also at sundry times urged Mr. Beecher to an avowal of his social views, by holding up the facts of his life as arguments. If this is what Miss Beecher refers to, I plead guilty; but she speaks of money, and to this I again reply, it is false, and challenge her or any other person, or all other persons, to produce a single instance to support the damning allegations.

“ Not long since the story was briskly circulated that I had

attempted to blackmail Mrs. Elizabeth Phelps, and Warrington was entrapped into repeating it in the *Springfield Republican*; but he was glad afterward to get out of it by saying it was the gossip of the Boston women (meaning the *Woman's Journal* clique, I suppose,) which he ought not to have repeated. My lawyer called upon Mrs. Phelps, who indignantly denied the whole affair.

“ ‘ Fred B. Perkins, of *Old and New* made a similar allegation in the *Hartford Post*, copied in the *Springfield Republican*, in connection with Mrs. Livermore. I called on Mrs. L., in the latter paper, to admit or deny the truth of it, and she remains silent, not daring in public to stand by her private gossip. I say that people who resort to this method to damage an opponent are unworthy the name of man or woman.

“ ‘ Soon following the article in the *Tribune* another appeared in the *Worcester Spy*, in which Woodhull and Claflin were distinctly charged with an attempt to blackmail Rev. Dr. Bellows. Friends immediately called on Dr. Bellows, who denied all knowledge of the source of the article and pronounced it utterly false.

“ ‘ Now, if there is a clique of persons, or any person, who think to break the force of the truth of anything I have published about anybody by this system of stigmatizing me all over the land as a professional blackmailer, and there are papers that will lend their aid to such a scheme, then I shall be compelled to adopt a course that will at once and forever stop its career.

“ ‘ In conclusion permit me to add, that I believe this letter was printed by Miss Beecher without the knowledge of her brother; because upon another occasion when she had volunteered to vouch for his virtue, he had replied to it: “ I wish the driveling old — would mind her own business, and permit me to take care of my own reputation.” I have no doubt he will make the same reply to this, her later effort.

“ ‘ And finally: Does Miss Beecher realize that she is invoking the interposition of the officials in her own case, since she has made statements derogatory to me which she cannot prove?

“ ‘ VICTORIA C. WOODHULL.

“ ‘ NEW YORK, April 2, 1873.’

“ But we have waited patiently until now, hoping that these persons in the shape of men had a sufficient sense of honor and

justice to permit us to refute the vile, base slander in the same columns in which it first appeared, but have waited in vain. On the contrary, we are informed that there is too great a sentiment against us and in favor of Henry Ward Beecher to allow our reply to appear before the public. To what depths of degradation has journalism sunk! To what depths of degradation have they who moved public opinion sunk! To what depth of degradation have all things sunk, when in a so-called Christian community a woman who has dared to speak the truth of the vicegerent of the Pagan God of the Bible, is denied what has never before been denied to the lowest and meanest of humanity! The *Tribune* and the *Sun*, two great leading dailies of the metropolis of America, dare not permit a woman to speak in her own defense in their columns, after publishing her to the world as guilty of one of the most infamous of felonies! Verily, the torch of the Commune cannot come too quickly to wipe out such disgraces to civilization and liberty; and verily it shall come, and that quickly; but it shall be a judgment they themselves invoke upon their own heads, as the slave holder invoked the war that exterminated slavery!

“But the contemptible malignity of *Miss Beecher* was soon surpassed by the outrageous effrontery of some cur, barking at the command and under the pay of Plymouth Church, who wrote a ‘New York Letter’ to a Rochester paper as follows:

“‘A New York letter writer says the latest attempt of Woodhull and Claflin to blackmail a minister was made on the Rev. Dr. Bellows. They sent him a printed proof of what they were going to publish about him in case he did not come down with the cash. He was set down in the stereotyped fashion as a wolf in sheep’s clothing, as a pious profligate, as a sacerdotal sinner, etc. Everybody is aware that Dr. Bellows is not that sort of a man, and, moreover, is capable of an exalted degree of indignation. Running his eye over the clear typography, his face flushed with righteous wrath. He informed the messenger of his opinion of those vile women, adding, if they published any such thing in regard to him, that he would make them smart for it. He then advised the carrier to leave the house instant, on pain of being kicked out of doors, and the carrier left. Dr. Bellows has regretted ever since that he showed so much amiability.’

"Like its predecessor this was widely copied, and how widely may be inferred from the fact that the clipping from which this is printed was from the *Oregonian* of Portland, Oregon, sent us by a friend asking if there is any foundation for it.

"The first copy, however, which we saw of it was from the *Spy*, Worcester, Mass. At that time Mrs. Dr. Ruggles and Laura Cuppy Smith were in our office. They immediately called upon Dr. Bellows, and he authorized them in his name to deny *in toto* that anything of the kind had ever happened. This they did, and their denial was published in the *Spy*.

"Now, who the infamous scoundrel is who lives in New York and wrote that letter we do not know and have been unable to find out, but we now pronounce him a sneak-thief who dare not come to our office and face us, and who dare not inform us where he may be found.

"But there is another sort of infamy to which many of the leading journals are given, which deserves the contempt of every honest person. For instance, of our recent lecture in Chicago, the *Tribune* of that city said editorially that it was unfit to be listened to, and spoke altogether in such a terribly condemnatory manner that all who did not hear it were stunned by it. This paper gave no report whatever of what was said. The next day the editor was waited upon and expostulated with regarding the manner in which the lecture was treated, and was told that the signatures of a hundred respectable citizens could be obtained that there was not an obscene word in the whole lecture. The honest editor replied: 'Oh! Editors know that all she has said about Beecher is true, and we must either indorse her and make her the most popular woman in the world, or write her down and crush her out; and we have determined to do the latter.'

"An evening or two later we spoke in East Saginaw. The following morning's paper not only refuted what had been said by the *Tribune*, but to prove it printed almost the whole lecture. And we defy any person to point out a single word in that speech that may not be freely spoken in the most refined society. So much for honesty in journalism; and so much for honest editors of the stripe of him of the Chicago *Tribune*, to whom we recommend for careful consideration the letter of Henry C. Bowen to Theodore Tilton, recently widely published, charging Henry Ward Beecher with rape.

“ We are sorry to feel obliged to use so much of our limited space to set forth the matter; but we are constantly receiving ‘clippings’ from our friends, who are justly indignant that these things should float about uncontradicted, asking their origin, and we take this opportunity to answer for all that are past and for all that may come, that, first, last and all the time these libels upon us are without even a shadow for a foundation, and we trust our indignant friends will hurl this denial in the teeth of every contemptible scoundrel who will so far forget his own manhood and lose all honor as to retail libels of which he has no proof. The whole press has howled at us because we spoke what we happened very well to know of a ‘revered citizen.’ Yet that same press has systematically villified us for three years by printing what it did not know and what is not true. But to just such degradation has journalism and journalists sunk in this country. Is it any wonder that revolution is sounding from one end of the country to the other; or any wonder that thousands will welcome it as the only competent salvation from the horrible despotism of the impacted mass of cowardice, hypocrisy and corruption called modern civilization, which now holds high carnival over the prostrate form of liberty.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

PLYMOUTH CHURCH TAKES A HAND IN THE GREAT SCANDAL PRELIMINARY STEPS FOR THE TRIAL OF THEODORE TILTON AND THE EXCULPATION OF MR. BEECHER.

"It has been expected that Plymouth Church would not allow the fair fame of its noted pastor to rest under the imputations cast upon it, but would take such action as should vindicate him in the estimation of the Christian community, and his immense constituency outside the church. His tens of thousands of admirers both in this country and abroad will heartily rejoice if their efforts shall be successful. We give below a statement of the preliminary steps toward this result.

"The Plymouth Church committee having in charge the investigation of the Beecher scandal, as presented in accusations of slander against Theodore Tilton and Henry C. Bowen, will make a report to the church at a meeting to be held on Friday evening. They will recommend the expulsion of Mr. Tilton, and that proposition will be put to vote after an opportunity shall have been given for its discussion by members.

"The investigation was inaugurated on the 1st of July last by the Grievance Committee, which is composed of twenty members of Plymouth Church, and is a permanent body before which difficulties affecting members are regularly brought. The first meeting was held on the date given, and the charges and specifications preferred by ex-Deacon William T. West were read. They were drawn separately against Mr. Bowen and Mr. Tilton, and were full and explicit. They set forth that the stories affecting Mr. Beecher had been told by these gentlemen, both of whom were members of Plymouth Church and answerable to its authority, and gave the details of the alleged slanders, the names of the persons to whom they had been told, with dates and places. There was a full discussion of the matter, and a marked division of sentiment was at once developed.

Mr. Beecher had at that time written his letter denying the truth of the defamatory stories. A portion of the Committee argued that such a sweeping denial from their pastor was a sufficient refutation, and that the whole subject should be ignored. A majority, however, claimed that Mr. Beecher's power for good was weakened so long as any shadow rested upon his character, and that a full investigation would hurt nobody but those who deserved it.

"Finally Mr. West moved that a sub-committee of three be appointed to wait on Mr. Tilton and Mr. Bowen, acquaint them of the charges against them, and cite them to appear before the Grievance Committee. The resolution was adopted, and Mr. E. H. Garbutt, Mr. C. C. Duncan, and Mr. Samuel Belcher were named as the Committee. Then came the time for Mr. Beecher's usual vacation, and a number of the Grievance Committee went away to the summer resorts. Consequently the proceedings were dropped, and the sub-committee was instructed to report on the evening of the second Thursday of the present month. In the meantime Mr. West added some new specifications to those which already supplemented the charges against Mr. Tilton, basing them upon alleged later facts that had been brought to his knowledge. Fall came, and the Grievance Committee prepared to commence the investigation in earnest. It was agreed to proceed first with the trial of Mr. Tilton. The varied nature of the charges and specifications rendered it unfeasible to try the gentlemen jointly.

"Mr. Tilton was waited on, notified of the nature of the accusations, and informally requested to appear before the Committee. This he politely refused to do, giving as a reason that he had not been a member of Plymouth Church during the past four years, and therefore was not amenable to its authority. He called their attention to the fact that slander was a misdemeanor punishable by the civil law, and invited them to carry the matter into the courts; but he positively declined to be tried by Plymouth Church. He further claimed that Mr. Beecher, the only possible aggrieved party, had cleared him of all blame—a statement to which some of the Committee demurred.

"On the 14th of this month, at a meeting of the Grievance Committee, Mr. Garbutt, as Chairman of the sub-committee,

reported their ineffectual efforts to bring Mr. Tilton to the bar of the church for trial. An examination of the church books was made, and it was found that Mr. Tilton's name had never been erased. Although he had not taken any active part in the meetings or management of the church, he had neither withdrawn nor been expelled. Mr. Beecher and his fellow-churchmen had always regarded him as a member, and were surprised at his renunciation of his connection with the church. There was an evening of argument over this new phase of the case, ending in the adoption of a resolution ignoring Mr. Tilton's claim of non-membership, and declaring him subject to the authority of the church. No further action was taken until a few evenings later, when a full meeting was held, and it was resolved to serve a copy of the charges and specifications upon Mr. Tilton, and to formally cite him to appear before the Committee on Thursday evening last. Mr. D. W. Talmadge, the clerk of the Committee, was intrusted with this responsibility. The next day, provided with a witness, he called upon Mr. Tilton and served the papers. Mr. Tilton claims that the documents are unsigned, and simply amount to memoranda. He took them, however, and replied in a letter addressed to the Committee.

"A meeting of the Grievance Committee, who were then ready to commence the trial, was held last Thursday evening. Capt. Duncan presided. The witnesses had been notified, and nothing but the presence of Mr. Tilton was lacking. Instead of that, however, his letter was read. It was brief, simply repeating his refusal to appear before them, on the ground that he was not a member of Plymouth Church. This left the Committee a choice of two courses — to proceed with the investigation in the absence of the defendant, or to recommend his expulsion for refusing to obey the mandate of the church. Against the former it was argued that the evidence taken under such circumstances would be *ex parte*, and that injustice to the defendant might ensue. Thereupon a resolution was offered, and passed by a good majority, after a long discussion, recommending the expulsion of Mr. Tilton. The report of the Committee is very brief, and will be presented to the church as a body for adoption or rejection.

"After Mr. Tilton's case is disposed of, the members say that

the investigation of the charges and specifications against Mr. Bowen will go on. The witnesses comprise a large number of Plymouth Church members, and the investigation of the scandal will be very thorough and complete. The burden of the prosecution will rest upon Mr. West, who brought the charges.

"Mr. Beecher has not attended any of the meetings of the Committee.

" 'I do not know what they have done,' he said to a *Sun* reporter yesterday, 'nor the nature of their report.'

"Mr. Tilton spent yesterday at the residence of Mr. Frank Moulton in Brooklyn, where he was found by a *Sun* reporter. He said he was falsely placed in the position of seeming to have brought accusations against Mr. Beecher, and then refusing to substantiate them; but he declined to make any explanation further than to claim that Mr. Beecher had exonerated him, and that that should be sufficient to satisfy the public.'

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE ACTION OF PLYMOUTH CHURCH IN REGARD TO THEODORE TILTON — THEODORE'S SPEECH.—BEECHER'S CHARACTERISTIC RESPONSE.—HE MAKES NO CHARGES — ALL IS SETTLED BETWEEN THEM, AND "BURIED OUT OF SIGHT."—TILTON'S NAME DROPPED FROM THE ROLL.

We now proceed to give our readers an account of the action of Plymouth Church upon the charges preferred by Deacon West, against Theodore Tilton, of having slandered the pastor. The final disposition of Mr. Tilton's case would seem to indicate that both he and Mr. Beecher considered it a matter personal to themselves, with which the church had nothing to do, and that the whole proceedings were contrary to the judgment of Mr. Beecher. How far the position taken by Mr. Beecher will help his case before the public, it is difficult to determine. From the comments freely made on both sides, it would seem that his position is, to say the least, quite as equivocal as it was before, and many who have believed that what "The Woodhull" charged against him was true, do not hesitate to say that the amicable feeling manifested by Beecher and Tilton toward each other, is the result of a bargain sealed by *hush money*. If this be so, it remains to be seen whether it will be successful in keeping the real facts from coming to the surface. It is understood that Henry C. Bowen will next be cited before the church to "show cause." What will be then developed remains to be seen.

"There has seldom been seen a larger audience gathered in the Plymouth lecture room than that which assembled there October 31. Not only all the seats in both main hall and adjoining parlor were filled, but camp stools were brought into requisition and the aisles were packed full. The first prayer was offered by the Rev. Edward Beecher, and after the singing of a hymn, Brother Hill led in prayer. Mr. Beecher's usual

Friday evening talk was much more brief than usual, he knowing that an important meeting of the church was to take place immediately after the prayer meeting. As upon the last Friday he read a text of scripture and commented upon that. His text was, 'Thy tools are of iron and of brass, and as thy days so shall thy strength be.' This precept, he said, was never more applicable than at the present time — a time of great darkness, or great distress in business, great fearings, great actual losses, and great fears for the things to come. It was impossible that there should be such a general shaking and upturning in the business of the community without involving much social and domestic suffering; in all these troubles, those real and those only the offspring of fear, Mr. Beecher thought that it would be a great joy and comfort in many households to feel that, as their day was, so would strength be given them, and that the Lord would not lay upon them a burden greater than they could bear. It was not presumption for any man to say, 'As my day is so my Lord will make my strength also. If I can go one day that is all I need; when the next day comes I will meet it, and if I can go that day, that day is all I need.' The proceedings closed by the singing of the hymn No. 840 commencing,

" 'Give to the winds thy fears,
Hope and be undismayed.'

"The pastor then announced that after the blessing had been pronounced there would be a stated meeting of the church for the reception of new members, and after that a special business meeting. The benediction was pronounced, but the number of those who left their seats and retired was very small.

"Rev. Mr. Halliday, the assistant pastor and clerk of the church, called the meeting to order and nominated Brother Raymond for chairman, who was elected unanimously. The ball was opened by Brother Fisher, who said

"*Mr. Moderator* — 'This is a business meeting of Plymouth church, and, therefore, it is only proper for the members of the church to participate in it. I see a dozen here who to my certain knowledge are not members, and I move that all those persons who are not members be requested to retire from this meeting.'

"*A dozen voices* — I second the motion.

"*Brother McKay* — 'There have been times when this would

have been done, but that time is not now. I was brought up in the Presbyterian church, and have been one of the strictest of the sect — a very pharisee among the pharisees ; but we are now in the condition that the public cannot know more of us than they know already, and, therefore, I hope there will be no gag-law here. [Applause.]

"*Brother Shearman* — ' Mr. Moderator, there is a rule of our church that all business meetings shall be opened with prayer. I hope this will be adhered to.'

"Rev. Mr. Halliday led in prayer.

"Brother Fisher renewed his motion, and it was put and declared lost.

"*A brother in the centre of the room* — ' Mr. Moderator, how do you know who voted on this resolution? Here is a large assemblage ; and I opine no one is competent to vote unless he is a member. I call for a standing vote.'

"*The Chair* — ' All who are in favor of requesting all to retire who are not members, will rise and stand until counted.'

"The number rising was eighty-one. On the opposite side one hundred and three arose, and all the audience remained. Five members by letter and three by profession of faith were then admitted, and the stated meeting adjourned.

"*Brother Shearman* — ' I move that the same chairman pre-side over the special meeting.'

"*The Chair* — ' What is the business before this meeting?'

"*Mr. Halliday* — ' The examining committee has handed me the following report to be placed before this meeting :'

"'BROOKLYN, Oct. 22, 1873.— Rev S. B. HALLIDAY, Clerk of Plymouth Church—*Dear Sir*: At a meeting of the examining committee of Plymouth church, held last evening, the following preamble and resolutions were passed :'

"*Whereas*, Charges were presented to this committee by William W. West against Theodore Tilton ; and

"*Whereas*, A special committee having been appointed by this committee to wait upon said Tilton in reference to said charges, and the said Tilton, on the evening of the 6th of October inst., made answer to the special committee in these words: "I have not for nearly four years past been an attendant at Plymouth church, nor have I considered myself a member of it, and I do not now, nor does the pastor of the church consider me a member, and I do not hold myself amenable to its jurisdiction in any manner whatever ; and

“*Whereas*, Theodore Tilton, in respect to a communication addressed to him by the clerk of this committee, and which communication with a copy of the charges preferred against him by William F. West, was put into the hands of the said Tilton on the 17th day of October inst., and a request made of him that he should answer the same by the 23d of October inst., says in a letter addressed to the clerk of this committee on date October 27, 1873: “It is four years since I terminated all connection with the church and am not now a member thereof, and therefore, documents addressed to me in that capacity I cannot receive;” and

“*Whereas*, It thus appears that Theodore Tilton, a member of the church, has abandoned his connection with the church by long absence from its ordinances; therefore, this committee recommend that the name of Theodore Tilton be dropped from the rolls of the church, as provided by rule No 7.’

“*Brother Talmage*—‘I move that the report of the committee be accepted and its recommendation be adopted.’

“*Brother West*—‘I hope that this motion will not prevail. I have a substitute to offer for the report of the committee, and upon that I wish to say a few words. I preferred the charges against Mr. Tilton before the examining committee, stating that Mr. Tilton had uttered gross slanders against the pastor of this church.’

“*Brother Shearman*—‘I rise to a point of order. Brother West has made his charges before the examining committee and not before the church, as he had a right to do if he had chosen. Those charges, whatever they were, are the property of the committee. All that this meeting can deal with, is the report of that committee. It has not chosen to tell us what these charges were. There is no intimation that any one has been slandered, and therefore the brother is out of order.’

“*The Chair*—‘I decide the point of order well taken. If Brother West will read the substitute he proposes to offer, I will then decide if it be in order, and upon that he may speak, confining himself strictly to the matter before the meeting.’

“Brother West then read his substitute for the report of the committee in the form of a resolution referring the matter back to the committee and ordering them to cite Mr. Tilton to appear before them and to report to this meeting which should adjourn to meet a week hence. Upon this he attempted to speak, but was promptly called to order by the chair whenever

he approached anything like a recital of what the charges consisted of. At the conclusion of his remarks brother Shearman obtained the floor and said: "I offer an amendment that we strike out all after the word 'resolved' in Brother West's resolution and insert 'that the clerk be directed to erase the name of Mr. Tilton from the rolls of the church.'"

"*Three or four voices* — 'I second the amendment.'

"*Another voice* — 'I move the previous question.'

"'Second it,' from all parts of the house.

"*Brother Hill* — 'I hope not. Don't let us have any gag-law here. If any brother has anything to say on this subject I hope he will be heard.'

"The call for the previous question was not sustained.

"*The brother in the centre of the house* — 'How do we know who are voting.'

"*Brother McKay* — 'Does the brother think there are ballot-stuffers here?' [Laughter.]

"*The brother in the centre of the house* — 'I will answer the gentleman.'

"*The Chair* — 'That is all out of order.'

"*The brother* — 'I will answer by saying that I never answered a blackguard remark.' [Hisses.]

"*The Chair* — 'You must come to order. Debate on the amendment of Brother Shearman is in order.'

"At this stage of the proceedings an immense sensation was occasioned by the tall form of Theodore Tilton rising to his feet and his voice was heard asking the privilege to be heard.

"The Chair said that Mr. Tilton's name being on the rolls of the church he should decide that Mr. Tilton had a right to be heard if he wished to speak, but as he had requested that permission be given him he would put the question, 'All in favor of hearing Mr. Tilton say aye.' The response was unanimously in the affirmative, and Theodore advanced and took his position on the platform. In a clear and even tone of voice he spoke as follows:

"'If I have a right to speak here to-night I desire to say a few plain words. Twenty years ago I joined this church, and many of the most precious moments of my life centre around these walls. Four years ago I ceased my membership, nor have I ever been from that time till to-night under this roof. In re-

tiring from Plymouth church I did not ask for the erasing of my name from the rolls because the circumstances were such that I could not publicly state them without wounding the feelings of others besides myself. During these years of my absence a story has filled the land, covering it like a mist, that I had slandered the minister of this church. Last summer Mr. Beecher published an explicit card in *The Brooklyn Eagle* exempting me from this injustice. Notwithstanding this public disclaimer by him on my behalf, a committee of this church by its action has given rise to injurious statements in the public press, that my claim of non-membership is made by me in order to avoid my just responsibility to the church as a member. I have therefore come here to-night not for any obligation of membership, for I am not a member of the church and not governed by any of its rules, and not because the committee has summoned me, but of my own free will, prompted by my self-respect, and as a matter vital to my life and honor, to say to Mr. Beecher, in this presence, surrounded here by his friends, that if I have slandered him I am ready to answer for it to the man I have slandered. If, therefore, the minister of this church has anything whereof to accuse me let him now speak, and I shall answer as God is my judge.'

"When during Mr. Tilton's remarks he got to the sentence, 'A story has filled the land, covering it like a mist,' Brother Shearman called him to order; but the chair decided that permission having been given him to speak he was not bound to confine himself to the subject matter before the house; and, bowing politely to Mr. Tilton, he requested him to proceed unless Brother Shearman chose to appeal.

"*Brother Shearman* — 'No, I shall not appeal, though I think you are wrong.'

"A brother on the right side of the house here made a forcible speech, beseeching members to consider well what they were doing. The question involved was, whether a member could sever his connection with the church at will. When he joined the church there was required to be two parties to the contract. Should there not be two parties to the dissolving of this contract? If this precedent was established there was an end to all control of the church over its members. At will any of them could walk out of the fold and say, 'I choose to be no

longer a member ; I deny your right to discipline me.' They must not be afraid to grapple with this matter now ; they must not fear what the outside world would say ; they must act right, let what would come of it.

" Brother Duryea said this was simply a subject for newspaper proprietors to make money out of, and he wished that the whole thing should end just where it was. He would move to lay the whole subject on the table.

" The motion was lost, and here, amid great applause, Mr. Beecher rose from his seat.

" *Brother McKay*—' Will Mr. Beecher go up on the platform ? We are more used to him there, and want to hear what he has to say.'

" Mr. Beecher spoke as follows :

" I propose to discuss the question simply of membership here, and the whole ground on which it stands in this particular instance. When I came to Plymouth church I came from the Presbyterian church, whose session is substantially the judicial body organized for the purpose of judicial procedure. The Congregational church is the most unorganized of all the churches in the world, and it relies on its free spirit and its moral influence rather than upon ecclesiastical authority. It soon became apparent that there was to be a large membership in this church, and the question came in early, what should be the method of the policy established in this church ; shall it be a church that shall undertake to make examination in detail into the life of its members ; shall it attempt to follow them up closely, or shall it be a large, educating brotherhood ? I need not tell you what view I took of it. My preaching up to this day has been that it is not a close corporation, like the Presbyterian church, or the Episcopal church, or like many of the New England Congregational churches, nor has it ever been from the beginning. There are two principles that are paramount. The first is that the door of the entrance into the church should be as large as humanity, and that the door of emission should be just as large as the necessity required. It was designed to give an invitation to all to come into the church that really felt that their object in coming in was a faith in Christ, and were willing to pay an obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. Thousands of churches have tried to keep members by discipline,

and have failed, but one of the earliest acts of this church was to make dismissal easier, the members had only to ask and the clerk sent him his letter of dismissal the next morning. We had no power to compel the attendance of witnesses, and we are no better than a town meeting. Where we have ascertained that persons have gone wrong it has been looked into, and the examining committee have again and again sent to him and said, "you had better withdraw and not compel the church to make inquiries." One and another and another and another case has been settled in this way, and for this reason, that it was the best method to take. What is therefore the application of this rule to the case before us? Mr. Tilton has been absent nearly four years. It has not been for the sake of excusing himself or of avoiding any responsibility that he has refused to appear before the committee, for to my certain knowledge he was absent because he believed that his separation from the church by his own act was equivalent to an entire sundering of the connection. In this case, for four years past, Mr. Tilton has not been present at any of our meetings. You have known it, you have never protested against it in any meeting, certainly not to him; you have had a distinct knowledge of it for nearly four years, and he assumed the position of a person who had withdrawn. You have permitted it to go on, and it is substantially to sanction the act, and now to go back and try to draw him again into the church for the sake of disciplining him is neither wise or prudent. I will say further I do not think Mr. Tilton has ever tried to shrink from his proper responsibility or to avoid his proper charge. He asks if I have a charge to make against him. I have none; whatever differences have been between us have been amicably adjusted; so far as I am concerned they are buried, and so far as he is concerned I am sure they are buried. This matter has been against my judgment from the beginning. I said to the people, You will only take this business up and carry it on to a point where you can do nothing, and then leave it where it began. I hold to that to-night. It is not wise and not according to my judgment, and that which I held in the beginning I hold still.' [Great applause.]

"Mr. Halliday made a few remarks, and then the motion denying the previous question was reconsidered and the main

question ordered. Brother Shearman's amendment was adopted by a vote of one hundred and sixty-eight to eighteen. The main question as amended was then put after a tedious time occupied by the chair in endeavoring to explain to the members what they were voting on, and it was lost. The question then recurred upon the motion to accept the report of the committee and adopt its recommendation, and it was adopted by a vote of two hundred and twenty-one to thirteen.

" Brother Hill fired a parting shot as follows :

" ' I move that Brother Halliday give Brother Tilton a strong letter of recommendation as a pure Christian man, and that he make it as strong as possible.'

" This motion was not seconded, and was lost amid the confusion attending the departure of the audience, who waited not for any motion to adjourn, but left at once, satisfied that Plymouth church had at least shaken herself free from the incubus that had been fastened upon her for the past ten months. After the adjournment many of the old members crowded around Mr. Tilton, shaking him warmly by the hand, and expressing their pleasure at seeing him once more among them.'

CHAPTER XL.

COMMENTS OF THE PRESS UPON THE ACTION OF PLYMOUTH CHURCH IN THE CASE OF THEODORE TILTON.

The extraordinary termination of the noted case of Plymouth Church versus Theodore Tilton has called out some pretty severe strictures upon the manner in which the real question was ignored and all investigation strangled at its birth, and that neither Beecher nor Tilton seemed inclined not to recognize any authority on the part of the church to interfere with their personal and private affairs. The first comment is from the leading Congregational Journal in the Northwest.

[From the Chicago Advance.]

“ Mr. Tilton, having refused to answer to the charges brought against him and Mr. Bowen by a member of Plymouth Church, of having slandered Mr. Beecher, and basing his refusal on the ground that, having had nothing to do with the church for four years past, he did not consider himself one of its members or subject to its jurisdiction, the church at a recent meeting, and after a warm debate, disposed of the matter by ‘erasing’ Mr. Tilton’s name from its roll of members. To say the least this is a singular proceeding, though not much out of keeping with the purpose in which the whole matter is said to have been taken up — not in any event to allow an investigation to go back of the tripartite covenant entered into last year between Messrs. Beecher, Bowen and Tilton. This is much as if no notice should be taken in a murder trial of anything that happened prior to the coroner’s inquest! Mr. Beecher has from the first strenuously objected to any church action in the case whatever. But it will be a great mistake if those unacquainted with Congregationalism conclude that it is no better fitted to cope with the duties of Church discipline than this action of Plymouth Church would imply, or that it is such an unorganized, gelatinous system

as might be inferred from the remarks made by Mr. Beecher on that occasion. But now what is to be done with Mr. Bowen?"

[*From the Cincinnati Enquirer.*]

"We had hoped that Mr. Beecher was innocent, but we give it up. He may now be considered as guilty, because certainly otherwise no clergyman of his reputation would rest under the grave imputations that have been cast upon him. He might as well understand first as last that he cannot by silence and non-action avoid these extraordinary accusations, which are special in their nature and character, and assume in all respects a definite form in time and place. No previous character will do. Innocence is always anxious for exculpation, and eagerly embraces the opportunity. Mr. Beecher is able and shrewd, and cannot but know how great is the sacrifice which at present he is making. We shall be amazed if Plymouth Church declines to have this investigation, although such may be the wish of Mr. Beecher. He is not the only party to be consulted. Indeed, we doubt if he ought to be consulted at all in any event, as he is interested in the judgment. But his failure to demand it should only make the Church more determined upon having a strict and rigid inquiry into all matters pertaining to it. They have even more at stake than Mr. Beecher. They have the Christian ministry and its honor and their own relations to it to consider."

[*From the Cincinnati Gazette.*]

"The meeting then dissolved, and it must have been with a feeling as if they were covering up an under-current of something very unpleasant. Mr. Beecher went out of one door, Mr. Tilton stood just in the way to another as many of the congregation went by, and a part greeted him cordially, while some avoided him. And so the affair stands. But there is evidently something below which has created much disturbance and division in that church. As it appears, Mr. Tilton takes a bold stand, and is ready to answer to any charge that the person chiefly interested in the 'slander'—if there be one—may bring; while Mr. Beecher declares they have buried whatever was between them, and he has no wish to revive it.

"We think Mr. Bowen was also called to answer charges of

slandering Mr. Beecher. As he is a member of the Church, we suppose that he can be made to respond. It is all very queer."

[*From the Springfield Daily Republican, Monday Nov. 3, 1873.*]

PLYMOUTH CHURCH AND ITS SCANDAL.

* * * Notwithstanding this attempt of their pastor to restore harmony by silencing discussion, the struggle between the party of investigation and the party of suppression went on for some time longer. At last, after the meeting had got itself into a dreadful tangle, it suddenly adopted the original resolution of the committee, and adjourned. So Mr. Tilton is 'dropped,' and there is an end of *that* investigation.

"Let us hope there is an end of the whole wretched business as well. If there is any good end to be served by going on with it beyond this point, we are too dull to perceive it. The public has heard quite as much as it cares to; its mind was made up some time ago. Mr. Beecher has had a lesson that he is not likely to soon forget; he will undoubtedly be a more prudent and a humbler man for it. We may assume that the experience has not been without its instruction and discipline for Mr. Tilton. Mr. Bowen, we hear, is going to Europe; if he is wise, he will stay there for the remainder of his natural life. Neither Brooklyn nor Plymouth Church has any further use for him. The latter is still the most prosperous and conspicuous religious society of the Protestant persuasion in the new world; while we are given to understand that the *Christian Union* is the most widely circulated of religious newspapers. Under these circumstances it would seem the wisest course for the Brooklyn brethren to turn down the old leaf and then try very hard to keep the new one unblotted."

PLYMOUTH CHURCH AND MR. BOWEN.

[*New York letter to the Providence Journal.*]

"As the name of Mr. Tilton was dropped from the rolls, the question now recurs, 'What shall be done with Mr. Bowen?' His case is under consideration, and the first steps in discipline have already been taken. His case is a grave one. For twenty five years he has been a member of Plymouth church. He has brought his family up under the Plymouth ministry. He has paid the first or second highest premium for pews for many

years. He has one of the most prominent seats in the house, a few pews off from Mrs. Beecher, Horace B. Claflin, and other magnates of Plymouth congregation. He is very conspicuous, comes early, and is pointed out to strangers as an object of curious observation. The Woodstock letter has never been recalled, explained, or retracted, unless it was done in the *tri-party* compact. This letter was given back to the writer when Mr. Bowen and Tilton settled their business squabbles. But copies of that letter are in private hands, and are circulated from house to house. What steps will be taken in this matter are not exactly known. If Mr. Bowen 'hears the church,' the second case will be disposed of as quietly as the first."

"If the following statement, which is taken from the *Sun* of the 2d inst., should prove to be correct, the proper sign or emblem of Plymouth church, Brooklyn, would be 'Whitewashing Done Here.'

"It has been stated in some of the journals that on last Friday night Mr. Theodore Tilton was expelled from Plymouth church. This is absurd. It was not pretended or supposed by any one, that the church took any such action. All that they did was to agree that his name should be dropped from their list. He informed them that he had withdrawn four years ago, and had never since then regarded himself as a member; and they simply recognized the correctness of this statement by voting to remove his name from the roll. We are bound to say also that Mr. Tilton's appearance at the meeting and the brief speech he delivered were in every way manly and creditable.

"The proceedings thus far indicate that neither the committee of Plymouth church, nor the church itself, nor Mr. Beecher, intends to have the so-called Beecher scandal investigated."

CHAPTER XLI.

The extraordinary proceedings, which culminated in the simple erasure of the name of Theodore Tilton from the roll of membership of Plymouth Church, without any trial for, or examination into the charges preferred against him by Deacon West, have caused almost as much excitement as did the first publication of the scandal by Mrs. Woodhull, and it is not probable, judging from recent indications, that the apparent determination of Beecher and Tilton, to stifle all investigation will be as successful as they had hoped.

The Congregational Church in its polity, is very different from most other Christian denominations. The difference is this. It has no superior organization outside of, and above the individual Church. No "Presbytery," "Synod," or "General Assembly," like the Presbyterian Church. No "Diocese" or "House of Bishops," like the Episcopal Church. But each church is virtually independent. They have, it is true, what is termed a "Conference of Churches," but their action is simply *advisory*, and they have really no ecclesiastical jurisdiction or power over any individual church. The idea is simply this, that each individual church contains within itself all the *human* elements which are necessary to constitute a true Church of Christ. The Pastor (or Bishop as he is sometimes termed) is simply a member of the church, having no more ecclesiastical power than a lay member, yet custom has made him the presiding officer of all church meetings, and he, like other presiding officers, only votes when there is a tie.

Plymouth Church is nominally Congregational, and it has been a universal custom in that denomination that no member can sever his or her connection, except by a letter to another church, or by excommunication, after an open trial and conviction upon charges preferred by some other member, hence

this "new departure" from established usage has created no little stir in the sister churches of that order, and two of the most important churches in Brooklyn, viz: "The Church of the Pilgrims," (Rev. Dr. R. S. Storrs) and Clinton Avenue Church, (Rev. Dr. Buddington's) have both taken action, and have called upon Plymouth Church to "show cause" for their novel treatment of the case of Mr. Tilton. Mr. Beecher in response, does not acknowledge the right of any sister church to interfere, and claims that the church over which he is pastor is *an wholly independent* organization.

Nevertheless, the two churches mentioned are endeavoring to bring about an investigation to ascertain whether the course pursued in dropping Tilton's name from the roll of the church was the real expression of the majority of the church, or if it was lobbied through in the interests of Mr. Beecher and his partizans for the purpose of preventing an investigation which should bring the real truth before the public at large. What will be the final result of this movement, no one can predict, but one thing seems certain, that the "scandal" like "Banquo's Ghost" will not "down" at the simple bidding of any one. In this connection we will give a brief epitome of the reception given by Plymouth Church to the communications received from the Church of the Pilgrims on the evening of November 26th.

In regard to the expulsion some time ago of Theodore Tilton from Plymouth Church, a meeting of the congregation was held this evening, for the purpose of considering a communication which had been received from the committee of the Church of the Pilgrims, Brooklyn. The communication in question, though couched in general terms, was evidently intended to refer to the expulsion on the 31st of October, of Theodore Tilton from the membership of Plymouth Church. The meeting was crowded to excess, only members of the congregation and representatives of the press being admitted. Mr. A. Raymond was chosen president. Rev. R. M. Halliday, clerk of the church, stated the purpose of the meeting, and submitted the communication from the Church of the Pilgrims, charging a lack of discipline in Mr. Beecher's church. He urged the appointment of a conference committee between the two churches. Mr. McKay proposed as the simplest conclusion

of the matter that Plymouth Church should accede to the request of the committee on conference. Mr. Gilbert proposed as an amendment a preamble and resolutions to the effect that the communication charging Plymouth Church with unscriptural action ought not to receive any consideration whatever, and that the latter church, being an independent organization, declined to take any notice of any project from Clinton Avenue or any other church. These resolutions were passed, and the clerk of the church was authorized to send a copy to the committee of the Church of the Pilgrims. Mr. Beecher made some remarks, in which, without referring directly to Mr. Tilton, he deprecated the idea of such strict church discipline by which a member can be expelled without grave reasons. Tilton's name was not mentioned during the entire proceedings.

We will supplement our report of the proceedings by quoting the remarks of Mr. Beecher on the occasion, giving his ideas of the true Congregational church polity, which is doubtless a fair and sound statement of the real principles of unadulterated Congregationalism. As we have already said in substance, any church or association of churches can only act toward an individual church in an *advisory* capacity, having no authority to discipline or even reprimand it or any of its officers or members.

"There were different views of Congregational polity. Plymouth Church stood for one. Was it their duty to give it up—to surrender it? It was their duty to maintain it, for the sake of all the churches around us, which we wish to see built up on the broadest democratic construction of Congregational church fellowship. What is Congregationalism? It answers more nearly than anything else to our ideas of democratic township government, more nearly to good neighborhood among equal or like families. It is simply the association of men by covenant of some sort or other in worship and in Christian helpfulness, and Congregationalism does not give to the churches gathered together any ownership in or over its members. It does not give to the neighboring churches, certainly, any ownership, or anything allied to it between one church and another. Congregational churches stand then, exactly, for principle, on the ground on which twenty families living in the same neighborhood stand, who are respectable, who interchange visits with

each other, who, when they are called upon, give each other counsel and advice, but never feel themselves at liberty by the tenure of friendship to intrude upon one another, or to dictate to one another what shall be their domestic and internal policy. The Brooklyn Baptists or Presbyterians had exactly as much right to meddle with their internal affairs as the Brooklyn Congregationalists. Advice? Yes. Dictation? No. When they come to us and say, The manner in which you are keeping house in your family is not agreeable to the people in our family, on that I feel disposed to say, Gentlemen, if you don't like our housekeeping, don't come here.

Next in order we will give the views of Col. James B. Mix, (a prominent and able member of the press,) as contained in a letter to the *Chicago Times*, and published in that paper November 22d, 1873.

Mr. Mix was a school-fellow of Mr. Tilton, and they both entered the field as journalists about the same time, and have long been intimate friends. It was to him that Tilton addressed the famous letter "To my Complaining Friend" which our readers will find on page 182. He is also the friend with whom Mr. Tilton walked on Brooklyn Heights on Thanksgiving day, 1872, when Tilton submitted to him his manuscript purporting to be the "true story," as related on page 219. He is also the author of a scathing letter published in the *Chicago Times*, Feb. 28, 1873, extracts from which will be found on page 204.

Mr. Mix has evidently become somewhat disgusted with his old-time friend Tilton, and probably some allowance should be made by the reader in estimating the weight which should attach to his severe criticisms.

After alluding to several other Brooklyn sensations he proceeds to say :

"Terrible as are these deeds of violence, corruption, and immorality, they don't work half the mischief that is done to the cause of morality and religion by the efforts of religious bodies and the religious press to whitewash the iniquitous transactions that have taken place inside a religious community. Such a scene I witnessed on the evening of Oct. 31, in the Plymouth chapel. It was the culmination of the Beecher-Bowen-Tilton-Woodhull imbroglio, where the hatchet was buried in the violated hearthstone ; where the Great High Priest of the

New Dispensation and his pupil embraced each other, and where two hundred and one idolaters out of a congregation of three hundred and fourteen people, cried "Amen!" After all of which there was prayer. Never before did the Christian church witness such a spectacle. Never was there such an exhibition of lying hypocrisy. Never was there such a shameless profanation of Christian virtues as took place that memorable night between Henry Ward Beecher and Theodore Tilton. The entire proceeding from beginning to end was a flagrant insult to the intelligence of the community. Every effort was made to exclude the press from the investigation; so much so that three days before the appointed time *The Brooklyn Eagle*, Mr. Beecher's organ, positively stated in answer to a paragraph that had appeared in a New York paper, that 'Mr. Tilton had written no letter to the examining committee of Plymouth Church; that he had not refused to answer any charges; that no charges had been made; that there was no committee, and that no investigation was contemplated.'

"There was one zealous, God-fearing member in Plymouth Church who believed that the truth should be told. He had no knowledge of the plotting and counter-plotting that had been going on, and believed his pastor pure as the driven snow. The following card the *Eagle* was obliged to publish:

[“ ‘*To the Editor of the Brooklyn Eagle.*”]

“ ‘BROOKLYN, Oct. 28, 1873. — Certain statements were made in yesterday's *Eagle*, which I, as a member of Plymouth Church and interested in its welfare, cannot allow to pass unnoticed. The statements were that Mr. Tilton had written no letter to the examining committee of Plymouth Church, that he had not been cited to appear before them, that he had not refused to answer any charges, that no charges had been made, that there was no committee, and no investigation was contemplated.

“ ‘The above statements are incorrect in nearly every particular. Mr. Tilton has, for the last three years, been circulating scandalous reports in relation to Mr. Beecher. Knowing this, and believing that the only way for Plymouth Church to meet these accusations was to call Mr. Tilton to account for making them, I preferred charges against him before the examining committee, on the evening of July 2, 1873. These charges were accepted by the committee at that time, and it was my

desire, earnestly expressed, that a trial of the case should take place at once. For various reasons, which it is not necessary here to state, these charges were not sent to Mr. Tilton until Oct. 17. On that day the clerk of the committee presented them to Mr. Tilton, with a request from the committee for an answer. Mr. Tilton replied, that as he had not been a member of the church for the past four years, he respectfully declined to answer the charges.

“‘These facts have already been published, and I therefore feel that I am violating no confidence in repeating them. The issue with Mr. Tilton is a plain one. I charge him with making scandalous accusations against Mr. Beecher, to the injury of Plymouth Church, and am ready at any time to prove my charges. I regret that there has been so much delay in bringing the case to trial, but am fully convinced that Plymouth Church will speedily take measures to call Mr. Tilton to a strict account, and to thoroughly investigate the scandal. Any assertion to the contrary is, in my opinion, injurious to the church, and I therefore take occasion to correct the statements which you have so widely circulated by your journal.

“‘Yours truly,

WM. F. WEST.’

“The investigation, however, did not take place. One Brother Shearman, Fisk & Gould’s attorney during their control of the Erie Railway company, fixed things, and every motion for an investigation was voted down. The meeting was more disorderly than was to have been expected, and at the termination, one innocent member asked, ‘are we to understand that the simple dropping of Mr. Tilton’s name settles the whole of what is called the scandal, without a censure of anybody?’ It is needless to say that at this point there was the cry of ‘question,’ and the question was put and carried.

“The press the following morning published full reports of the meeting, but there were no comments. It would seem from the numerous communications published that the public is not satisfied, and that the question is asked: ‘Please explain why it is that Plymouth Church, the most conspicuous and every way notable Congregational church in the land, is wholly silent while its pastor and some of its most eminent members are publicly and repeatedly accused of adultery, licentiousness, lying, intrigue, and treachery.’

"The whitewash covering the Plymouth pulpit is so thin that the impious are asking such conundrums as the following:

"1. Is it in order in a Christian church for any member to leave at his option? Does it require the assent of two parties, the Church and himself, to get in, while he can go out without asking permission, and even without the church being aware of it? Mr. Beecher's argument in favor of this position was rather strange. He says, as reported in *The Sun*:

"His relations to the church were severed by his own act. That severing may not have been regular, but it was certainly valid. The rules of churches and equity do not always require regularity. If parties regard themselves as married, and others regard them as married, the law holds that they are married, although there has been no marriage ceremony.'

"Allowing this, will the same apply to divorce? Does Mr. Beecher hold that when a man deserts his wife the separation is valid, if not quite regular.

"2. Is it in order in a Christian church to allow a man to avoid discipline, or for a church to avoid the disagreeable duty of self-purification by declaring the relation of membership already severed? To an outsider it seems like a farce for a church which provides for discipline to allow a member charged with murder, or adultery, or slander, to say, 'I withdrew last week, or last month, or last year.'

"3. Does not Mr. Tilton equivocate when he says in *The Eagle*, 'So far as I know, no committee, either in church or state, has ever made charges against me of any sort?' This is verbally true, for the charges in question were not made *by* the committee, but *to* the committee, and by them communicated to Mr. Tilton. He adds: 'Nor have I been summoned to appear before a Plymouth Church committee for any purpose whatever.' True again. The committee in presenting the charge made against him did not summon him to appear before the committee, but only to answer their letter and appear before the church. We are quoting his language from the later amended report of his denial, as made to *The Eagle*.

"4. Has Mr. Beecher really denied that Mr. Tilton has ever made calumnious charges against himself? So Mr. Tilton says of the story that 'I have slandered the minister of this church. Last summer Mr. Beecher published an explicit card in *The*

Brooklyn Eagle exempting me from this injustice.' Any one who will read Mr. Beecher's accurately-worded card will see that in it he carefully avoids any reference to Mr. Tilton's charges against himself, but refers only to those quite different charges mentioned in the 'document' to which the card alludes; which document omits all reference to Mr. Tilton's well-known charges against Mr. Beecher, and only refers to those other charges which Mr. Tilton alleges were repeated to him by Mr. Bowen. It is a little puzzling to see that Mr. Beecher's exoneration of Mr. Tilton in reference to certain charges is claimed by him as covering all other slanderous reports, without a word of denial from Mr. Beecher, who sits by and hears the claim.

"5. What does Mr. Beecher mean by taking so much pains to show the public that he has no grievance against Mr. Tilton? This is the greatest mystery of all. He said in his card to *The Eagle*, 'I am unwilling that he (Mr. Tilton) should even seem to be responsible for injurious statements whose force was derived wholly from others.' Last Friday night he said: 'Whatever differences have been between us have been amicably adjusted, and so far as I am concerned, buried. I have no charges.' And yet this miraculously forgiving man knows that Mr. Tilton is the man who has again and again charged him with a crime which involves the peace of his own home; who says that his "fiery spirit" 'burns to defend his wife and little ones,' but who forbears to do it lest his answer should 'shoot forth like a thunderbolt through other hearts.' Mr. Beecher knows that this is the great scandal which so nearly undermined his usefulness in his own church, and his position in the hearts of the whole people. He knows that this horrible calumny came from Mr. Tilton and from nobody else, and that Mr. Tilton has never retracted it in any way. He knows that Mr. Tilton has, within scarce six months, publicly charged him with 'moral insincerity' and 'a plentiful lack of conscience and courage,' such as leads him 'to say one thing and think another; to hold one philosophy in public and another in private; to offer one morality to the multitude and keep another for himself.' Knowing all this, he can yet assure the public that he has nothing against Mr. Tilton. He can sit still and say nothing while Mr. Tilton asserts before his face: 'A story has filled the land, covering it like a mist, that I have slandered the min-

ister of this church. Last summer Mr. Beecher published an explicit card in *The Brooklyn Eagle*, exempting me from this injustice.' Mr. Beecher had done no such thing, nor could he have truthfully have done any such thing; but had exempted him from injustice in reference to quite different slanders; and yet he allowed Mr. Tilton to spread the mantle of that card broad enough to cover all Mr. Tilton's real offenses. How he could have done it is what no man can make out.

"6. Are we to understand that Mr. Tilton is left master of the situation? Charges of slander are made against him. He refuses to reply, claiming that he is no member of the church. The committee of examination admits this claim; Mr. Beecher admits this claim; and the church votes to admit it; and also votes upon that plea that his name be 'struck from the roll.' He has got all he asks; but, determined to secure not only immunity but triumph, he proceeds to confront the church and its pastor, and to say:

" 'I come here to-night in order to say in Mr. Beecher's presence, surrounded here by his friends, that if I have slandered him I am ready to answer for it to the man whom I have slandered. If, therefore, the minister of this church has anything whereof to accuse me, let him now speak, and I shall answer, as God is my judge.'

"He knows he has uttered these slanders, and has never retracted them; and Mr. Beecher knows it. And yet he dares to speak this haughty challenge, and Mr. Beecher meekly replies: 'He asks if I have any charges to make against him. I have none. Whatever differences have been between us have been amicably adjusted.' Most mysteriously forgiving and forbearing of men, who does not even ask a public confession and apology before he forgives the calumny which has covered the land like a mist.'

"There is no sincere Christian in the land that does not feel the taint which has polluted the pulpit in Brooklyn should be purged away. As Theodore Tilton has succeeded in intimidating Mr. Beecher, and as he did not scruple to basely use his friends to accomplish that end, it is but just that his knavery and duplicity should be exposed. Either Henry Ward Beecher is the boldest libertine living, or Theodore Tilton is a malignant traducer and scandal-monger, and when he faced Plymouth

church and said he had never made any charges against Henry Ward Beecher, he lied. The lie was so palpable, for I know that which I affirm, that I felt that 'judgment had fled to brutish beasts, and men had lost their reason.' In the true story of the Beecher-Bowen-Tilton-Woodhull 'Scandal' there is an entire absence of those incidents which form the eddies in the current of married life. There is in it neither love, jealousy, nor revenge. The parties for the most part are all humility and Christian benignity. The only shield they offer to public attacks is their reputations, forgetting that this has been a sorry year for Christian statesmen and bankers. As if it were a special interposition of divine providence, a wonderful concatenation of causes has kept this case before the public; and strangely enough, the very precautions, deliberately contrived and adopted to insure safety and concealment, have become the means of publicity. Leveling the very bulwarks of our social system in more than one city in this country, is a coterie of people, who, in accordance with their epicine philosophy, believe that society has no laws that they, peculiarly constituted as they are, are bound to respect. Hence they are conspicuous for their contempt of morality. They are eccentric in manner; *outré* in dress, and decidedly coarse in features; but have an abundance of 'cheek.' The peace of hundreds of households has been destroyed by their pernicious doctrines, and in the case of the Richardson-McFarland tragedy, that culminated in a marriage that shocked the moral sense of the community, the great high priest, Henry Ward Beecher, did not hesitate to put asunder what God had joined together.

"Victoria Woodhull, unsuccessful as a broker, made a dead break from commercial circles, and began skirmishing among the sisters of the free-love league. For some time they evaded her, but one by one she captured them, and brought them to her little back parlor on Broad street, where she told them who were their affinities, and imparted much other information on the relations of the sexes. Living with her in a palatial mansion on Murray Hill were two husbands, and a large family of dependents. The appearance of her paper occasioned much comment, particularly as her views on the social question were expressed in language more forcible than elegant. It is doubtful if the Woodhull had ever given the social problem much

thought, or was in any way worried about the rights of women. As she expressed it, 'I am building up a constituency;' and while she built it, her second husband ran the paper. It was not long before the sisters of the free-love persuasion began making the Woodhull office their rendezvous. Vic. soon perceived that there was a scarcity of the long-haired element, and she began looking around for an apostle for the new dispensation, as she termed it. Among those radical liberals who had yet failed to render her that homage to which she felt herself entitled, was Theodore Tilton, who had just started *The Golden Age*, he having had a rupture with Bowen of *The Independent*, of which paper Tilton had been editor. Tilton saw Woodhull's game, but, to use a vulgar phrase, wouldn't 'tumble.' Her next step was the giving out of vague hints in her paper, which were meant for Tilton's eye. These passed unnoticed. Then she published a communication in *The World* and *The Times*, in which she said 'I know a clergyman of eminence in Brooklyn who lives in concubinage with the wife of another clergyman of equal eminence.'

"This last shot did the business, and this notorious couple became almost inseparable. At the mansion on Murray Hill, Theodore was the cock of the roost. Neither of the husbands murmured. There were no petty jealousies. It was free love, pure and unadulterated, and everybody was happy. Theodore lay down on a bed of roses, while Vicky fanned his Apollo brow with the odorous sandal-wood fan of indiscriminate sexuality. As lolled the brave and warlike Antony in the lap of the wistful Cleopatra, so lolled the disciple of Beecher in the lap of the woman who is 'breaking the way for future generations.' In a word, it was red-hot.

"The Woodhull was delighted when she discovered that her peculiar doctrines had found so eloquent a champion, and never before were talents so prostituted as were those of Theodore Tilton's in eulogizing this woman as one who nightly communed with the spirit of Demosthenes. As an evidence of what gushing twaddle a man can get off when he becomes the tool of a designing woman, the following is taken from *The Golden Age* of June 20, 1871:

"'Victoria C. Woodhull is a younger heroine than most of the foregoing — having come into the cause after some of her

elders had already become veterans. But her advocacy of woman's right to the ballot, as logically deduced from the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments, has given her a national notoriety. If the woman's movement has a Joan of Arc, it is this gentle but fiery genius. She is one of the most remarkable women of her time. Little understood by the public, she is denounced in the most outrageous manner by people who do not appreciate her moral worth. But her sincerity, her truthfulness, her uprightness, her true nobility of character, are so well known to those who know her well, that she ranks in the estimation of these, somewhat as St. Theresa does in the admiring thoughts of pious Catholics. She is a devotee — a religious enthusiast — a seer of visions — a devout communionist with the other world. She acts under spiritual influence, and, like St. Paul, is "not disobedient to the heavenly vision." Her bold social theories have startled many good souls, but anybody who, on this account, imagines her to stand below the whitest and purest of her sex, will misplace a woman who in her moral integrity rises to the full height of the highest.

"Wherever Theodore went there went this new affinity, and the result was the Woodhull soon ingratiated herself with a lot of 'hussey-guzzies' of uncertain age, who, though married, are not mated, and therefore give unusual prominence to their maiden names. To this shining light that had just flashed into their circle, these uncanny women gave their confidence, and with clairvoyant skill she extracted from them their inmost thoughts. A consummate actress, she could, while expatiating on woman's wrongs, work her hearers into a state of frenzy. It was while in one of these grand flights that she obtained from her fair-haired apostle the story of his woes, and it was then that a new field of operations opened to her view. That Henry Ward Beecher and Theodore Tilton should be estranged, was in direct antagonism to the fundamental principles of the new dispensation, and she brought Theodore to a realization of his true position, when, one evening, while reveling in one of their lustful orgies, she placed Theodore's hand within her magnanimous husband's (Blood's) and said :

" 'Two souls with but a single thought,
Two hearts that beat as one.' "

"To make his conversion complete there was yet a final test

required before the priestess would pronounce him of the true faith, of which Victoria gives the following account :

“ ‘Never did Theodore appear so grand and noble as when he related to me the incident of his meeting with his pastor, and the reconciliation that followed. Coming to me one evening, he said, “Last evening, in crossing on the ferry-boat, and while leaning on the railing, I felt instinctively that my pastor was near me. I walked over to where a man was sitting with his head buried in his hands. I raised the slouch hat that concealed his face, and taking his arm, said, you have nothing to fear from me. I felt, as I put his arm within mine and we walked up the hill together, that I had grown a foot taller.’

“To have a private meeting with Henry Ward Beecher, where she could uninterruptedly discuss the length and breadth of matters, would be to her the consummation of her most sanguine hopes, and she set about it with all the pertinacity and adroitness of a diplomat. What was this terrible secret that this remorseless and audacious adventuress possessed, that she could with such unblushing effrontery compel the most notable clergyman in the land to gratify her desires, no matter how whimsical or capricious? Well, to continue — Theodore could never wait to communicate verbally, and hence it was necessary to send the following :

“ ‘MY DEAR VICTORIA: I have arranged with Frank that you shall see Mr. Beecher at my house on Friday night. He will attend a meeting at the church till 10 o'clock and will give you the rest of the evening as late as you desire. You may consider this fixed. Meanwhile, on this sunshiny day, I salute you with a good morning. Peace be with you. Yours,

“ ‘THEODORE.’

“The Woodhull's description of this meeting is inimitable. She tells it with ravenous delight, and considers it the proudest moment of her life.

“She pronounces Mr. Beecher a man of many sterling qualities, and says that at this interview she came to a perfect understanding with him. Now, while the new social movement was red-hot, and its new converts effervescing, Vic hastened to appear before the public, backed up by her distinguished colleagues. While Steinway hall was being filled with unbelievers, she was importuning Henry Ward Beecher in Brooklyn to come over with her and give the new dispensation a sendoff.

"It was here that Woodhull was terrible in her wrath, when she found that the great preacher was about to fail her, and she left the house, at which she had met Mr. Beecher by appointment, vowing that if she went alone before the crowded audience then waiting to greet her, she would introduce some startling topics in her lecture, not down on the bills.

"Mr. Tilton who was present at the interview, hastened after her in company with a friend, and introduced her to the audience. This was on the night of Nov. 21, 1871.

"During that winter the free-love thermometer kept up among the nineties, but as summer approached, Theodore began adopting the freezing process. The liberal movement absorbed his attention, and he became its most eloquent champion.

"Vic. soon perceived that her charm was no longer potent. She had thought that with the failure of the liberal movement, her apostle would return to his allegiance, but not so. Rumors of another affinity having disturbed their relations annoyed her, and one day she had struck off slips of a scandalous article, entitled 'Tit for Tat,' in which she discussed the relations of a score of people of both sexes, and which she threatened to publish. When her paper suspended, it was hoped that Woodhull would move her family west, but she was only crouching for a more terrible spring.

"Finally, she told a tale that, true enough, did 'fill the land, covering it like a mist,' which will never be dispelled until the miserable wretches who for years have been masquerading in the cloak of religion are held up to the public derision and scorn. The Woodhull tribe were thrown into jail, where they were daily visited by Marplot Train, who, anxious for some kind of a revolution, issued a blasphemous sheet, and to keep these fanatics apart, and thereby prevent a saturnalia of filth and impiety, Train was thrown into the Tombs. Blundering officials, in their eagerness to whitewash vice in high places, usurped the law, thereby creating a morbid sympathy for these moral pests.

"And now I would like to say why it is that I write these lines. It can be said in a few words:

"Theodore Tilton and I were at school together, and together we started up the thorny path of journalism. Consequently, I felt a sympathy for him that can hardly be expressed

when I saw him battling, as I then thought, against a legion of foes. I went to him with words of comfort, which he responded to by donning a mask and acting a part. In piteous tone, he told me the story of his woe. It was exquisite acting; there is no question about that. Behind the flash of the footlights it would make his fortune, and it is morally certain that Brooklyn, in preserving a cuckold, has robbed the stage of a star. But I didn't know it then, and gave him commiseration when I should have cried 'Bravo.' It was on Thanksgiving day that he read me his statement, a lengthy document, since read to, at least, a dozen, in which he recited eloquently the narrative of the manner in which the first divine of the land had sought to debauch his hospitality, his hearthstone, and his bed.

"The reluctance of Tilton to publish his statement I attributed to his Christian benignity, and that it might appear he was goaded into defending the honor of his hearthstone, I received from his hand the following for publication. (For this letter see page 182.)

"Subsequent events have proved that the suspicions of every editor whom I importuned for the publication of the letter were only too true.

"When, some time ago, I became convinced that the letter placed in my hands was meant for Henry Ward Beecher's private eyes, and had produced the desired result; when informed by Tilton that he had read the true story to Beecher, and that Beecher had asked for twenty-four hours' notice of the intended *expose*, to prepare for his departure to heavenly realms; when I saw around the corner of the mask of humility and contrition, and detected the gleam of gain in the Tiltonian eyes; then I knew the whole thing was a juggle and a farce; and when, at the expression of my doubts, the Woodhull placed in my hands the incriminatory letters, the existence of which has been denied, I determined to puncture the bubble with my quill. It could no longer be disguised that Tilton had settled with Beecher, and that his pastoral pressure was the balm that had quenched his 'fiery spirit.' Because all this is true, because the temple of the Lord from which our Savior drove the money-changers with his whip of cords has come to be a lustful market-place, have I attempted to unfold the mystery of this 'scandal.' Immediately following the revelations of the Wood-

hull woman, the Hon. Thomas Kinsella, a crafty jobber in the journalistic profession, published almost daily in the columns of *The Eagle*, of which paper he is editor, communications regarding the scandal. Beecher and Kinsella are both Jesuits, but of different persuasions, and Kinsella determined to compel Beecher to select *The Eagle* as the medium whereby he could present his first statement. There was a bitter feud existing between Bowen, of *The Union*, and Kinsella. Bowen, however, remained quiet, while Kinsella daily accused him of having originated the stories that were then in circulation regarding Beecher. A slight ripple in the current of Kinsella's domestic relations gave Bowen the long-desired opportunity to make Brooklyn uninhabitable by Kinsella for several days. Kinsella had secured the removal of the superintendent of public instruction, and the attentions of Kinsella to the wife of his successor were very annoying to Mrs. Kinsella, so much so, that she followed him one day last summer to a hostelry on the Coney Island road, where she found him in the parlor with the wife of the new superintendent. Bowen made the fur fly, and said much that was naughty, Kinsella soon returned, and reopened the Beecher 'scandal,' to 'get square,' at Beecher's expense, if that were necessary. In *The Eagle* office, there had been lying for months the following incriminatory letter from Tilton. It was the rod that Kinsella kept in pickle for Bowen, which was to appear at the critical moment. (We have portions of the following letter in previous pages of this book, but we here give it entire.)

“‘BROOKLYN, Jan. 1, 1871.

“‘MR. HENRY C. BOWEN ; Sir :—I received last evening your sudden notice breaking my two contracts, one with *The Independent*, the other with *The Brooklyn Union*. With reference to this act of yours I will make a plain statement of facts. It was during the early part of the rebellion, if I recollect aright, when you first intimated to me that Rev. Henry Ward Beecher had committed acts of adultery for which, if you should expose him, he would be driven from the pulpit. From that time onward your references to the subject were frequent, and always accompanied with the exhibition of deep-seated injury to your heart. In a letter which you addressed to me from Woodstock, June 16, 1863, referring to this subject, you said “I sometimes

feel that I must break silence ; that I must no longer suffer as a dumb man and be made to bear a grief most unjustly. One word from me would make — a rebellion throughout Christendom, I had almost said, and you know it. You have just a little of the evidence from the great volume in your possession. I am not pursuing a phantom—but solemnly brooding over an awful reality.”

“Subsequent to this letter and at frequent intervals from this till now, you have repeated the statement that you could at any moment expel Henry Ward Beecher from Brooklyn. You have reiterated the same thing, not only to me, but to others. Moreover, during the year just closed your letters on the subject were marked with more feeling than heretofore, and were not unfrequently coupled with your emphatic declaration that Mr. Beecher ought not to be allowed to occupy a public position as a Christian teacher and preacher.

“On the 25th of December, 1870, at an interview in your house, at which Mr. Oliver Johnson and I were present, you spoke freely and indignantly against Mr. Beecher as an unsafe visitor in the families of his congregation. You alluded by name to a woman, now a widow, whose husband's death you did not doubt was hastened by his knowledge, that Mr. Beecher had maintained with her an improper intimacy. As if to leave no doubt on the minds of either Mr. Johnson or myself, you informed us that Mr. Beecher had made to you a confession of guilt, and had with tears implored your forgiveness. After Mr. Johnson retired from this interview, you related to me the case of a woman of whom you said (as nearly as I could recollect your words) that “Mr. Beecher took her in his arms by force, threw her down upon the sofa, accomplished upon her his deviltry, and left her.” * * * During your recital of this tale you were filled with anger toward Mr. Beecher. You said, with terrible emphasis, that he ought not to remain a week longer in his pulpit. You immediately suggested that a demand should be made upon him to quit his sacred office. You volunteered to bear to him such a demand in the form of an open letter, which you would present to him with your own hand, and you pledged yourself to sustain the demand which the letter should make, namely, “that he should, for reasons which

he explicitly knew, immediately cease from his ministry at Plymouth church, and retire from Brooklyn." The first draft of this letter did not contain the phrase "for reasons that he explicitly knew," and these words, or words to this effect, were incorporated in a second at your motion. You urged, furthermore, very emphatically, that the letter should demand, not only Mr. Beecher's abdication of his pulpit, but the cessation of his writing for *The Christian Union* — a point on which you were overruled. This letter you presented to Mr. Beecher at Mr. Freeland's house. Shortly after its presentation you sought another interview with me in the editorial office of *The Union*, during which, with accountable emotion in your manner, your face livid with rage, you threatened with loud voice that if ever I should inform Mr. Beecher of the statements which you made concerning the adultery, or should compel you to adduce the evidence on which you agreed to sustain the demand for Mr. Beecher's withdrawal from Brooklyn, you would immediately deprive me of my engagement to write for the *Independent*, and to edit the Brooklyn *Union*, and that in case I should ever attempt to enter the office of those journals you would have me ejected by force. I told you that I should inform Mr. Beecher or anybody else according to the dictates of my judgment uninfluenced by any authority from my employers. You then excitedly retired from my presence. Hardly had your violent words ceased ringing in my ears when I received your summary notices breaking my contract with the *Independent* and the Brooklyn *Union*. To the foregoing narrative of fact I have only to add my surprise and regret at the sudden interruption by your own act of what has been on my part a faithful service of fifteen years.

"Truly yours,

"THEODORE TILTON."

"The appearance of this letter was the first intimation that Bowen had of the conspiracy existing to crush him, and if he had any doubt as to Beecher's hostility, it was immediately dispelled when the following document appeared in all the New York papers:

[The document referred to is the famous compact made by Bowen, Tilton and Beecher.]

"In 1870, Bowen and Tilton made a compact to drive

Beecher from his pulpit. This they did not do; but in 1872, they, with Beecher, signed a triple-compact, in order that they might continue to traffic on religion. They agreed to wipe out the past, and Bowen and Tilton condoned the crimes that involved the honor of their families. Tilton kept a printed copy of the letter which had been delivered up to Bowen, which found its way to *The Eagle* office. To save Beecher, the covenant was given to the press, and it was at this stage of the scandal that Bowen endeavored to form a coalition with Victoria Woodhull. Too cowardly to use the evidence already in his possession and thereby dirty his own nest, he appointed a meeting at Victoria Woodhull's house, and, unfortunately for him, after an interval of a week, accompanied by Mr. H. B. Clafin, he visited the free love priestess, and found to his surprise that her admiration for Beecher was unbounded. Bowen should have known that delays in love or war are dangerous. At the same time that Vic. was manifesting an angelic delicacy regarding the contents of the terrible letters, Beecher defied Bowen in the following letter;

[*To the Editor of the Brooklyn Eagle.*]

“ ‘ In a long and active life in Brooklyn it has rarely happened that *The Eagle* and myself have been in accord on questions of common concern to our fellow citizens. I am for this reason impelled to acknowledge the unsolicited confidence and regard of which the columns of *The Eagle* of late bear testimony. I have just returned to the city to learn that application has been made to Mrs. Victoria Woodhull for letters of mine supposed to contain information respecting certain infamous stories against me. I have no objection to have *The Eagle* state in any way it deems fit, that Mrs. Woodhull, or any other person or persons who have letters of mine in their possession, have my cordial consent to publish them. In this connection, and at this time, I will only add that the stories and rumors which have for some time past been circulated about me, are grossly untrue, and I stamp them in general and in particular as utterly false.

“ ‘ Respectfully,

“ ‘ HENRY WARD BEECHER. ’ ”

“ In fact, Beecher made the publication of the letters the criterion of his innocence or guilt. Little more remains to be said re-

garding these sanctimonious teachers of morality. Bowen, crushed and despised, crawls to his hole like a poisoned rat, and sells his paper much to the delight of Kinsella. *The Eagle*, perched on the shoulders of Beecher and Tilton, shrieks victory! and flaps its wings, while they embrace each other. At this final tableau, the Plymouth pagans roll their eyes up at their fleshy idol, unmindful that Trinity, of New York, had its Onderdonk, and Tremont temple of Boston its Kallock, and they were cast out.

"It may be asked

WHERE IS THE TERRIBLE OGRE,

the man-woman who unearthed all this sin and iniquity. It will be seen from the announcement below that she is about to found a new establishment, that, notwithstanding its aristocratic surroundings, may require the attention of the police.

"THE PSYCHE CLUB-HOUSE.

The proprietors of *The Weekly* propose to open a club house under the above title, at their residence, No. 333 West Twenty-third street.

"The plan on which it will be instituted will be similar to that on which most other club-houses are conducted, the exception being that the Psyche club-house will be open for the admission of members of both sexes.

"From this may be inferred the intent of its establishment, viz: To furnish a convenient centre in which reformers may discuss all questions connected with the well being of humanity, neither the male nor female element unduly predominating in such discussion.

"Much good may be expected to flow from this commingling of the knowledge of both sections of the human unit, the better development of which is the idea which underlies all the projected reforms of the age.

"Further particulars with regard to terms of membership, etc., will be given next week.'

"Club-houses are expensive luxuries, and the removal of the Woodhull headquarters from an upper attic in Nassau street, to a brown stone front, augurs well for the new dispensation."

CHAPTER XLII.

A SUMMING UP OF THE WHOLE MATTER.

Our readers who have gone through the mass of evidence we have presented to them, have doubtless arrived at their own conclusions. But as there has necessarily been some repetitions, and not a little conflicting testimony, we will endeavor to give them a *resume* of the whole, and in a connected form. As in all controversies, each side have their partizans, and it is not to be expected, nor perhaps is it desirable, that there should be a unanimous verdict on the part of the great jury of the public.

In giving to our readers a *resume* or *epitome* of the case we shall have no occasion to allude, except incidentally, to any of the actors in this thrilling drama, except the four great "Stars" who are Henry Ward Beecher, Theodore Tilton, Victoria C. Woodhull and Henry C. Bowen.

From the testimony adduced, and the numerous allegations made it would seem that the foundations of this great scandal are not of recent growth, but extend back a dozen years at least, long before The Woodhull went to New York or had achieved any extended notoriety. According to Tilton's letter to Bowen written soon after his summary dismissal by Bowen from his two lucrative positions, it was during the first year of the war that Bowen began to reveal to Tilton, the irregularities which he charged upon Beecher, and that it was more than ten years ago (June 1863) that Bowen wrote the famous Woodstock letter to Tilton in which he alluded to conversations which they had held upon the same subject some time before, and in that letter he reiterated in writing what Tilton says he had freely charged orally long before, that Beecher had been guilty of the grossest acts of social immorality—had not only debauched the then deceased wife of Bowen, but had been guilty of the crime of rape with a former member of Bowen's family, who was widely

known to the reading community as an authoress of high repute. Why Bowen, who asserted that he had proof to substantiate his charges, and also that Beecher had confessed his guilt and besought Bowen's forgiveness, allowed the matter to rest, and the knowledge of it to be limited to a few, and still retained his position as a prominent member of Plymouth Church, and a seemingly warm supporter of its Pastor, who had, if Bowen's testimony is entitled to any credence, inflicted upon him the deepest injury that it is in the power of one man to inflict upon another, is one of those things past finding out, and it is not to be wondered at that Beecher's friends and partizans claim that it is a strong argument against the credibility of Bowen's statement.

Thus matters went on until, as Tilton asserts, that upon his return home, from a lecturing trip in the west, he was informed by his little daughter of some singular proceedings during his absence, between his wife and Mr. Beecher. Driven to the verge of madness by this story of the perfidy of the friend whom he had trusted — the religious teacher to whom he had for years been accustomed to look for instruction in matters of religious faith — he confronted his wife with the story, and charged her with infidelity to her marriage vows, and she admitted the truth of the allegation, and the confirmation of the statements of his little daughter so wrought upon him that he lost all self-control and grossly assaulted his wife, and inflicted personal injuries that resulted in miscarriage, she being at the time *enciente*, and as Tilton believed, by her reverend lover. That Tilton tore the wedding-ring from the finger of his wife who had dishonored it, and stamped it into the earth which covered the fruit of her illicit love.

The reader will bear in mind that the authority for the foregoing statement, and much that follows, rests principally upon Mrs. Woodhull, to whom, as she claims, Mr. Tilton related the whole story in detail.

The story of Tilton abandoning his home, and walking the streets, night after night in a state of frenzy. His writing the much-commented-upon-poem,

“SIR MARMADUKE’S MUSINGS”

at Young's Hotel in Boston, with a revolver by his side, with which he had resolved to end his wretched life, leaving the

poem as an explanation of the cause of his suicide, and his sober second thought, which led him to "still live" and instead of leaving the *explanatory* poem in manuscript, he gave it to the public in the columns of his paper, *The Golden Age*; his first interview with The Woodhull, and their subsequent affiliation. How Tilton became the special champion of Woodhull and her theories, and wrote her life, which was more an Eulogy than a Biography. How she at the request of Tilton, acted the part of comforter to his suffering and heart-broken wife, and convinced "Theodore" that what had been done was not only *not wrong*, but "good," "beautiful" and "altogether lovely," and that he had no right, or occasion to complain, but rather to recognize it as a most delightful illustration of the workings of the *new dispensation*, of which he was henceforth to be the *Great Apostle*, all appear in the preceding pages of this strange history.

Through her new disciple and admirer (Theodore) Woodhull secured an introduction to Mr. Beecher, which according to the statements of Woodhull resulted in numerous interviews, at which were discussed the social problems and theories of which The Woodhull is the special champion, and as she claims, the great preacher was in his sentiments in full accord with her most advanced and extreme doctrines of social freedom. Another result was that numerous letters passed between Mr. Beecher and Mrs. Woodhull, and it will be remembered by our readers that Mr. H. C. Bowen endeavored recently, with a good deal of *finesse*, to get possession of them, for the purpose of substantiating the charges he had made against Mr. Beecher. How he did not succeed, we have recorded, and so we are left in blissful ignorance of the tone and tenor of the letters of Beecher to Woodhull; but she, in alluding to them, naively and suggestively remarks, that considering their peculiar and confidential relations, it is not to be supposed that Beecher's letters to her were wholly *platonic*. How much (if any) weight should attach to this shrewd insinuation, we will not attempt to decide, but that there was in them, what would, (in his own estimation at least) be of service to Bowen in his efforts to make out a case against Beecher, there can be little question.

For a time all the plans of Woodhull seemed to prosper. Theodore was firmly attached to her personally, and to her

schemes for bringing about a social revolution. His eloquent voice and ready pen were always ready to obey her behests. She was the Queen Elizabeth and he the Essex of the new kingdom. He wrote and spoke of her as one of the brightest and purest of her sex, and she, as she has since told the author, "*almost loved that man.*" At the same time (she having been instrumental in bringing about a reconciliation between Tilton and Beecher) the great preacher sat at her feet, as Saul of Tarsus did at the feet of Gamaliel, drinking in the new gospel according to Saint Woodhull. But there came a change. Woodhull had prepared her celebrated Steinway Hall speech, which was to be the "Declaration of Independence" for the new government, and she wanted Beecher to be the "John Hancock," and head the list by introducing her to the audience. This was too much, and while he signified his approval of the doctrines laid down in the speech, he hesitated, half consenting, until at the last hour he declined to commit himself *publicly* to the "new departure" and the faithful Theodore took the responsibility, and filled the niche in the structure, which had been prepared for Mr. Beecher.

The breach thus made between Woodhull and Beecher widened from that night, and has never been healed. But she was not left comfortless or without support. "Theodore" was still faithful and true for a time, and the work progressed, but after a time he too began to flag in his zeal, and grow luke-warm until the final separation took place just as he was starting for the Cincinnati Convention to nominate Horace Greeley for the Presidency, at which interview she told him (when he declared he was going for the purpose of reporting the proceedings for the *Tribune*) "Theodore, you are lying again," and as she says at the same time predicted the death of Mr. Greeley as the result of the ill-starred movement.

This was their last interview, and, finding herself deserted by those on whom she had so confidently relied, she made her next grand, and most famous movement. It was the publication of the story of the scandal in her *Weekly*, a copy of which she caused to be mailed some days in advance of the regular issue to nearly all the newspapers in the country, and the result was she with her sister Tennie were arrested and shut up, their paper suppressed, and all obtainable copies seized and confiscated.

And just here the author will depart from the rule which he laid down in the outset of the work, which was to give facts and circumstances, but not to express opinions, nor to commend or condemn the doctrines or actions of any of his characters; but in recording the fact of the arrest and imprisonment of Woodhull and Claflin by the United States authorities, on the charge of sending obscene publications through the mails, he is bound to say it was a gross outrage, and has all the appearance of a subterfuge to avoid an investigation into the real case. That the publication was scandalous, is beyond all question, and that it was libelous is more than probable, but that it was obscene is not true, as our readers can see, for we have re-produced the article entire.

The true course for those who were aggrieved would (as it seems to us) have been to have had them arrested under the laws of the state of New York for libel or slander, and thus compel them to prove their statements in justification or suffer the penalties prescribed by the statutes for libel. That we are correct in our position is proven by the result when the case came up for trial. After long imprisonment, and subsequent release upon enormous bail, the case was summarily disposed of by Judge Blatchford as not coming under the provisions of the act of Congress upon which they were arrested on the complaint of Mr. Comstock. The whole thing was a blunder, and has been the means of creating no little sympathy for the Woodhull, which would never have been accorded to her but for the impression that she was persecuted.

"The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church" is a proverb, the truth of which is illustrated in many causes outside the church, and nothing helps a bad or unpopular cause more effectually, than a blind opposition, or a resort to unjust measures for suppression, and the careful reader of history cannot fail to observe that many gross errors and systems that would doubtless have died out if let alone, have been perpetuated by the unwise zeal of its opposers, and that nothing is more sure to raise up friends for *any* cause than the cry of *persecution*.

Since the foregoing was written, the long-expected and much-talked-of examination of Henry C. Bowen has taken place, and has resulted in about the same manner as did the preceding one of Tilton, *i. e.*, ignoring the entire matter, and virtually saying to Mr. Bowen, "If you'll be still, we'll be still," and thus the

famous investigation into charges made by a prominent member and pillar of the largest and most influential church in America, against the pastor of the church, who has been for years the most widely known and popular preacher in the land — charges accusing him of not only gross immoralities but heinous crime, are passed over, and the honored brother is let off on his promise not to do so any more.

To complete the record of the case we give a condensed account of the proceedings alluded to, supplemented by a card from Mr. Bowen which he has addressed to the editors of several papers.

“NEW YORK, Dec. 5. — Plymouth church took final and decisive action this evening on the questions growing out of the Tilton-Bowen scandal, during the usual Friday evening meeting. The lecture-rooms and parlors of the church were crowded, and when, at the close, it was announced that an adjourned business meeting would be held, nearly all remained in their seats.

“The business meeting was opened with prayer by Mr. Beecher. Rev. Dr. Halliday, the assistant pastor, read a letter from the Church of the Pilgrims, and the Clinton Avenue church, in reply to the resolution passed at the last business meeting of Plymouth church. They acknowledged the receipt of the resolution, declining the invitation to meet in private conference, and desired to know whether this was to be construed as a refusal to take part in a formal conference. It was important that they should be informed upon this point, in order that they might not be led astray in such future action as they should take. It was desired that there should be no future misunderstanding, and they felt this the more strongly inasmuch as their former communication seemed to have been greatly misapprehended. On motion, the communication was accepted.

“Mr. Beecher, who was received with applause, said that he had prepared a reply to this communication, which he proceeded to read.

“It expresses regret that any misunderstanding should have arisen in regard to the former communication, and requests that before Plymouth church be asked to take part in the council it be informed of the questions which were to be discussed there, in order that some intelligent action might be taken in regard to it. The reply was unanimously approved.

“Mr. Halliday read the following:

“ ‘ REV. G. B. HALLIDAY, Clerk of Plymouth church. — *Dear Sir* : I am instructed to place in your hands the following preamble and resolutions, being the proceedings of the examining committee at a meeting held Dec. 1, to consider the charges preferred by Wm. F. West against Henry C. Bowen, both members of this church :

“ ‘ *Whereas*, Complaint has been made to the examining committee against Henry C. Bowen, a member of the church, of uttering slanders affecting the good name of our pastor ; and,

“ ‘ *Whereas*, A sub-committee was appointed to confer with Henry C. Bowen in reference to this report ; and,

“ ‘ *Whereas*, Mr. Bowen assures the sub-committee that it ever has been and is his purpose to abide in good faith by the agreement signed by his pastor and himself, which is as follows : “ I, Henry C. Bowen, having given credit, perhaps without due consideration, to tales and innuendoes affecting Henry Ward Beecher, and being influenced by them, as was natural to a man who receives impressions suddenly, to the extent of repeating them — guardedly, however, and within limitations, and not for the purpose of injuring him, but entirely in the confidence of consultation — now feel that therein I did him wrong ; therefore, I disavow all charges and all imputations that have been attributed to me, as having been made by me against Henry Ward Beecher, and I declare fully and without reserve that I know nothing which should prevent me from extending to him my most cordial confidence, friendship, and Christian fellowship ; and I expressly withdraw all imputations and innuendoes imputed as having been made and uttered by me, and set forth in a letter written to me on the 1st of June, 1871 ; and I sincerely regret having made any imputations, charges, or innuendoes unfavorable to the Christian character of Mr. Beecher ; and I covenant and promise that, for all future time, I will never, by word or deed, recur to, repeat or allude to any or either of said charges, imputations or innuendoes ; and,

“ ‘ *Whereas*, Mr. Bowen has also authorized Mr. Halliday to state to the examining committee or to the church that if on his part there has seemed to be any departure from the letter or spirit of that agreement, he regrets it exceedingly and trusts that nothing shall accrue in the future in this direction to mar the harmony of the church ; therefore,

“ ‘ *Resolved*, That this committee, in view of the facts and

statements above set forth, accept these assurances made by Mr. Bowen as an answer to the charges preferred against him, and that complaint against him be dismissed.'

"D. W. TALLMADGE,

"Clerk of Examining Committee.'

"Mr. Halliday then read a statement, giving a history of the investigation of the charges against Mr. Bowen, and showing that, inasmuch as they could not obtain sufficient proof to establish his guilt to a legal certainty, they had been obliged to dismiss the charges.

"Brother Shearman thought that the committee had come to a wise conclusion, but condemned strongly the publication of the charges against Mr. Bowen. He moved that the report be referred back to the committee, and that it be ordered that no charges made against any member of the church before the examining committee should be submitted to the church unless they were sustained.

"Brother Guilbert, after some discussion, moved the adoption of the report of the committee, which was carried unanimously. After considerable debate, the motion of Brother Shearman, requiring all charges made before the examining committee to be kept secret, was laid on the table.

"Prof. Roseitor W. Raymond said that while he did not wish to add anything to the present excitement connected with their affairs, he thought it best to show plainly the position of Plymouth church. He therefore offered a series of resolutions setting forth the fact that Plymouth church, for more than twenty-five years, has been an independent organization, though holding fellowship with all evangelical churches, and that she neither is responsible for the action of any other church, nor permits any other church to interfere with her internal affairs. Mr. Raymond explained that this was not new ground for the church to take, but merely an explanation of the position which they had always occupied.

"Mr. Beecher said there were always two types in every church, the aristocratic and democratic type. Some held for authority, and some for local independence. Plymouth church was pre-eminently, both in the spirit of its members and its pastor, a democratic organization. He read a letter from a pastor in Massachusetts of forty years' standing, who declared

that the position assumed by Plymouth church was the only true congregational ground, and encouraged them to push forward the reform in church government. Mr. Beecher's remarks were received with much applause. The resolutions offered by Mr. Raymond were unanimously adopted. After transacting some further business, the meeting adjourned.

A CARD.

[*To the Editor of—.*]

"SIR : More than six months has passed since I was informed through the newspapers that sundry charges against me had been presented to the examining committee of Plymouth church. I have never seen a copy of these charges, and the person who presented them has never spoken to me on the subject. I have never been cited to appear before the examining committee, although I have repeatedly expressed my entire willingness to do so on the shortest possible notice, nor have I been able to traverse or rebut any testimony that might be sought against me. After a faithful search for testimony, the committee, as stated by the assistant pastor, utterly failed to obtain it. The only course before them was to recommend that the charges be dismissed, and this was done by unanimous vote of the church. But this committee in their report, and the church in their official action, strangely omitted to put that recommendation on the only permanent basis, namely: That there was no evidence to sustain the charges, but instead of this, based it on an oral statement which I refused to put in writing, since I would not appear in the least to weaken my protestation of entire innocence in reference to the reported charges. I am also amazed that the committee should have embodied in their report, and thus given further publicity, to a fragment of a document which was sacredly private, which had been surreptitiously obtained and anonymously published, and all the parties to which were solemnly pledged never to divulge it."

"HENRY C. BOWEN."

"BROOKLYN, DEC. 5, 1873."

We will close our quotations by copying a letter to the *Chicago Tribune* from Mrs. Jane G. Swisshelm, (who it will be remembered was one of the pioneers in the woman's-rights movement) and the editorial comments upon the same, both of which appeared in the *Chicago Tribune* of Sunday Dec. 7th 1873. And finally we copy, what purports to be a letter to the *Chicago Times* from a Congregational minister.

Our readers will find the tone of the two communications quite different, and indeed all the evidence adduced in the entire history of the case is conflicting and contradictory.

“‘ *To the Editor of The Chicago Tribune :*

Sir:— Please let me state my reasons for differing with you on the Beecher-Bowen case. I think it would be unwise for the Congregational Union to attempt any investigation of it, because it is a matter which so primarily concerns Messrs. Beecher, Bowen, and Tilton, that no one has a right to interfere, except at the instance of one or more of those three men. If Messrs. Bowen and Tilton have slandered Mr. Beecher, it is Mr. Beecher's business to demand redress. If he does not choose to do so ; if he prefers to forgive and forget,—who has a right to say nay ? Has that gentleman been officially declared of “unsound mind,” and had a guardian appointed ? People may think he needs one, and that his treatment of this story proves insanity ; but, until he has been pronounced insane, his forgiveness of personal injuries is nobody's business ; and no one has a right to question his motives, since no one has been injured by his magnanimity.

“‘ If, on the other hand, the story afloat is true, look at the position of Mr. Tilton ! What knight of the olden time of chivalry ever stood for his lady against such fearful odds ? The man who could attack him in such a place is a coward, I care not under what pious pretense he veils that attack. A husband who could so guard a sinning wife deserves to take rank amid the noblest of the martyrs ; and, if the Congregational church has the honor of developing such a Christ-like example of self-immolation and heroic devotion to a sense of duty, even though it may be a mistaken one, it can well afford to bear any weight of Mr. Beecher's weakness.

“‘ As for the Union going into such a hunt with Mrs. Woodhull and her hopeful sister at its head, I trust I shall have suffi-

cient warning to take my name off the roll of membership before the start. I do not propose to be one of those who shall congregate around Mr. Tilton's residence to clap hands, halloo, and shout:

““Seize him, Vic! Catch him, Claflin!”

““If the Congregational Union is to get up a grand rat-hunt, and send its terriers into Mr. Tilton's cellar, pantry, and bedroom, may I be a good way off. No Woman's Rights Association ever did get me to fellowship Mrs. Woodhull, and, if the Congregational Union proposes to take her for a leader, I, at least, will not be one of the led. When a story from such a source can throw a large religious denomination into convulsions, it is time for individuals who wish to avoid contusions to get outside such organization.

““The worst that can be believed is Mr. Beecher's guilt, of which we have no proof; but, even granting it, what has the church or the world to gain by nosing after his private sins? There is no complaint that there is anything wrong in his teaching! He is not using his influence to make sin popular; he is not apologizing for it; but, on the contrary, his public attitude of denial is a condemnation of the sin; and, if it condemn himself, that stands between him and his Judge. “To his own Master he standeth or falleth.”

““No one can deny that God has endowed him with a special gift of teaching; has inspired him with great truths and a power of utterance which have made him a messenger of good to millions. He has been, to his age, a cup overflowing with precious draughts. Millions have drunk from the brim, and been refreshed for duty. Shall we break the cup because there is a flaw in it? We all acknowledge that God puts his treasure into earthen vessels. Is he under any obligation to use only those made of the finest clay and in the most excellent forms? Has he not an undoubted right to put the most precious portions of that treasure into the ugliest brown mug he ever made? No matter how coarse the clay of which Mr. Beecher may be made, no matter how crooked or misshapen, he is full and running over with precious truths,—truths required for the healing of this nation; he is God's messenger, and, so long as his message is right, so long as the shape and substance of the cup do not injure the contents, so long we have nothing to do with the cup;

but his case is only one more evidence of the truth of what we call compensation. Small people, like myself, whether they believe him innocent or guilty, may take comfort that, after all, he has a heavy load to carry, and modify our envy of his talents with compassion for his wrongs or for his weakness. Those who think the worst of him may be consoled for their comparative insignificance by the thought that they can go to sleep nights without hating themselves, as one of his moral sense must do if he have been so overcome by evil, and dragged through the mire at the chariot-wheels of ungodly lusts.

“‘JANE GREY SWISSHELM.’”

“The preceding letter, from Mrs. Jane Grey Swisshelm on the Beecher-Bowen matter, is remarkable rather for what it suggests, than for what it actually says. It is not easy to tell whether it was written in the way of irony or with serious intent. If intended to be ironical, it is an insidious attack on all the persons whose names have been associated with the affair, and especially upon Mr. Beecher and the lady whose name was first coupled with his when the gossip was made public — a lady who has always been respected as a virtuous woman, and cherished as a gentle, delicate, and affectionate wife. If there were no other construction to be put upon Mrs. Swisshelm's letter, we should decline to publish it, as it would merely contribute to the stock of scandal, which is already excessive, without in any manner suggesting an explanation of the mystery in which the whole case is involved.

“But the letter suggests a ‘new departure’ in the school of public morals, which, if not altogether original with Mrs. Swisshelm, is yet sufficiently novel and startling to attract attention. This lady contends substantially that Mr. Beecher's private conduct is nobody's business, and intimates that it would do more harm to expose it and dethrone Mr. Beecher from the religious prominence he now holds than to permit him to wear the livery of heaven to serve the devil in. ‘No one can deny,’ says Mrs. Swisshelm, ‘that the Lord has endowed him with a special gift of teaching,’ etc. She likens him to a cup, and his eloquence and religious fervor to precious draughts with which he is overflowing. ‘Shall we break the cup because there is a flaw in it?’ she asks. If all this is spoken in earnest, it means that, so long as Mr. Beecher's pulpit utterances are of benefit to the

community, it should make no difference what his personal morals are. It means that Mr. Beecher may be a libertine in private, and still be of such great good to mankind by means of his public teachings that his vices should not be exposed and punished. It means that Mr. Beecher as a hypocrite is too much of a blessing to the world to be sacrificed on the altar of truth. All this sounds very strange. It raises the question whether hypocrisy is a virtue, or the opposite, We cannot limit the application of this new law of morals to Mr. Beecher. Other men are eloquent in public. Other men glow with religious fervor in the pulpit. Other men are shining lights in society, brightening, cheering, and purifying in all their outward seeming. Other men are permitted, under the cover of their clerical robes, to enter freely into the domestic circles of their congregations. Husbands trust their wives, brothers their sisters, and fathers their daughters more confidently in the companionship of men who preach religion, extol virtue, and excite holy thoughts in public, Are we asked to admit, then, that all men, in proportion to their intellectual power and personal magnetism, shall be granted immunity from all inquiry into their private morals? Is it contended that men whose position has identified them to some extent with the good name of the church shall be free from the moral restraints which the church itself has imposed upon all persons? Shall Henry Ward Beecher's eloquence, influence, and fame entitle him to a general absolution for all private sins, so long as they are not open and bare-faced? If we have not greatly misinterpreted Mrs. Swisshelm's philosophy, she hints an affirmative answer to all these questions, and thereby sets up a code of morals that would produce chaos, in very short order, if generally accepted. It would be a work of supererogation to point out that such a system would be subversive, not only of the safeguards of society, but of the foundation of religion.

"We have said this much in answer to the singular theory that Mrs. Swisshelm's letter seems to suggest, and without any reference to the merits of the Beecher-Bowen controversy as it now stands. In spite of the wide discussion which this matter has elicited, there has been nothing definite enough to warrant an unfavorable judgment of Mr. Beecher, but much to author-

ize the suspicion that he has been foully slandered by Henry C. Bowen. Indeed Mr. Bowen seems inclined to admit that much. At the same time, we have an opinion that the treatment of the matter by all the parties concerned, including the congregation of Plymouth church, has been of the character to create the belief in many quarters that something is withheld. We believe, also, that an honest, straightforward investigation, which shall ascertain the character of the charge and clear the atmosphere of the haze that now envelops the whole affair, is the proper course to adopt.

[*To the Editor of the Chicago Times.*]

"That a Congregational minister should choose *The Chicago Times* as a medium through which to express himself, may perhaps occasion grave doubts as to the right to be heard anywhere else, or even at all. As to that, he claims no right whatever to be heard anywhere; it is simply a duty, as he regards it, to express himself, if he can be allowed the privilege. As he knows of no religious paper which would accord this privilege on this subject, he is truly thankful that there is a secular press which will.

"This scandal of Mr. Beecher's would by this time have been buried, had it not been for the secular press. There cannot be a doubt of it. Our own newspaper reading is chiefly from the religious press, yet though we have seen a variety of religious journals, weekly and monthly, we have failed to see one word in any religious journal respecting it, excepting only *The Advance*. Now, why is it? Why is it that *The Advance* does not keep this thing more thoroughly stirred? The editor of that journal knows that we set a high estimate on it; indeed, were all Christians who take Beecher's *Christian Union* to stampede to *The Advance* they would find it in every way a paying and a profitable adventure. But we must give it as our opinion that that journal has failed to do its whole duty in the matter. Almost the first that we heard of it was through *The Advance*, just enough to announce the fact of a 'scandal,' nothing more. Next was an article, a good one, calling on Mr. Beecher, or his church, or both, to clear things up. By this we were tolerably well certain that there must be something to 'clear up,' and we set to hunting it. We found it. Have read up the entire case on both sides, at considerable cost of time and money, and,

much as I dislike to criticise *The Advance*, it is simply friendly to state what effect its articles up to that time had on our own mind, it was to produce the impression that Mr. Beecher was foully slandered, and that the parties to it should be summarily treated to severe punishment. We found the impression quite general, and now that we have learned the facts, it is at a great risk of our own reputation — if we choose to regard that — that we venture to state them. We hold to the opinion that *The Advance* and every other religious journal owed a solemn duty to the Christian church, and to the cause of religion the world over, to give such a free and accurate statement of facts as would have rendered it utterly impossible for Mr. Beecher to have been invited to or tolerated on the floor of the Evangelical Alliance. There is something more than heart-sickening at the remembrance of his getting up there, and being listened to by that body of men on the 'Ministry of the Age.' It is revolting, and our friends of the religious press must do something more than open their eyes and draw long breaths, and pen a few lines of slang against the secular press, if they would escape the charge of complicity in some way, in that direction in which H. W. Beecher is charged. There is no dodging it.

"And now for a little plain talk to Christian ministers and churches.

"Go back ten or fifteen years, and do you not remember that the Christian churches generally, felt themselves driven to avow the doctrine of 'associate responsibility,' before any action of theirs could be made to tell at all against the system of slavery? Hence 'no fellowship with slavery or slaveholders' was the keynote of the churches, and to-day there are hundreds of churches and many valuable institutions in existence, which never would have arisen but for that doctrine. If it was good then, is it not as good now?

"The American Missionary association was one of the institutions which arose in response to that doctrine. They would not receive into their treasury, knowingly, any funds which could be traced directly to slavery. Should the judgment of that valuable institution be any less pronounced against adultery and those charged with it? Yet we see this same association listening to a speech from the man against whom stands as gross a charge as ever was brought against any human being.

Nay, not a single charge, but charges multiplied. Now, is it at all probable that these charges can have existed in all their horrid and filthy details for two or more years without the directors of that association knowing of them? Is it at all probable that there was a single auditor in that vast anniversary gathering but knew that the charges of adultery and rape existed against him, and that they had not only not been contradicted, but that the only response to the urgent calls for investigation was the most extravagant attempts to suppress it? Could any one possibly come to any other conclusion than that, in the estimation of those directors, the charges of adultery and rape formed no bar to Christian fellowship? Nay, more, that they were not of sufficient importance even to enquire into? Don't squirm gentlemen. What we desire is, to get you to look at these things as others look at them; to let you see how others regard your action, and to get you to take such action in the premises as shall convince the world that you are not in fellowship with sin.

"If fellowship with slavery would help to support it, how can fellowship with such crimes as adultery and rape have any other effect than to make them respectable? If to purchase books from societies which systematically expurgated all anti-slavery teaching was held to be a support of slavery, how can it be otherwise than equally a concert with adultery, to be among the subscribers for 'Beecher's Sermons,' or his *Christian Union*, as the charges stand now, uninvestigated? It was held in those good old anti-slavery times that if we would have our children right on 'slavery, we must give them the reading which would tend to it. Why not now, if we would have our children right in respect to moral purity, instruct them? Perhaps you say, 'We do.' Yes! With Beecher's sermons! and his *Christian Union*. Are you not sensible yourselves since you have read that man's words and thoughts that you have suffered in your own moral sense, and do you wish your children to suffer? Just look back to the time when you did not read him, and, if you can, compare yourselves as to your moral and religious status then and now, and answer to yourself, if you are as high up since you have studied him as you were before. I have H. W. Beecher himself as authority, that it were far safer for ourselves and for our families that we keep constantly on our tables the

most ultra-infidel and free-love papers than to have there 'Beecher's Sermons' or his *Christian Union*. The one advocates doctrines which are at war even with nature, to say nothing of religion and inspiration, and the best antidote to them is the faithfulness and apparent sincerity with which they are advocated. The other contains precisely those same doctrines, but they are like homœopathic pills, the sugar disguises the medicine, his plausible and seductive eloquence disguises the lurking heresy, the damning vice, which it is his aim to have us look upon 'with pity, perhaps, then to embrace.'

"But we have Mr. Beecher himself for it, so let us hear him. He is reported in *The Advance* of Nov. 13, as saying on the platform of the American Missionary Association: 'If you do not save the degraded classes they will infect you. A family moves into a house; they fling the refuse into the cellar. There go the old potatoes, the turnips and onions, to rot together. They are too busy dusting the fine parlors up stairs to care for the cellar. Before long, the old gentleman is sick, and needs the doctor. Then mother is sick, and the children. What have you here that poisons you? asks the physician. The foul miasma from below. The cellar is more than a match for the parlors.'

"Precisely so! When down deep in the cellar of a man's mind there is rottenness and corruption, that 'cellar' will be 'more than a match for the parlors' of his mind; hence his sermons and his *Christian Union*, go out every week tainted through and through with the 'foul miasma' from below to poison the thousands who read them. Like 'the old gentleman and his family,' while the eye and ear are delighted with his thoughts, the mind is imperceptibly drinking in the poison; and it is only as we compare our present insensibility to those wrongs which in times past we have shrunk from with horror that we appreciate how low we have sunk; in other words, how far we have come under the influence of this man's corrupt teaching.

"In conclusion, I want to ask religious editors and ministers everywhere, why is it that you are so careful of Mr. Beecher? Were a less popular free-lover to be discovered in the ranks of the ministry, you would spare no pains to oust him. Don't you know that for years this man's teachings have been declared loose and heretical? It has always been easier to pronounce

the heresy there, than to brand the particular paragraph which contained it; but you have known that it was there. Not a sermon, not an article, has issued from his lips or pen, but has been laden with the 'foul miasma from below,' and to-day the intolerable indifference to this gigantic lustful scandal against him is owing to the diseased state of the public morals, as a result of reading his sermons, and his *Christian Union*.

"The question then is, 'What can we do about it?' We answer, fall right back on to the old doctrine: 'No fellowship' with adultery, nor with those charged with it, until fully and clearly exonerated, past all doubt. Let *The Advance*, *The Christian at Work*, and all other Christian journals, and all Christian organizations, refuse to Mr. Beecher and his sermons and *Christian Union* the fellowship accorded among Christians. If he cannot see that his course has been such as to bring odium upon the cause of Christianity, let him see and feel that the universal sentiment of Christendom is, that he has; and that there are but two ways to scatter it; first, by an undoubted verdict of acquittal after all the testimony is heard; and, second, if the charges are true, by the exhibition of 'a broken and a contrite heart.' This God never will, man ought never to, despise."

X.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE CASE SUBMITTED TO THE JURY.

In finally closing our labors, and submitting our book for the verdict of the public, we feel that in many respects, we stand in the same position as does the presiding judge, when he delivers his charge to the jury at the close of a long and tedious trial where the testimony has been contradictory, and when the verdict must greatly depend upon the credibility of the witnesses, and whether their testimony has been substantiated by corroborative circumstances. No matter what conclusion he may have arrived at himself he must carefully avoid giving any such expression as shall bias the judgment of the jury, and yet he must carefully and impartially explain the points of law applicable to the case, and instruct the jury as to the admissibility or otherwise of doubtful testimony, and that in every case of doubt, the accused is entitled to the benefit; and that in weighing the evidence of any witness, they should take into consideration the previous reputation for truth and veracity of the witness, *as brought before them on the trial*. The judge or some of the jury, may be almost fully convinced from *outside* evidence, of the guilt of the accused, and yet in making up the verdict no evidence, no matter how conclusive to the individual, should have the slightest weight with the judge or jury, unless it has been legally brought before them in that capacity. Their simple duty is to give a true verdict in accordance with the law and the evidence.

In the case before us the most noted and influential clergyman of this generation is charged not only with gross violations of the laws of hospitality and social morality, but of a great crime. The principal witness, or the one who first made these charges public, is a woman who has for some years been ostracized for her open disregard of long established social laws and usages, and yet she gives as her authority for these charges, the

statements of two of the most prominent members of this clergyman's church, and with a circumstantial detail that is almost astounding. That she did not manufacture the stories out of 'whole cloth' is quite evident from the strange covenant entered into by the two accusers, and the accused.

Perhaps we cannot do better in closing than to adopt the favorite expression of the poor, ignorant, simple, but honest-hearted hero of Dicken's *Hard Times*.

"IT IS AW A MUDDLE."