THE

TRUE HISTORY

OF THE

BROOKLYN SCANDAL:

BEING

A COMPLETE ACCOUNT OF THE TRIAL OF THE REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER, OF PLYMOUTH CHURCH, BROOKLYN, UPON CHARGES PREFERRED BY THEODORE TILTON, INCLUDING ALL THE ORIGINAL LETTERS, DOCUMENTS AND PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE, WITH BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEADING ACTORS IN THE GREAT DRAMA.

CONTAINING ALSO THE FULL STATEMENTS OF

MOULTON, BEECHER, AND TILTON,

AND MANY ADDITIONAL FACTS, PRIVATE LETTERS, ETC., NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

BY

CHARLES F. MARSHALL.

Illustrated with numerous Fine Engravings and Portraits.

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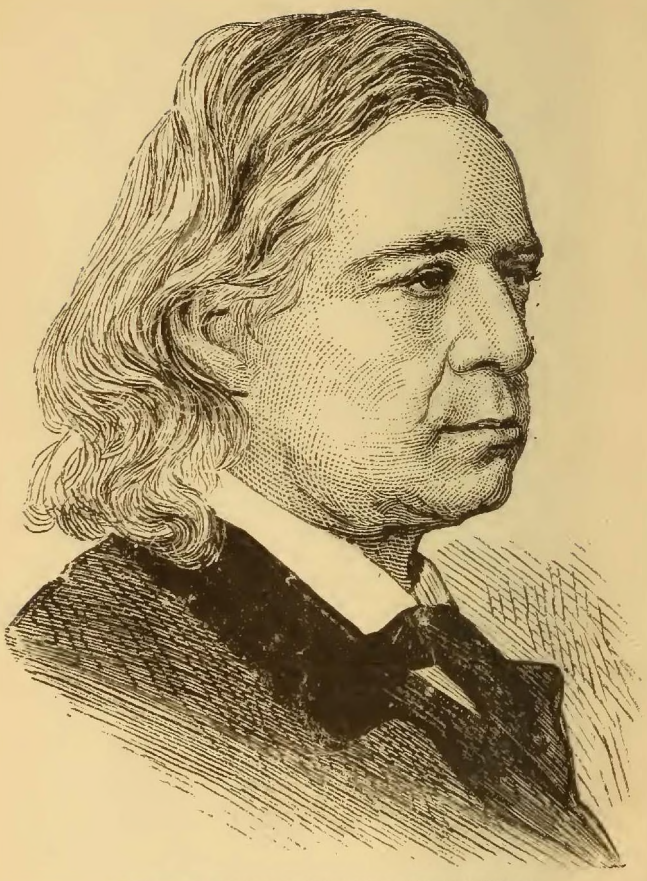
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REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER.



PLYMOUTH CHURCH, BROOKLYN, ON THE 28TH OF AUGUST, 1874.

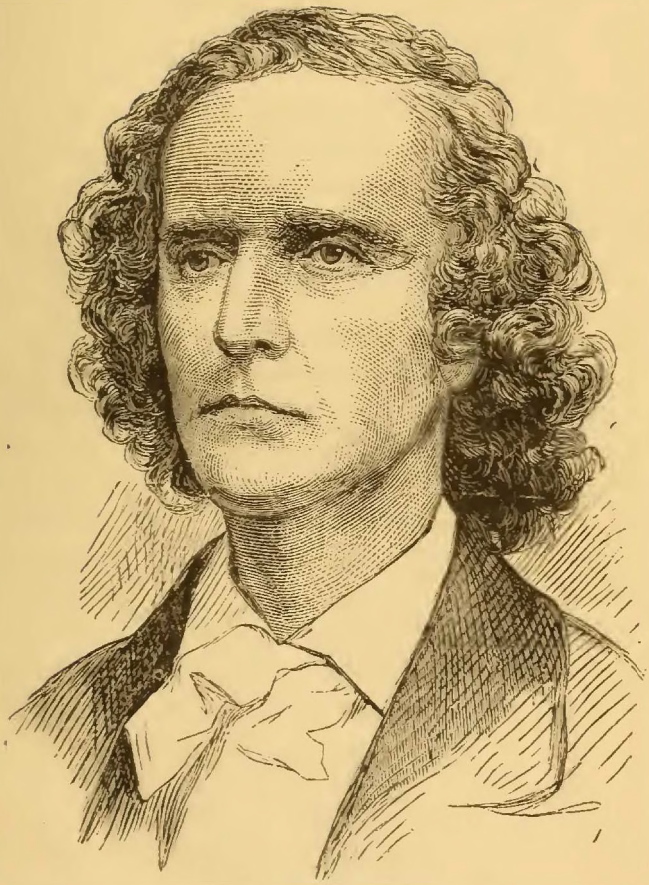
PREFACE.

THE great and overwhelming interest manifested by the American people in the investigation of the charges preferred by Theodore Tilton against the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher cannot be credited to a national love for scandal, but rather to a desire that one who has for long years stood first in their regards as a religious teacher and counsellor should vindicate himself from the terrible accusations made against him. Men said: "If this man, whom we have loved and honored so long for his pure life as well as for his great genius, shall be proven a hypocrite and a libertine, whom shall we trust?" Mr. Beecher's reputation is esteemed a national honor, and his countrymen have watched every stage of the charges against him with the deepest interest, and have rejoiced in his triumphant vindication as at the defeat of an effort to cast a stain upon the fair name of the Great Republic of the West.

In spite of this great interest, the reports of the trial, and the statements of the principal actors in it, were presented to the great mass of the people in a very incomplete form. The testimony was so voluminous, and the statements so numerous and long, that even the great daily papers of the largest cities had not room in their columns for the whole case. The great majority of the newspapers of the Union were only

able to publish brief extracts from the statements and summaries of the investigation, so that the case has gone out to the public in a fragmentary and unsatisfactory manner. The people at large have not yet had the means of learning the whole case, which alone can qualify them for forming an intelligent conclusion concerning the matters at issue. There has been a demand from all parts of the country for a connected and chronologically arranged account of the Brooklyn scandal, giving its history, and presenting all the documents necessary to the forming of a fair opinion on the part of the reader.

Such a work is offered to the public in the present volume. In these pages the history of the charges against Mr. Beecher is traced from their inception down to the acquittal of Mr. Beecher by the Investigating Committee of Plymouth Church, with such comments and explanations as are necessary to a proper understanding of the matter. Every document bearing upon the case, including the statements of the principal actors in the controversy, the evidence of the principal witnesses examined by the Investigating Committee, the report of that committee, and the events that have occurred since the close of the investigation—all these are given in their proper order, together with biographies of the principal personages concerned. In short, the case is presented complete, and in such shape as will enable the reader to decide it upon its own merits. While the compiler has a very decided opinion as to the reasonable conclusion to be drawn from this case, the facts speak for themselves, and have been left to do so in the main.



THEODORE TILTON.

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MRS. ELIZABETH R. TILTON.

THE TRUE HISTORY OF THE BROOKLYN SCANDAL.

I.

MRS. WOODHULL'S CHARGES.

In September, 1872, Mrs. Victoria Woodhull was re-elected President of the National Association of Spiritualists at Boston, and in her speech of acceptance made a bitter personal attack upon the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. The Boston newspapers suppressed the most of her remarks. At length, after giving out several vague hints of her charges, she published them in full in her journal known as *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly*, on the 2d of November, 1872. In this article, after asserting that Mr. Beecher was a believer in the most advanced doctrines of free-love and the abolition of Christian marriage, as held and advocated by herself, she asserted that Mr. Tilton had informed her that he had discovered a criminal intimacy between his wife and Mr. Beecher. The statements thus made public were given by Mrs. Woodhull in the form of a conversation between a reporter and herself. The following passages contain the substance of her story:

"It was brought up subsequently, in an intimate conversation between her and me, by Mrs. Pauline 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. T * * * 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. T * * *. Mrs. T * * * 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 would ever come again to visit me.' In the interview that followed, Mrs. * * * spoke freely of a long series of intimate and so-called criminal relations on her part with a certain clergyman; of the discovery of the facts by Mr. T * * *; 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.



Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull.

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. T * * * in his rage at the discovery of such intimacy, and, as he believed, the great probability that she was *enceinte*, but not by him. Mrs. T * * * confessed to Mrs. Davis the intimacy with this clergyman, and that it had been of years' standing. She also said that she loved him before she married Mr. T * * *, and that now the burden of her sorrow was greatly augmented by the knowledge that the clergyman 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 scoundrel.'

" * * It seems that Mr. T * * *, 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 Tenafly, 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

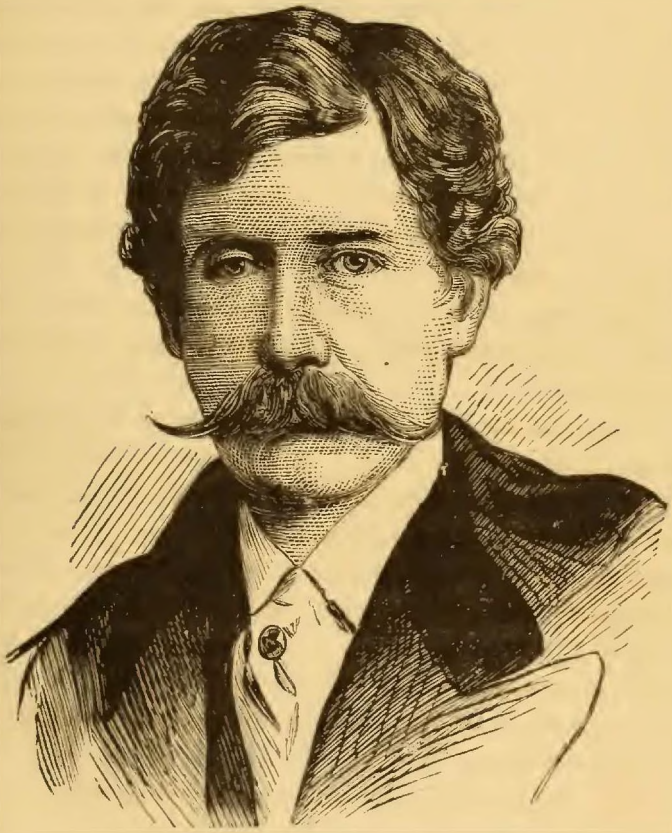
have endured it, but to have him creep like a snake into my house, leaving his pollution behind him, and I so blind as not to see, and esteeming him all the while as a saint—oh! it is too much. And when I think how for years she, upon whom I had bestowed all my heart's love, could have lied and deceived 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. T * * * himself told it to me, subsequently, with his own lips."

REPORTER.—"Is it possible that Mr. T * * * 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 most 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. T * * * looks deeper into the soul of things than most men, and is braver than most."

REPORTER.—"How did your acquaintance with Mr. T * * * 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



FRANCIS D. MOULTON, "THE MUTUAL FRIEND."



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. T * * * came to my office, No. 44 Broad street, and, showing me the letter, asked: 'Whom do you mean by that?" 'Mr. T * * *,' I said, 'I mean you and Mr. * * *.' 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 Rev. * * *. '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 * * *, 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 my wife, 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. T * * * 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."

Mrs. Woodhull then resumed, saying: "Mr. T*** first began to have suspicions of Mr. * * * 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 my wife 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 *enceinte;* 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. * * * from my wall



MRS. ELIZABETH CADY STANTON.

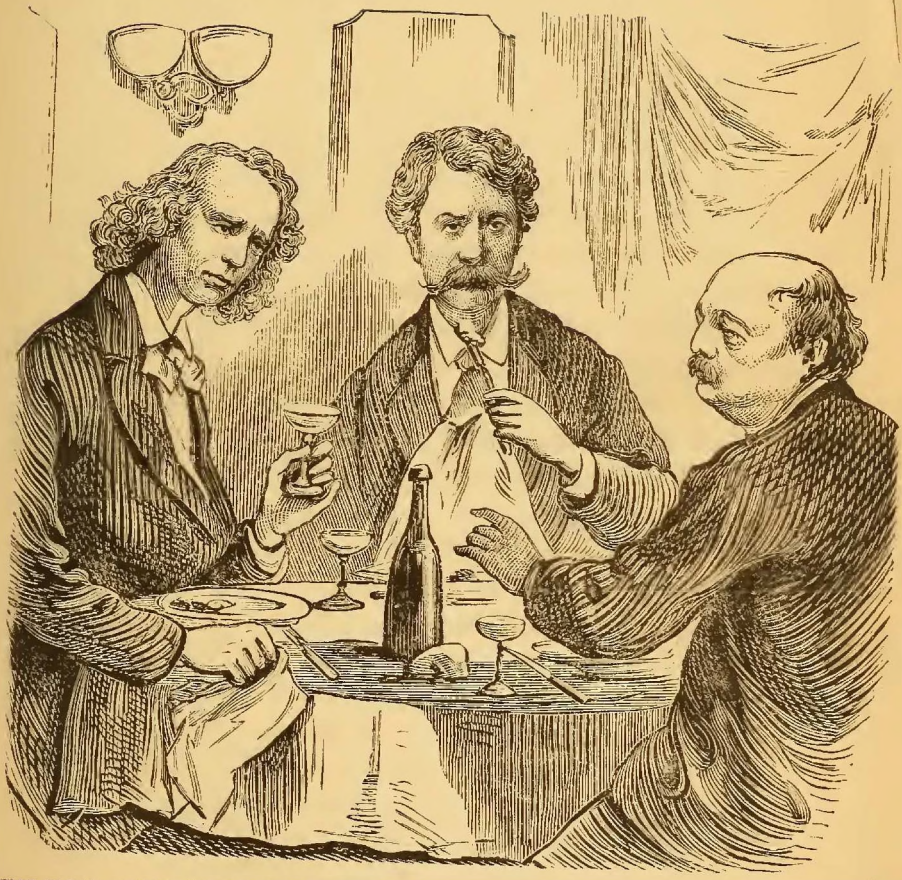
and stamped it in pieces. Indeed, I do not know what I did not do. I only look back to it as a time too horrible to retain any exact remembrance of it. She miscarried the child and it was buried. For two weeks, night and day, I might have been found walking to and from that grave, in a state bordering 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 suppose I should have remained silent through life had not an occasion arisen which demanded that I should seek counsel. Mr. * * * learned that I had discovered the fact, and what had transpired between my wife 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. * * *, 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 * * * Church. My friend took a pistol, went to Mr. * * *, and demanded the letter of Mrs. T * * *, 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. * * * 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. T * * *'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. T * * * was also absent days at a time, and, as Mr. T * * * 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. * * *'s selfish, cowardly cruelty in endeavoring to shield himself and create public opinion against Mr. T * * * 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. T * * * came to me. I attempted to show him the true solution of the embroglio, 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 * * * nor in Mrs. T * * *, 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 can not feel and live any more than the grown boy can re-enter the clothes of his early childhood. I recalled



TILTON AND MOULTON CONSULTING WITH GENERAL BUTLER.

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.

* * * * * * *

"Mr. T * * *'s conduct toward Mr. * * * 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. * * *, saying to him, in the presence of Mrs. T * * *: 'You love each other. Mr. * * *, 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. * * * * * was, so to speak, the slave of Mr. T * * * and Mr. Moulton. He consulted them in every matter of any importance. It was at this time that Mr. T * * * introduced Mr. * * * * to me, and I met him frequently both at Mr. T * *'s and at Mr. Moulton's. We discussed the social problem freely in all its varied bearings, and I found that Mr. * * * agreed with nearly all my views upon the question."

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

MRS. WOODHULL.—"I mean to say just this—that Mr. * * * * 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. * * * 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. * * *, 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. * * *, 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 40,000 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. * * * 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."

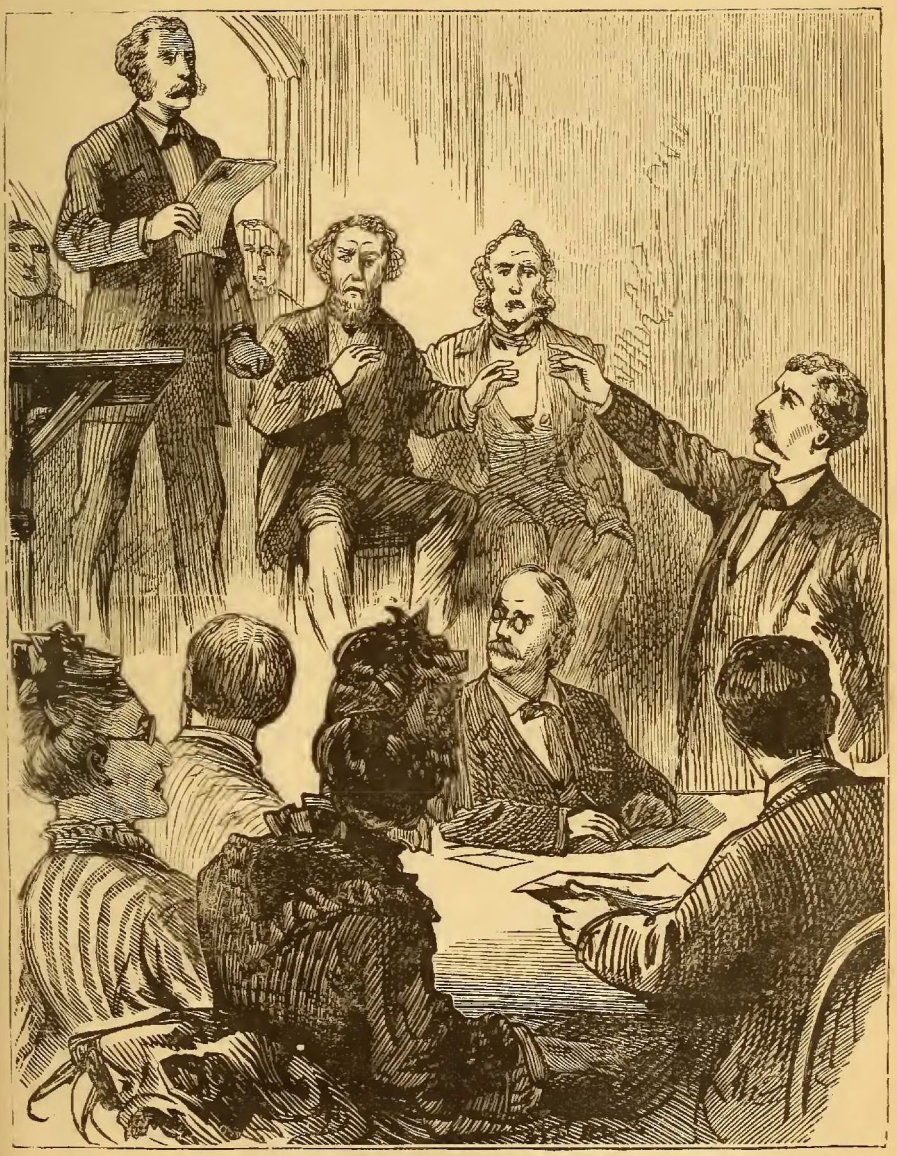
REPORTER.—"Was Mr. * * * aware that you knew of his relations to Mrs. T * * * ?"

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. * * * 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. * * * 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. T * * * and Mr. Moulton that I was going to ask Mr. * * * 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. * * * asking him to preside for me. This alarmed him. He went with it to Messrs. T * * * 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. * * * 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



SCENE IN PLYMOUTH CHURCH—MOULTON CALLS PROF. RAYMOND A LIAR.

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. T * * * said to him: 'Mr. * * *, 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 Mr. * * *, 'that this thing will come out to the world?' Mr. T * * * replied: 'Nothing is more certain in earth or heaven, Mr. * * *; and this may be your last chance to save yourself from complete ruin.'

"Mr. * * * 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. * * *, 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. * * *, frightened at what I had said, promised, before parting with Mr. T * * *, 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. T * * * and Mr. Moulton came into the ante-room asking for Mr. * * *. 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. T * * * 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. * * *."

In spite of the asterisks with which Mrs. Woodhull had so plentifully sprinkled her statement, it was known that the persons embraced in her sweeping charges were the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, and Theodore and Mrs. Tilton. Her charges created the most profound sensation, and drew from Mr. Beecher the following card, a few days later:

To the Editor of the Brooklyn Eagle:

Sir:—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, compelled 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 untrue, and I stamp them in general and in every particular as utterly untrue.

Respectfully,

Henry Ward Beecher.

Mr. Beecher's denial was accepted by the public as effectually disposing of Mrs. Woodhull's charges. In a matter of veracity between Mr. Beecher and Mrs. Woodhull public opinion naturally sustained the former.

The matter would probably have died a natural death had Mr. Tilton been willing that it should. In December, 1872, he revived the public interest in the scandal, which was beginning to die out, by the publication of the following letter:

No. 174 Livingston Street,
Brooklyn, *December* 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 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 the 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,

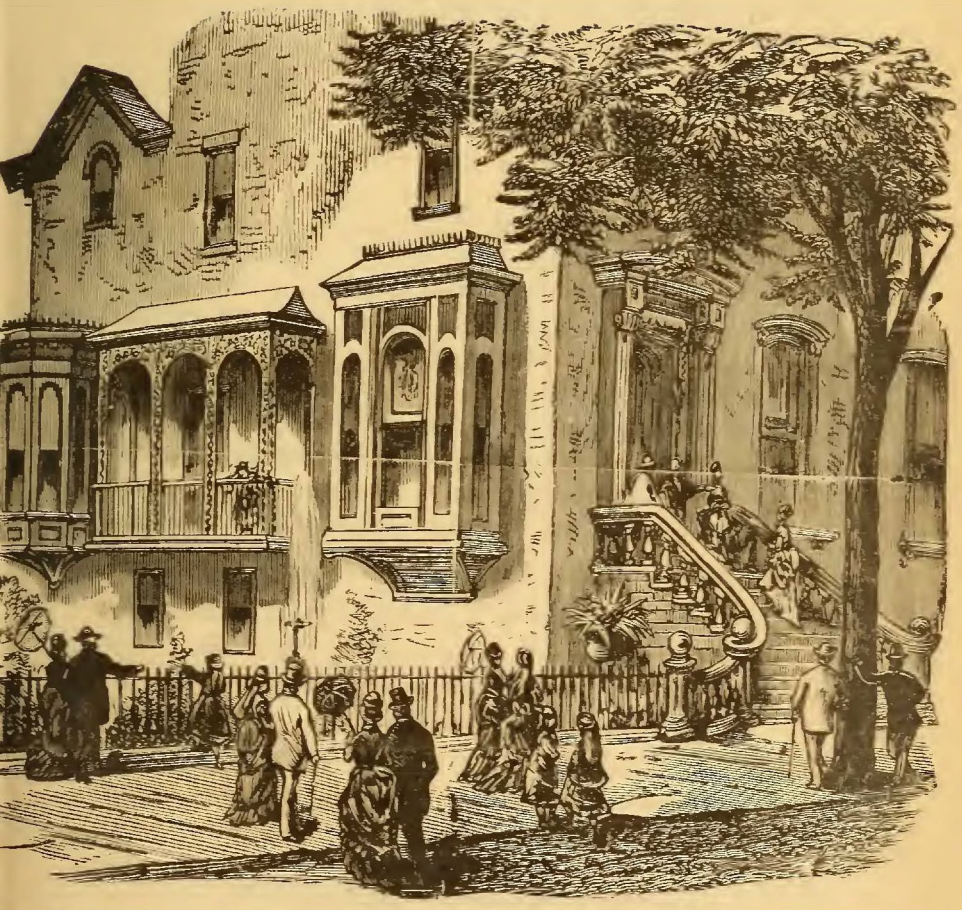
THEODORE TILTON.

This letter excited considerable comment at the time, and was generally regarded as a denial by Mr. Tilton of the rumors that had been in circulation for some time.

II.

PLYMOUTH CHURCH TAKES ACTION IN THE MATTER.

IT seems that Mr. Tilton, not content with the letter quoted above, repeated to various persons the substance of the charges which he subsequently embodied in his statement to the committee. These coming to the ears of Mr. Wm. F. West, a member of Plymouth Church, that gentleman informed Mr. Tilton of his intention to cite him before the church on the charge of circulating scandals against the pastor. Mr. Tilton stated to West that he had ceased his attendance upon the services of Plymouth Church for several years, and considered himself no longer a member of that body, and refused to regard himself as amenable to its discipline. This conversation occurred in August, 1873. On the 6th of October, at the close of the summer vacation, Mr. West formally charged Theodore Tilton, "a member of the church," with having circulated and promoted scandals derogatory to the



RESIDENCE OF MR. STORRS, THE PLACE OF MEETING OF THE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE.

Christian integrity of Mr. Beecher, and injurious to the reputation of the church.

On the evening of Friday, October 31, 1873, after the usual prayer meeting, the official body of the church recommended that Mr. Tilton's name "be dropped from the role of membership of this church." Mr. Tilton, who had been informed of the intention of the Society, was present on this occasion, and rose and addressed the meeting as follows:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: Twenty-three years ago I joined this church, and many of the most precious memories of my life cluster around these walls. Four years ago I ceased my membership, nor have I ever been, from that time until to-night, once under this roof. Retiring from Plymouth Church, I did not ask for the erasure of my name from the roll, because the circumstances were such that I could not publicly state them without wounding the feelings of others beside myself. During these years of my absence a story has filled the land, covering it like a mist, that I have slandered the minister of this church.

The speaker was interrupted by cries from two or three of "Order! order!" Mr. Shearman stated the point of order to be that there was no question of slander before them. The Moderator decided that Mr. Tilton was in order, and the latter resumed:

Last summer Mr. Beecher published an explicit card exempting me from this injustice. Notwithstanding this public document in 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 evade my just responsibility to the church as a member. I, therefore, come here to-night, not from any obligation of membership, since I am not a member, and not examined by any committee, for no committee has examined me, but of my free will, prompted by my self-respect, and as a ma ter vital to my life, and 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.

At the close of Mr. Tilton's remarks, Mr. Beecher said:

Mr. Tilton has been absent for four years. It has not been for the sake of excusing himself, or evading any process, or avoiding any proper responsibility. To my personal knowledge he was absent because he believed that his relation to the church had been separated by his own act. It cannot have been regular, but it was valid. The Roman Church holds that a child cannot die and go to heaven without it be baptized, except that it go to purgatory, and yet irregular baptism is allowed to be valid. Persons honestly believing themselves to be married are considered married, if they show good intention in the matter. For four years past Mr. Tilton has not been present at any of our meetings. You have known it and never protested against it in any meeting or social gathering. With the distinct knowledge that for nearly four years he had assumed the position of a man that had withdrawn from the church, you have permitted it to go on. It is substantially a sanction of his action; and now to go back of your own action, for the sake of drawing into the church a troublesome case of discipline, is neither wise nor according to the spirit and administration of this church.

I desire to say further that I don't believe that Mr. Tilton has desired in any way whatever to shirk his proper responsibility, or to avoid or evade any proper charge that might be made by the church. He asks if I have any charge to make against him. I have none. Whatever differences have been between us have been amicably adjusted, and, so far as I am concerned, buried. I have no charges. This whole matter has not been with my consent. This whole matter has been against my judgment. I have said to the brethren who were interested

in it, but who have acted sincerely and honestly, I believe, "You will only, to take up this matter, stop the proper business of the church, and reach a point at which you can do nothing. You will end just where you began, and I hold it not to be wise, not to be called for, certainly not to be, according to my judgment, 'the matter of the church.' That which I held from the beginning, I hold still."

After some further debate, the question was put and Mr. Tilton's name was dropped from the roll of Plymouth Church members by a vote of 210 yeas, and 13 nays.

III.

THE CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL.

The action of Plymouth Church in dropping Mr. Tilton's name from its rolls was considered by two Congregationalist pastors of Brooklyn, Rev. R. S. Storrs, of the Church of the Pilgrims, and Rev. Wm. Ives Budington, of the Clinton Avenue Congregational Church, as violative of Congregational polity, and they addressed a remonstrance to Plymouth Church, stating their views, and insisting upon what they considered the proper course to be pursued in the premises. Plymouth Church declined to admit their interference, and asserted its right, as an independent body, to manage its affairs in its own way. The result of the controversy was the summoning of an Advisory Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States. Plymouth Church protested against this action as an unwarrantable interference with its affairs, and refused to take part in the Council.

The Council met in Brooklyn on the 9th of March,

1874, and held daily sessions up to 12.30 on the morning of Sunday, the 29th. It was presided over by Rev. Dr. Leonard Bacon, of Yale College. Exactly what this Council decided or accomplished has never yet been made plain to the outside public. By that great body of dispassionate critics, the whole matter was viewed as an attempt upon the part of the complaining clergymen to force the publication of the scandal concerning Mr. and Mrs. Tilton and Mr. Beecher. The *New York Herald*, of March 29, clearly summed up the public judgment in the following article:

It would have been better for the general cause of religion, if the reverend gentlemen who composed the Brooklyn Council had remained at home. They have been made, perhaps unwillingly, parties to the most wretched farce ever enacted, and have become the laughing-stock of every man who believes in fair play. They have wasted the better part of a week in trying to mind Mr. Beecher's business and neglecting their own. The Council was convened, and the Council adjourned, and the only record left is that of an attempt to take revenge on a brother minister because the Almighty made him a genius.

Well, it seems to be one of the inalienable rights and privileges of ecclesiastical human nature to call a council. Even ministers will quarrel, and when they do they are more persistent in their ill temper and more willing to sacrifice the man they have chosen for a victim than any other class of men in the community. The history of the Church shows that a religious quarrel is full of bad blood, and that clergymen, when they attack a man, are not satisfied until they tear him all to pieces.

We think the gentlemen in whose fertile brains the Council originated have a genius for strategy. They have learned the lesson, that when a light weight contemplates flooring a heavily-timbered man, he should choose a time when circumstances seem to be against the latter, when he is a little off his guard,

and then strike boldly and heroically from the shoulder. If the heavy weight should happen to be too quick and should recover himself after the first blow, it is well to hold a correspondence on the subject; in which case, like the squid, which exudes a black substance that stains the water all around, and so escapes, the assailant can sneak away under cover of the assertion that he is a Christian gentleman; that no one has ever dared to call his fair name in question, while his brother, whom he hates with a velvety rhetoric and eloquence, is known to have pitch about him. We are a little afraid that Dr. Storrs loves Mr. Beecher too much—his affection is so ardent that he tries to love him to death. He pronounced a eulogy over him on the occasion of his twenty-fifth anniversary, and it may be that the effort exhausted all his kindly feeling, or, better still, it may be that, having got his hand in at that kind of eloquence, he wants the Plymouth pastor to die a violent death, that he may have an opportunity of exhibiting the versatility of his rhetoric.

The Brooklyn Council will long be remembered for several reasons. First, for the character of the gentlemen who composed it. It was as goodly a company as has been gathered together for many a year. Noted pastors of noted churches; business men, whose Christian character is without spot or blemish; presidents and officers of our colleges, whose names have been familiar to us for half a generation; directors of the most important missionary enterprises of America—all bowed their heads reverently to the opening prayer in Clinton Avenue Church. They were ready to consider, and able to settle the gravest questions of theology or polity. Better than that, they were men who have always believed in fair play; and they stood ready, as a grand jury, to hear any facts and to decide the law. Dr. Storrs opened the case by a splendid piece of rhetorical fireworks. He delivered a special plea, very forcible and very dishonest. The conspicuously absent Beecher had a stronger magnetic influence over that grave body of men than Storrs, whose words all had a sting in them, or Budington, who was evidently determined to be relentless. It was per-

fectly evident from the beginning that these gentlemen intended to put their neighbor in an awkward position. They presented five propositions for consideration and decision. These propositions were related to Congregationalism, they said, but every delegate knew that they related to Mr. Beecher only. They were worded very carefully, but each one of them, if reduced to plain English, would read thus:—Had Mr. Tilton any right to leave Plymouth Church without making public all he knew about the recent scandal? The only object which Storrs and Budington had in calling the Council was simply to rake over the embers of that old and burnt-out gossip.

This brings us to the second reason why the Council will be long remembered, which is that, after it had been convened, its real business was to do an injury to a brother minister, in which it signally failed. The delegates were informed that they were to give advice. The question was at once asked, To whom? Certainly not to Mr. Beecher; for, in the first place, he had never asked for it, and, in the second place, he felt perfectly competent to attend to his own affairs. The only parties in the quarrel who needed advice, then, were Drs. Budington and Storrs, and it was too late to say anything to them, for they had already acted in the case, prejudged Mr. Beecher and condemned him as a man unworthy of fellowship. To be sure, they would have been glad to shift the responsibility of their unwarrantable interference upon the Council, but they had men and not partisans to deal with, and they now stand, after the adjournment, alone in their unenviable position, the self-elected smelling committee of the Congregational body.

The truth is, Mr. Beecher has excited the rancor of certain parties by his popularity and independence. He has something inside of him which most ministers do not possess—the ability to make himself widely known and widely loved. There is a great desire on the part of some of the clergy to find out exactly what this something is by vivisection. The people know well enough that it is simply brains and heart; but some ministers insist that no one can have more heart or brains than they, and have written a petition to this effect:—The under-

signed, gasping for fame and unable to get it, respectfully petition you to lie down quietly and allow them to cut you in pieces. They hope to find some radical difficulty in your system. If it should happen that, after the process is over, they should be unable or unwilling to put you together again, you will at least have the satisfaction of dying for the benefit of others, and your detractors will enjoy the supreme happiness of knowing that you are out of the way.

We submit that this is asking too much. The Council, which was evidently convened for the purpose of holding an inquest on the body of Beecher, or at least of compelling him to swallow such medicine as will soon render an inquest necessary, is another black spot on the page of religious history. There are some envious souls so small that they cannot be happy until they see Beecher safely stowed away in Greenwood. May their disappointment last many a long year yet!

Why cannot clergymen be a little more friendly and a little less rancorous? Why cannot they wait patiently until the glorious work of Mr. Beecher is finished? They will then have an opportunity to carry him to Clinton avenue, pronounce their eulogies and squeeze their lachrymals for a few drops of hypocritical sorrow; or, if they like it better, they can take him to the ecclesiastical dissecting room, and give every gray head and every tyro the chance to put his knife into his dead body.

Go home, gentlemen, and let your betters alone. Quarrel with each other, if you must, but do not wear your knuckles to the bone in vainly hitting a giant. Mr. Beecher has been doing a hard day's work while you have been drawing your salaries, and has earned the right not to be interfered with. He is perfectly competent to mind his own business, and all the people ask of you is to do the same, and to do it as well and as faithfully as he has done it. It is pretty poor work, that which you have been doing the last four days, and it seems to common folks that you have been acting the part of Paul Pry, with very little credit to yourselves. Gentlemen, find your gingham umbrellas and go home.

The ultimate decision of the Council, as far as it can be understood, was that Plymouth Church was wrong; but, for the sake of harmony and peace, it counselled that there be no withdrawal of fellowship between the several churches. Plymouth Church, in the uncertainty of this decision, claimed that the victory rested with it, while the complaining parties claimed that it was a vindication of them and a warning to Plymouth Church not to repeat its offence. "So far as we have been able to make it out," said the *Herald*, "the clergy and lay delegates mean to say to Mr. Beecher by that verdict, 'You have done nothing that requires censure and you must not do it again.' Whereupon Plymouth Church seizes upon the first clause and insists that the Council decided in its favor; and the congregations of the accusing churches seize upon the last clause and insist that the verdict is in their favor. This fact remains—that it took the wisdom of the whole country four days to put the opinion of the majority into hieroglyphics. What is greatly needed just now is another Council to interpret the language of this one and then in good time we shall want still another to interpret the doings of that one, and so on indefinitely."

IV.

DR. BACON'S SPEECH.

Though the Council was so enigmatical in its utterances, its Moderator, the Rev. Dr. Bacon, was much plainer and more to the point in his comments upon it. On the 2d of April, 1874, he delivered a lecture in New Haven, in which he explained the bearings of the

Council's acts upon Congregational polity. In closing his remarks, he made the following allusions to Mr. Beecher and Mr. Tilton:

My theory of all these transactions and troubles proceeds on a belief in the highest Christian integrity of Mr. Beecher. I believe that the infamous women who have started this scandal have no basis for it. [Applause.] If it was their testimony alone, it would not be worth kicking a dog for. But I do not doubt that he has his infirmity, which is to let unprincipled men know too much of him. I do not object to his being a friend to publicans and sinners. Our Lord was. But the harlot who washed his feet with her tears and wiped them with her tresses was a repentant harlot; so one must hedge himself in a little. And you, as you go out to preach, be on your guard, lest in your anxiety to do good to the low you become liable to be charged with their sins.

Another part of my theory is, that Mr. Beecher's magnanimity is unspeakable. I never knew a man of a larger and more generous mind. One who was in relations to him the most intimate possible, said to me, "If I wanted to secure his highest love, I would go into a church-meeting and accuse him of crimes." This is his spirit. But I think he may carry it too far. A man whose life is a treasure to the Church universal, to his country, to his age, has no right to subject the faith in it to such a strain. Some one has said that Plymouth Church's dealings with offenders is like Dogberry's. The comparison was apt: "If any one will not stand, let him go and gather the guard and thank God that you are rid of such a knave." So of Lance, who went into the stocks and the pillory to save his dog from execution for stealing puddings and geese. I think he would have done better to let the dog die. And I think Mr. Beecher would have done better to have let vengeance come on the heads of his slanderers.

But he stands before his Master, and not before men. I hope ever to feel the fullest confidence in his character, and to see his influence enlarge and round out more and more. No

one could give such a course of lectures as this last one of his here—which was the best—and show unconsciously such a reach of spiritual experience and growth, without being pure and noble. [Applause.] And in this feeling the Council shared. Dr. —— himself said to me, as we went out of the church after Dr. Storrs's address, in which he paid high tribute to Mr. Beecher's character and work, "That passage should be saved to be Mr. Beecher's funeral eulogy, for it could never be excelled."

V.

MR. TILTON'S REPLY TO DR. BACON.

Dr. Bacon's speech was extensively copied by the press of all parts of the country, and drew forth in many instances editorial comments very unfavorable to Mr. Tilton, who, on the 21st of June, 1874, addressed the following reply to Dr. Bacon:

Sir:—I have carefully read your New Haven address concerning the late Council, and also your five essays on the same subject, just concluded in *The Independent*.

The numerous and extraordinary misrepresentations of my position which these writings of yours will perpetuate to my injury, if not corrected, compel me to lay before you the data for their correction:—misrepresentations which, on your part, are of course wholly unintentional, for you are incapable of doing any man a wilful wrong.

In producing to your inspection some hitherto unpublished papers and documents in this case, I need first to state a few facts in chronological sequence, sufficient to explain the documentary evidence which follows.

I. After I had been for fifteen years a member of Plymouth Church, and had become meanwhile an intimate friend of the pastor, knowledge came to me in 1870 that he had committed against me an offence which I forbear to name or characterize. Prompted by my self-respect, I immediately and forever ceased

my attendance on his ministry. I informed him of this determination as early as January, 1871, in the presence of a mutual friend, Mr. Francis D. Moulton.

The rules of Plymouth Church afforded me a choice between two methods of retirement:—one to ask for a formal letter of dismissal; the other, to dismiss myself less formally by prolonged absence. I chose the latter. In so doing, my chief desire was to avoid giving rise to curious inquiries into the reasons for my abandoning a church in which I had been brought up from boyhood; and therefore I did not invite attention to the subject by asking for a dismissory letter, but adopted the alternative of silently staying away—relying on the rule that a prolonged absence would finally secure to me a dismissal involving no publicity to the case.

Several powerful reasons prompted me to the adoption of this alternative, among which were the following:—The pastor communicated to me in writing an apology signed by his name. He also appealed to me to protect him from bringing reproach to the cause of religion. He alleged that an exposure would forbid him to reascend his pulpit. These, and other similar reasons, I had no right or disposition to disregard; and I acted upon them with a conscious desire to see Mr. Beecher protected rather than harmed.

II. At length my absence from the church—an absence of which not three members of the congregation, beside the pastor, knew the cause—began to excite comment in private circles.

Some of the members hinted that I had lapsed into a lamentable change of religious views—whereas my views continued to be the same as they had been for many years previous; and though they had long before ceased to find their honest expression in the formal creed which I had professed in my childhood at the altar of Plymouth Church, yet my religious faith had not changed from that early original more than the views of some of the most honored members and officers of the same church had changed within the same time.

Other persons insinuated that I had adopted un-Christian tenets concerning marriage and divorce:—whereas, touching

marriage, I have always held, and still hold, with ever-increasing firmness, the one and only view common to all Christendom; and touching divorce, the substance of what I held was, and still is, the needful abrogation of our unjust New York code, and the substitution of the more humane legislation of New England and the West.

Other persons fancied that I had become a Spiritualist of an extravagant type:—whereas I have never yet seen my way clear to be a Spiritualist at all—certainly not to be so much a Spiritualist as some of the most prominent members of Plymouth Church are known to be.

All these suppositions, and many others, but never the right one, became current in the church (and still are) to explain my suddenly sundered membership; the true reason for which has been understood always by the pastor, but never by his flock.

III. At length, after many calumnious whisperings, near and far (since evil tales magnify as they travel), a weekly paper in New York, in November, 1872, published a wicked and horrible scandal—a publication which some persons in the church ignorantly attributed in its origin and animus to me; whereas I had previously spent many months of constant and unremitting endeavor to suppress it: an endeavor in which, with an earnest motive, but a foolish judgment, I made many ill-directed sacrifices of my reputation, position, money, and fair prospects in life; for all which losses of things precious, since mine alone was the folly, let mine alone be the blame.

IV. In May, 1873, occurred the surreptitious publication of a tripartite agreement signed by H. C. Bowen, H. W. Beecher, and myself:—an agreement which, so far as I was concerned, had for its object to pledge me to silence against using or circulating charges which Mr. Bowen had made against Mr. Beecher. This covenant, as originally written, would have bound me never to speak, not only of Mr. Bowen's, but also of my own personal grievances against Mr. Beecher. I refused to sign the original paper. My position in the amended paper was this: Mr. Bowen had made grave charges against Mr. Beecher. These charges Mr. Bowen had been induced to

recall in writing. I cheerfully agreed never to circulate the charges which Mr. Bowen had recalled.

V. In August, 1873, Mr. William F. West, a member of Plymouth Church, hitherto a stranger to me, came to my residence, accompanied (at his request) by my friend Mr. F. B. Carpenter, and told me that when the summer vacation was over he (Mr. W.) meant to cite me before the church on the charge of circulating scandals against the pastor; declaring, in Mr. C.'s presence, that Mr. Beecher had acted as if the reported scandalous tales were true rather than false, and urging that I owed it to myself and the truth to go forward and become a willing witness in an investigation. I peremptorily declined to join Mr. West in his proposed investigation, and declared that as I had not been a member of Plymouth Church for several years, I could not be induced to return to that church for any purpose whatever, least of all for so distasteful a purpose as to participate in a scandal. Mr. West had meanwhile discovered that my name still remained on the church-roll; from which circumstance he determined to assume that I was still a member, and to force me to trial. Accordingly, a few weeks later, he brought forward charges which were nominally made against myself but really against the pastor:—charges which, if I may characterize them by the recently published language of the present Clerk of Plymouth Church, were "an indirect and insincere method of investigating one man under the false pretence of investigating another."

Some leading members, including especially the pastor, desired my co-operation in defeating Mr. West, and I cheerfully gave it. To this end, I wrote—with their pre-knowledge and at their urgent desire—a letter declining to accept a copy of the charges addressed to me as a member, on the ground that I had, four years previously, ceased my connection with the church. For this letter, I received, on the next day after sending it, the pastor's prompt and hearty thanks. An understanding was then had between Mr. Beecher and myself, in an interview at the residence of Mr. Moulton, that Mr. West's indictment against me was to be disposed of in the following

way, namely, by a simple resolution to the effect that, whereas I had, four years previously, terminated my membership; and whereas by inadvertence my name still remained on the roll; therefore resolved that the roll be amended in accordance with the fact. This was to put Mr. West's case quietly out of court without bringing up the scandal.

To my surprise and indignation, I learned on the morning of October 31, 1873, that the report which was to be presented at the church meeting to be held on that evening, would not be in the simple form already indicated, but would declare that whereas I had been charged with slandering the pastor; and whereas I had been cited before the church to meet the charge; and whereas I had pleaded non-membership as an excuse for not appearing for trial; therefore resolved that I should be dropped, etc.

This gross imputation, thus foreshadowed to me, led me to appear in person at the church on that evening, there to await the reading of the forthcoming report. This report, when it came to be read, brought me the following novel intelligence, namely, "Whereas a copy of the charges was put into the hands of the said Tilton on the 17th of October, *and a request made of him that he should answer the same by* the 23d of October," etc.

I do not know to this day whose hand it was that drew the above report, and therefore I am happily saved from an offensive personality when I say that the statement which I have here quoted is diametrically the opposite of the truth; for instead of my having been requested to answer the charges, I had been requested *not* to answer them.

After the public reading of the above report I arose in the meeting and said in Mr. Beecher's presence, that if I had slandered him I would answer for it to his face:—to which he replied in an equally public manner that he had no charge whatever to make against me.

VI. Next, growing out of the church's singular proceedings in this case, came the Congregational Council of which you were Moderator.

The above facts and events—which I have mentioned as briefly as possible, omitting their details—will serve as a suffi-

cient groundwork whereon to base the correction of the unjust and injurious statements which you have unwittingly given of my participation and responsibility in the case. With the Congregational theories and usages which you have so ably discussed, I have no concern—you are probably right about them. But as to all the essential facts growing out of my relationship to Plymouth Church, you have been wholly misinformed—as you will see by the following proofs:

I. You say that I retired from the church, giving no announcement of my so doing to any proper officer; in other words, that I stole out secretly, letting no one in authority know of my purpose. Your language concerning me is as follows:

"His position was that he had terminated his membership four years previously—*not by requesting the church* (as by its rules he might have done) *to drop his name from its roll*," etc.

You then ask:

"Is this the beautiful non-stringency of the covenant which connects the members of that church with the body, and with each other? What sort of a covenant is that which can be dissolved at any moment, not merely by mutual consent, nor by either party giving notice to the other, but by a silent volition in the mind of either?"

The above is a thorough misstatement of the manner in which I left Plymouth Church.

On the very first occasion of my meeting the chief officer of the church, after my retirement from it, I gave notice to him of that retirement. At a later period, I repeated this notice to other officers of that body. In evidence of this fact, I adduce the following extract from a recent card by Mr. Thomas S. Shearman, Clerk of Plymouth Church, published in *The Independent*, June 18, 1874. He says:

"Long before any charges were preferred against him, Mr. Tilton distinctly informed the Clerk of the church and various other officers and members (myself included) *that he had withdrawn, and that his name ought to be taken off the roll.*"

II. You say that I have either "a malicious heart," or "a crazy brain." I know the fountain-head of this opinion.

While the Council was in session in Brooklyn, the following startling paragraph appeared in the Brooklyn *Union* of Saturday, March 28, 1874:

MR. SHEARMAN ON THE SITUATION.

"At the close of the services a *Union* reporter approached Mr. Beecher for the purpose of getting his views as to the Council, but he declined to be interviewed. Mr. Shearman, the Clerk of the church, however, was communicative. He said he had received no intimation as yet, what course the Council would pursue. In regard to the scandal on Mr. Beecher, he said, so far as Tilton was concerned, he (Tilton) was out of his mind, off his balance, and did not act reasonably. As for Mrs. Tilton, she had occasioned the whole trouble while in a half-crazed condition. She had mediumistic fits, and while under the strange power that possessed her, often spoke of the most incredible things, declared things possible that were impossible, and among the rest had slandered Mr. Beecher. Mr. Tilton himself had acknowledged that all the other things she had told him in her mediumistic trance were false and impossible; then why, asked Mr. Shearman, should the scandal on Mr. Beecher be the only truth in her crazy words?"

My attention was not called to the above paragraph until after the Council had adjourned, and its members had gone to their homes. At first, I was not willing to believe that the Clerk of Plymouth Church—the same officer whose name had been officially signed to all the documents which the church had just been sending to the Council—could have been guilty of such an outrage against truth and decency as the above paragraph contained:—particularly against a lady whose devout religious faith and life are at the farthest possible remove from spiritualism or fanaticism of any kind. Accordingly, I procured the following sworn statement by the reporter certifying to the accuracy of his report:

KINGS COUNTY, *ss.*

Edwin F. Denyse, reporter of the Brooklyn *Union*, being duly sworn, deposed as follows:

At the close of the Friday evening meeting in Plymouth Church, March 27, 1874, I, in company with another member of the press, requested Mr. Thomas G. Shearman, Clerk of the church, to communicate to us for publication any facts or com-

ments or opinions which he might wish to make concerning the Congregational Council then in session: whereupon Mr. Shearman stated in our hearing, and for the purpose for which we asked him to do so, the allegations contained in the previous paragraph. And I do solemnly swear that this paragraph is a correct and moderate report of Mr. Shearman's statements, both in letter and spirit. And I further testify that I solicited, as a reporter, the above statement from Mr. Shearman because he was the Clerk of the church, whose name had been affixed in that capacity to the documents which Plymouth Church had sent to the Council, and because an opinion from such a high officer would have an official authenticity and importance.

Sworn to before me this 1st day of April, 1874,
FRANK CROOKE, *Justice of the Peace.*
} EDWIN F. DENYSE.

Shortly after the appearance of Mr. Shearman's reported interview in the *Union*, that gentleman sent to me through Mr. F. D. Moulton a letter, the substance of which was that he (Mr. S.) had referred in the above conversation not to *me* or *my* family, but to other persons. This letter I declined to receive, and returned it to the writer, with a demand upon him to retract his untrue and unjust statements. Furthermore, I required as a condition of my accepting from Mr. Shearman any apology at all, that this apology should be presented to me in writing in the presence of the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. This was promptly done at Mr. Moulton's house, in Mr. Beecher's presence. Mr. Shearman's apologetic letter was as follows:

BROOKLYN, *April* 2, 1874.

DEAR SIR:—Having seen a paragraph in the Brooklyn *Union* of Saturday last, containing a report of a statement alleged to have been made by me concerning your family and yourself, I desire to assure you that this report is seriously incorrect, and that I have never authorized such a statement.

It is unnecessary to repeat here what I have actually said upon these subjects, because I am now satisfied that what I *did* say was erroneous, and that the rumors to which I gave some credit were without foundation.

I deeply regret having been misled into an act of unintentional injustice, and am glad to take the earliest occasion to rectify it. I beg, therefore, to withdraw all that I said upon

the occasion referred to as incorrect (although then believed by me), and to repudiate entirely the statement imputed to me as untrue and unjust to all parties concerned.

Yours obediently, T. G. SHEARMAN.

THEODORE TILTON, Esq.

The above-named calumny, which Mr. T. G. Shearman thus retracted, is but one of several similar falsehoods against my wife and myself which have been fostered by interested parties to explain the action of Plymouth Church: falsehoods which, in some instances, have been corrected in the same way, and which in others still await to be corrected either in this way or in a court of justice.



FRANK B. CARPENTER.

III. You ask, "When did Mr. Tilton cease to be responsible to the Plymouth Church?" I answer, that I first ceased my responsibility to that church when I terminated my membership four years ago. I afterwards voluntarily renewed my responsibility to the church on the evening of October 31, 1873, by appearing in person at one of its public meetings, and offering to answer then and there, in the pastor's presence, the charge that I had slandered him. Less than two months ago, I still further renewed my responsibility to Plymouth Church, as will appear by the following correspondence:

BROOKLYN, *May* 4, 1874.

REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER, *Pastor of Plymouth Church;* REV. S. B. HALLIDAY, *Associate Pastor; and* MR. THOMAS G. SHEARMAN, *Clerk:*

GENTLEMEN:—I address, through you, to the church of which you are officers, the following statement, which you are

at liberty to communicate to the church through the Examining Committee, or in any other mode, private or public.

The Rev. Leonard Bacon, D.D., LL.D., Moderator of the recent Congregational Council, has seen fit, since the adjournment of that body, to proclaim, publish, and reiterate, with signal emphasis, and with the weight of something like official authority, a grave declaration which I here quote, namely:

"It was for the Plymouth Church," he says, "to vindicate its pastor against a damaging imputation from one of its members. But with great alacrity—the pastor himself consenting—IT THREW AWAY THE OPPORTUNITY OF VINDICATION" . . . "That act," he continued, "in which THE PLYMOUTH CHURCH THREW AWAY THE OPPORTUNITY OF VINDICATING ITS PASTOR, was what gave occasion for remonstrances from neighboring churches" . . . "There are many," he says also, "not only in Brooklyn, but elsewhere, who felt that the church had not fairly met the question, and by evading the issue had THROWN AWAY THE OPPORTUNITY OF VINDICATING ITS PASTOR."

The Moderator's declaration is thus made three times over that the Plymouth Church, in dealing with my case, THREW AWAY ITS OPPORTUNITY OF VINDICATING THE PASTOR.

This declaration so emphatically repeated by the chief mouth-piece of the Council, and put forth by him apparently as an exposition of the Council's views, compels me, as the third party to the controversy, to choose between two alternatives.

One of these is to remain contentedly in the dishonorable position of a man who denies to his former pastor an opportunity for the vindication of that pastor's character:—an offence the more heinous because an unsullied character and reputation are requisites to his sacred office.

The other alternative is for me to restore to his church their lost opportunity for his vindication by presenting myself voluntarily for the same trial to which the church would have power to summon me, if I were a member:—a suggestion which (judging from my past experience) will subject me afresh to the unjust imputation of reviving a scandal, for the suppression of which I have made more sacrifices than all other persons.

Between these two alternatives—which are all that the Moderator leaves to me—and which are both equally repugnant to my feelings—duty requires me to choose the second.

I therefore give you notice that if the pastor, or the Examining Committee, or the church as a body, desire to repossess

the opportunity which the Moderator laments that you have thrown away, I hereby restore to you this lost opportunity as freely as if you had never parted with it.

I authorize you (if such be your pleasure) to cite me at any time within the next thirty days to appear at the bar of Plymouth Church for trial on the charge heretofore made against me, namely, that of "circulating and promoting scandals derogatory to the Christian integrity of the pastor, and injurious to the reputation of the church."

My only stipulation concerning the trial is, that it shall not be held with closed doors, nor in the absence of the pastor.

I regret keenly that the Moderator has imposed on me the necessity for making this communication, for nothing but necessity would extort it.

The practical good which I seek to achieve by this proposition is that, whether accepted or declined, it will in either case effectually put an end forever to the Moderator's grave charge that Plymouth Church has been deprived through me of an opportunity to vindicate its pastor, or that its pastor has been by any act of mine deprived of an opportunity to vindicate himself. Truly yours,

THEODORE TILTON.

To the above communication I received the following reply from the Clerk of the church:

BROOKLYN, *May* 18, 1874.

DEAR SIR:—Your note of the 4th inst., enclosing a letter addressed to Mr. Beecher, Mr. Halliday, and myself, was duly received.

This letter has been read by Mr. Halliday, with whose concurrence it has been submitted to the Examining Committee; and we all deem its contents to present a question which should be decided by that committee, and which should not be submitted to the pastor of the church, to whom, therefore, the letter has not been shown, though he has been advised of its substance.

Having consulted the members of the committee, I am informed by them that they see no reason for accepting your proposition, or even laying it before the church.

Whatever view may be taken of the case by others, the Examining Committee and the church have seen no necessity for vindicating any member of the church from charges which no one has made, and the church has never in the twenty-seven years of its history adopted such a course. No one can, there-

fore, hold you responsible for the loss of an opportunity to the church to do that which it never yet has done, and probably never will do.

We do not understand your letter as implying that you have any charges to make, but to the contrary. If the committee had so understood it, they would have readily entertained and fully investigated them.

It is proper to add that your name was dropped from the roll, not simply because of the statements made by you *after* charges had been preferred against you, but because months, if not years, *before* any charges were made you distinctly stated to various officers and members of the church that you had permanently abandoned your connection with it, thus bringing yourself expressly within the terms of our rule upon this subject.

Yours, truly,

MR. THEODORE TILTON. THOMAS G. SHEARMAN.

As the above communication by Mr. Shearman seemed to bear no official but only a private signature, I addressed to him the following note:

174 LIVINGSTON STREET,
BROOKLYN, *May* 23, 1874.

MR. THOMAS G. SHEARMAN, *Clerk of Plymouth Church:*

SIR:—My recent communication addressed to the Pastor, the Associate Pastor, and the Clerk of Plymouth Church is acknowledged by you in a note which you seem to have signed merely as a private individual, and not as an officer of the church.

I call your attention to the fact that I did not address you in your private capacity but solely as Clerk of Plymouth Church.

I therefore respectfully request to be informed by you, definitely and in writing, whether or not I am at liberty to regard your letter as an official reply to mine.

Yours, truly,

THEODORE TILTON.

Mr. Shearman's reply was as follows:

81 HICKS STREET,
BROOKLYN, *May* 29, 1874.

DEAR SIR:—In reply to your inquiry whether my letter of 18th inst. was an official answer to yours of the 4th inst., I beg to say that I did not feel at liberty, without the express authority of the church itself, to sign that letter as its Clerk.

In so far as the letter stated that your proposition of May 4 was declined, it was official; since as Clerk of the church I declined then, and decline now, to lay the proposal before the church itself, holding myself responsible to the church for so doing.

The remainder of the letter of 18th inst. must be regarded as my individual statement of what I believe to be the unanimous opinion of the officers of the church.

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS G. SHEARMAN.

MR. THEODORE TILTON.

It will thus be seen that Mr. Shearman, in answer to my inquiry, characterizes his previous letter to me as partly official and partly unofficial—though how he could originally have expected me to draw the dividing line between its two parts without this subsequent explanation, I am at a loss to understand. But the official portion of his letter (now that it has been pointed out to me) is sufficient to answer your query. "When did Mr. Tilton cease to be responsible to the Plymouth Church?" I respectfully submit that, setting aside all previous cavils and technicalities concerning the church-roll, I may be fairly said to have ceased my responsibility to Plymouth Church when the Clerk of that church officially informed me that my voluntary offer to return and be tried was officially declined.

IV. In your five essays you were led, through ignorance of the facts, to make several other erroneous and injurious statements concerning my case; but the corrections and explanations which I have already given will of themselves correct the others.

It now remains for me to give you some reasons why I have been prompted, after years of reticence, to lay before you the grave matters contained in this communication. Nothing could induce me to make my present use of the foregoing facts except the conviction which the events of the last year, and particularly of the last half year, have forced upon my mind that Mr. Beecher, or his legal and other agents acting in his interest and by his consent, have shown themselves willing to sacrifice

my good name for the maintenance of *his*. I have come slowly to this judgment—more slowly than my personal friends have done; but that I am not mistaken in it, you shall see by a few illustrative instances:

I. I have already shown you how the church, at a public meeting, on Friday evening, October 31, 1873, by an official document which was published the next morning in every leading journal in New York, gave the public falsely to understand that I had been cited to answer charges, when I had really been requested *not* to answer them:—a piece of ecclesiastical misrepresentation which was the more grievous to me because it was subsequently accepted by the Council as authentic, and because it is still widely believed by the public.

II. Mr. Beecher's journal, *The Christian Union*, published this official falsehood to a wide circle of readers, and took no notice of the correction which I addressed at the time in a brief note to the Council. Let me ask you to weigh the peculiar gravity of this omission by that journal. My case, as presented to the Council by the two protesting churches, was based by them, not on any private or accurate knowledge of the facts, but solely on the published misstatements of those facts by Plymouth Church. I was described by the two churches to the Council as follows:

"Specific charges of grossly un-Christian conduct are presented against him by a brother in the church, *to which charges he declines to answer*," etc.

You will remember that I promptly addressed to you a reply to the above, in which I used the following explicit words:

"Gentlemen of the Council, every man among you knows that I did *not* decline to answer."

You, as Moderator of the Council, courteously gave me the ecclesiastical reasons why my letters could not be officially laid before that body; but can you give me any honorable reason why my defence should not have been published in *The Christian Union?* If every other American journal should be destroyed, and only the files of *The Christian Union* should

remain, that journal's report of my case would represent me as a culprit, first, who had slandered a clergyman; next, who had been summoned before the church to answer for this calumniation; next, who had evaded this summons by resorting to the safe shelter of non-membership; and last, who on account of this moral poltroonery had been dropped from the roll. Such is the record which Mr. Beecher's journal contains of my case, up to date.

III. During the Council, and when there seemed a probability that Plymouth Church would receive condemnation and be disfellowshipped by the neighboring churches, Mr. Beecher inspired a message from his church to the Council, closing with these words:

"We hold that it is our right, and may be our duty, to avoid the evils incident to a public explanation or a public trial; and that such an exercise of our discretion furnishes us no good ground for the interference of other churches, *provided we neither retain within our fellowship, nor dismiss by letter, as in regular standing, persons who bring open dishonor upon the Christian name.*"

This adroit insinuation against me is what you, as Moderator of the Council, know to have been the turning point in the fortunes of Plymouth Church before that tribunal. The Council's verdict borrows almost these identical words. It says, "The accused person has not been retained in the church, nor commended to any other church." You, too, quote these words —borrowed thus doubly from the church's plea and from the Council's verdict—and you then logically say, "Therefore the abnormal method in which the charges against him [me] were disposed of was overlooked."

In other words, the Council, on reading the above excusatory petition sent up to it by Plymouth Church, found in it the one and only ground for retaining that church within the Congregational fellowship; and this one and only ground was because Mr. Beecher's final appeal to the Council represented me as a person who had neither been retained in his church, nor been recommended to any other, but who was dropped from the roll

for bringing "dishonor on the Christian name." This document—constituting Plymouth Church's ungenerous defence before the Council—was accepted by you in good faith, and has since led you to point against me the following cruel words:

"The Plymouth Church," you say, "made it known that they were no longer responsible for the dishonor which he has brought or may bring on the name of Christ. They dropped him from the roll of the church. In one word they excommunicated him, for such a dropping from the roll was excommunication from the church."

You never could have uttered the preceding injurious words against me had not Mr. Beecher and his church-agents given you the materials for so doing by ingeniously putting before the Council a document which you, as Moderator, interpreted as being only another way of Plymouth Church's saying that I had brought dishonor on the Christian name and had therefore been excommunicated.

Do not misunderstand me. I will not say that, in my unsuccessful management of this unhappy scandal, I have brought no "dishonor on the Christian name:" the one name which, of all others, I most seek to honor. With infinite sorrow I look back through the last few years, and see instances in which, by the fatality of my false position, I have brought peculiar "dishonor on the Christian name:"—all which I freely acknowledge, and hope yet to repair. But I solemnly aver—and no man shall gainsay me—that the reason why Plymouth Church avoided an investigation into the scandal with which *I* was charged, was not because *I*, but another man, had "brought dishonor on the 'Christian name.'" And yet this other person, a clergyman, permitted his church to brand me before the Council with an accusation which, had I been in his place and he in mine, I would have voluntarily borne for myself instead of casting on another.

IV. I will adduce a further instance by a quotation from a letter which I had occasion to address to Mr. Beecher, dated May 1, 1874:

HENRY WARD BEECHER:

SIR:—Mr. F. B. Carpenter mentions to me your saying to him that under certain conditions, involving certain disavowals by me, a sum of money would or could be raised to send me, with my family, to Europe for a term of years.

The occasion compels me to state explicitly that so long as life and self-respect continue to exist together in my breast, I shall be debarred from receiving, either directly or indirectly, any pecuniary or other favor at your hands.

The reason for this feeling on my part you know so well, that I will spare you the statement of it.

Yours, truly,

THEODORE TILTON.

V. Take another instance. You will perceive that in Mr. Shearman's letter, given above—the letter officially declining my offer to return to the church, to be tried—he says, under date, May 18, 1874:

"Your note of the 4th inst., enclosing a letter addressed to Mr. Beecher, Mr. Halliday and myself, was duly received. *This letter has been read by Mr. Halliday with whose concurrence it has been submitted to the Examining Committee.*"

And yet, a month and a half after Mr. Halliday saw this letter, and a month after Mr. Shearman had officially replied to it, the Brooklyn *Union* of June 19 contained the following singular statement, by a reporter who visited Mr. Halliday:

"In an extract," says the *Union*, "from a letter written to the Chicago *Tribune*, it is stated that Mr. Tilton had addressed a note to the 'Trustees of Plymouth Church.' The *Tribune's* correspondent declares that Mr. Tilton 'not only expresses his willingness but desire to answer any summons as a witness during the next thirty days.' A *Union* reporter (Mr. Tilton not being accessible) called on Rev. Mr. Halliday to-day, and, upon presenting the extract to him, was assured that the person who corresponded with the Chicago *Tribune* must have been misinformed. The very fact of his stating that the letter was addressed 'to the Trustees of Plymouth Church,' he said, 'was an absurdity.' The trustees only attended to temporalities of the church. *If Mr. Tilton had written such a letter, of which, however, he had no knowledge, it would have been either addressed to the church, to its pastor, or to some member or members.* At the last Friday evening meeting no such letter had been presented

for consideration, and he was certain that none had since been received, although he must say he had been absent in Massachusetts about a week. *He added that he had reason for believing that Mr. Tilton felt a little sore about what Rev. Mr. Bacon had said of him. But whether he would take to writing letters about it he couldn't say.*"

And yet Mr. Halliday, according to Mr. Shearman's testimony above given, had read my letter forty days before thus denying that he had ever seen or heard of it.

A similar statement to the above appeared in the Brooklyn *Eagle*, at the same time (June 20), as follows:

"The trustees of Plymouth Church deny that Theodore Tilton has addressed a letter to them offering himself as a witness, and expressing a desire to answer certain charges against Mr. Beecher, during the next thirty days. They say that the whole story is false from beginning to end."

The above are recent specimens—not solitary or unique—of the manner in which Mr. Beecher's agents have not hesitated to use the Brooklyn press, on numerous occasions, to misrepresent and pervert my case to the community in which I reside, and to the public at large.

VI. Furthermore, I regret to point you to the evidence that Plymouth Church, or rather the attorney who now acts as its Clerk, is attempting to make up a false but plausible record concerning this case, for the purpose of appealing to it in future to my disadvantage. It was to this end that Mr. Shearman ingeniously incorporated in his letter to me, dated May 18, 1874, the following words:

"We do not understand your letter as implying that you have any charges to make, but the contrary. *If the committee had so understood it, they would have readily entertained and fully investigated them.*"

The manifest object of the above record is to enable the church to say, a year or five years hence, that if I ever had any charges to make against Mr. Beecher, the church had long ago given me an abundant opportunity to make them. Mr. Shearman is still more bold in his communication to *The Independent*, dated June 18, 1874. He therein says of the church:

"Its officers have, in the proper way, without parade, *given every facility for investigation that could reasonably be desired, even by the most captious critics.*"

The above statement by Mr. Shearman is made in a letter which was put forth by him ostensibly in my interest, and which I am already accused of having inspired. This leads me to disavow the declaration which I have last quoted as insincere and at variance with the truth.

VII. Not to multiply instances needlessly, there is one other to which my self-respect compels me to allude with painful explicitness. In your New Haven speech you characterized Mr. Beecher as the most magnanimous of men, and in the context referred to me as a knave and dog. You left the public to infer that I had become in some despicable way the creature of Mr. Beecher's magnanimity. Early in April last I called Mr. Beecher's attention to the offensiveness and injuriousness of your statement, and informed him that I should insist on its correction either by him or me. In order to provide him with an easy way to correct it, involving no humiliation to his feelings, I addressed to you the following letter:

BROOKLYN, *April* 3, 1874.

REV. LEONARD BACON, D.D.:

MY DEAR SIR:—I have just been reading the *Tribune's* report of your Yale speech on the Brooklyn Council, in which occurs the following paragraph:

"Another part of my theory is that Mr. Beecher's magnanimity is unspeakable. I never knew a man of a larger and more generous mind. One who was in relations to him the most intimate possible said to me, 'If I wanted to secure his highest love, I would go into a church meeting and accuse him of crimes. This is his spirit. But I think he may carry it too far. A man whose life is a treasure to the Church universal, to his country, to his age, has no right to subject the faith in it to such a strain. Some one has said that Plymouth Church's dealing with offenders is like Dogberry's. The comparison is apt: 'If any one will not stand, let him go, and gather the guard, and thank God you are rid of such a knave.' So of Lance, who went into the stocks and the pillory to save his dog from execution for stealing puddings and geese. I think he

would have done better to let the dog die. And I think Mr. Beecher would have done better to have let vengeance come on the heads of his slanderers." . . .

Setting aside the satire and mirth, if there be any criticism directed toward me in these words in sobriety and earnestness, then I beg you to do me the following act of justice:

Please forward to Mr. Beecher the letter I am now writing, and ask him to inform you, on his word of honor, whether I have been his slanderer—whether I have spoken against him falsely—whether I have evaded my just responsibility to Plymouth Church—whether I have treated him other than with the highest possible fairness—and whether he has not acknowledged to me, in large and ample terms, that *my* course towards *him* in this sorrowful business has been marked by the magnanimity which you apparently intimate has characterized *his* towards *me*.

If you write to Mr. Beecher as I have indicated, I will thank you for a line as the words or substance of his reply. With great respect I am truly yours,

THEODORE TILTON.

In reply to the above letter you sent me the following:

NEW HAVEN, *April* 10, 1874.

THEODORE TILTON, ESQ.:

DEAR SIR:—Not being in Mr. Beecher's confidence, I have doubted what I ought to do with your letter written a week ago. I was not—and am not—willing to demand of him that he shall admit me to his confidence in a matter on which he chooses to be reticent. But as the letter seems to have been written for *him* quite as much as for *me*, I have now sent it to him without asking or expecting any reply. . . .

With the best wishes for your welfare, I am yours truly,

LEONARD BACON.

It is now between two and three months since I received from you the foregoing letter; and as I have not heard that Mr. Beecher has made a reply, either to you or to me, I am at last forced to the disagreeable necessity of borrowing a reply in his own words, as follows:

BROOKLYN, *Jan.* 1, 1871.

I ask Theodore Tilton's forgiveness, and humble myself before him as I do before my God. He would have been a better man in my circumstances than I have been. I can ask

nothing except that he will remember all the other breasts that would ache. I will not plead for myself. I even wish that I were dead. . . .

H. W. Beecher.

The above brief extract from Mr. Beecher's own testimony will be sufficient, without adducing the remainder of the document, to show that I have just ground to resist the imputation that I am the creature of his magnanimity.

In conclusion, the common impression that I have circulated and promoted scandals against Mr. Beecher is not true. I doubt if any other man in Brooklyn, during the whole extent of the last four years, has spoken to so few persons on this subject as I have done. A mere handful of my intimate friends —who had a right to understand the case—are the only persons to whom I have ever communicated the facts. To all other persons I have been dumb—resisting all questions, and refusing all explanations.

If the public have heretofore considered my silence as inexplicable, let my sufficient motive be now seen in the just forbearance which I felt morally bound to show to a man who had sent me a written and absolute apology.

But my duty to continue this forbearance ceased when the spirit of that apology was violated to my injury by its author or his agents. These violations have been multitudinous already, and they threaten to multiply in the future—forcing me to protect myself against them in advance ;—particularly against the cunning devices of the Clerk of the church, who, acting as an attorney, appears to be conducting this business against me as if it were a case at law.

Had the fair spirit which I had a right to expect from Plymouth Church—at least for its pastor's sake—been shown toward me, I would have continued to rest in silence on Mr. Beecher's apology, and never, during the remainder of my life, would I have permitted any public word of mine to allude to the offence or the offender.

But the injurious measures which the author of this apology has since permitted his church to take against me without protest

on his part—measures leading to the misrepresentation of my case and character by the church to the Council, and by the Council to the general public—involving gross injuries to me, which have been greatly aggravated by your writings:—all these indictments, conjoining to one end, have put me before my countrymen in the character of a base and bad man—a character which, I trust, is foreign to my nature and life. Under the accumulating weight of this odium—unjustly bestowed upon me—neither patience nor charity can demand that I keep silent.

In your capacity as ex-Moderator of the Council, and as its chief expositor, you have labelled the theme of your animadversions, "the celebrated case of Theodore Tilton." You have declared that "the transaction, with all its consequences, belongs to history, and is in every way a legitimate subject of public criticism." If, therefore, your estimate of the historic importance of the case is true (though I hope it is not), I now finally appeal to you as its chief historian not to represent me as playing an unmanly or dishonorable part in a case in which, so far as I can yet see, I have failed in no duty save to myself.

Truly yours,

THEODORE TILTON.

VI.

MR. BEECHER DEMANDS AN INVESTIGATION.

THE publication of this letter of Mr. Tilton brought matters to a crisis. Up to this time Mr. Beecher, for reasons which will appear at a further stage of this narrative, and which all good men will appreciate and respect, whether they indorse them or not, had exerted himself to prevent this unhappy scandal from coming to a public trial. Mr. Tilton had by his letter to Dr. Bacon made it necessary that, in justice to all parties, the truth should be known; and Mr. Beecher,

conscious of his own rectitude and confident of the result, had but one course open to him—to demand the fullest and most searching investigation into the facts of the case. He accordingly addressed the following letter to a number of the most prominent members of his congregation, who are named in this document, asking them to investigate the charges made against him by Theodore Tilton:

BROOKLYN, *June* 27, 1874.

GENTLEMEN:—In the present state of the public feeling, I owe it to my friends, and to the church and the Society over which I am pastor, to have some proper investigation made of the rumors, insinuations, or charges made respecting my conduct, as compromised by the late publications made by Mr. Tilton. I have thought that both the church and the Society should be represented, and I take the liberty of asking the following gentlemen to serve in this inquiry, and to do that which truth and justice may require. I beg that each of the gentlemen named will consider this as if it had been separately and personally sent to him, namely:

From the Church—Henry W. Sage, Augustus Storrs, Henry M. Cleveland.

From the Society—Horace B. Claflin, John Winslow, S. V. White.

I desire you, when you have satisfied yourselves by an impartial and thorough examination of all sources of evidence, to communicate to the Examination Committee, or to the church, such action as then may seem to you right and wise.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

These gentlemen having signified their willingness to undertake the task confided to them, Mr. Beecher notified the Examining Committee of Plymouth Church of his action, and requested their sanction of it in the following letter:

could not do it at all. He concluded by saying that he should be very much obliged to any one if he could explain this mystery.

"The pastor said: 'May it not be the natural delicacy we feel, and ought to feel, in approaching the interior consciousness of another person?'

"Another brother rose. There was no hanging back at this meeting; there were no awkward pauses; every one seemed full of matter. The new speaker was not inclined to admit the explanation suggested by the pastor. 'Suppose,' said he, 'we were to see a man in imminent danger of immediate destruction, and there was one way of escape, and but one, which *we* saw, and he did not, should we feel any delicacy in running up to him and urging him to fly for his life? Is it not a want of faith on our part that causes the reluctance and hesitation we all feel in urging others to avoid a peril so much more momentous?'

"Mr. Beecher said the cases were not parallel. Irreligious persons, he remarked, were not in imminent danger of immediate death; they might die to-morrow; but in all probability they would not, and an ill-timed or injudicious admonition might forever repel them. We must accept the doctrine of probabilities, and act in accordance with it in this particular, as in all others.

"Another brother had a puzzle to present for solution. He said that he too had experienced the repugnance to which allusion had been made; but what surprised him most was, that the more he loved a person, and the nearer he was related to him, the more difficult he found it to converse with him upon his spiritual state. Why is this? 'I should like to have this question answered,' said he, 'if there *is* an answer to it.'

"Mr. Beecher observed that this was the universal experience, and he was conscious himself of a peculiar reluctance and embarrassment in approaching one of his own household on the subject in question. He thought it was due to the fact that we respect more the personal rights of those near to us than we do those of others, and it was more difficult to break in upon the

routine of our ordinary familiarity with them. We are accustomed to a certain tone which it is highly embarrassing to jar upon.

"Captain Duncan related two amusing anecdotes to illustrate the right way and the wrong way of introducing religious conversation. In his office there was sitting one day a sort of lay preacher, who was noted for lugging in his favorite topic in the most forbidding and abrupt manner. A sea captain came in, who was introduced to this individual.

"'Captain Porter,' said he, with awful solemnity, 'are you a captain in Israel?'

"The honest sailor was so abashed and confounded at this novel salutation, that he could only stammer out an incoherent reply; and he was evidently disposed to give the tactless zealot a piece of his mind, expressed in the language of the quarter-deck. When the solemn man took his leave, the disgusted captain said, 'If ever I should be coming to your office again, and that man should be here, I wish you would send me word, and I'll stay away.'

"A few days after another clergyman chanced to be in the office, no other than Mr. Beecher himself, and another captain came in, a roistering, swearing, good-hearted fellow. The conversation fell upon sea-sickness, a malady to which Mr. Beecher is peculiarly liable. The captain also was one of the few sailors who are always sea-sick in going to sea, and gave a moving account of his sufferings from that cause. Mr. Beecher, after listening attentively to his tale, said, 'Captain Duncan, if I was a preacher to such sailors as your friend here, I should represent hell as an eternal voyage, with every man on board in the agonies of sea-sickness, the crisis always imminent, but never coming.'

"This ludicrous and most unprofessional picture amused the old salt exceedingly, and won his entire good-will toward the author of it; so that, after Mr. Beecher left, he said, 'That's a good fellow, Captain Duncan. I like *him*, and I'd like to hear him talk more.'

"Captain Duncan contended that this free and easy way of

address was just the thing for such characters. Mr. Beecher had shown him, to his great surprise, that a man could be a decent and comfortable human being although he was a minister, and had so gained his confidence and good-will that he could say *any thing* to him at their next interview. Captain Duncan finished his remarks by a decided expression of his disapproval of the canting regulation phrases so frequently employed by religious people, which are perfectly nauseous to men of the world.

"This interesting conversation lasted about three-quarters of an hour, and ended, not because the theme seemed exhausted, but because the time was up. We have only given enough of it to convey some little idea of its spirit. The company again broke into one of their cheerful hymns, and the meeting was dismissed in the usual manner."

Mr. Beecher has several times visited Europe, where he enjoys a reputation equal to that which he has built up among his own countrymen. And well does he deserve it. As a pulpit orator, he has not his peer among the English-speaking nations, and there is no man on earth whose great talents have been more faithfully given to the cause of Christianity. He is a stout, heavily-built man, with a powerful muscular development, looking more like a prosperous farmer with a merry heart and a clear conscience than a preacher. His face is that of a born orator, earnest, impassioned and full of genius. He dresses simply, and lives in a careful and frugal manner. He is now sixty-one years old, and is beginning to show his age. Yet he is full of energy, with a boundless capacity for work, and an untiring industry in the performance of it.

Such a man is an honor to his country and to his age, and his reputation is a national treasure. For many years Mr. Beecher has held a prominent place

in the regards of his countrymen. Even many of his old political enemies have come to love and honor him for his true manhood and his great genius. When the recent infamous assertions were put forth concerning his private life, there was a general outcry of indignation from the respectable portion of the community. The proud silence which he maintained for so long was appreciated, and when, at last, yielding to the desire of his friends that he should deny the charges made against him, he did so in general but emphatic terms, his denial was accepted by the great mass of his countrymen. When these charges took a more definite form in the statement of Theodore Tilton, Mr. Beecher promptly demanded of his church, to which he was primarily responsible, an investigation of all the reports concerning his alleged immoralities. This investigation was made, carefully, deliberately, and without haste, and resulted in the triumphant vindication of the character of Mr. Beecher. The verdict of the Investigating Committee was hailed with satisfaction by good men and women throughout the length and breadth of the Union. That there were dissatisfied persons—persons who, in spite of the overwhelming testimony in his behalf and the absence of proof against him, made haste to declare him guilty—is true; but it is also true beyond question that the confidence of the great mass of his countrymen in him has never wavered, and that they regard him with even greater affection for the trial he has passed through so triumphantly.

The common sense of the American people sustained the verdict of the committee. Looking beyond the verdict and the evidence upon which it was based,

they beheld a man whose long and busy life had been spent in the cause of Christianity, in the constant and noble endeavor to lift men up out of their baser selves and make them fit for the kingdom of God—a man in whose utterances not one gross, ignoble or un-Christian sentiment can be found—charged with the most shameful crimes, branded as a hyprocrite, a liar, an adulterer, and a defamer of the man he was charged with having injured, and they refused to believe these charges. Common sense revolted from believing these things of one whose whole life contradicted them. To ask them to credit such slanders was to insult their intelligence. They trusted the evidence of nearly forty years of purity and devotion, and the result has vindicated both Mr. Beecher's uprightness and the correctness of the popular judgment. No man ever had a greater triumph; no man ever deserved it more. Writing to a friend just after the attack upon him by Mrs. Woodhull, Mr. Beecher said, "Living or dying, I am the Lord's. He knows it and I know it. After that it matters little what happens." Many a man has stood clear of guilt in the sight of God, but has been judged guilty by his fellow-men. Mr. Beecher has not been called upon to bear this trial. Innocent of wrong before God, he has also been vindicated in the sight of his countrymen, and he can afford to disregard the handful whose dirty imaginations lead them still to repeat the slanders which have so fatally recoiled upon his assailants.

Dr. J. G. Holland, in the October number of *Scribner's Magazine*, well expresses the sentiments of the more cultivated class of the community, in the following article:

If any of our readers care to refer to the number of this magazine dated January, 1873, they will find under the title, "The Popular Capacity for Scandal," all that we have ever cared to say concerning the scandal in Plymouth Church, recently and forever exploded. There never was any probability in it. The idea that Mr. Beecher, who had carried a pure name through life, should after having lived to be nearly sixty years old, reared a family, and been subjected to the most tremendous drafts upon his vitality, gone out of his way to seduce an innocent member of his own flock, the wife of a personal friend to whom he had married her, was simply preposterous. The absurdity of it is greater when it is remembered that his life had not been a brutal one, but one in which the nobler sentiments had always been those receiving special culture. The crime charged against him is probably the last toward which he would have been tempted. We say there never was any probability in it, regarded purely from a physiological point of view; and when we remember that the person who originated it continued to cling to the nest which he professed to believe was dishonored by repeated crimes against its purity, the improbability grew in all practical results to impossibility.

It is strange that these two circumstances—Mr. Beecher's age, his relations and the spiritual character of his culture, and his accuser's condonation of the offence which he professed to believe his wife had committed—had not opened the eyes of the public to the facts and rendered the scandal impossible. There are other circumstances that ought to have been taken into consideration. If the public had fully looked in the face the organized and self-justified nastiness in which this scandal was bred, they would have seen that it was an attack on eminent purity before which it writhed in condemnation. But it is all over now. We suppose that none but a fool now believes that Mr. Beecher ever had criminal conversation with the weak woman whose name has been coupled with his in this business, and that none but a worse than fool either wishes or pretends to believe it. Saying this the case ought to be covered, but unhappily, even Mr. Beecher is still blamed. Why did he not

come out and say all he has said before? Why did he submit to the manipulation which proved him to be so little worldly-wise? Why did he hold any communication with people whom he ought to have known were unsafe associates? Why did he, and why did he not, do a thousand things besides?

We are not Mr. Beecher's champion, but we would like to ask a few questions. What business have you, oh, inquisitive public, with a man's mistakes? Why did you give the slightest credence to this wretchedly improbable story, and put him to such long and inexcusable torture? He denied this story over his own signature explicitly; why did you not believe his denial? Had he been in the habit of deceiving you? Did this tidal-wave of filth that has swept over the land originate with him? Has he not been sinned against, privately and publicly, from the first? That he was unwise in the management of this affair is a matter for your commiseration and not for your blame. The fact calls for your sympathy and not for your condemnation. The people and the press have done that for which they ought to go down on their knees before Mr. Beecher. The sly knavery of the advice that has been meted out to him to confess and be forgiven, the apologies that have been made for him on the ground of his usefulness as a Christian preacher, the distinctions that have been drawn between the man and his work, the readiness to give credence to anything that made against him from the most untrustworthy sources, the bandying of his name as a jest—these are offences so gross that all who have been guilty of them should hide their heads in shame. If Mr. Beecher can forgive or withhold his indignation, it becomes the offending public to be silent.

There is a special portion of the great public who ought to have a few honest words said to them, and those we propose to say. It cannot be denied that there was a considerable number of the large aggregate of clergymen in this country who not only did not stand by Mr. Beecher on his trial, but who had such a degree of satisfaction in his humiliation that they could not contain it. There are clergymen who have aided in the circulation of this scandal and helped to confirm its impression

upon the public mind—men who envied him, distrusted his influence, and did not believe in the soundness of his doctrines. How much Christianity is it supposed there can be in any minister who can take the least satisfaction in the downfall of a professional brother? How much in him who does not refuse to believe anything against such a brother until his guilt is undeniably proved? Bah! It is enough to make a man sick to contemplate such dastards. There is not one of them who does not live in a glass house. There is not one of them who is not closeted, more or less, with women in distress; and he only needs to have an observing enemy to make him the subject of a scandal just as cruel and causeless as that which has befallen Mr. Beecher. If clergymen cannot stand by one another in emergencies like this, can they blame the public for believing anything that may be said against them? "It is a dirty bird," etc.

We congratulate Mr. Beecher on his relief from the horrible incubus that has so long rested upon him. We congratulate all who have stood by him, with faith in his purity and integrity unshaken. We congratulate the Christian Church at large, and the Plymouth Church in particular, on the restoration to public confidence of the strongest man of the Christian pulpit. We congratulate the country that one of its greatest men stands redeemed to its respect, and that one of its proudest names has emerged from a cloud of slander that can never hide it again.

VIII.

THEODORE TILTON.

Theodore Tilton was born in New York city, on the 2d of October, 1835. His father was a shoemaker, and made every sacrifice to give his son a good education. He passed through the public schools with credit, and entered the Free Academy, now the Free College of New York. He remained in this institution only two



RESIDENCE OF THEODORE TILTON, NO. 174 LIVINGSTON STREET, BROOKLYN.

years, not long enough to obtain a diploma. After leaving the Academy he became a reporter on the *New York Tribune*, in which capacity he acquired a good reputation as a short-hand writer, and was considered a careful, steady young man. In 1855, at the age of twenty, Mr. Tilton married Miss Elizabeth Richards. Mr. and Mrs. Tilton are the parents of seven children, of whom four are living at present.

Few young men have ever entered upon life with more flattering prospects than Mr. Tilton. His fidelity to his duties as a reporter on the *Tribune*, and his talents, won him the friendship of Horace Greeley. He matured very rapidly, passing his time among books, and seeming to care very little for the pleasures or frivolities of youth. Previous to his marriage he became a member of Plymouth Church, and it was here that he became acquainted with his wife, who was also a member of that congregation. He was married by Mr. Beecher, between whom and himself a warm friendship sprang up. This friendship strengthened as time passed on, at least upon Mr. Beecher's part. The pastor of Plymouth Church recognized the talents of his young friend, and exerted himself to push him forward. Mr. Tilton professed the warmest and most devoted love for Mr. Beecher, and there can be no doubt that, for a time at least, this feeling was sincere.

Mr. Beecher was at this time one of the editors of *The Independent*. Mr. Tilton began very early in his career to report Beecher's sermons in shorthand for that journal, and, encouraged by its editors, soon after began to write articles for the same paper. In 1861, upon the retirement of Doctors Bacon, Storrs and Thompson from the editorial department of *The Independent*, Mr. Beecher became its editor, and Mr. Tilton was made his assistant. During Mr. Beecher's absence in Europe in 1863, Mr. Tilton assumed the editorial charge of the paper, and conducted it to the satisfaction of both proprietor and subscribers. Soon after his return from Europe, Mr. Beecher resigned the control of *The Independent*, and Mr. Tilton became its chief editor.

Up to this time Mr. Tilton's career had been emi-

nently successful. He was not only a popular editor, but an equally popular lecturer, and a writer of acknowledged ability. He was the controlling power of the leading Congregational journal of the country, and his friends were warranted in entertaining the most exalted hopes for his future.

For some years after assuming the control of *The Independent*, Mr. Tilton's career afforded unbounded satisfaction to his friends. Then a change set in. During this time, however, the friendship between Mr. Beecher and Mr. Tilton had apparently been undisturbed. Mr. Tilton exerted himself to induce Mr. Beecher to visit his house as an intimate friend, and the result was that Mr. Beecher, who cherished a warm regard for the Tilton family, became a frequent and honored visitor at their house.

At length, however, a change set in. Clouds began to overcast the fair sky of Tilton's future. Perhaps his success had been too easy. About May 1, 1870, he became the editor of the Brooklyn *Union*, a daily evening journal owned by Mr. Bowen, the proprietor of *The Independent*, in addition to his labors on the latter journal. But by this time Mr. Bowen had had reason to become seriously dissatisfied with Mr. Tilton's conduct of *The Independent*. For several years Mr. Tilton's doctrines, as set forth in *The Independent*, had aroused a storm of indignation and opposition among its subscribers, principally in the West, where this paper was widely circulated. "After much discussion this led to the starting of *The Advance* newspaper, in Chicago, to supersede *The Independent*. Mr. Tilton, while editor of *The Independent*, a leading religious newspaper, had come to deny the inspiration of the

Scriptures and the Divinity of Christ. His social views about this time also underwent a radical change in the direction of free love." Much of this crept into the editorial columns of *The Independent*, and letters of remonstrance and stoppages of the paper came so frequently from subscribers, that Mr. Bowen resolved to make a change in its editorial management. Still, regarding Tilton as a friend, and appreciating what he had done for the paper in the past, he wished to make the change as pleasantly as possible to all parties. In the early part of December, 1870, he put this resolve into execution. "Owing to the marked change in Mr. Tilton's religious and social views, Mr. Bowen felt constrained to give him notice that his services as editor of *The Independent* would terminate at a day named in the notice."

After making this change, Mr. Bowen entered into a contract with Mr. Tilton to continue him as chief contributor to *The Independent*, and editor of the Brooklyn *Daily Union* for five years, with a liberal salary for each position.

With this change in his worldly prospects came a change in Mr. Tilton's feelings for Mr. Beecher. It is hard to ascertain the exact date of this change, or the true cause of it, but, judging from the published testimony in the case, it is most probable that Tilton regarded Beecher as responsible in some way for his loss of his editorial chair, and believing this, his friendship changed to bitter enmity, and he resolved upon revenge. It would even seem that he was willing to perish himself, if he could drag his enemy down with him. The true cause of his misfortunes, however, was the loss of public confidence in him in consequence of

his radical change of sentiments. Even before his enforced withdrawal from the editorial chair of *The Independent*, many who had once honored him had lost faith in him. Grave charges were whispered about New York and Brooklyn concerning his moral character, and these, whether true or false, so seriously affected his usefulness to *The Independent*, that Mr. Bowen had no choice but to remove him. Indeed, these charges were so open and so widely circulated, that "within a few days after making this contract (that for five years mentioned above), Mr. Bowen received such information of Tilton's immorality as alarmed him, and led to an interview between himself, Tilton and Oliver Johnson, at the house of Bowen, on the 26th day of December, 1870. At this interview Mr. Tilton sought to retain his place and Bowen's confidence by offering to join Bowen in an attack on Mr. Beecher. This interview resulted in the insolent letter which Mr. Tilton wrote and signed on the 27th of December, demanding that Mr. Beecher leave Plymouth pulpit and Brooklyn. That evening Mr. Bowen, on his way home, delivered this letter to Mr. Beecher. Mr. Beecher, on reading it, expressed his astonishment at the receipt of such a letter, and denounced its author. Mr. Bowen then derided the letter, and gave him some account of the reasons why he had reduced Tilton from the editorship of *The Independent* to the subordinate position of contributor, saying that Mr. Tilton's social and religious views were ruining the paper, and he was now considering whether he could consistently retain him as editor of the Brooklyn *Union* or chief contributor of *The Independent*. They conversed for some time, Mr. Bowen wishing Mr. Beecher's opinion, which

was freely given. Mr. Beecher said he did not see how Mr. Bowen could retain his relations with Mr. Tilton. Mr. Beecher spoke strongly of the threatening letter and the revelation he had just had concerning Tilton's domestic affairs. Mr. Bowen read Tilton's threatening letter, and said that if trouble came, he would stand by Mr. Beecher."

This conversation and his own resolution were communicated to Mr. Tilton by Mr. Bowen the next day, and the former saw himself face to face with the loss of his income. His rage against Beecher for the advice he had given Bowen was overwhelming, and was increased by learning that Mr. Beecher had advised Mrs. Tilton, who, in consequence of her unhappy domestic life, which unhappiness she alleged was produced by her husband's course, had applied to Mr. Beecher for advice, and had been advised by him to leave her husband. Mrs. Tilton was then very ill, and Tilton, taking advantage of her condition, extorted from her a document implicating Mr. Beecher—a document evincing her love for her pastor, and charging him with having made indecent proposals to her. This was his first step in his plan of revenge upon his former friend. The others will occur in the course of the statements to be made in other parts of this book.

About the 1st of January, 1871, *The Golden Age* newspaper was established in New York by Mr. Tilton and his friends, and he became its editor. This journal was devoted to the advocacy of the views which had caused Mr. Bowen to dispense with his services as editor of *The Independent*. Some months after the establishment of *The Golden Age*, Mr. Tilton published a *Biography of Mrs. Victoria Woodhull*. His intimacy

with this woman had for some time disgusted his remaining reputable friends, and this public indorsement and laudation of her made it plain that they had not been mistaken in the estimate they had been obliged to form of him of late. He was indeed a changed man.

In the meantime Mr. Beecher had cause to believe that he had been misinformed as to the extent of Mr. Tilton's derelictions, and naturally experienced a very keen regret for the advice he had given Mrs. Tilton counselling separation, and seeing that his advice to Mr. Bowen had caused that gentleman to execute his purpose to end his connection with Tilton, his regret was increased to a degree of self-reproach that became very painful to a man of his sensitive disposition. In this state of mind he believed it to be his duty at any sacrifice to himself to overlook Tilton's treatment of himself, and endeavor to assist him to a return of good fortune. It would seem that Tilton, on his part, was not indisposed to feel kindly to Mr. Beecher as long as he was financially easy; but as his pocket grew light, his sense of his injuries deepened, and his revengeful feelings became uncontrollable. In March, he succeeded in recovering the sum of $7000 from Mr. Bowen as a forfeit for the cancellation of his contract by that gentleman, and in April, the famous "Tripartite Agreement" or "Covenant" was negotiated between Beecher, Bowen, and Tilton. It was as follows:

"We three men, earnestly desiring to remove all causes of offence 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 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 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 innuendoes 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 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 and innuendoes.

"II. And I, Theodore Tilton, do, of my free will and friendly spirit toward Henry Ward Beecher, hereby covenant and agree that I will never again repeat, by mouth or word or otherwise, any of the allegations, or imputations, or innuendoes 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* 2, 1872."

In order to properly comprehend the above remarkable document, the reader should understand that Mr. Tilton had, since his dismissal by Mr. Bowen, begun to charge Mr. Beecher with endeavoring to ruin him in business and his domestic relations by procuring his discharge by Bowen, and making indecent proposals to Mrs. Tilton. His charge at this time had not grown to *adultery*, but was limited to improper solicitation on the part of Mr. Beecher. Mr. Tilton carefully declared that Mrs. Tilton was innocent of any crime, and spoke of her as a pure woman who had been insulted by her pastor. When Mrs. Woodhull published her infamous story in November, 1872, Tilton, though he did not at once deny her charges in print, did so verbally to friends. On the 18th of November, he said to the Rev. Mr Halliday, according to that gentleman's testimony, "My wife is as pure as the light," and denied that he had ever accused her of criminal intimacy with Mr. Beecher. When his letter to a "Complaining Friend" was published in December, it was regarded as a virtual denial of Mrs. Woodhull's story. From time to time, however, he spoke of his supposed wrongs to friends. At last, his affairs becoming very bad, he changed the form of his accusation against Mr. Beecher, and charged him with the deliberate

XII.

MR. TILTON'S SWORN STATEMENT.

THE committee having resolved to proceed with the investigation, Mr. Tilton, in accordance with their invitation, appeared before them on the 20th of July, and read the following communications to them:

GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE:—In communicating to you the detailed statement of facts of evidences which you have been several days expecting at my hands, let me remind you of the circumstances which call this statement forth. In my recent letter to Dr. Bacon I alluded to an offence and an apology by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. To whomsoever else this allusion seemed indefinite, to Mr. Beecher it was plain. The offence was committed by him; the apology was made by him; both acts were his own, and were among the most momentous occurrences of his life. Of all men in Plymouth Church, or in the world, the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher was the one man who was best informed concerning this offence and apology, and the one man who least needed to inquire into either. Nevertheless, while possessing a perfect knowledge of both these acts done by himself, he has chosen to put on a public affectation of ignorance and innocence concerning them, and has conspicuously appointed a committee of six of the ablest men of his church, together with two attorneys, to inquire into what he leaves you to regard as the unaccountable mystery of this offence and apology, as if he had neither committed the one nor offered the other, but as if both were the mere figments of another man's imagination, thus adroitly prompting the public to draw the deduction that I am a person under some hallucination or delusion, living in a dream and forging a fraud. Furthermore, in order to cast over this explanation the delicate glamour which always lends a charm to the defence of a woman's honor, Mrs. Elizabeth R. Tilton, lately my wife, has

been prompted away from her home to reside among Mr. Beecher's friends, and to co-operate with him in his ostensibly honest and laudable inquiry into facts concerning which she too, as well as he, has for years past had perfect and equal knowledge with himself. The investigation, therefore, has been publicly pressed upon me by Mr. Beecher, seconded by Mrs. Tilton, both of whom, in so doing, have united in assuming before the public the non-existence of the grave and solemn facts into which they have conspired to investigate for the purpose, not of eliciting but of denying the truth. This joint assumption by them, which has seemed to your committee to be in good faith, has naturally led you into an examination in which you expect to find on their part nothing but innocence and on my part nothing but slander. It is now my unhappy duty, from which I have in vain hitherto sought earnestly to be delivered, to give you the facts and evidences for reversing your opinion on this subject. In doing this painful, I may say heartrending, duty, the responsibility for making the grave disclosures which I am about to lay before you belongs, not to me, but first to Mr. Beecher, who has prompted you to this examination, and next to Mrs. Tilton, who has joined him in a conspiracy which cannot fail to be full of peril and wretchedness to many hearts. I call you to witness that in my first brief examination by your committee I begged and implored you not to inquire into the facts of this case, but rather to seek to bury them beyond all possible revelation. Happy for all concerned had this entreaty been heeded! It is now too late. The last opportunity for reconciliation and settlement has passed. This investigation, undertaken by you in ignorance of dangers against which Mr. Beecher should have warned you in advance, will shortly prove itself, to your surprise, to have been an act of wanton and wicked folly, for which the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, as its originator and public sponsor, will hereafter find no "space for repentance, though he seek it carefully and with tears." This desperate man must hold himself only, and not me, accountable for the wretchedness which these disclosures will carry to his own home and hearth as they have already brought to

mine. I will add that the original documents referred to in the ensuing sworn statement are, for the most part, in my possession; but that the apology and a few other papers are in the hands of Mr. Francis D. Moulton. Truly yours,

THEODORE TILTON.

TILTON'S SWORN STATEMENT.

Whereas, the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher has instigated the appointment of a committee consisting of six members of his church and society to inquire and report upon alleged aspersions upon his character by Theodore Tilton; and whereas, Mrs. Elizabeth R. Tilton, formerly the wife of Mr. Tilton, has openly deserted her home, in order to co-operate with Mr. Beecher in a conspiracy to overthrow the credibility and good repute of her late husband as a man and citizen; therefore, Theodore Tilton, being thus authorized and required, and by the published demand made upon him by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, and being now and hereafter released by act of Mrs. Tilton from further responsibility for concealment of the truth touching her relations with Mr. Beecher—therefore, Theodore Tilton hereby sets forth, under solemn oath, the following facts and testimony:

I. That on the second of October, 1855, at Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, a marriage between Theodore Tilton and Elizabeth M. Richards was performed by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, which marriage, thirteen years afterwards, was dishonored and violated by this clergyman through the criminal seduction of this wife and mother, as hereinafter set forth.

II. That for a period of about fifteen years, extending both before and after this marriage, an intimate friendship existed between Theodore Tilton and the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, which friendship was cemented to such a degree that in consequence thereof the subsequent dishonoring by Mr. Beecher of his friend's wife was a crime of uncommon wrongfulness and perfidy.

III. That about nine years ago the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher began, and thereafter continued, a friendship with Mrs. Elizabeth R. Tilton, for whose native delicacy and extreme religious sensibility he often expressed to her husband a high admiration; visiting her from time to time for years, until the year 1870, when, for reasons hereinafter stated, he ceased such visits; during which period, by many tokens and attentions, he won the affectionate love of Mrs. Tilton, whereby, after long moral resistance by her, and after repeated assaults by him upon her mind with overmastering arguments, accomplished the possession of her person; maintaining with her thenceforward during the period hereinafter stated the relation called criminal intercourse; this relation being

regarded by her during that period as not criminal or morally wrong—such had been the power of his arguments as a clergyman to satisfy her religious scruples against such violation of virtue and honor.

IV. That on the evening of October 10, 1868, or thereabouts, Mrs. Elizabeth R. Tilton held an interview with the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, at his residence, she being then in a tender state of mind, owing to the recent death and burial of a young child; and during this interview an act of criminal commerce took place between this pastor and this parishioner, the motive on her part being, as hereinbefore stated, not regarded by her at the time criminal or wrong; which act was followed by a similar act of criminality between these same parties at Mr. Tilton's residence during a pastoral visit paid by Mr. Beecher to her on the subsequent Saturday evening, followed also by other similar acts on various occasions from the autumn of 1868 to the spring of 1870, the places being the two residences aforesaid, and occasionally other places to which her pastor would invite and accompany her, or at which he would meet her by previous appointment; these acts of wrong being on her part, from first to last, not wanton or consciously wicked, but arising through a blinding of her moral perceptions, occasioned by the powerful influence exerted on her mind at that time to this end by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, as her trusted religious preceptor and guide.

V. That the pastoral visits made by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher to Mrs. Tilton, during the year 1868, became so frequent as to excite comment, being in marked contrast with his known habit of making few pastoral calls on his parishioners, which frequency in Mrs. Tilton's case is shown in letters written to her husband during his absence in the West; these letters giving evidence that during the period of five or six weeks twelve different pastoral calls on Mrs. Tilton were made by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, which calls became noticeably infrequent on Mr. Tilton's return to his home.

VI. That previous to the aforesaid criminal intimacy, one of the reasons which Mrs. Tilton alleged for her encouragement of such exceptional attentions from the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher was the fact that she had been much distressed with rumors against his moral purity, and wished to convince him that she could receive his kindness, and yet resist his solicitations; and that she could inspire in him, by her purity and fidelity, an increased respect for the chaste dignity of womanhood. Previous to the autumn of 1868 she maintained with Christian firmness towards her pastor this position of resistance, always refusing his amorous pleas, which were strong and oft-repeated; and in a letter to her husband, dated February 3, 1868, she wrote as follows: "To love is praiseworthy, but to abuse the gift is sin. Here I am strong. No demonstrations or fascinations could cause me to yield my womanhood."

VII. That the first suspicion which crossed the mind of Theodore Tilton that the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher was abusing or might abuse the affection and reverence which Mrs. Tilton bore towards her pastor was an improper caress given by Mr. Beecher to Mrs. Tilton by the . . . while seated by her side on the floor of his library overlooking engravings. Mr. Tilton a few hours afterwards asked of his wife an explanation of her permission of such a liberty, whereat she at first denied the fact, but then confessed it, and said that she had spoken chidingly to Mr. Beecher concerning it. On another occasion Mr. Tilton, after leaving his house in the early morning, returned to it in the forenoon, and on going to his bedchamber found the door locked, and when on knocking the door was opened by Mrs. Tilton, Mr. Beecher was seen within apparently much confused and exhibiting a flushed face. Mrs. Tilton afterwards made a plausible explanation, which from the confidence reposed in her by her husband was by him deemed satisfactory.

VIII. That in the spring of 1870, on Mr. Tilton's return from a winter's absence, he noticed in his wife such evidences of the absorption of her mind in Mr. Beecher, that in a short time an estrangement took place between her husband and herself, in consequence of which she went into the country earlier than usual for a summer sojourn. After an absence of several weeks she voluntarily returned to her home in Brooklyn. On the evening of July 3, 1870, when, and then and there, within a few hours after her arrival, and after exacting from her husband a solemn promise that he would do the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher no harm, nor communicate to him what she was about to say, she made a circumstantial confession to her husband of the criminal facts hereinbefore stated, accompanied with citations from Mr. Beecher's arguments and reasonings with her to overcome her long-maintained scruple against yielding to his desires, and declaring that she had committed no wrong to her husband or her marriage vow, quoting, in support of this opinion, that her pastor had repeatedly assured her that she was spotless and chaste, which she believed herself to be. She further stated that her sexual commerce with him had never proceeded from low or vulgar thoughts either on her part or his, but always from pure affection and a high religious love. She stated, furthermore, that Mr. Beecher habitually characterized their intimacy by the term "nest-hiding," and he would suffer pain and sorrow if his hidden secret were ever made known. She said that her mind was often burdened by the deceit necessary for her to practice in order to prevent discovery, and that her conscience had many times impelled her to throw off this burden of enforced falsehood by making a full confession to her husband, so that she would no longer be living before him a perpetual lie. In particular she said that she had been on the point of making this confession a few months pre-

viously, during a severe illness, when she feared she might die. She affirmed also that Mr. Beecher had assured her repeatedly that he loved her better than he had ever loved any other woman, and she felt justified before God in her intimacy with him, save the necessary deceit which accompanied it, and at which she frequently suffered in her mind.

IX. That after the above-named confession by Mrs. Elizabeth R. Tilton she returned to the country to await such action by her husband as he might see fit to take, whereupon, after many considerations, the chief of which was that she had not voluntarily gone astray, but had been artfully misled through religious reverence for the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher as her spiritual guide, together, also, from a desire to protect the family from open shame, Mr. Tilton condoned the wrong, and he addressed to his wife such letters of affection, tenderness and respect as he felt would restore her wounded spirit, and which did partially produce that result.

X. That in December, 1870, differences arose between Theodore Tilton and Henry C. Bowen which were augmented by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher and Mrs. Beecher, in consequence whereof and at the wish of Mrs. Elizabeth R. Tilton expressed in writing in a paper put into the hands of Francis D. Moulton, with a view to procure a harmonious interview between Mr. Tilton and Mr. Beecher, such an interview was arranged and carried out by Mr. Moulton at his then residence on Clinton street, Mr. Beecher and Mr. Tilton meeting and speaking then and there for the first time since Mrs. Tilton's confession of six months before. The paper in Mr. Moulton's hands was a statement by Mrs. Tilton of the substance of the confession which she had before made, and of her wish and prayer for reconciliation and peace between her pastor and her husband. This paper furnished to Mr. Beecher the first knowledge which he had as yet received that Mrs. Tilton had made such a confession. At this interview between Mr. Beecher and Mr. Tilton permission was sought by Mr. Beecher to consult with Mrs. Tilton on that same evening. This permission being granted, Mr. Beecher departed from Mr. Moulton's house, and in about half an hour returned thither, expressing his remorse and shame, and declaring that his life and work seemed brought to a sudden end. Later in the same evening Mr. Tilton, on returning to his house, found his wife weeping and in great distress, saying that what she had meant for peace had only given pain and anguish; that Mr. Beecher had just called on her, declaring that she had slain him and that he would probably be tried before a council of ministers unless she would give him a written paper for his protection. Whereupon she said he dictated to her, and she copied in her own handwriting, a suitable paper for him to use to clear himself before a council of ministers. Mrs. Tilton having kept no copy of this paper, her husband asked her to make a

distinct statement in writing of her design and meaning in giving it, whereupon she wrote as follows:

December 30, 1870—*Midnight.*

My Dear Husband:—I desire to leave with you, before going to bed, a statement that Mr. Henry Ward Beecher called upon me this evening, and asked me if I would defend him against any accusation in a Council of Ministers; and I replied solemnly, that I would, in case the accuser was any other person than my husband. He (H. W. B.) dictated a letter, which I copied as my own, to be used by him as against any other accuser except my husband. This letter was designed to vindicate Mr. Beecher against all other persons save only yourself. I was ready to give him this letter because he said with pain that my letter in your hands addressed to him, dated December 29, "had struck him dead, and ended his usefulness." You and I are pledged to do our best to avoid publicity. God grant a speedy end to all further anxieties.

Affectionately, Elizabeth.

On the next day, namely, December 31, 1870, Mr. Moulton, on being informed by Mr. Tilton of the above-named transaction by Mr. Beecher, called on him (Mr. Beecher) at his residence, and told him that a reconciliation seemed suddenly made impossible by Mr. Beecher's nefarious act in procuring the letter which Mrs. Tilton had thus been improperly persuaded to make falsely. Mr. Beecher promptly, through Mr. Moulton, returned the letter to Mr. Tilton, with an expression of shame and sorrow for having procured it in the manner he did. The letter was as follows:

December 30, 1870.

Wearied with importunity and weakened by sickness I gave a letter implicating my friend Henry Ward Beecher under the assurances that that would remove all difficulties between me and my husband. That letter I now revoke. I was persuaded to it—almost forced—when I was in a weakened state of mind. I regret it, and recall all its statements.

E. R. Tilton.

I desire to say explicitly Mr. Beecher has never offered any improper solicitation, but has always treated me in a manner becoming a Christian and a gentleman. Elizabeth R. Tilton.

At the time of Mr. Beecher's returning the above document to Mr. Tilton through Mr. Moulton, Mr. Beecher requested Mr. Moulton to call at his residence, in Columbia street, on the next day, which he did on the evening of January 1, 1871. A long interview then ensued, in which Mr. Beecher expressed to Mr. Moulton great contrition and remorse for his previous criminality with Mrs. Tilton; taking to himself shame for having misused his sacred office as a clergyman to corrupt her mind, expressing a determination to kill himself in case of exposure, and begging Mr. Moulton to take a pen and receive from his (Mr. Beecher's) lips an apology to be conveyed to Mr. Tilton, in the hope that such an appeal would secure Mr. Tilton's forgiveness. The apology which Mr. Beecher dictated to Mr. Moulton was as follows:

MR. BEECHER'S APOLOGY.

[In trust with F. D. Moulton.]

My Dear Friend Moulton:—I ask through you Theodore Tilton's forgiveness, and I humble myself before him as I do before my God. He would have been a better man in my circumstances than I have been. I can ask nothing, except that he will remember all the other breasts that would ache. I will not plead for myself. I even wish that I were dead. But others must live to suffer. I will die before any one but myself shall be inculpated. All my thoughts are running out towards my friends, and toward the poor child lying there, and praying with her folded hands. She is guiltless, sinned against, bearing the transgression of another. Her forgiveness I have. I humbly pray to God to put it into the heart of her husband to forgive me. I have trusted this to Moulton, in confidence. H. W. Beecher.

In the above document, the last sentence and the signature are in the handwriting of the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher.

XI. That Mrs. Tilton wrote the following letter to a friend:

174 Livingston Street,
Brooklyn, *January* 5, 1871.

Dear Friend:—A cruel conspiracy has been formed against my husband, in which my mother and Mrs. Beecher have been the chief actors. . . . Yours truly, Elizabeth R. Tilton.

XII. That in the following month Mr. Moulton, wishing to bind Mr. Tilton and Mr. Beecher by mutual expressions of a good spirit, elicited from them the following correspondence:

MR. TILTON TO MR. MOULTON.

Brooklyn, *February* 7, 1871.

My Dear Friend:—In several conversations with you, you have asked about my feelings toward Mr. Beecher, and yesterday you said the time had come when you would like to receive from me an expression of this kind in writing. I say, therefore, very cheerfully, that notwithstanding the great suffering which he has caused to Elizabeth and myself, I bear him no malice, shall do him no wrong, shall discountenance every project (by whomsoever proposed) for any exposure of his secret to the public, and (if I know myself at all) shall endeavor to act to Mr. Beecher as I would have him in similar circumstances act toward me. I ought to add that your own good offices in this case have led me to a higher moral feeling than I might otherwise have reached. Ever yours, affectionately, Theodore.

To Frank Moulton.

On the same day Mr. Beecher wrote to Mr. Moulton the following:

MR. BEECHER TO MR. MOULTON.

February 7, 1871.

My Dear Friend Moulton:—I am glad to send you a book, etc.

. . . . . .

Many, many friends has God raised up to me, but to no one of them has he ever given the opportunity and the wisdom so to serve me as

you have. You have also proved Theodore's friend and Elizabeth's. Does God look down from heaven on three unhappier creatures that more need a friend than these? Is it not an intimation of God's intent of mercy to all that each one of these has in you a tried and proved friend? But only in you are we thus united. Would to God, who orders all hearts, that by his kind mediation Theodore, Elizabeth, and I could be made friends again. Theodore will have the hardest task in such a case; but has he not proved himself capable of the noblest things? I wonder if Elizabeth knows how generously he has carried himself toward me. Of course, I can never speak with her again without his permission, and I do not know, even then, it would be best. . . .

Mr. Moulton on the same day asked Mr. Tilton if he would permit Mr. Beecher to address a letter to Mrs. Tilton, and Mr. Tilton replied in the affirmative, whereupon Mr. Beecher wrote as follows:

MR. BEECHER TO MRS. TILTON.

Brooklyn, *February* 7, 1871.

My Dear Mrs. Tilton:—When I saw you last I did not expect ever to see you again, or to be alive many days. God was kinder to me than were my own thoughts. The friend whom God sent to me, Mr. Moulton, has proved, above all friends that I ever had, able and willing to help me in this terrible emergency of my life. His hand it was that tied up the storm that was ready to burst on our heads. You have no friend (Theodore excepted) who has it in his power to serve you so vitally, and who will do it with such delicacy and honor. It does my sore heart good to see in Mr. Moulton an unfeigned respect and honor for you. It would kill me if I thought otherwise. He will be as true a friend to your honor and happiness as a brother could be to a sister's. In him we have a common ground. You and I may meet in him. The past is ended. But is there no future? No wiser, higher, holier future? May not this friend stand as a priest in the new sanctuary of reconciliation and mediate and bless Theodore and my most unhappy self? Do not let my earnestness fail of its end. You believe in my judgment. I have put myself wholly and gladly in Moulton's hand, and there I must meet you. This is sent with Theodore's consent, but he has not read it. Will you return it to me by his own hand? I am very earnest in this wish for all our sakes, as such a letter ought not to be subject to even a chance of miscarriage. Your unhappy friend,

H. W. Beecher.

XIII. That about a year after Mrs. Tilton's confession her mind remained in the fixed opinion that her criminal relations with Mr. Beecher had not been morally wrong, so strongly had he impressed her to the contrary; but at length a change took place in her convictions on this subject, as noted in the following letter addressed by her to her husband:

MRS. TILTON TO MR. TILTON.

Schoharie. *June* 29, 1871.

My Dear Theodore:—To-day through the ministry of Catharine Gaunt, a character of fiction, my eyes have been opened for the first time in my experience, so that I see clearly my sin. It was when I

knew that I was loved, to suffer it to grow to a passion. A virtuous woman should check instantly an absorbing love. But it appeared to me in such false light. That the love I felt and received could harm no one, not even you. I have believed unfalteringly until four o'clock this afternoon, when the heavenly vision dawned upon me. I see now, as never before, the wrong I have done you, and hasten immediately to ask your pardon, with a penitence so sincere that henceforth (if reason remains) you may trust me implicitly. Oh! my dear Theodore, though your opinions are not restful or congenial to my soul, yet my own integrity and purity are a sacred and holy thing to me. Bless God, with me, for Catharine Gaunt, and for all the sure leadings of an all-wise and loving Providence. Yes; now I feel quite prepared to renew my marriage vow with you, to keep it as the Saviour requireth, who looketh at the eye and the heart. Never before could I say this. When you yearn toward me with true feeling, be assured of the tried, purified, and restored love of ELIZABETH.

Mrs. Tilton followed the above letter with these:

MRS. TILTON TO MR. TILTON.

July 4, 1871.

O, my dear husband, may you never need the discipline of being misled by a good woman, as I was by a good man.

[No Date.]

I would mourn greatly if my life was to be made known to father. His head would be bowed indeed to the grave.

[No Date.]

Do not think my ill health is on account of my sin and its discovery. My sins and life-record I have carried to my Saviour. No; my prostration is owing to the suffering I have caused you.

XIV. That about one year after Mrs. Tilton's confession, and about a half year after Mr. Beecher's confirmation of the same, Mrs. V. C. Woodhull, then a total stranger to Mr. Tilton, save that he had been presented to her in a company of friends, a few days previous, wrote in the *World*, Monday, May 22, 1871, the following statement, namely:

I know of one man, a public teacher of eminence, who lives in concubinage with the wife of another public teacher of almost equal eminence. All three concur in denouncing offences against morality. I shall make it my business to analyze some of these lives.

NEW YORK, *May* 20, 1871. VICTORIA C. WOODHULL.

On the day of the publication of the above card in the *World*, Mr. Tilton received from Mrs. Woodhull a request to call on imperative business at her office; and, on going thither, a copy of the above card was put into his hand by Mrs. Woodhull, who said that "the parties referred to therein were the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher and the wife of Theodore Tilton." Following this announcement Mrs. Woodhull detailed to Mr. Tilton, with vehement speech, the wicked and injurious story which she published in the year following. Meanwhile, Mr. Tilton, desiring to guard against any possible temptation to Mrs. Woodhull to

publish the grossly distorted version which she gave to Mr. Tilton (and which she afterwards attributed to him), he sought by many personal services and kindly attentions to influence her to such a good-will towards himself and family as would remove all disposition or desire in her to afflict him with such a publication. Mr. Tilton's efforts and association with Mrs. Woodhull ceased in April, 1872, and six months afterwards, namely, November 2, 1872, she published the scandal which he had labored to suppress.

XV. That on the third day thereafter the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher, of Elmira, N. Y., wrote as follows:

ELMIRA, *November* 5, 1872.

Mrs. Woodhull only carries out Henry's philosophy, against which I recorded my protest twenty years ago.

XVI. That in May, 1873, the publication by one of Mr. Beecher's partners of a tripartite covenant between H. C. Bowen, H. W. Beecher, and Theodore Tilton led the press of the country to charge that Mr. Tilton had committed against Mr. Beecher some heinous wrong, which Mr. Beecher had pardoned; whereas the truth was the reverse. To remedy this false public impression, Mr. Moulton requested Mr. Beecher to prepare a suitable card, relieving Mr. Tilton of this injustice. In answer to this request Mr. Beecher pleaded his embarrassments, which prevented his saying anything without bringing himself under suspicion. Mr. Tilton then proposed to prepare a card of his own, containing a few lines from the recently quoted apology, for the purpose of showing that Mr. Beecher, instead of having had occasion to forgive Mr. Tilton, had had occasion to be forgiven by him. Mr. Beecher then wrote a letter to Mr. Moulton, which, on being shown to Mr. Tilton, was successful in appealing to Mr. Tilton's feelings. Mr. Beecher said in it, under date of Sunday morning, June 1, 1873:

MR. BEECHER TO MR. MOULTON.

MY DEAR FRANK:—I am determined to make no more resistance. Theodore's temperament is such that the future, even if temporarily earned, would be absolutely worthless, and rendering me liable at any hour of the day to be obliged to stultify all the devices by which we saved ourselves. It is only fair that he should know that the publication of the card which he proposes would leave him worse off than before. The agreement (viz., the "tripartite covenant") was made after my letter through you to him (viz., the "apology") was written. He had had it a year. He had condoned his wife's fault. He had enjoined upon me, with the utmost earnestness and solemnity, not to betray his wife, nor leave his children to a blight. . . . With such a man as T. T., there is no possible salvation for any that depend upon him. With a strong nature, he does not know how to govern it. . . . There is no use in trying further. I have a strong feeling upon me, and it brings great peace, that I am spending my last Sunday, and preaching my last sermon.

The hopelessness of spirit which the foregoing letter portrayed on the part of its writer led Mr. Tilton to reconsider the question of defending himself at the cost of producing misery to Mr. Beecher; which determination by Mr. Tilton to allow the prevailing calumnies against himself to go unanswered was further strengthened by the following note received by him two days thereafter from the office editor of Mr. Beecher's journal:

OLIVER JOHNSON TO THEODORE TILTON.

128 East Twelfth Street, *June* 4, 1873.

My Dear Theodore:—May I tell you frankly that when I saw you last, you did not seem to me to be the noble young man who inspired my warm affection so many years ago. You were yielding to an act which I could not help thinking would be dishonorable and perfidious, and, although it is easy for me to make every allowance for the circumstances that had wrought you to such a frenzy, I was dreadfully shocked. My dear Theodore, let me, as an old friend, whose heart is wrung by your terrible suffering and sorrow, tell you that you were then acting ignobly, and that you can never have true peace of mind till you conquer yourself and dismiss all purpose and thought of injuring the man who has wronged you. Of all the promises our lips can frame, none are so sacred as those we make to those who have injured us, and whom we have professed to forgive; and they are sacred just in proportion as their violation would work injury to those to whom they are made. You cannot paint too blackly the wrongs you have suffered. On that point I make no plea in abatement, but I beg you to remember that nothing can change the law which makes forgiveness noble and godlike. I have prayed for you night and day, with strong crying and tears, beseeching God to restrain you from wronging yourself by violating your solemn engagements. To-night I am happy in the thought that you have been preserved from committing the act which I so much dreaded.

In a letter written by Mr. Beecher, in order to be shown to Mr. Tilton, Mr. Beecher spoke as follows:

MR. BEECHER TO MR. MOULTON.

No man can see the difficulties that environ me unless he stands where I do. To say that I have a church on my hands is simple enough, but to have the hundreds and thousands of men pressing me, each one with his keen suspicion, or anxiety, or zeal, to see the tendencies which, if not stopped, would break out into a ruinous defence of me; to stop them without seeming to do it; to prevent any one questioning me; to meet and allay prejudices against T., which had their beginning years before; to keep serene, as if I was not alarmed or disturbed; to be cheerful at home and among friends when I was suffering the torments of the damned; to pass sleepless nights often, and yet to come up fresh and fair for Sunday—all this may be talked about, but the real thing cannot be understood from the outside, nor its wearing and grinding on the nervous system.

In still another letter, written for the same purpose as the above, Mr. Beecher said:

MR. BEECHER TO MR. MOULTON.

If my destruction would place him (Mr. Tilton) all right, that shall not stand in the way; I am willing to step down and out. No one can offer more than that. That I do offer. Sacrifice me without hesitation, if you can clearly see your way to his safety and happiness thereby. In one point of view I could desire the sacrifice on my part. Nothing can possibly be so bad as the power of great darkness in which I spend much of my time. I look upon death as sweeter far than any friend I have in the world. Life would be pleasant if I could see that rebuilt which is shattered. But to live on the sharp and ragged edge of anxiety, remorse, fear, despair, and yet to put on an appearance of serenity and happiness, cannot be endured much longer. I am well nigh discouraged. If you cease to trust me, to love me, I am alone; I do not know any person in the world to whom I could go.

Mr. Tilton yielded to the above-quoted and other similar letters, and made no defence of himself against the public odium which attached to him unjustly.

XVI. That the marriage union between Mr. and Mrs. Tilton, until broken by Mr. Beecher, was more than common harmony, affection, and mutual respect. Their house and household were regarded for years, by all their guests, as an ideal home. As evidence of the feeling and spirit which this wife entertained for her husband, up to the time of her corruption by Mr. Beecher, the following letters by Mrs. Tilton, written only a few months before her loss of honor, will testify:

MRS. TILTON TO MR. TILTON.

Tuesday Morning, *January* 28, 1868.

My Beloved:—Don't you know the peculiar phase of Christ's character as a lover is so precious to me because of my consecration and devotion to you? I learn to love you from my love to him. I have learned to love him from loving you. I couple you with him. Nor do I feel it one whit irreverent. And as every day I adorn myself consciously, as a bride to meet her bridegroom, so in like manner I lift imploring hands that my soul's love may be prepared. I, with the little girls, after you left us, with overflowing eyes and hearts, consecrated ourselves to our work and to you. My waking thoughts last night were of you. My rising thoughts this morning were of you. I bless you; I honor you; I love you. God sustain us and help us both to keep our vows.

MRS. TILTON TO MR. TILTON.

Saturday Evening, *February* 1, 1868.

O, well I know, as far as I am capable, I love you. Now to keep this fire high and generous is the ideal before me. I am only perfectly contented and restful when you are with me. These latter months I have thought, looked, and yearned for the hour when you would be at home with longings unutterable.

MRS. TILTON TO MR. TILTON.

MONDAY, *February* 3, 1868—9 o'clock A. M.

What may I bring to my beloved, this bright morning? A large, throbbing heart, full of love, single in its aim and purpose to bless and cheer him? Is it acceptable, sweet one?

MRS. TILTON TO MR. TILTON.

MONDAY MORNING, *February* 24, 1868.

Do you wonder that I couple your love, your presence and relation to me with the Saviour's? I lift you up sacredly and keep you in that exalted and holy place where I reverence, respect and love with the fervency of my whole being. Whatever capacity I have I offer it to you. The closing lines of your letter are these words: "I shall hardly venture again upon a great friendship—your love shall be enough for the remaining days." That word "enough" seems a stoicism on which you have resolved to live your life; but I pray God he will supply you with friendships pure and with wifely love, which your great heart demands, withholding not himself as the chief love, which consumeth not though it burn, and whose effects are always perfect rest and peace. Again, in one of your letters you close with "Faithfully yours." That word "faithful" means a great deal. Yes, darling, I believe it, trust it, and give you the same surety with regard to myself. I am faithful to you, have been always, and shall forever be, world without end. Call not this assurance impious; there are some things we *know*. Blessed be God!

MRS. TILTON TO MR. TILTON.

HOME, *February* 29, 1868—SATURDAY EVENING.

Ah, did ever man ever love so grandly as my beloved? Other friendships, public affairs, all "fall to nought" when I come to you. Though you are in Decorah, to-night, yet I have felt your love, and am very grateful for it. I had not received a line since Monday, and was so hungry and lonesome that I took out all your letters and indulged myself as at a feast, but without satiety. And now I long to pour out into your heart, of my abundance. I am conscious of three jets to the fountain of my soul—to the Great Lover and yourself—to whom as *one* I am eternally wedded; my children; and the dear friends who trust and love me. I do not want another long separation. While we are in the flesh, let us abide together.

MRS. TILTON TO MR. TILTON.

WEDNESDAY MORN, *March*, 1868.

O, how almost perfectly could I minister to you this winter, my heart glows so perpetually. I am conscious of great inward awakening toward you. If I live, I shall teach my children to *begin* their loves where now I am. I cannot conceive of anything more delicious than a life consecrated to a faithful love. I insist that I miss you more than you do me, but soon I shall see my beloved. YOUR OWN DEAR WIFE.

In addition to the above many other letters by Mrs. Tilton to her husband prior to her corruption by Mr. Beecher served to show that a Christian wife, loving her husband to the extreme degree above set forth, could only have been swerved from the path of rectitude by artful

and powerful persuasions, clothed in the phrases of religion and enforced by strong appeals from her chief Christian teacher and guide.

XVIII. That the story purporting to explain Mr. Beecher's apology as having been written because he had offended Mr. Tilton by engaging his wife in the project of a separation from her husband is false, as will be seen by the following letter written only three days after the date of the apology:

MRS. TILTON TO MR. MOULTON.

174 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, *January* 4, 1871.

Mr. Francis D. Moulton:

My Dear Friend:—In regard to your question whether I have ever sought a separation from my husband, I indignantly deny that such was ever the fact, as I have denied it a hundred times before. The story that I wanted a separation was a deliberate falsehood, coined by my poor mother, who said she would bear the responsibility of this and other statements she might make, and communicated to my husband's enemy, Mrs. H. W. Beecher, and by her communicated to Mr. Bowen. *I feel outraged* by the whole proceeding, and am now suffering in consequence more than I am able to bear. I am yours very truly,

Elizabeth R. Tilton.

XIX. That during the first week in January, 1871, a few days after the apology was written, Mr. Beecher communicated to Mr. Tilton, through Mr. Moulton, an earnest wish that he (Mr. Tilton) would take his family to Europe and reside there for a term of years at Mr. Beecher's expense. Similar offers have been since repeated by Mr. Beecher to Mr. Tilton through the same channel. A message of kindred tenor was brought from Mr. Beecher to Mr. Tilton last summer by Mr. F. B. Carpenter as will appear from the following affidavit:

AFFIDAVIT OF F. B. CARPENTER.

Homer, N. Y., *July* 18, 1874.

On Sunday, June 1, 1873, two days after the surreptitious publication of the tripartite covenant between H. W. Beecher, H. C. Bowen, and Theodore Tilton, I walked with Mr. Beecher from Plymouth Church to the residence of F. D. Moulton, in Remsen street. On the way to Mr. Moulton's house Mr. Beecher said to me that if Mr. Tilton would stand by him he would share his fame, his fortune, and everything he possessed with him (Tilton). Francis B. Carpenter.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this eighteenth day of July, 1874.

William T. Hicok, *Notary Public.*

Mr. Carpenter, in communicating to Mr. Tilton the above affidavit, says in a letter accompanying it, "I have no hesitation in giving you the statement, as I understood at the time that it was for me to repeat in substance to you, and I did so repeat it. It was at this interview Mr. Beecher spoke to me of his apology to you." The charge that Mr. Tilton ever attempted to levy blackmail on Mr. Beecher is false; on the

contrary, Mr. Tilton has always resented every attempt by Mr. Beecher to put him under pecuniary obligation.

XX. Not long after the scandal became public, Mrs. Tilton wrote on a slip of paper, and left on her husband's writing-desk, the following words: "Now that the exposure has come, my whole nature revolts to join with you or standing with you." Through the influence of Mr. Beecher's friends, the opinion has long been diligently propagated that the scandal was due to Mr. Tilton, and that the alleged facts were malicious inventions by him to revenge himself for supposed and imaginary wrongs done to him by Mr. Beecher. Many words were spoken from time to time by Mrs. Tilton to the praise and eulogy of Mr. Beecher, which being extensively quoted through his congregation, heightened the impression that Mr. Tilton was Mr. Beecher's slanderer, Mrs. Tilton being herself the authority for the statement. In this way Mrs. Tilton and one of her relatives have been the chief causes of the great difficulty of suppressing the scandal. They have had a habit of saying, "Mr Tilton believes such and such things," and their naming of these things by way of denial has been a mischievous way of circulating them broadcast. In this way Mr. Tilton has been made to appear a defamer, whereas he has made every effort in his power to suppress the injurious tales which he has been charged with propagating. On all occasions he has systematically referred to his wife in terms favorable to her character. Further, Mr. Tilton would not have communicated to the committee the facts contained in this statement, except for the perverse course of the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher and Mrs. Elizabeth R. Tilton to degrade and destroy him in the public estimation.

XXI. That one evening, about two weeks after the publication of Mr. Tilton's letter to Dr. Bacon, Mrs. Tilton, on coming home at a late hour, informed her husband that she had been visited at a friend's house by a committee of investigation, and had given sweeping evidence acquitting Mr. Beecher of every charge. This was the first intimation that Mr. Tilton received that any such committee was then in existence. Furthermore, Mrs. Tilton stated that she had done this by advice of a lawyer, whom Mr. Beecher had sent to her, and who, in advance of her appearing before the committee, arranged with her the questions and answers which were to constitute her testimony in Mr. Beecher's behalf. On the next day, after giving this untrue testimony before the committee, she spent many hours of extreme suffering from pangs of conscience at having testified falsely. She expressed to her husband the hope that God would forgive her perjury, but that the motive was to save Mr. Beecher and her husband, and also to remove all reproach from the cause of religion. She also expressed similar contrition to one of her intimate friends.

XXII. Finally, that in addition to the foregoing facts and evidences,

other confirmations could be adduced if needed to prove the following recapitulated statement: namely, that the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, as pastor and friend of Mr. Tilton and family, trespassed upon the sanctity of friendship and hospitality in a long endeavor to seduce Mrs. Elizabeth R. Tilton; that by the artful use of his priestly authority with her, she being his pupil in religion, he accomplished this seduction; that for a period of a year and a half, or thereabout, he maintained criminal intercourse with her, overcoming her previous modest scruples against such conduct by investing it with a false justification as sanctioned by love and religion; that he then participated in a conspiracy to degrade Theodore Tilton before the public, by loss of place, business and repute; that he abused Mr. Tilton's forgiveness and pledge of protection by thereafter authorizing a series of measures by Plymouth Church having for their object the putting of a stigma upon Mr. Tilton before the church, and also before an ecclesiastical council, insomuch that the moderator of that council, interpreting these acts by Mr. Beecher and his church, declared publicly that they showed Mr. Beecher to be the most magnanimous of men, and Mr. Tilton to be a knave and dog; that when Mr. Tilton thereafter, not in malice, but for self-protection, wrote a letter to Dr. Bacon, alluding therein to an offence and apology by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, he (Mr. Beecher) defiantly appointed a committee of his church members to inquire into the injury done him by Mr. Tilton by the aforesaid allusion, and implying that he (Mr. Beecher) had never been the author of such offence and apology, and that Mr. Tilton was a slanderer; that to make this inquiry bear grievously against Mr. Tilton, he (Mr. Beecher) previously connived with Mrs. E. R. Tilton to give false testimony in his (Mr. Beecher's) behalf; that Mr. Beecher's course towards Mr. Tilton and family has at last resulted in the open destruction of Mr. Tilton's household and home, and in the desolation of his heart and life. THEODORE TILTON.

Sworn to before me, this twentieth day of July, 1874.

THEO. BURGMYER, *Notary Public.*

GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE:—Having laid before you the above sworn statement, which I have purposely restricted to relations of Mr. Beecher with Mrs. Tilton only, and with no other person or persons, I wish to add an explanation due to yourselves. In the *Golden Age*, lately edited by me, a suggestion was made, not with my knowledge or consent, that your committee, in order to be justly constituted, should comprise, in addition to the six members appointed by Mr. Beecher, six others appointed by myself. To no such proposal would I have consented, for I have never wanted any tribunal whatever

was one of a number of ingenious subterfuges; I wrote it thinking that it would please Elizabeth; I read it to her before it was printed and she liked it; afterwards she spoke to me violently about it, and said it was another way of perpetuating the scandal.

Q. And charged you with publishing it for that purpose? A. No, not that.

Q. But did not she say that the effect of that publication would be to perpetuate the scandal and revive it? A. Yes, after it was published.

Q. The Woodhull scandal was dying out of the minds of the people, was it not, then, when that was published? A. I think not; I did not know the time when it was; it is a death of which I have had no notice yet; I thought I did a crafty thing in that card, but it failed.

Q. I asked whether the Woodhull scandal was not dying out of the minds of the people, and whether it would not have died out but for that? A. Well, I don't know; you are a better judge of that than I am; I think I heard less of it.

Q. Do you not know that the publication of that letter revived the talk and the scandal? A. Yes, yes; everything revives the talk; the appointment of an investigating committee revived it in the same way, in general terms.

Q. What other publications have you made since the publication of the Woodhull scandal, and the letter "To a Complaining Friend," and the Bacon letter and letters to the Council? A. The letter "To a Complaining Friend" was put in the *Eagle* with a ferocious comment; if it had not been printed with a bad comment, I think it would have had a good effect; but that letter did harm.

Q. You mean to say, that it revived or perpetuated the scandal instead of allaying it? A. It did harm in the sense that it purported to be a denial, looked as if it was meant for a denial which did not deny, and it left about this impression—that Mr. Tilton, a direct man, who knows what he means and could say it, if he could have denied this squarely would have done it; the impression was that it was written to deny, but that it did not deny.

Q. Did it not carry in it a strong implication of guilt? A. Well, perhaps in a sense you might inferentially say so; I think you might say that; I think if I had never said a word on the subject at all, from the beginning down, it would have been a great deal better.

Q. The scandal would have died out long ago, would it not? It has only been kept alive by your writings? A. I have acted like a fool, I admit.

By Mr. TRACY—We all concede that, and do not need to call witnesses to prove it.

Q. Now, when the Council was in session, that took the form, did it

not, of an ecclesiastical controversy, in which the scandal proper dropped out of sight? A. There is no scandal proper.

Q. Well, this scandal itself dropped out of sight, and the controversy was over an ecclesiastical question, was it not? A. In a technical sense; but everybody said that that Council revived the business.

Q. Did you know that your letters revived the scandal? A. Yes; or it did not need reviving—it had life in it.

Q. Did not your letters to the Council largely call out the letters by Dr. Bacon? A. I think Dr. Bacon took a sublime indifference to my letters in the first place; he sent them back from the Council; I do not now recollect that there was any extract from my letters to the Council that was introduced at all by Dr. Bacon; perhaps there was; if he made any allusion at all to them it was a most unimportant one.

Q. You knew that the effect of your letters to the Council would be to revive the scandal, did you not? A. No, I did not; I wrote them to vindicate myself; I did not care whether they revived the scandal or not.

Q. Did not you know what the effect would be? A. I thought of vindicating myself; I had been attacked and I wrote a defence; the scandal had to take care of itself; I was not so tender toward the scandal that I should refrain from defending myself if it would revive it even.

Q. That is evident. Mrs. Tilton's letter to you, quoted February 9, 1868, and commencing, "Ah! did angel ever love so grandly as my beloved!" In that letter, on page 164, this sentence occurs: "And the dear friends who love us." You originally wrote it, and you have erased "us" and put in "me." Do you know which is correct? What is in the original? A. I think it is "me;" it is "me" (examining the first draft of the communication).

Q. How came Mrs. Tilton to write that letter to Moulton, denying that she had ever thought of separating from you? A. Frank, as soon as he undertook to make the compromise between us, undertook to straighten out whatever was wrong; there was a story that Mrs. Morse set afloat about my being divorced, and Frank wrote a note to her, or went to see her, and she wrote this note.

Q. Did not she write it at your suggestion? A. I do not think she did; I think she wrote it at Frank's suggestion; I had forgotten that letter until I found it among the papers.

Mr. Hill—Did not you make any suggestion to her about writing that letter? A. I do not recollect distinctly; it may be that I did; I do not know; I co-operated with Frank.

General Tracy—Has she not during this controversy signed letters that you have written for her? A. No; she wrote a letter to Dr. Storrs, a part of which I suggested the phraseology, of a delicate statement of her relations to Mr. Beecher, which, while it was not false, did not con-

vey more than half of the truth; the remainder she wrote herself; she was going to state too much in it.

Q. Is there any other letter that she has ever written at your dictation, and signed after you had written it, in this controversy? A. Well, I do not know; I do not recollect any at present.

Q. Do you remember a letter that she wrote Mr. Moulton, commencing "Dear Francis, I told you a falsehood last night"? A. I never saw it.

Q. Do you remember that Mr. Moulton reported to you, on any occasion, that she had made a statement that what you claimed was her confession she had made at your solicitation and instance, and at a time when you were also confessing to her, or anything of that description, and that you were angry about it, and took Moulton to your house to have him see whether she would make such a statement or not, and that Mr. Moulton coming in and repeating the statement in your presence, you asked her whether she had ever said so, and she said she had not, and you turned to Moulton and said, "Then you see who is the liar?" A. I do not remember any such phrase as that; Frank Moulton said to me, as nearly as I can recollect (his memory is better than mine), that Elizabeth, in a mood of criticism on me (which she did not very often have), had said that I had made to her confessions against myself corresponding with the confession which she had made to me against herself, which was not true; and Frank asked her squarely if it was so.

Q. Did he ask her or did you? A. I do not remember.

Q. What did she say? A. She said "No," and then Frank afterwards told me she said the opposite.

Q. Now did you not know that the very next morning she wrote to Mr. Moulton a letter beginning, "Dear Francis, I told you two falsehoods," and proceeded to say in substance, "the fact is when I am in the presence of Mr. Tilton he has such a control over me that I am not responsible for what I say," or, "I am obliged to say whatever he wills that I should say; but the truth is that I had reported the story just as you had heard it"? A. I do not; I know that she had some conversations with him, which she reported to me as being greatly like a see-saw—saying one thing and unsaying it.

Q. Have you ever had doubts of her sanity? A. No.

Q. Never? A. No, sir.

Q. Have you ever threatened to put her in an asylum? A. No, sir.

Q. Have you ever circulated the story among her acquaintances or friends that she was becoming insane? A. No, but that her mother was; there was one time about then when she was a little delirious.

Q. When? A. I do not remember; her mind wandered a little in sickness; she has never had a taint of insanity; you know we have a customary phrase, "You say an extravagant thing, my friend, you are

insane;" that is the only possible way in which Elizabeth has been insane; she is not insane at all.

Q. Mr. Tilton, you have quoted the letters of your wife here to prove what the character of your home was in the beginning of 1868 and through 1868? A. I quoted them to show what it was previous to her surrender to him.

Q. You have stated, Mr. Tilton, that there were acts of criminality, first at Mr. Beecher's house, and secondly, at your own house; do you pretend to have a personal knowledge of those acts? A. Only the knowledge of Mrs. Tilton's confession—that is all; I was absent at the time.

Q. Mr. Moulton was in college with you? A. Yes, sir.

Q. He has always been your friend from your college days? A. Yes, sir, and I hope he will be to the end of my life.

Q. Your novel is dedicated to him? A. Yes, but he has not done me the honor of reading it; I will never dedicate another.

Q. You say that you had not reported this scandal to the Woodhull women or woman; but you do not deny that you had frequently spoken harshly of Mr. Beecher to her? A. Oh, not harshly; I have spoken often critically of him, but always with a view to have her do no harm to him; I expressed my opinion about him.

Q. How came she and Mr. Beecher to have an interview? A. I do not remember the circumstances; I think Frank Moulton devised it; Mr. Beecher had a number of interviews with her at Frank's house and one at mine.

Q. Was not the object to get Mr. Beecher committed to her views of free love? A. No; to her views of the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments of woman's suffrage; Mr. Butler and I championed it, and we wanted Mr. Beecher to do the same.

Q. Was it not to get him to preside at Steinway Hall? A. That was not at my house but at Frank's; I think at mine it was in regard to the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments.

Q. Well, an effort was made to get him to preside there and introduce her at Steinway Hall, and an exposition of this scandal was threatened if he did not preside there? A. Frank received a letter from Colonel Blood that he thought was a threat; it angered Frank a good deal.

By Mr. Winslow—Did you see the letter from Colonel Blood, in which it was threatened that this scandal would be exposed if Mr. Beecher did not preside at the Steinway Hall meeting? A. I do not think that is so; if it was I did not know it; I do not think there was any truth in it.

Q. Mr. Beecher had been importuned to preside, had he not? A. Yes; there came a note from Colonel Blood about the Woodhulls not being received in some hotel; they said it was because they were unpopular,

and they wanted Mr. Beecher's help; there was something in the letter which Frank regarded as unhandsome, and I knew he was angry, and expressed himself strongly about it, and said it looked like blackmail; it was one of the first indications of their attempting to use us.

Q. Do you not know that Mr. Beecher was threatened that in case he did not preside at that meeting this scandal should be published? A. It is the first time that I have ever heard it suggested.

Q. Was he not threatened by Mrs. Woodhull? A. Not that I have any knowledge of.

Q. Was not the very object of soliciting Mr. Beecher to preside at the Steinway Hall meeting on the part of you and Mr. Moulton, in order to place Mrs. Woodhull under obligation, so that she should not make the publication? A. Precisely so: we did not know there was to be a publication; we wanted to keep her on our side, and wanted to take every possible occasion to do it; her husband had spent a considerable length of time to devise this Steinway Hall speech; what it was about I do not know; she gave Frank and me the proofs, and he put them in his drawer; I never looked at them; it was our folly that we did not, for I might have known what was in that speech; she wanted Mr. Beecher to preside; I told Mr. Beecher that however unpopular she was, he might go and preside, and I sketched a little sort of a speech (and I think Frank sketched one) that, if he could see his way to do it he might make:—"Fellow-citizens—Here is a woman who is going to speak. She will probably speak on what you do not believe; but that is no reason why she should not be heard. It is because I disagree with her that I would introduce her. I like free speech. I have the honor of presenting her." I said to him that he was able to carry a little speech of that sort, and I felt that if he went and presided, it would put her under the same obligation to him as I fancied that I had put her under to me in writing her biography; I considered that I had secured her good-will by writing that and other things, and I thought that if Mr. Beecher would do some signal service of that kind, which he could do and which would be noted as such, it would fix her under gratitude, and we would all be fixed; Frank had done her some service; Frank had been very friendly to her; he had done her many services, and he had great respect for her.

Q. You pressed that argument on Mr. Beecher? A. Yes, and Frank also.

Q. As a matter of safety? A. Yes; I said, "Think it over, and if you find that you can, go and do it."

Q. Do you know whether the letter from Colonel Blood had been received at that time? A. I do not know.

Q. Mr. Beecher rejected your arguments and refused to preside? A. He did not refuse, but said that if he saw his way clear he would come and let us know.

Q. But he did not let you know? A. He did not let us know.

Q. And you presided instead? A. I did not want to; but I had no idea of what the speech was going to be.

Q. Although the proofs were in your hands and you might have known? A. Yes; but I never did know; the proofs had been brought to Frank's study; I may have had the idea that they were for Mr. Beecher to see the speech; but it was not the printed speech that did the damage; it was the interjected remarks in response to the audience; she said violent things.

Q. Had you written her life at that time? A. Yes, I had; I am pretty certain of it.

Q. What other things had you done to put her under obligations? A. I will tell you what I did; I wrote that idea of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, and spent three of the solidest weeks of my life in working it into an argument and printing it into a tract; it was her idea, but she did not know how to express it, and I worked it up in one of the most elaborate pieces of writing I ever did; that was one of the great services; the second was the writing of a sketch; then, also, when Senator Carpenter attacked that proposition, I made an elaborate reply.

Q. You went to the meeting yourself, and deliberately intended to go? A. No, I did not; Frank came to the *Golden Age* office; it rained and it was late, half-past seven o'clock, and I went to see who was to preside; there was no expectation that I would preside at all; we got there at ten minutes to eight o'clock, and the crowd was so great that we could not get in at the front way, and we went to the rear, and went into a large ante-room, and there was Mrs. Woodhull, flushed and excited because there was not a brave man in the circle of the two cities to preside at her meeting; Mr. Beecher did not come, and one or two others that had been invited were not there; she felt that there was no courage in men, and she was going on alone, and I said, "I will preside at your meeting;" it was not more than ten minutes—I do not believe five minutes—forethought; I went on the platform and made a few remarks, and introduced her; that was the way it came about.

Q. You quote letters from your wife in 1868 to show the affection she bore you at that time, and then you say that in 1870 you thought you discovered that her mind was absorbed in Mr. Beecher to too great an extent. Between the beginning of 1868 and the spring of 1870, had there been any act on your part calculated to disturb the happiness of your home or alienate the affections of your wife? A. Not that I remember.

Q. Had there been no affection of a marked character existing between you and another lady which was calculated to disturb the happiness of a wife? A. No. I think not.

[Here followed a series of circumstantial inquiries concerning Mr.

Tilton's relations with different women, and equally circumstantial denials on his part of anything improper, or of any connection between these stories and his wife's estrangement from him.]

Q. Do you know that —— made charges against you, and that that was one of the reasons why Mr. Bowen discharged you? A. I cannot say what operated on Mr. Bowen.

Q. That was one of the things discussed, was it not? A. Yes, the only thing discussed; but, Mr. Tracy, I decline this examination; you have introduced names here, and you must take the consequences; there are charges against one of the names; I took pains to introduce no names; there are written charges made and filed concerning a lady whom you have named; now, I do not take the responsibility of reviving it.

General Tracy—We have to mention names here, but I think they won't be mentioned in the record.

Q. What was the character of the charges that —— made against you? A. I never knew that —— made any until afterwards; Mr. Bowen said there had been a story told prejudicial to me; he would not tell me by whom, and he would not tell me the story; I said, "If there is any story prejudicial to me, bring the person who tells the story face to face with me;" Mr. Bowen said, "That is fair;" after that I heard that she wrote a letter.

Q. Was there any other lady that was in the habit of seeing you at your house? A. If there was, do you suppose I would be little enough, as a gentleman, to name it? I am not a minister.

General Tracy—Then perhaps you might mention it? A. I should not; there are ladies that I know and honor, and I should scorn to answer such a question.

Q. I asked you whether there were any other ladies who were in the habit of visiting your house, and whose visits disturbed the quiet and happiness of your wife? A. You may ask her, and take her answer; I scorn to answer; Elizabeth shall have the benefit of any statement she pleases to make concerning any names; this examination I understand the point of perfectly well; there is no woman that I have respected or honored whom I have not brought to my house, which is not the practice always of men in their relations with ladies; if Elizabeth has been troubled concerning my attentions to any lady, take her testimony upon that subject.

General Tracy—I will do that, and I shall do it, because you have brought into the controversy the character of your home; you have said that her affections were alienated, and it is proper and essential that we should show that that was not the cause to which you attributed it.

Mr. Tilton—I say if Elizabeth's change of mind was due in her

opinion to the fact that I had loves and affections for other ladies, take her testimony for that fact; I will not deny her.

Q. You are confident she will state the truth of that? A. She will state what she wants to have appear, and that she is welcome to.

By Mr. Hill—Won't you say generally whether you had affections for other ladies which your wife knew of? No answer.

By General Tracy—Do you refuse to be examined on that point? A. No; I don't refuse to be examined on that point.

Q. Then state whether there are not other ladies who have been intimate with you, and in your society at your house, often and repeatedly, and in a manner calculated to disturb the quiet and peace of mind of your wife? A. I think I brought Mrs. Stanton and Miss Anthony there; she hated them, but it was because she thought they were radicals, and so on.

Q. Did you ever hear it stated or intimated that you had undue familiarities with those ladies at your house? A. No, no.

General Tracy—I don't mean criminal familiarities, but undue familiarities, such as visiting their room or appearing in their room before they were dressed? A. No, I didn't; I cannot imagine any reason why anybody should.

Q. Was there any other lady besides the two that you have mentioned who annoyed Elizabeth? A. Mrs. Woodhull always annoyed her when she came; Elizabeth always took fire at every person who did not come within the limit of the orthodox ordinances; she always loved all the women who were connected with the church; my life was outside, and it generally happened that nearly all my public friends were radical in one way or another, and she could not bear it, and it annoyed her.

Q. Don't you know of the visits and attentions of another lady that disturbed your wife very much? A. No.

[A series of questions then followed concerning another lady, which Mr. Tilton answered at first frankly, and afterwards with anger, claiming that the lady was an intimate and valued friend of his wife as well as himself.]

General Tracy—Do you know that about the time of your quitting the *Union*, in 1869, your name and ——'s were associated together by public rumor? A. By Henry Ward Beecher; and he wrote an apology to Mr. Bowen, which I possess, recalling it; it was his slander, and I can produce it; the first thing Mr. Beecher did, within a week after his apology on the 4th of January, was to write to Mr. Bowen a retraction of what he had said in regard to ——.

Q. When was it that he said it? A. I never heard of it until he had unsaid it; it was a voluntary thing; in making his retraction he confessed the fact; I had never heard that he had spoken unhandsomely

until he apologized to me and wrote the retraction; that retraction was put into my hands.

Q. You mean to say that public rumor did not connect your name and ——'s at the time you were on the *Union*, or about that time?

[Mr. Tilton admitted that there was a paragraph in one of the New York papers that they were going to elope together. He was then on the *Union*. Other questions followed, concerning his visits to the lady, etc., which he explained as natural and proper.]

Q. Did it come to the knowledge of your wife? A. I carried it to the knowledge of my wife; it was during the summer of 1870, when I edited the *Union;* I only edited it eight months; it never was a good paper before or since—begging pardon for improprieties.

Q. Afterwards you made the acquaintance of Mrs. Woodhull, did you not? A. The next year, 1871.

Q. Did you ever express your attachment for —— in the presence of your wife? A. Ask my wife; take her answer; you may depend that I never said to —— or any other lady, in the absence of my wife, what I would not have said in her presence; I have no secrets from Mrs. Tilton; I never had any, and never should have had any but for this break-up; I never had any secrets from Mrs. Tilton until within this last year or two, during which we have not harmonized as in former years.

Q. Have you ever admitted to her that you had committed adultery? A. I never admitted to her anything of the kind.

Q. But you don't mean to say that you have not, do you? A. Mr. Tracy, talk to me as one gentleman to another.

General Tracy—You charge your wife with having committed adultery; I mean to ask you whether you have or not? A. I say, let my wife make the charge, if she wishes to.

Q. I ask you the question. A. You may ask it till doomsday.

Q. You decline to answer? A. I do not; I say I will take my wife's answer.

Q. How could she know that you had, if you had not confessed it to her? I ask you whether you had not been guilty of the crime? A. I decline to hold a conversation with you on the subject.

Q. Have you not admitted to others your commission of adultery? A. Mr. Tracy, have you committed adultery?

General Tracy—I have not charged my wife with that crime.

Mr. Tilton—If I am to be charged with the crime of adultery in this business I wish to know it. I wish my wife, in whose interest you speak, to make the charge if she chooses. Now let her choose. If you, gentlemen, suppose that you are to fight this battle in reference to my character I will make it ten times harder than you see. Yesterday we

were on the edge of peace; but if you mean to draw the sword the sword shall be drawn.

Mr. Hill—Don't you think it is pretty well out?

Mr. Tilton—There is one thing that I was born for and that is war.

Q. Did you make the acquaintance of Mrs. Woodhull in the absence of ——? A. I don't remember whether she was absent or present.

Q. Don't you remember whether it was while she was at home or not that you were associating with Mrs. Woodhull? A. I knew Mrs. Woodhull a whole year.

Q. [After several questions interjected, involving reference to another woman] Do you know whether or not information was communicated to your wife that you were living with Mrs. Woodhull? A. I never lived with her.

Q. Do you remember whether your wife was told that you were living with her? A. I never heard of it till now; I saw something the day before yesterday in a salacious newspaper.

Q. The Chicago *Times?* A. Yes.

Q. Have you read it? A. Yes.

Q. Don't you know that information of precisely the character then published was communicated to your wife by the mother of Mrs. Woodhull during your intimacy with Mrs. Woodhull? A. I never heard of such a thing; I remember that Mrs. Morse was with Mrs. Claflin; the old, crazy woman came at the foot of her stairs one night and made a hideous racket of some sort of trash; Mrs. Morse quoted that, and got quite frightened about it.

General Tracy—I hope all the mothers of your friends are not insane. Don't you know that Mrs. Claflin at the same time communicated that to your wife? A. I did not know that she saw my wife; I understood that that woman made a visit at Mrs. Morse's; it may be, perhaps, that Mrs. Tilton was there at the time.

Q. Don't you know that your wife's mind has been disturbed in regard to your own infidelity to her by your associations with public women? A. No, sir; if that pretence is made, Mr. Tracy, on your part, it is unmanly; if it is made on her part it is false; I have never associated with public women.

General Tracy—I don't mean prostitutes; I mean reformers. A. Oh, yes; I said before that Elizabeth had been annoyed, over and over again, by my associations with all persons out of the realm of religious orthodox ideas.

Q. In that class of people whom among your lady acquaintances do you include? A. I include Mrs. Stanton and Miss Anthony, though I have not seen those people since Elizabeth ordered them of the house; beyond those persons I don't know; Lucy Stone was one; she lived in Boston; she did not come very often; Elizabeth was a reformer at one

time, and had the getting up of woman's rights' meetings, and had the children take the tickets; she arranged the campaign, but now she can't endure them.

SESSION OF JULY 23, 1874.

At the session all the members were present and examined, with Mr. Tilton, who was also present, the letter from his wife which he had quoted in his statement. The other letters which he had quoted from he said were in the hands of Mr. Frank Moulton. After some conversation the committee adjourned.

XIV.

MR. BEECHER'S DENIAL.

THE publication of Mr. Tilton's statement in the Brooklyn *Argus* drew from Mr. Beecher the following emphatic denial of his assertions, and defence of Mrs. Tilton. It was published on the 22d of July:

I do not propose, at this time, to make a detailed examination of the remarkable statement of Mr. Theodore Tilton, made before the Committee of Investigation, and which appeared in the Brooklyn *Argus* of July 21, 1874.

I recognize the many reasons which make it of transcendent importance to myself, the church, and the cause of public morality, that I shall give a full answer to the charges against me. But having requested the Committee of Investigation to search this matter to the bottom, it is to them that I must look for my vindication.

But I cannot delay for an hour to defend the reputation of Mrs. Elizabeth R. Tilton, upon whose name, in connection with mine, her husband has attempted to pour shame.

One less deserving of such disgrace I never knew. From childhood she has been under my eye, and since reaching womanhood she has had my sincere admiration and affection. I cherish for her a pure feeling, such as a gentleman might honorably offer to a Christian woman, and which he might re-



REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER PURCHASING TILTON'S STATEMENT FROM THE NEWSBOYS.

ceive and reciprocate without moral scruple. I reject with indignation every imputation which reflects upon her honor or my own.

My regard for Mrs. Tilton was perfectly well known to my family; when serious difficulties sprang up in her household, it was to my wife that she resorted for counsel; and both of us, acting from sympathy, and, as it subsequently appeared, without full knowledge, gave unadvised counsel which tended to harm.

I have no doubt that Mr. Tilton found that his wife's confi-

dence and reliance upon my judgment had greatly increased, while his influence had diminished, in consequence of a marked change in his religious and social views, which was taking place during those years. Her mind was greatly exercised lest her children should be harmed by views which she deemed vitally false and dangerous.

I was suddenly and rudely aroused to the reality of impending danger by the disclosure of domestic distress, of sickness, perhaps unto death, of the likelihood of separation, and the scattering of a family every member of which I had tenderly loved. The effect upon me of the discovery of the state of Mr. Tilton's feelings, and the condition of his family, surpassed in sorrow and excitement anything that I had ever experienced in my life. That my presence, influence and counsel had brought to a beloved family sorrow and alienation, gave, in my then state of mind, a poignancy to my suffering which I hope no other man may ever feel.

Even to be suspected of having offered, under the privileges of a peculiarly sacred relation, an indecorum to a wife and mother, could not but deeply wound any one who is sensitive to the honor of womanhood. There were peculiar reasons for alarm in this case on other grounds, inasmuch as I was then subject to certain malignant rumors, and a flagrant outbreak in this family would bring upon them an added injury, derived from these shameless falsehoods.

Believing at the time that my presence and counsels had tended, however unconsciously, to produce a social catastrophe, represented as imminent, I gave expression to my feelings in an interview with a mutual friend, not in cold and cautious, self-defending words, but eagerly, taking blame upon myself, and pouring out my heart to my friend in the strongest language, overburdened with the exaggerations of impassioned sorrow. Had I been the evil man Mr. Tilton now represents, I should have been calmer and more prudent. It was my horror of the evil imputed that filled me with morbid intensity at the very shadow of it.

Not only was my friend affected generously, but he assured

me that such expressions, if conveyed to Mr. Tilton, would soothe wounded feeling, allay anger, and heal the whole trouble. He took down sentences and fragments of what I had been saying to use them as a mediator. A full statement of the circumstances under which this memorandum was made I shall give to the Investigating Committee.

That these apologies were more than ample to meet the facts of the case is evident, in that they were accepted, that our intercourse resumed its friendliness, that Mr. Tilton subsequently ratified it in writing, and that he has continued for four years, and until within two weeks, to live with his wife.

Is it conceivable, if the original charge had been what is now alleged, that he would have condoned the offence, not only with the mother of his children, but with him whom he believed to have wronged them? The absurdity, as well as the falsity of this story is apparent, when it is considered that Mr. Tilton now alleges that he carried this guilty secret of his wife's infidelity for six months, locked up in his own breast, and that then he divulged it to me, only that there might be a reconciliation with me. Mr. Tilton has since, in every form of language, and to a multitude of witnesses, orally, in written statements and in printed documents, declared his faith in his wife's purity.

After the reconciliation of Mr. Tilton with me, every consideration of propriety and honor demanded that the family trouble should be kept in that seclusion which domestic affairs have a right to claim as a sanctuary; and to that seclusion it was determined that it should be confined.

Every line and word of my private and confidential letters which have been published are in harmony with the statements which I now make. My published correspondence on this subject comprises but two elements: The expression of my grief, and that of my desire to shield the honor of a pure and innocent woman.

I do not purpose to analyze and contest at this time the extraordinary paper of Mr. Tilton; but there are two allegations which I cannot permit to pass without special notice. They

refer to the only two incidents which Mr. Tilton pretends to have witnessed personally: the one, an alleged scene in my house while looking over engravings; and the other a chamber scene in his own house. His statements concerning these are absolutely false. Nothing of the kind ever occurred, nor any semblance of any such things. They are now brought to my notice for the first time.

To every statement which connects me dishonorably with Mrs. Elizabeth R. Tilton, or which in anywise would impugn the honor and purity of this beloved Christian woman, I give the most explicit, comprehensive and solemn denial.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

BROOKLYN, *July* 22, 1874.

This manly and well-timed denial of Tilton's charges was well received by the public.

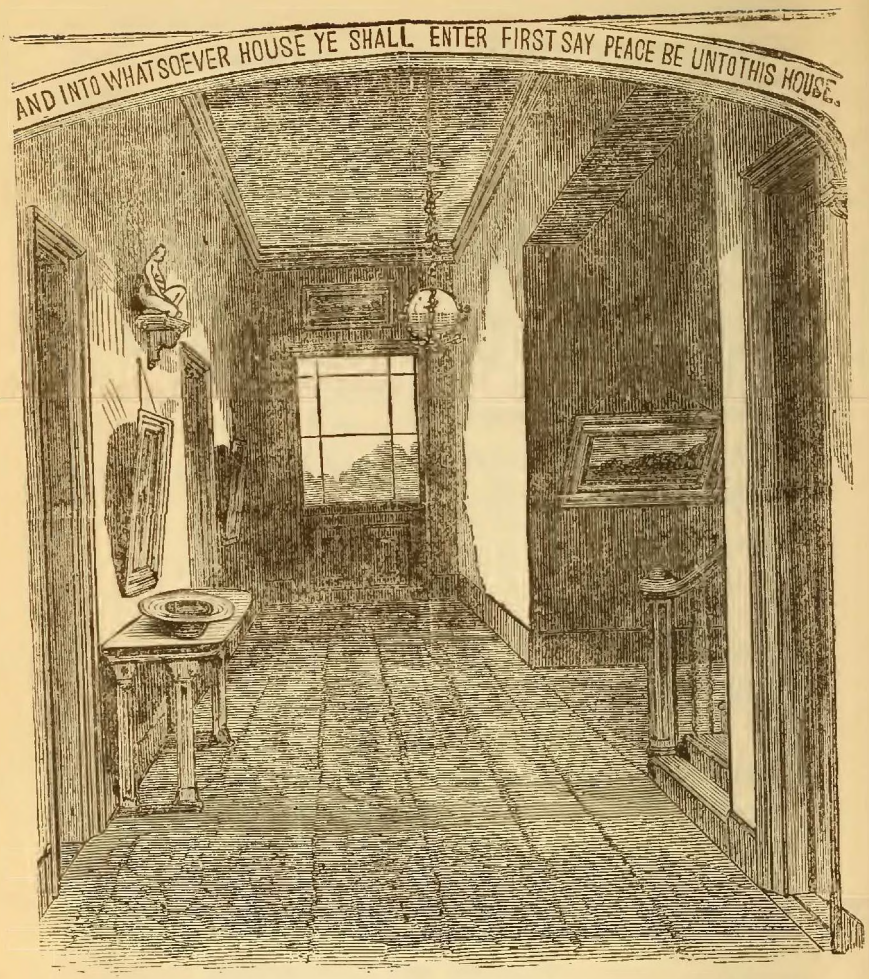
XV.

MRS. TILTON'S STATEMENT.

MRS. TILTON had left her husband's house on the 11th of July, previous to his appearance before the committee, and the publication of his shameful charges against her, and had taken refuge in the family of Mr. Ovington, friends who stood by her bravely in her troubles. Goaded to desperation by the charges of her husband and their publication, this poor woman, on the 23d of July, addressed the following communication to the public, through the medium of the Brooklyn *Eagle:*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BROOKLYN EAGLE:

To pick up anew the sorrows of the last ten years, the stings and pains I had daily schooled myself to bury and forgive, makes this imperative duty, as called forth by the malicious statement of my husband, the saddest act of my life. Beside,



THE HALLWAY OF MR. THEODORE TILTON'S RESIDENCE, NO. 174 LIVINGSTON STREET, BROOKLYN.

my thought of following the Master contradicts this act of my pen, and a sense of the perversion of my life-faith almost compels me now to stand aside, till God, himself, delivers.

Yet I see in this wanton act an urgent call and privilege from which I shrink not. To reply in detail to the twenty-two

articles of arraignment I shall not attempt at present. Yet if called upon to testify to each and all of them, I shall not hesitate to do so. Suffice it for my purpose now that I reply to one or more of the most glowing charges.

Touching the feigned sorrow of my husband's compulsory revelations, I solemnly avow that long before the Woodhull publication, I knew him, by insinuation and direct statement, to have repeated to my very near relative and friend the substance of these accusations which shock the moral sense of the entire community this day. Many times, when hearing that certain persons had spoken ill of him, he has sent me to chide them for so doing; and then and there I learned he had been before me with his calumnies against myself, so that I was speechless.

The reiteration in his statement that he had "persistently striven to hide" these so-called facts, is utterly false, as his hatred to Mr. Beecher has existed these many years, and the determination to ruin Mr. Beecher has been the one aim of his life.

Again, the perfidy with which the holiest love a wife ever offered has been recklessly discovered in this publication, reaches well nigh to sacrilege; and, added to this, the endeavor, like the early scandal of Mrs. Woodhull, to make my own words condemn me, has no parallel.

Most conspicuously, my letter quoting the reading of "Griffith Gaunt." Had Mr. Tilton read the pure character of Catharine, he would have seen that I lifted myself beside it—as near as any human may affect an ideal. But it was her character, and not the incidents of fiction surrounding it, to which I referred. Hers was no sin of criminal act or thought.

A like "confession" with hers, I had made to Mr. Tilton in telling of my love to my friend and pastor, one year before. And I now add that, notwithstanding all misrepresentations and anguish of soul, I owe to my acquaintance and friendship with Mr. Beecher, as to no other human instrumentality, that encouragement in my mental life, and that growth toward the

Divine nature which enable me to walk daily in a lively hope of the life beyond.

The shameless charges in articles seven, eight, and nine are fearfully false in each and every particular.

The letter referred to in Mr. Tilton's tenth paragraph was obtained from me by importunity, and by representations that it was necessary for him to use in his then pending difficulties with Mr. Bowen. I was then sick, nigh unto death, having suffered a miscarriage only four days before. I signed whatever he required, without knowing or understanding its import. The paper I have never seen, and do not know what statements it contained.

In charge eighteen, a letter of mine, addressed to Mr. Francis Moulton, quoted to prove that I never desired a separation or was advised by Mr. or Mrs. Beecher to leave my husband, I reply, the letter was of Mr. Tilton's own concocting, which he induced me to copy and sign as my own—an act which, in my weakness and mistaken thought to help him, I have done too often during these unhappy years.

The implication that the harmony of the home was unbroken till Mr. Beecher entered it as a frequent guest and friend, is a lamentable satire upon the household where he himself, years before, laid the corner stone of Free Love, and desecrated its altars up to the time of my departure; so that the atmosphere was not only godless, but impure for my children. And in this effort and throe of agony, I would fain lift my daughters, and all womanhood from the insidious and diabolical teachings of these latter days.

His frequent efforts to prove me insane, weak-minded, insignificant, of mean presence, all rank in the category of heartlessness, selfishness, and falsehood, having its climax in his present endeavor to convince the world that I am or ever have been unable to distinguish between an innocent or a guilty love.

In summing up the whole matter, I affirm myself before God to be innocent of the crimes laid upon me; that never have I been guilty of adultery with Henry Ward Beecher in

thought or deed; nor has he ever offered to me an indecorous or improper proposal.

To the further charge that I was led away from my home by Mr. Beecher's friends, and by the advice of a lawyer whom Mr. Beecher had sent to me, and who, in advance of my appearing before the committee, arranged with me the questions and answers which are to constitute my testimony in Mr. Beecher's behalf, I answer, that this is again untrue, having never seen the lawyer until introduced to him a few moments before the arrival of the committee, by my step-father, Judge Morse; and in further reply I submit the following statement of my action before the committee, and the separation from my husband.

The publication of Mr. Tilton's letter in answer to Dr. Bacon, I had not known nor suspected, when on Wednesday evening he brought home the *Golden Age*, handing it to me to read. Looking down its columns I saw, well nigh with blinding eyes, that he had put into execution the almost daily threat of his life—"that *he* lived to crush out Mr. Beecher; that the God of battles was in *him;* he had always been Mr. Beecher's superior, and all that lay in his path, wife, children, or reputation, if need be, should fall before this purpose."

I did not read it. I saw enough without reading. My spirit rose within me as never before.

"Theodore," I said, "tell me what means this quotation from Mr. Beecher? Two years ago you come to me at midnight saying: "Elizabeth, *all* letters and papers concerning my difficulties with Mr. Beecher and Mr. Bowen are burned, destroyed; now don't *you* betray me, for I have nothing to defend myself with."

"Did you believe that?" said he.

"I certainly did, implicitly," I said.

"Well, let me tell you—they all *live;* not one is destroyed."

If this was said to intimidate me, it had quite the contrary effect. I had never been so fearless, nor seen so clearly before with whom I was dealing.

Coming to me a little later, he said: "I want you to read it;

you will find it a vindication of *yourself.* You have not stood before the community for five years as you now do."

Roused still further by the wickedness hid behind so false a mask, I replied: "Theodore, understand me, this is the last time you call me publicly to walk through this filth. My character needs no vindication at this late hour from *you.* There was a time, had you spoken out clearly, truthfully and manfully for me, I had been grateful, but now I shall speak and act for myself. Know, also, that if in the future I see a scrap of paper referring to any human being, however remote, which it seems to me you might use or pervert for your own ends, I will destroy it."

"This means battle on your part, then," said he.

"Just so far," I replied.

I write this because these words of mine he has since used to my harm.

The next morning I went to my brother, and told him that now *I* had decided to act in this matter; that I had been treated by my husband as a nonentity from the beginning, a plaything, to be used or let alone at will; that it had always seemed to me I was a party not a little concerned. I then showed him a card I had made for publication.

He respected the motive, but still advised silence on my part. I yielded to him thus far, as to appearing in the public prints; but counselling with myself *and no other,* it occurred to me that among the brethren of my own communion I might be heard.

Not knowing of any church committee, I asked the privilege of such an interview in the parlors of those who had always been our mutual friends. Mr. and Mrs. Ovington then learned, for the first time, that the committee would meet that night, and advised me to see *those* gentlemen, as perhaps the goodliest persons I could select. This I accordingly did.

There, *alone,* I pleaded the cause of my husband and children, the result being that their hearts were moved in sympathy for my family—a feeling their pastor had shared for years, and for which he was now suffering.

On going home, I found my husband reading in bed. I told

him where I had been, and that I did not conceal anything from him, as his habit was from me. He asked who the gentlemen were; said no more; rose, dressed himself, and bade me good-bye forever.

The midnight following I was awakened by my husband standing by my bed. In a very tender, kind voice he said he wished to see me. I rose instantly, followed him into his room, and sitting on the bedside, he drew me into his lap, said "he was proud of me, loved me; that nothing ever gave him such real peace and satisfaction as to hear me well spoken of; that, meeting a member of the committee, he had learned that he had been mistaken as to my motive in seeing the committee, and had hastened to assure me that he had been thoroughly wretched since his rash treatment of me the night before," etc.

Then and there we covenanted sacredly our hearts and lives —I most utterly: renewing my trust in the one human heart I loved.

The next day, how happy we were! Theodore wrote a statement to present to the committee when they should call upon him, to all of which I heartily acceded. This document, God knows, was the true history of this affair, completely vindicating my honor and the honor of my pastor. In the afternoon he left me to show it to his friends.

He returned home early in the evening, passing the happiest hours I had known for years; renewedly assuring me that there was no rest for him away from me. So in grateful love to the dear Father, I slept. Oh, that the end had then come! I would not then have received the cruel blow "which made a woman mad outright."

The next morning he called upon our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Ovington, and there, with a shocking bravado, began a wicked tirade, adding with oath and violence the shameless slanders against Mr. Beecher, of which I now believe him to be the author.

This fearful scene I learned next day. In the afternoon he showed me his invitation from the committee to meet them that evening. I did not then show my hurt—but carried it

heavily within, but calmly without, all night, till early morning.

Reflection upon this scene at Mr. Ovington's convinced me that, notwithstanding my husband's recent professions to me, his former spirit was unchanged; that his declarations of repentance and affection were only for the purpose of gaining my assistance to accomplish his ends in his warfare upon Mr. Beecher. In the light of these conclusions, my duty appeared plain.

I rose quietly, and having dressed, roused him only to say: "Theodore, I will never take another step by your side. The end has indeed come!"

He followed me to Mrs. Ovington's to breakfast, saying I was unduly excited and that he had been misrepresented perhaps—but leaving me determined as before.

How to account for the change which twenty-four hours have been capable of working in his mind, then many years past, I leave for the eternities with their mysteries to reveal. That he is an unreliable and unsafe guide whose idea of truth-loving is self-loving, it is my misfortune in this late, sad hour to discover.

ELIZABETH R. TILTON.

July 23, 1874.

The comments of the press showed that Mrs. Tilton's statement was accepted by the great mass of the public as correct. The publication of her statement was followed, on the 31st of July, by her cross-examination before the committee, the official report of which was immediately published by them.

XVI.

MRS. TILTON'S CROSS-EXAMINATION.

The official report of the cross-examination of Mrs. Elizabeth R. Tilton before the Investigating Committee, as communicated to the press by the chairman of that committee, is given in full, as follows:

BROOKLYN, *July* 31.

By Mr. HILL—You stated, I think, the date of your marriage in your former examination? A. I believe so—1855.

Q. Did you begin your married life housekeeping or boarding? A. Boarding with my mother, on Livingston street.

Q. About how long did you remain boarding with her? A. My first housekeeping was in Oxford street; I think that was in the spring of 1860.

Q. How long did you remain in Oxford street? A. Nearly three years, I think.

Q. And then where did you go? A. We went to board with mother again about three years; and then from there I went to my own house in Livingston street, where I remained until within a few weeks.

Q. Please state to the committee what Mr. Tilton's conduct was toward you in the early part of your married life, so far as personal attention was concerned, in sickness or in health? A. I wish these gentlemen to understand that, to a very large extent, I take the blame upon myself of the indifference my husband has shown to me in all my life; at first I understood very well that I was not to have the attention that many wives have; I realized that his talent and genius must not be narrowed down to myself; that I made him understand also; to a very large extent I attribute to that the later sorrows of my life; I gave him to understand, that what might be regarded as neglect under other circumstances would not be regarded by me as neglect in him, owing to his business and to his desire to make a name for himself and to rise before the world.

Q. To what extent was that attention to outside matters carried by him to the neglect of his family? A. At the birth of the first three children, I had very severe and prolonged sicknesses; but when he saw me, he never felt that I was sick, because on seeing him I always tried to seem well; I felt so desirous of his presence. It was charged upon me many a time by my mother and my brother: "When Theodore or the doctor comes, you are never sick." They said of me: "She has never a genius for being sick."

Q. Will you state just what attention your husband bestowed upon you in case of sickness during your confinement, or any other illness if you had them? A. Well, I had no attention whatever, I may truthfully say, from him, any more than a stranger would give; I do not think it was from neglect so much as from an inability on his part to understand that I was sick and suffering; though, in fact, I was very seriously ill.

Q. Please give the committee some idea of the length and severity of your illnesses in these three instances, or in any one of them? A. At the birth of my second little girl I was sick from the middle of April

until September, confined to my bed; I sat up for the first time in the middle of September a little while.

Q. Who was your physician? A. Dr. Morrill; Theodore, I can truthfully tell you, in that time never gave me any sympathy at all; he called to see how I did in the morning and evening, or late at night; at this period he was absorbed in chess to such a degree that he would sometimes be up all night; I have known him to stand up at night, ready for bed, engaged upon a problem in chess, and to be found in that same condition in the morning, without having gone to bed at all.

Q. Was his conduct in that respect the subject of remonstrance on the part of your mother and others? A. Frequently by my mother.

Q. Ever in your presence? A. Yes, sir, and also by my nurse, who was a faithful woman; she would often speak to him and of him in his presence as thoughtless and heartless; I have known her many times to speak harshly of him.

EARLY MARRIED LIFE.

Q. How much was he engrossed with actual business at this time? A. Not very much; I always thought that if Theodore had more business he would have less time for sentiment and romance.

Q. How much time did he spend in actual business as editor? A. In the early years of his editorial life I think he was a pretty hard worker; he never had his study at home then, and never wrote much at home.

Q. Do you recollect any message which came to you or to the family from your doctor, in regard to your condition, giving the reason why your illness was of such a lingering character? A. Yes, sir; I remember that Dr. Putnam said, "There is care and trouble on that woman's mind, and I cannot help it with medicine." He said that there was something he could not reach by the ordinary method, and that it was trouble.

Q. What was the trouble in point of fact? A. Well, any one of you gentlemen, I think, would have cared for my family as much as Theodore did. I was left entirely with my servants, and they were very poor servants. I could not have my mother with me, because it was impossible for her to live with us on account of the disagreement between Mr. Tilton and herself.

Q. You intimated that you thought it would be better if your husband had been more fully occupied; will you explain further what you meant by that remark? A. He spent a great deal of his time at home in moods of dissatisfaction with the surroundings, yearning and wanting other ministrations; there was nothing in our home that satisfied him.

Q. Why was that? A. It was on account of my domestic duties; I think it was because I could not minister to him in the way he wanted me to—that is, in reading; his life was largely literary, and I could not

meet him there; I had three little children, all about the same age, at that time.

Q. Were his friends persons who were congenial to you at that early time? A. Yes, sir; I was happy in the friends that he brought to my house, and I felt as if they were an addition to my life.

Q. Tell me who your guests were at the time.

A. I do not think when we boarded with mother that there were many except the church folks; when we left mother's and went into Oxford street, literary people came to the house, and that has been so ever since; they would sometimes call in his absence, and when he came home I would laughingly tell him so and so had been there during the day, and he would ask, "What did you have to say?" I would reply, "Well I am a first-rate listener if they are good talkers; if not, I am a good chatterer myself."

Q. Did you understand that he said that as an expression of doubt as to your ability to entertain people? A. Yes, sir; there is not a shadow of doubt of it; I have lived under that always; he was very critical about my language; when under Theodore's influence I do not think I ever said anything freely or naturally.

Q. Please state what you did or tried to do in receiving these friends of his? A. I tried to receive them kindly and pleasantly, always; and I think there is not one of them that will not bear witness to it; they were welcome; I always had a great desire to make my home hospitable to every one that came into it; we had a little picture of a sunshine house; the first year Theodore brought it home, and I said, "Our home will always be like that."

THE FIRST SEEDS OF DISCORD.

Q. I want to ask you in regard to his attention to domestic wants—to the needs of the family? A. He did not know anything about them at all; I took charge of them myself altogether; often he was critical about it, and I would say, "Well, alone I can do no better; but with you I think I can do much better!" and he would say, "I do not call upon you to go to the office to do my work; this is yours—the other is mine."

Q. What was the character of his criticisms? A. They were very unreasonable, indeed; he would speak to me harshly and severely about any little extravagance, as he considered it; he was very fastidious, and must have the best of everything; but he didn't realize the cost.

Q. Do you mean that he found fault with your domestic management? A. Yes, sir; with my management of my servants, and with my management of the household matters generally.

Q. You speak of his referring to it harshly and severely; how did he treat you in matters of that description? A. I fail generally when I

attempt to be severe, and, therefore, I do not think I can imitate or describe him; he would frequently make some very impulsive remark; I remember his taking me to task and scolding me severely before the butcher in regard to my dealings there; but directly after making a severe remark to me he would always apologize, and say that he was sorry; but the apology was in private; it is a sorry story, indeed.

Q. Were his demands extravagant? A. Very much so; he was very particular with regard to his diet, and the table linen and his own apparel, and the glass and china must be very nice; but these things cost money, so that the expenses which we were subjected to were largely increased, while I would have liked very well to have had it different

Q. Now, state to the committee what it was that first really disturbed your peace of mind in your family? A. I think that first I was jealous of his attention to the ladies.

Q. When were you first sensible of that? A. I think not until the winter of 1866.

Q. Do you recall any criticism of Mr. Tilton upon your conduct in any respect prior to 1869? A. Oh, yes; my manner to every one was a trouble to Theodore; I think that was the beginning of my trouble; I saw something that was interesting in every one; persons that he would find it a perfect bore to talk with, I would be interested in, and entertain; that was a great annoyance to Mr. Tilton, and he said I gathered about me the most distressing sort of people, and he frequently had to go away; many persons that were pleasant to me were repulsive to him; but all who came—it mattered very little to me who they were—I took an interest in; not that I wanted such and such persons, but the house was open, and I really feel that you should give me credit for that one gift of mine (if it is a gift) of seeing something in almost every one to be interested in—the poor and the rich and the miserable—even those women who have troubled me so much lately.

COMMENTS ON MR. BEECHER'S FIRST VISITS.

Q. When did he begin to talk with you, if at all, in regard to your association with and friendship for Mr. Beecher? A. I think I had no personal visits from Mr. Beecher before 1866; that is the first that I remember seeing him very much.

Q. What was the criticism in regard to Mr. Beecher and yourself which Mr. Tilton made? A. I would like to go back a little here, for I think it will show you my manner with Mr. Beecher; when I lived in Oxford street, that was the first of this taint with which Mr. —— filled my husband's mind as early as 1865; Theodore then used to begin to talk to me about Mr. Beecher's wrong-doings with ladies with which he (Mr. Tilton) had heard from Mr. ——, and night after night, and day

after day, he talked about Mr. Beecher; he seemed to be worried on that subject, so that when Mr. Beecher came to see me, Mr. Tilton immediately began to have suspicions; but in order that I might be perfectly transparent to my husband with respect to my interviews with Mr. Beecher whenever I was alone with him, I used to make a memorandum, and charge my mind with all the details of the conversation that passed between us, that I might repeat them to Mr. Tilton; it was so in regard to every gentleman who came to see me, and with whom I sat alone; I was very closely watched and questioned, but especially in regard to Mr. Beecher; I attributed those criticisms from Theodore to Mr. ——'s criticisms; I never had a visit from Mr. Beecher that I was not questioned; Theodore would question me till I thought I had told him all that we talked about, and, perhaps, a day or two afterward, I would throw out a remark which Mr. Beecher had made, and Theodore would say, "You didn't tell me that yesterday;" I would say: "I forgot it;" "You lie," he would say, "you didn't mean to tell me;" "Oh, yes, I did mean to tell you, but I forgot it;" for two or three years I tried faithfully to repeat to my husband everything that I said and did, till I found it made him more suspicious than ever; he believed that I left out many things purposely, while I was conscious of never meaningly omitting anything; I wanted Theodore to know everything that passed between us; I often said that if he would only come home and be there he would know all.

Q. You say that he would say "You lie;" be kind enough to explain to the committee what his manner was in doing that? A. It was passionate and angry; he had no confidence in me; in those days I suffered a great deal; the last two or three years I have not felt so badly.

Q. You say that these suspicions and criticisms continued for about three years? A. They have lasted up to the present day, I think.

THE FIRST CRIMINAL CHARGES.

Q. When did his complaints against you change from the form of criticism to that of accusation, or something more than mere criticism? A. In the latter part of the winter, and in the early spring of 1869–70 he began to talk to me, assuming that I had done wrong.

Q. In what respect? A. With Mr. Beecher.

Q. Criminally? A. Yes; I have been with him days and nights talking this matter over; but I would like to have you know that these conversations lasted for years, and that the change of his thought from the "old to the new," as he called it, was gradual; I used to think that his suspicions of me were caused by his not being at rest in his own mind.

Q. When he assumed that you had been guilty of criminal intimacy with Mr. Beecher, how did you treat the subject? A. For a time I was

very angry, and expressed myself to him as strongly as I possibly could; I became angry, and said I would not be talked to in that way.

Q. State how you received it at different times—whether you received it silently or denied it? A. I received it in various ways, according to the manner in which he introduced it; sometimes I would think it best to be quiet; I have often taken the plausible mode of dealing with him, and tried to lift his mind from that subject to some other; I have acted according to his moods as far as I could.

Q. State whether or not you invariably denied that you ever had any criminal intimacy with Mr. Beecher? A. I have indeed; I remember that he not only charged me with this in my presence, but often became so audacious as to write to me about it, and that seemed to me unpardonable.

Q. When did he begin that? A. In the summer of 1870, when I was away.

Q. What was the character of that which he wrote to you in this particular? A. He sometimes would write quite at length of his own state of mind; his social theories—what we call free-love doctrines—were the one absorbing theme with him then; I remember replying to him; I have not the letter, but so far as I can recollect there was a direct, not question exactly, but affirmation.

Q. What was your reason for adopting these various methods in receiving these accusations? A. Because I felt that he was in a morbid state of mind from troubles of his own; I was not quite willing to treat the matter seriously in regard to myself until he began to publish it abroad.

Q. What did you do in endeavoring to soothe and quiet Mr. Tilton, and relieve his mind from the impressions he had in regard to yourself and in regard to social life? A. I read to him a great deal aloud; I have read to him nearly half the night; he could not sleep; he never has been a good sleeper for years and years.

Q. What did you do particularly in regard to his accusation against you? A. I never could do anything but deny it.

Q. Did you always deny it? A. Oh, yes, sir; always.

Q. Please state what he said on the subject—how he introduced it? A. Well, as I look back upon it now, it seems to me that he would be very glad to bring me into such a state that I would acknowledge some wrong; all his influence, in his conversation, was exerted in that direction; he would talk of the Bible; he read it, and thought of it, and he was becoming persuaded, and was making up his mind in regard to the life he was about to lead; and he would ask me again and again, "What do you think about this? 'Whosoever looketh upon a woman,' etc.;" really, my friends, he was morbid on that subject; I do not think he ever talked about anything else; I sought relief from it day and night,

I assure you; he would keep me awake till 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, discussing of this particular subject; it came from his giving up his religious faith; altogether it was a breakdown.

MR. TILTON JEALOUS OF OTHERS BESIDE MR. BEECHER.

Q. In making those offensive allegations, what did he say? A. As often as any way, he said, "You will not deny that you have had criminal intercourse," and he tried to frighten me by saying he had seen certain things.

Q. What things did he say he had seen? A. I remember that once or twice he pretended he saw me sitting in Mr. Beecher's lap at home, in the red chair in the parlor; in reply to this I said, "You didn't;" I do not know what you, gentlemen, will think, but you certainly can see that such a continual talk, year in and year out, would have its influence upon me; I came to be really quite indifferent, except in regard to my anxiety about him; it was a sort of morbid jealousy that he had; I was worn out and sick with it.

Q. Was it only in respect to Mr. Beecher that he made those accusations, or in respect to other people also? A. In respect to Mr. Beecher only, at that time; about 1870, I believe, he began to think that I had great admiration for several people beside Mr. Beecher.

Q. Did he hesitate to mention names? A. No, sir, he did not.

Q. How many different persons did he mention? A. Two or three gentlemen acquaintances.

Q. Did he ever make to you any charge or accusation even with respect to Mr. Beecher, naming any definite time or place of any criminal act? A. Oh! no, never; he never connected any time with it.

Q. Did he ever pretend to you that you had been guilty of any impropriety with Mr. Beecher at his (Beecher's) house? A. No; he wondered why I went there on two or three occasions; I went on errands; I attended Mr. Burgess a great deal at the time of his death (he was a poor man), and I went to Mr. Beecher two or three times to see him in regard to that man.

Q. Did you ever meet Mr. Beecher at other places by appointment? A. Never at all; not once.

Q. Did Mr. Tilton ever base any accusations against you upon any admission which you had made to him, either with respect to an event at Mr. Beecher's or your house, or any other place? A. Yes; he based an accusation against me in his public statement upon an interview which I had with Mr. Beecher in my second-story room, and I deny it in my public statement.

Q. In any conversation with you at any time, did he accuse you of wrongdoing with Mr. Beecher based upon any admission by you? A. No, sir.

ADJOURNED.

Mr. Morris—Then I ask that the case stand over till Monday, until I can consult with the legal representative of the people of this county.

Mr. Gaynor—I wish to have Mr. Beecher and all the other parties subpœnaed. I am willing to let the case rest till then.

Judge Riley—The case is adjourned until ten o'clock on Monday morning next.

The case was several times adjourned, and was finally dismissed, Mr. Gaynor having withdrawn his charge.

XVIII.

MR. BEECHER DEMANDS HIS LETTERS.

As has been stated, the patience of the public had been sorely tried by the delay in the investigation. This was unavoidable, however. It was necessary for the charges to be made in full, and for all the evidence sustaining them to be taken before Mr. Beecher could properly answer them. This was a slow process. In the meantime, however, Mr. Beecher was not idle. His course is thus comprehensively stated by the Albany *Evening Journal:*

While many of the papers have been clamorously censuring Mr. Beecher for apparently paying no heed to the charge of Mr. Tilton, it seems the great preacher anticipated their impetuous demand and has been quietly doing what honor and truth seemed to require. At the very time when the accusation was published he wrote a letter to representative members of his church asking them to investigate the matter. He did this, as appears, upon his own prompting. Even the regular examining committee knew nothing of it until some days afterward. And now, we are told, the examiners have about concluded their labors.

Doubtless those who have been ready to believe Mr. Beecher guilty and who have loudly called upon him to clear his skirts will now complain of this quiet investigation. They will insist that it ought to have taken place in the full eye of the public and in the full blaze of their garish capitals. They will not readily forgive the pastor of Plymouth that he has prevented this "scandal," with charge and countercharge, from being spread as a dainty dish before the country every day. They will intimate that the conclusions of a secret investigation, though they may exonerate him from every imputation, will always be open to sus-

picion. Upon that point, however, we presume, the result will be presented in such a way and with such proofs as to disarm all reasonable objection.

In the light of this disclosure. the course of Mr. Beecher, throughout this extraordinary chapter of history, seems dignified, honorable, and self-respecting. The imputation against him first found publicity in the shameless, lying, outrageous story of the vile Woodhull. Mr. Beecher was then told in not a few of the public prints that he ought to make an answer. But his only answer was the pertinent question whether anybody passing under a window and flooded with a bucket of filth would stop to enter into a controversy with the nasty scullion. If the reputation and character of a lifetime weigh nothing against the slanders of the most leprous and infamous of creatures, then they are practically worthless, and, so far as the world is concerned, it is idle to spend a life in acquiring a good name. Forty thousand charges from sensational and bedizened harlots—upon whose face, as Shakespeare says, shame is ashamed to sit—should have counted nothing against Mr. Beecher, and he only obeyed the dictates of a manly self-respect when he refused to bandy words with the disreputable being in whose libidinous utterances the enamored Mr. Tilton heard the inspiration of Demosthenes!

In that determination time has fully vindicated him. The letter of Mr. Tilton himself furnishes the proof that the story of the Woodhull was false from beginning to end. What Mr. Beecher disdained to answer, beyond a single incidental denial, the very man whom he was accused of wronging has himself effectually disproved. Mr. Beecher acts with a calm faith and composure which inspire confidence.

In Mr. Tilton's statement certain letters of Mr. Beecher had been produced. These were from the first regarded by the public as the only serious part of Mr. Tilton's document. Mr. Tilton and his friends held that they proved conclusively that Mr. Beecher was guilty of the acts charged against him; that, in short, they could not be reconciled with any other theory. Many of the warmest supporters of Mr. Beecher were staggered by them, and on all sides was heard the remark, "If Mr. Beecher will only explain these letters, he can afford to laugh at all the rest that has been said against him." The malice of his enemies and the anxiety of his friends both overlooked the fact that these letters were perfectly consistent with the theory of Mr. Beecher's innocence; that they were in fact the productions of a mind conscious of its innocence though sorely



REPORTERS ENDEAVORING TO OBTAIN ADMISSION TO A MEETING OF THE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE AT MR. STORRS'S HOUSE.

tried by trouble. On the 27th of July, the *New York World* published the following able analysis of these letters, which attracted much attention at the time, and is so important a feature of the case that we reproduce it:

Mr. Beecher's rejoinder does not charge Tilton with forging the extraordinary letters which are skilfully strung along the thread of his indictment. If forged, it is incredible that Mr. Beecher should not have made haste to pronounce them forged. The engraving scene, the chamber scene, he made haste to pronounce an invention, "absolutely false." "Nothing of the kind," he says, "ever occurred, nor any sem-

blance of any such thing." The general charge of the indictment, too, he made haste to deny with all the force of language. "To every statement which connects me dishonorably with Mrs. Elizabeth R. Tilton, or which in anywise would impugn the honor and purity of this beloved Christian woman, I give the most explicit, comprehensive, and solemn denial." But Mr. Beecher does not deny writing the letters which Tilton publishes as his. On the contrary, he pronounces none of them forged, and he says of them in general: "Every line and word of my private and confidential letters which have been published is in harmony with the statements which I now make. My published correspondence on this subject comprises but two elements—the expression of my grief, and that of my desire to shield the honor of a pure and innocent woman."

That "grief" and that "desire" would not misbecome Mr. Beecher if Tilton's charge were true. The expression of that "grief" and that "desire" should weigh but lightly in favor of a chivalrous man, with a cold and critical judge searching for the truth. Every line and word of Mr. Beecher's private and confidential letters must be in harmony with, must make not the slightest discord with, the theory that his relations with Mrs. Tilton were not criminal, else Tilton's indictment, which contains (apart from the letters) not the slightest *proof*, nothing but unsupported allegations, is fatal to Mr. Beecher.

Plenty of time was taken by Tilton to prepare his indictment. It is to be presumed that he accumulated therein all the proofs within his reach to support his allegation of a criminal connection between his wife and his former friend. His mind is an untrained one, of the sentimental sort, teeming with cheap rhetoric, with no logic and no knowledge of the rules of evidence, but he probably did his best to set forth what evidence he had to support his charge. The letters of Mr. Beecher himself, and of Mrs. Tilton herself, constitute, we repeat, all the evidence in support of those passionate and bitter affirmations, which Mr. Beecher has met by "the most explicit, comprehensive, and solemn denial," and which Mrs. Tilton has met by affirming "before God," "never have I been guilty of adultery with Henry Ward Beecher in thought or deed, nor has he ever offered to me an indecorous or improper proposal."

It is a sharp and searching test of the question, crim. con. or no crim. con., to lay Mr. Beecher's private and confidential letters now disclosed by Tilton, letters written for no eyes but those of Tilton or Mrs. Tilton or Moulton, alongside of the theory of his guilt, and the theory of his innocence. It is a test to which Mr. Beecher appeals and to which at any rate he must submit, be the result what it may.

Mr. Beecher's own letters are six in number and may be described as:

1. His letter of contrition, to Moulton, January 1, 1871.

2. His letter of gratitude, to Moulton, February 7, 1871.
3. His letter of advice, to Mrs. Tilton, February 7, 1871.
4. His letter of non-resistance, to Moulton, June 1, 1873.
5. His letter of torment, to Moulton (no date given).
6. His letter of "sacrifice me," to Moulton (no date given).

1. Mr. Beecher's letter of contrition is as follows:

[In trust with F. D. Moulton.]

My Dear Friend Moulton:—I ask through you Theodore Tilton's forgiveness, and I humble myself before him as I do before my God. He would have been a better man in my circumstances than I have been. I can ask nothing, except that he will remember all the other breasts that would ache. I will not plead for myself. I even wish that I were dead. But others must live to suffer. I will die before any one but myself shall be inculpated. All my thoughts are running out towards my friends, and toward the poor child lying there, and praying with her folded hands. She is guiltless, sinned against, bearing the transgression of another. Her forgiveness I have. I humbly pray to God to put it into the heart of her husband to forgive me. I have trusted this to Moulton, in confidence. H. W. Beecher.

Crim. con. or no crim. con.? Let the test be applied. With which does this letter fit? "Every line and word" must be "in harmony" with one or the other theory. The charge made by Tilton is crim. con. No lesser fault than crim. con. could engage the attention of the whole public as now. If Mr. Beecher has ever known Mrs. Tilton's love for him to surpass her love for her husband, yet did not withdraw from her society, did not refuse to encourage it by reciprocal tenderness, that indeed is a grave fault, in a clergyman a most grave fault, enough when discovered to make him wish himself dead, to make him feel that the end of his career at last was come in an open and public shame which must silence his tongue and pen as an ethical teacher, as a preacher of the Christian religion. But neither that fault nor any less fault would certainly move public opinion to so stern and relentless a judgment as such a man might yet anticipate, and think to take refuge from in suicide. It would take a fairer account than he of his otherwise well-spent life, at such a moment. Men of the world would condemn the fault, but not him utterly. The pious would say: a sin assuredly, but go; sin no more. But no such fault, repented of with tears and anguish, pardoned and pardonable, is that which Tilton now alleges against his wife's pastor. He charges criminal conversation. Crim. con. or no crim. con.? is the searching test which must be applied to his own letters.

"I will die before any one but myself shall be inculpated." These words and the remainder of the letter of contrition were omitted by Tilton when he quoted its first sentences at the close of his letter to Dr. Bacon, written to prove himself more magnanimous than Mr. Beecher. Without inquiring why Tilton should have stopped short of

them in his quotation, let them be reconciled with the crim. con. theory, if possible. Note that Tilton alleges (though Mrs. Tilton denies) the fact of her confession of crim. con. six months earlier, July 3, 1870; alleges his own silence during those six months; alleges that he met Mr. Beecher for what he calls "a harmonious interview" and to comply with Mrs. Tilton's "wish and prayer for reconciliation and peace between her pastor and her husband;" alleges that Mr. Beecher then for the first time became aware of what Tilton describes as the six months old "confession" of his wife; alleges that he then and there granted permission to Mr. Beecher to have a private interview with Mrs. Tilton at which Mrs. Tilton gave him a written exculpation against everybody except her husband; alleges that that exculpation distinctly affirms in a postscript that even her husband could not truly charge Mr. Beecher with crim. con., nor so much as an "improper solicitation." Note also that Mr. Beecher describes the letter of contrition (which is not in his handwriting but is signed by him) as having been taken down by a friend, "sentences and fragments of what I had been saying, to use them as a mediator," while "taking blame upon myself and pouring out my heart to my friend in the strongest language, overburdened with the exaggerations of impassioned sorrow." One sentence was, "I will die before any one but myself shall be inculpated." And how can that be reconciled with the theory of crim. con.?

Does Mr. Tilton, then, charge his wife with crim. con. with other men? It is not alleged. Was Mr. Beecher confessing crim. con. with Mrs. Tilton which Mrs. Tilton too had confessed, but of which only Mr. Beecher was guilty,—uni-lateral crim. con.? That is absurd. Or was Mr. Beecher taking to himself wholly and shielding everybody else (say Mrs. Beecher for example) from the charge of somehow having caused a conjugal rupture? "I will die before any one but myself shall be inculpated" is difficult to put in harmony with any crim. con. theory. Unless explained by something not now disclosed to the public it is not reconcilable with the crim. con. theory.

The rest of the letter of contrition fits equally the crim. con. and the no crim. con. theory. The whole of the letter, including the phrase, "I will die before any one but myself shall be inculpated," is consistent with the explanation offered in Mr. Beecher's rejoinder. "When serious difficulties sprang up in her household, it was to *my wife* that she resorted for counsel, and *both of us*, acting from sympathy, and as it subsequently appeared without full knowledge, *gave unadvised counsel*, which tended to harm. I have no doubt that Mr. Tilton found that *his wife's confidence and reliance upon my judgment had greatly increased, while his influence had diminished* in consequence of a marked change in his religious and social views which was taking place during those years."

Finally, if the letter of contrition were indeed a letter, instead of a report of outbursts of grief made in detached sentences, omitting some and preserving what were best suited to effect a reconciliation, then the last two sentences taken down by Moulton might plead in Mr. Beecher's favor, for they represent her forgiveness which he has, and his forgiveness which he desires, as equally accessible to sincere contrition. But a comparison of separate sentences in such a memorandum cannot fairly weigh in Mr. Beecher's favor any more than against him, without what is lacking, a knowledge of intervening words not recorded. But the consistency of each separate sentence with the crim. con. or the no crim. con. theory does throw light. Every sentence should be perfectly consistent with one or the other theory. One sentence is not consistent with the crim. con. theory.

II. Mr. Beecher's letter of gratitude to Moulton, a month later, is as follows:

February 7, 1871.

My Dear Friend Moulton:—I am glad to send you a book, etc.

. . . . . .

Many, many friends has God raised up to me, but to no one of them has he ever given the opportunity and the wisdom so to serve me as you have. You have also proved Theodore's friend and Elizabeth's. Does God look down from heaven on three unhappier creatures that more need a friend than these? Is it not an intimation of God's intent of mercy to all that each one of these has in you a tried and proved friend? But only in you are we thus united. Would to God, who orders all hearts, that by his kind mediation Theodore, Elizabeth, and I could be made friends again. Theodore will have the hardest task in such a case; but has he not proved himself capable of the noblest things? I wonder if Elizabeth knows how generously he has carried himself toward me. Of course, I can never speak with her again without his permission, and I do not know, even then, it would be best. . . .

This is indeed the extravagance of impassioned sorrow. But crim. con. or no crim. con. is the test for the searcher after facts. In the first place it is to be noted that this letter is alleged by Tilton to be of the same day and date with one from Tilton to Moulton which he cites as follows:

Brooklyn, *February* 7, 1871.

My Dear Friend:—In several conversations with you, you have asked about my feelings toward Mr. Beecher, and yesterday you said the time had come when you would like to receive from me an expression of this kind in writing. I say, therefore, very cheerfully, that notwithstanding the great suffering which he has caused to Elizabeth and myself, I bear him no malice, shall do him no wrong, shall discountenance every project (by whomsoever proposed) for any exposure of his secret to the public, and (if I know myself at all) *shall endeavor to act to Mr. Beecher as I would have him in similar circumstances act toward me.* I ought to add that your own good offices in this case have led me to a higher moral feeling than I might otherwise have reached. Ever yours, affectionately, Theodore.

To Frank Moulton.

If crim. con. was understood by Tilton to have been confessed by Mr. Beecher and by Mrs. Tilton, this is the most extraordinary letter an injured husband ever wrote.

"A little month,
Ere yet the salt of his most righteous tears
Had left the flushing in his galled eyes,"

and he can promise to a common friend that he "shall endeavor to act to Mr. Beecher as I would have him in similar circumstances act toward me." Does an injured husband rise so easily to that plane of moral feeling, and, reaching that altitude, does he with the turn of a pen put himself in place of Mr. Beecher, and "in similar circumstances" think how he would like to have an injured husband behave to him, Tilton, caught in crim. con.?

But Mr. Beecher's own letter to the same mediator, of the same day and date, is in equally flagrant hostility to the idea of a lately discovered and pardoned crim. con. It is "Theodore, Elizabeth and I"—a most ill-timed familiarity if the wrong had been crim. con. He praises the mediator for his service to him, and then adds: "You have also proved Theodore's friend and Elizabeth's," and sees no hindrance to the "kind mediation" by which "Theodore, Elizabeth and I could be made friends again;" an absurd impertinence and a most preposterous expectation if the wrong had been crim. con. But it shocks nobody. The two letters, according to Tilton, are addressed to a common mediator. Mr. Beecher is not surprised by the ease with which Tilton puts himself in his place, and does as he would be done by if *he* were detected in crim. con. Tilton is not shocked by the tone of Mr. Beecher's letter praying a renewal of the triple friendship, its unconscious air of pastoral, or at least personal, domination. "Theodore will have the hardest task in such a case." On the contrary, according to Tilton himself, it helps "to bind Mr. Beecher and Mr. Tilton by mutual expressions of a good spirit." Crim. con., then, or no crim. con.? Of Mr. Beecher's letter of gratitude, it must be said that, read by itself, it is not absolutely inconsistent with a detected crim. con., though very extraordinary upon any theory of human nature. Read by the light of Tilton's companion letter and of the circumstances detailed by Tilton himself, it is consistent with a theory of no crim. con., of a wrong done to both husband and wife, of a wrong which Tilton can imagine himself to have done "in similar circumstances," and where Mr. Beecher can say "he would have been a better man in my circumstances." Read in the light of Tilton's companion letter and recital of facts, Mr. Beecher's letter is not consistent with crim. con. Every line and word should be perfectly consistent with one or the other theory. Some sentences, and its whole tone, are not consistent with the crim. con. theory.

III. Mr. Beecher's own letter of advice to Mrs. Tilton of still the same

day and date gives and receives light from the two foregoing letters. Like the rather artful phrase in Mr. Tilton's letter about "any exposure of his secret," it confirms the impression that the wrong done by Mr. Beecher was something tending to a conjugal rupture, of which the consummation would let loose the "storm ready to burst on our heads." Even if the lips of both the Tiltons had been sealed, such a rupture with which Mr. Beecher was wholly or partly chargeable would have been likely, while human tongues wag at their present rate and slight impulsion, to have let loose a storm to drown Plymouth Church itself, and cleave the general ear with horrid speech. Creatures like the Woodhull live and print, and newspaper reporters interview her at every stopping-place from San Francisco to New York, and newspapers print what, for her sex's sake, we hope are not her words.

Mr. Beecher's letter of advice to Mrs. Tilton, we are told by Mr. Tilton, was addressed by his permission:

BROOKLYN, *February* 7, 1871.

MY DEAR MRS. TILTON:—When I saw you last I did not expect ever to see you again, or to be alive many days. God was kinder to me than were my own thoughts. The friend whom God sent to me, Mr. Moulton, has proved, above all friends that I ever had, able and willing to help me in this terrible emergency of my life. His hand it was that tied up the storm that was ready to burst on our heads. You have no friend (Theodore excepted) who has it in his power to serve you so vitally, and who will do it with such delicacy and honor. It does my sore heart good to see in Mr. Moulton an unfeigned respect and honor for you. It would kill me if I thought otherwise. He will be as true a friend to your honor and happiness as a brother could be to a sister's. In him we have a common ground. You and I may meet in him. The past is ended. But is there no future? No wiser, higher, holier future? May not this friend stand as a priest in the new sanctuary of reconciliation and mediate and bless Theodore and my most unhappy self? Do not let my earnestness fail of its end. You believe in my judgment. I have put myself wholly and gladly in Moulton's hand, and there I must meet you. This is sent with Theodore's consent, but he has not read it. Will you return it to me by his own hand? I am very earnest in this wish for all our sakes, as such a letter ought not to be subject to even a chance of miscarriage. Your unhappy friend,

H. W. BEECHER.

The essential fact apparent in this letter is that, with Tilton's consent, Mr. Beecher commends Mr. Moulton to Mrs. Tilton as her best adviser. That fact is absurdly difficult to reconcile with the crim. con. theory. In this letter, as in the letter of gratitude to Moulton, Mr. Beecher undertakes to be and is accepted by all parties as the definer of their new and future relations, as the *moral* adviser and definer of them. That is consistent with a wrong done to husband and wife, but absurdly inconsistent with a detected crim. con. Every line and word should be perfectly consistent with one or the other theory. Its heated

phrases here and there tolerate the suggestion of the worst of conjugal wrongs. Its whole purport is not consistent with the crim. con. theory.

IV. Mr. Beecher's letter of non-resistance to Moulton is two years later in its date, June 1, 1873. It was called out, Tilton says, by the publication of the tripartite covenant, dated April 2, 1872, in which covenant Tilton, with the other signers, "earnestly desired to restore each to the other the respect, love, and fraternity in which we once lived happily together," by the public comments interpreting Tilton as the injuring and Mr. Beecher as the injured man, and by Tilton's proposal to show by publishing a few lines from the letter of contrition that the reverse was the case:

My Dear Frank:—I am determined to make no more resistance. Theodore's temperament is such that the future, even if temporarily earned, would be absolutely worthless, and rendering me liable at any hour of the day to be obliged to stultify all the devices by which we saved ourselves. It is only fair that he should know that the publication of the card which he proposes would leave him worse off than before. The agreement (viz., the "tripartite covenant") was made after my letter through you to him (viz., the "apology") was written. He had had it a year. He had condoned his wife's fault. He had enjoined upon me, with the utmost earnestness and solemnity, not to betray his wife, nor leave his children to a blight. . . . With such a man as T. T., there is no possible salvation for any that depend upon him. With a strong nature, he does not know how to govern it. . . . There is no use in trying further. I have a strong feeling upon me, and it brings great peace, that I am spending my last Sunday, and preaching my last sermon.

Tilton publishes himself in this letter as enjoining upon Mr. Beecher "with the utmost earnestness and solemnity not to betray his wife (Mrs. Tilton), nor leave his children to a blight." The rest of the note is consistent with the theory of a detected crim. con. in every line and word. It would suggest such a theory to the most impartial mind. It would compel Mr. Beecher's dearest friend to tolerate the suggestion. But the phrase we have quoted may suggest fifty things: Mrs. Tilton's greater love for Mr. Beecher than for her husband; some "wife's fault," which Tilton had condoned, it distinctly affirms; "all the devices by which we (Tilton and Mr. Beecher) saved ourselves" from public misconception and reproach, and the harsher judgment which would have followed a conjugal rupture in anywise chargeable to Mr. Beecher—these it distinctly admits; but among these fifty things that one phrase does not suggest the guilty partner in a detected crim. con. Him a clergyman, before the public daily, did an injured husband ever "enjoin with utmost earnestness and solemnity" not to betray his wife? Every line and word of Mr. Beecher's own letters should be perfectly consistent with one or the other theory, crim. con. or not crim. con. That phrase is not consistent with the crim. con. theory.



REPORTERS FOR THE NEW YORK PRESS FOLLOWING A WITNESS ON HER RETURN FROM THE COMMITTEE ROOM.

V. and VI. The two remaining letters of Mr. Beecher to Mr. Moulton are akin in their purport. Both explicitly anticipate, with a sensitiveness not unbecoming however misjudging, that the publication by Tilton of his letter of contrition would terminate the usefulness, the happiness, and the career of the pastor and preacher. The latter anticipates that the publication would be equally fatal to Tilton, but says "sacrifice me without hesitation, if you can clearly see your way to his safety and happiness thereby."

MR. BEECHER TO MR. MOULTON.

No man can see the difficulties that environ me unless he stands where I do. To say that I have a church on my hands is simple enough, but to have the hundreds and thousands of men pressing me, each one with his keen suspicion, or anxiety, or zeal, to see the tendencies which, if not stopped, would break out into a ruinous defence of me; to stop them without seeming to do it; to prevent any one questioning me; to meet and allay prejudices against T., which had their beginning years before; to keep serene, as if I was not alarmed or disturbed; to be cheerful at home and among friends when I was suffering the torments of the damned; to pass sleepless nights often, and yet to come up fresh and fair for Sunday—all this may be talked about, but the real thing cannot be understood from the outside, nor its wearing and grinding on the nervous system.

MR. BEECHER TO MR. MOULTON.

If my destruction would place him (Mr. Tilton) all right, that shall not stand in the way; I am willing to step down and out. No one can offer more than that. That I do offer. Sacrifice me without hesitation, if you can clearly see your way to his safety and happiness thereby. In one point of view I could desire the sacrifice on my part. Nothing can possibly be so bad as the power of great darkness in which I spend much of my time. I look upon death as sweeter far than any friend I have in the world. Life would be pleasant if I could see that rebuilt which is shattered. But to live on the sharp and ragged edge of anxiety, remorse, fear, despair, and yet to put on an appearance of serenity and happiness, cannot be endured much longer. I am well nigh discouraged. If you cease to trust me, to love me, I am alone; I do not know any person in the world to whom I could go.

Both of these letters in their lines and words appear to us consistent with the crim. con. theory. They are neither of them inconsistent, however, with the no crim. con. theory.

Thus, then, the case stands. Judging Mr. Beecher by his own letters, with no other light than they cast upon one another, or than is cast upon them by Tilton himself, and excluding all the explanations made by his friends, and all the light which Mr. Beecher himself may yet throw by detailing the primary facts in the case and the set of circumstances under which each letter was written; taking crim. con. or no crim. con. as the single test to be applied in the careful analysis of every line and word of Mr. Beecher's own most "private and confidential letters," we reach this result.

All the letters are consistent with the no crim. con. theory. Two of the letters are consistent with either theory. Four of the letters are inconsistent with the crim. con. theory.

> "If his occulted guilt
> Do not itself unkennel in *one* speech,
> It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
> And men's imaginations are as foul
> As Vulcan's stithy."

In order to present his defence in proper shape, and to explain the letters quoted by Tilton, Mr. Beecher very naturally desired to obtain possession of the originals, that he might refresh his memory by an examination of them. These had been intrusted by Mr. Beecher to the keeping of Mr. Francis D. Moulton, the "mutual friend" of himself and Tilton. Just why Mr. Beecher should have placed his private correspondence in the hands of a third party is a circumstance hard to understand. It was a foolish act, and a great error upon his part, and certainly he has grievously atoned for it.

Upon the publication of Tilton's statement, Mr. Beecher applied to Mr. Moulton for the return of the documents intrusted to him. His letter was as follows:

July 24, 1874.

My Dear Mr. Moulton:—I am making out a statement, and I need the letters and papers in your hands. Will you send me, by Tracy, all the originals of my papers? Let them be numbered, and an inventory taken, and I will return them to you as soon as I can see and compare, get dates, make extracts or copies, as the case may be.

Will you send me "Bowen's Heads of Difficulty," and all letters of my sister, if any are with you?

I heard you were sick—are you about again? God grant you to see peaceful times.

Yours gratefully, H. W. Beecher.

F. D. Moulton.

To this note Mr. Beecher received no reply. After waiting several days, during which it was ascertained that Mr. Moulton had left Brooklyn, a messenger was despatched to his summer residence with the following note:

Brooklyn, *July* 28, 1874.

My Dear Friend:—The Committee of Investigation are waiting mainly for you before closing their labors. I, too, earnestly wish that you would come and clear your mind and memory of everything that can bear on the case. I pray you also to bring all letters and papers relating to it which will throw light upon it, and bring to a result this protracted case.

I trust that Mrs. M. has been reinvigorated, and that her need of your care will not be so great as to detain you.

Truly yours, H. W. Beecher.

F. D. Moulton, Esq.

The messenger did not succeed in finding Mr. Moulton at his summer residence at Narragansett, and after a vain search for him returned to Brooklyn, and left the note at Mr. Moulton's house.

49 Remsen Street, Brooklyn, *August* 4. 1874.

My Dear Mr. Beecher:—I received your note of July 24, informing me that you are making a statement, and need the letters and papers in my hands, and asking me to send to you for the purpose of having extracts or copies made from them, as the case may be, that you may use them in your controversy with Mr. Tilton.

I should be very glad to do anything that I may do, consistent with

my sense of what is due to justice and right, to aid you; but if you will reflect that I hold all the important papers intrusted to me at the desire and request, and in the confidence of both parties to this unhappy affair, you will see that I cannot in honor give them or any of them to either party to aid him as against the other. I have not given or shown to Mr. Tilton any documents or papers relating to your affairs since the renewal of your controversy, which had been once adjusted.

I need not tell you how deeply I regret your position as foes each to the other after my long and, as you, I have no doubt, fully believe, honest and faithful effort to have you otherwise.

I will sacredly hold all the papers and information I have until both parties shall request me to make them public, or to deliver them into the hands of either or both, or to lay them before the committee, or I am compelled in a court of justice to produce them, if I can be so compelled.

My regret that I am compelled to this course is softened by my belief that you will not be substantially injured by it in this regard; for all the facts are of course known to you, and I am bound to believe and assume that in the statement you are preparing you will only set forth the exact facts; and, if so, the documents, when produced, will only confirm, and cannot contradict, what you may state, so that you will suffer no loss.

If, on the contrary—which I cannot presume—you desire the possession of the documents in order that you may prove your statement in a manner not to be contravened by the facts set forth in them to the disadvantage of Mr. Tilton, I should be then aiding you in doing that which I cannot believe the strictest and firmest friendship for you call upon me to do. With grateful recollections of your kind confidence and trust in me, I am very truly yours,

F. D. Moulton.

Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Mr. Moulton's action in this matter up to the writing of this note had perplexed the outside public very greatly, but it seems that up to this period Mr. Beecher had regarded him as his friend. The refusal of Mr. Moulton to comply with Mr. Beecher's very proper demand for his own letters opened the eyes of all parties as to the true position of the "mutual friend." Tilton had been able to use documents intrusted in confidence to Moulton, and when Beecher asked for an inspection of the originals, he was refused. The public from this moment became satisfied that Mr. Moulton had dropped the character of "mutual friend," and had joined Tilton in the war

upon Beecher. Mr. Moulton has since then presented his justification, which will be found in these pages, but he has not succeeded in relieving himself of the suspicion of betraying the confidence reposed in him by Mr. Beecher for the benefit of Tilton.

Mr. Beecher, now perceiving the true position of Moulton, addressed him a peremptory demand for the production of all his papers in Moulton's possession before the committee. His letter and Moulton's reply were as follows:

BROOKLYN, *August* 4, 1874.

F. D. MOULTON, ESQ.:

SIR:—Your letter bearing date Aug. 4, 1874, is this moment received. Allow me to express my regret and astonishment that you refuse me permission even to see certain letters and papers in your possession, relating to charges made against me by Theodore Tilton, and at the reasons given for the refusal.

On your solemn and repeated assurances of personal friendship, and in the unquestioning confidence with which you inspired me with your honor and fidelity, I placed in your hands for safe-keeping various letters addressed to me from my brother, my sister, and various other parties; also memoranda of affairs not immediately connected with Mr. Tilton's matters. I also from time to time addressed you confidential notes relating to my own self, as one friend would write to another. These papers were never placed in your house to be held for two parties, nor to be used in any way. They were to be held for me. I did not wish them to be subject to risk of loss or scattering, from my careless habit in the matter of preserving documents. They were to be held for me. In so far as these papers were concerned, you were only a friendly trustee, holding papers subject to my wishes.

Mr. Tilton has made a deadly assault upon me, and has used letters and fragments of letters, purporting to be copies of these papers. Are these extracts genuine? Are they garbled? What are their dates? What, if anything, has been left out, and what put in?

You refuse my demand for these papers on the various pleas, that if I speak the truth in my statement I do not need them; that if I make a successful use of them it will be an injury to Mr. Tilton, and that you, as a friend of both parties, are bound not to aid either in any act that shall injure the other.

But I do not desire to injure any one, but to repel an injury attempted upon me by the use of papers committed sacredly to your care. These documents have been seen and copied; they have been hawked for sale

in New York newspaper offices; what purport to be my confidential notes to you are on the market.

But when I demand a sight of the originals of papers of which you are only a trustee, that I may defend myself, you refuse, because you are the friend of both parties! Mr. Tilton has access to your depository for materials with which to strike me; but I am not permitted to use them in defending myself.

I do not ask you to place before the committee any papers which Mr. Tilton may have given you. But I do demand that you forthwith place before the committee every paper which I have written or deposited with you. Truly yours, H. W. Beecher.

MR. MOULTON'S ANSWER TO MR. BEECHER.

46 Remsen Street, Brooklyn, *August* 5, 1874.

Rev. Henry Ward Beecher:

My Dear Sir:—In all our acquaintance and friendship I have never received from you a letter of the tone of yours of August 4. It seems unlike yourself, and to have been inspired by the same ill advisers who had so lamentably carried your private affairs before a committee of your church and thence before the public.

In reply let me remind you that during the whole of the past four years all the documents, notes and memoranda which you and Mr. Tilton have intrusted to me, have been so intrusted because they had a reference to your mutual differences. I hold no papers, either of yours or his, except such as bear on this case. You speak of "memoranda of affairs not immediately connected with the Tilton matter." You probably allude to the memoranda of your difficulties with Mr. Bowen, but these have a direct reference to your present case with Mr. Tilton, and were deposited with me by you because of such reference. You speak also of a letter or two from your brother and sister, and I am sure you have not forgotten the apprehension which we entertained lest Mrs. Hooker should fulfil a design which she foreshadowed to invade your pulpit and read to your congregation a confession of your intimacy with Mrs. Tilton.

You speak of other papers which I hold "subject to your wishes." I hold none such, nor do I hold any subject to Mr. Tilton's wishes. The papers which I hold, both yours and his, were not given to be subject to the wishes of either of the parties. But the very object of my holding them has been, and still is, to prevent the wish of one party from being injuriously exercised against the other.

You are incorrect in saying that Mr. Tilton has had access to my "depository of materials;" on the contrary, I have refused Mr. Tilton such access. During the preparation of his sworn statement he came to me and said his case would be incomplete unless I permitted him to

use all the documents, but I refused; and all he could rely upon were such notes as he had made from time to time from writings of yours which you had written to me to be read to him, and passages of which he caught from my lips in shorthand. Mr. Tilton has seen only a part of the papers in my possession, and would be more surprised to learn the entire facts of the case than you can possibly be.

What idle rumors may have existed in newspaper offices I know not; but they have not come from me.

In closing your letter you say, "I do not ask you to place before the committee any papers which Mr. Tilton may have given you; but I do demand that you forthwith place before the committee every paper which I have written or deposited with you." In reply I can only say that I cannot justly place before the committee the papers of one of the parties without doing the same with the papers of the other, and I cannot do this honorably except either by legal process compelling me, or else by consent in writing, not only of yourself, but of Mr. Tilton, with whom I shall confer on the subject as speedily as possible.

You will, I trust, see a greater spirit of justice in this reply than you have infused into your unusual letter of August 4.

Very respectfully, FRANCIS D. MOULTON.

Mr. Moulton was now in a most unhappy predicament for himself. His pretence of friendship for both parties was exploded, and it was absolutely necessary for him to speak in his own defence. As a preliminary step, he addressed the following note to Mr. Tilton, asking his consent to the step demanded of him by Mr. Beecher:

BROOKLYN, *August* 5, 1874.

THEODORE TILTON, ESQ.:

MY DEAR SIR:—I have received, under date of July 28, a letter from the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, in which he expresses the wish that I would go before the Investigating Committee and "clear my mind and memory of everything that can bear on this case," referring, of course, to the controversy between you and him.

I cannot, in view of my confidential relations with you, make any statement before the Investigating Committee, unless you release me, as Mr. Beecher has done, explicitly from my obligation to maintain your confidence.

If you will express to me clearly a request that I should go before the Investigating Committee and state any and all facts within my knowledge concerning your case with Mr. Beecher, and exhibit to them any or all documents in my possession relating thereto, I shall, in view of

Mr. Beecher's letter, consider myself at liberty to accede to the request of the committee, to state such facts and exhibit such documents.

Very respectfully,

FRANCIS D. MOULTON.

To this letter Mr. Tilton replied as follows:

BROOKLYN, *August* 5, 1874.

FRANCIS D. MOULTON, ESQ.:

MY DEAR SIR:—In response to your note of this day, mentioning Mr. Beecher's request that you should exhibit to the committee the facts and documents hitherto held in confidence by you touching his difference with me, I hereby give you notice that you have my own consent and request to do the same. Yours truly,

THEODORE TILTON.

XIX.

MR. MOULTON'S SECOND APPEARANCE.

AFTER the receipt of the note of Mr. Tilton, given above, Mr. Moulton had no longer any reason for withholding the information demanded of him. Accordingly, on the night of the 5th of August, he appeared before the committee, and read the following document to them:

GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE:—I have received your invitation to appear before you. I have been ready, on any proper occasion, to disclose all the facts and documents known to me or in my possession relating to the subject-matter of your inquiry, but I have found myself embarrassed because of my peculiar relations to the parties to the controversy. Friendly for years to all of them, and at the time of the outbreak of this miserable business having the kindest feeling toward each, I endeavored to avert the calamity that has now fallen upon all. Most fully and confidently trusted by all parties, it became necessary that I should know the exact and simple truth of every fact and circumstance of the controversy, as I was made by mutual consent in some sort the arbiter of the affair, and, after the estrangement, the medium of communication between the parties, each saying in writing to me such things as were desired to be said or written to the others; and in such case I gave the information or showed the communication to the person intended to receive or be affected by it. Under these circumstances I have not felt at liberty to give testimony or facts thus obtained in the sacredness of confidence before a tribunal not authorized by law to require them, however much otherwise I might respect its members and

objects, without the consent of the parties from whom I received the disclosures and documents. With the consent or request of Mr. Beecher or Mr. Tilton, I have held myself ready, sorrowingly, to give all the facts that I know about the objects of inquiry of the committee, and produce whatever papers I have to the committee, and leave copies of the same with them, if they desired it, with perhaps the one stipulation that if I have to give my evidence orally or to be cross-examined, I might bring with me a phonographic reporter, in order that I should have an exact copy of my testimony, for my own protection.

I am to-day in receipt, from the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher and Mr. Theodore Tilton, of their consent and request, thus absolving me thereby from my confidential relations toward them, to appear before you, and to give to you the facts and documents with reference to the differences between them.

It appears to me that as Mr. Tilton has given his evidence, and Mrs. Tilton likewise, Mr. Beecher should be requested to add his own, in order that the three principal parties in the case shall have been independently heard on their own responsibility before I am called to adduce the facts in my possession, derived from them all.

Nevertheless, since I am now fully released from my confidential relations with the parties involved in this sad affair, and since my only proper statement must consist of the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, I see no special reason why it may not be made at one time as well as at another, but as my statement will necessarily include a great multiplicity of facts and papers, I must ask a little delay to arrange and copy them. Accordingly, I suggest Saturday evening, August 8, as an evening convenient for me to lay my statement before the committee.

The committee adjourned at midnight and passed silently away.

XX.

FRANCIS D. MOULTON.

(THE MUTUAL FRIEND).

Mr. Moulton has figured so prominently in the controversy that some knowledge of him is necessary to a proper understanding of the case.

He is about thirty-two years of age, and is said to be a man of fine education and commanding business talents. After passing through college, he received an appointment to the

Military Academy at West Point, but declined it because of his then delicate health. Upon the recommendation of Peter Cooper, Esq., he was received into the mercantile establishment of Woodruff & Robinson, of New York. By diligent application to business he soon won the confidence of the firm, and was rapidly advanced, becoming, at length, a partner in the house. He has been a very successful merchant, and is now a man of considerable wealth. "In manners he impresses one as being a gentleman of refinement, with just enough of the way of the world in his make up to preclude the idea of effeminacy. He wears a heavy brown moustache that looks as if it were never combed or cared for. His manner is direct and business-like. He is slightly over the medium height, straight and muscular. He talks freely, but when discussing business speaks rather slowly and with precision. His admiration for General Butler, his personal friend, whom he has consulted in this case, is based upon that gentleman's force of character, and the success with which he uniformly accomplishes his ends."

It has been a matter of surprise to the outside world that Mr. Beecher should have honored Mr. Moulton with such an extraordinary degree of his friendship. Certainly there seemed little to draw the two men together. One was a man of world-wide fame, of advanced age, and scholarly tastes and pursuits, and a clergyman ; the other scarcely known out of his own immediate circle, simply a man of average abilities, a young man, and one who made no pretensions to religious life or thought. "Mr. Beecher," says Mrs. Stowe, writing in 1868, "had inherited from his father what has been called a genius for friendship. He was never without the anchor of an enthusiastic personal attachment for somebody."

Men with such a predisposition to friendship are apt to (to use Mr. Beecher's own words) "slop over." Certainly Mr. Beecher did choose unwisely in selecting Mr. Moulton as his intimate friend and confidant. Moulton, however, had been Tilton's friend, and Theodore had confided to him the story of his imaginary wrongs. He came to Mr. Beecher with profes-

sions of the warmest esteem for him and of his desire to settle the controversy peaceably and quietly, and being a prepossessing and most plausible man, won the pastor's friendship, which was given with characteristic unreserve.

"We find Moulton," says the Investigating Committee, in their final report, "quietly becoming the friend of both parties —the mutual friend. Mr. Moulton, as he discloses his character in these proceedings, appears to be a very plausible man, with more vigor of will than conscience. One thing is unfortunately clear, that from this time on he contrived to obtain and hold the confidence of Mr. Beecher both in his ability and purpose to keep the peace in good faith. There was certainly room for an honest peacemaker. Mr. Beecher knew he had been falsely accused of an impure offence, and that a reputable woman by some means had been induced to make the accusation. It is true the charge had been withdrawn, and its force was in a sense broken. Still the fact remained—he had been accused.

"Mr. Beecher naturally felt that the situation was critical. For him, a clergyman of world-wide fame, to be even falsely accused was a calamity. To prevent publicity would save a still greater calamity. He felt—and in the light of results may we not say he was right?—that a public charge of such an offence would, as he expressed it in his letter to Moulton of February 5, 'make a conflagration.' For reasons of malice and revenge, it became apparent that Tilton was preparing to make a deadly assault upon him. This Mr. Beecher believed it was his supreme duty to prevent by all possible honorable means. Moulton professed to deprecate Tilton's purpose, and declared if Mr. Beecher would trust to him he could and would prevent it. And so now began a series of letters and steps under the direction of the mutual friend, having for their object, as Mr. Beecher believed, the suppression of the scandal and the restoration, in some measure, if practicable, of Tilton to position and employment."

That Mr. Moulton understood the charge against Mr. Beecher at this time to be "improper solicitations of Mrs. Tilton" is

evident from the fact that he regarded the offence alleged by Tilton as one that could be apologized for and forgiven. It would be an outrageous wrong to him to imagine that he could hold that Tilton ought under any circumstances to renew his friendly relations with, or accept the bounty of, the man he believed to be the seducer of his wife.

Not only was Mr. Moulton aware of the true nature of Tilton's first charge against Mr. Beecher, but he also believed Mr. Beecher to be innocent of wrong in the matter. About the 1st of June, 1873, Mr. Beecher, becoming disheartened at the ill-success of his efforts to keep the scandal quiet, had half formed a resolution to let it take its course, and make his defence in a statement to the public, and on that day he wrote to Moulton, "My mind is clear; I am not in haste; I shall write for the public a statement that will bear the light of the Judgment Day. God will take care of me and mine." Certainly these are strange words for a guilty man. They breathe but one sentiment—conscious rectitude and a consequent trust in God. Mr. Moulton, however, did not wish publicity. He replied to Mr. Beecher, beginning his letter thus: "If the truth must be spoken, let it be. I know you can stand if the whole case was published to-morrow." "Apparently fearing this might rather tend to determine Mr. Beecher to publish the whole case than otherwise, he crossed out these and other lines with a pencil and commenced anew. In this new effort, on the same paper, these words occur: 'You can stand if the whole case were published to-morrow.'" Whatever Mr. Moulton may now allege, his written words must stand against him.

Mr. Moulton gave Mr. Beecher very bad advice during the progress of the affair, and under the influence of the "mutual friend" Mr. Beecher exhibited a degree of timidity and moral cowardice which he has bitterly paid for. Yet all this while he trusted Moulton, who, by his own showing, was using his influence over him for Tilton's benefit. Nor did Mr. Beecher suspect the true character of the "mutual friend" until the publication of Tilton's statement containing copies of letters confided to Moulton's keeping, and the refusal of the "mutual

friend" to allow Beecher access to the originals of these papers, made it seem that Moulton was using the confidence reposed in him for Tilton and against Beecher.

The New York *Graphic*, which is popularly supposed to speak for Mr. Moulton, and to express his sentiments, gives what is regarded as the gist of Moulton's reasons for his refusal of Mr. Beecher's request (see edition of August 6) in the following: "It is obvious at a glance that the papers once in Mr. Beecher's hands would be at his disposal and might be destroyed by some of his indiscreet or over zealous friends." In asking for these papers in his first letter—that of July 24—Mr. Beecher asked Mr. Moulton to number and take an inventory of the papers he asked for. This placed it in Moulton's power to prove the destruction or suppression of any of them. Such destruction or suppression would have been fatal to Mr. Beecher, and it is not for a moment to be supposed that either he or any of his friends would have inflicted such damage upon his case, or at least have pointed out to Mr. Moulton the means of fastening such action upon them.

Mr. Moulton's position in this scandal has been peculiar, and he has come out of it not in the manner he must have desired. Many hard things have been said of him, many serious charges made against him; but it must be confessed that the most serious injuries he has experienced in the affair have been those he has inflicted upon himself by his own admitted acts and his published statements.

XXI.

MR. MOULTON'S THIRD APPEARANCE.

On the 10th of August, to which date Mr. Moulton's appearance had been postponed by mutual consent, that gentleman appeared before the committee, and laid before them copies of some of the documents he had been requested to produce. The official report of this session of the committee is as follows:

The committee met at 3 P. M. All the members were present. At about 5 o'clock Francis D. Moulton, who was expected at the opening of the session, made his appearance, when, with the consent of the committee, he read the following statement, prefacing it with the remarks:

"I submit to you, first, the invitation signed by your chairman, July 27, 1874; next, the invitation of your chairman, signed July 28, and next, the invitation of your chairman, signed August 4," (laying copies of these invitations on the table before him.)

STATEMENT OF MR. MOULTON.

GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE:—When I was last before you I stated that I would, at your request, produce such documents as I had, and make such statement of facts as had come to my knowledge on the subject of your inquiry. I fully intended so to do, and have prepared my statement of facts as sustained by the documents, and made an exhibit of all the papers that have come in any way into my possession, bearing on the controversy between the parties. That statement must, of course, bear with more or less force upon one or the other of them. On mature reflection, aided by the advice of my most valued friends, I have reconsidered that determination, and am obliged to say to you that I feel compelled, from a sense of duty to the parties, to my relation to their controversy, and to myself, neither to make the statement nor to produce the documents.

When I first became a party to the unhappy controversy between Beecher and Tilton, I had no personal knowledge, nor any document in my possession which could affect either. Everything that I know of fact, or have received of papers, has come to me in the most sacred confidence, to be used for the purpose of composing and settling all difficulties between them, and of preventing, so far as possible, any knowledge of their private affairs being brought to the public notice. For this purpose all their matters have been intrusted to me, and for none other. If I should now use them, it would be not for the purpose of peace and reconciliation, but to voluntarily take part in a controversy which they have seen fit to renew between themselves. How faithfully, earnestly, and honestly I have labored to do my duty to the parties for peace, they both know. The question for me to settle for myself, and no other, is now, ought I to do anything to aid either party in a renewed controversy by use of that which I received and have used only to promote harmony? On my honor and conscience, I think I ought not. And at the risk of whatever of misconstruction and vituperation may come upon me, I must adhere to the dictates of my own judgment, and preserve, at least, my own self-respect.

I call attention again to the fact that yours is a mere voluntary tribunal, and whatever I do here is done by a voluntary and not compelled

witness. Whether before any tribunal having the power to compel the production of testimony and statement of fact, I shall ever produce these papers, or give any of these confidential statements, I reserve to myself to judge of the emergency, which I hope may never come. Against my wish—as I never have been in sympathy with a renewal of this conflict—a part of these documents have been given to the public. In so far, confidence in regard to them has ceased. It is but just, therefore, and due to the parties, that the whole of those documents, portions of which only have been given, shall be put into your hands, in response to the thrice-renewed request of the committee. I have, therefore, copies of them which I produce here and place in the hands of the committee, with the hope and request, that after they have been examined by them, they may be returned to me. If any controversy shall arise as to the authenticity of the copies, or of the documents on that point, I shall hold myself open to speak. With this exception—except in defence of my own honor and the uprightness of my course in all this unfortunate and unhappy business, the purity and candor of which I appeal to the consciences of both parties to sustain—I do not propose, and hope I may never be called upon hereafter to speak, either as to the facts, or to produce any paper that I have received from either of the parties involved herein. FRANCIS D. MOULTON.

[The letters will appear in Mr. Beecher's statement, with an explanation of each.]

THE DEBATE WITH THE COMMITTEE.

Mr. WINSLOW—Mr. Moulton, the committee desire me to ask you some questions, notwithstanding the position you take here in your written statement. You are well aware, as you show, by the three invitations which the committee have sent you, that we are in good faith pursuing an investigation. You will remember that we were appointed by the pastor of Plymouth Church, with the sanction and approval of the examining committee of that church, to inquire into all these matters relating to the alleged grievances of Mr. Tilton. The letter of authority that comes to us is not limited. No restrictions are put upon us of any kind. We are invited to examine all the sources of evidence, and we have looked upon you as one of the principal sources of evidence. We have waited some two or three weeks to get your testimony, and I am sure I express the feeling of the committee when I express a sense of disappointment at the position you take. Of course we know that we are not a court with compulsory powers. We are, as you state, a mere voluntary tribunal. You can do exactly as you please; we await your pleasure; but what I desire to know is, in behalf of the committee, whether you have so deliberately formed this purpose as to make it beyond recall, as things now stand.

Mr. Moulton—In reply to what you have said, and with reference to my appearance here, so far as you are concerned in this committee, I call your attention to the language of your own invitation, namely, this: "We earnestly request that you bring all letters and documents in your possession which are referred to by Theodore Tilton in his statement before the committee." I comply with the request of this committee, and produce copies of the letters referred to by Mr. Tilton, the authenticity of which I am ready within a few moments to establish.

Q. Do you mean to have us understand, Mr. Moulton, that you have personally compared the originals with these copies, so that you know of your own knowledge that they are correct? A. I mean to state exactly what I have stated.

Mr. Winslow—You have not stated anything on that point.

Mr. Moulton—Yes, I stated that these are copies of the letters which you requested, referred to in Mr. Theodore Tilton's documents.

Q. Do you state of your own personal knowledge that they are copies, or have you trusted to somebody else to make copies and compose them? A. I beg pardon, sir; I am willing to authenticate these copies whenever you wish that they should be authenticated.

Q. Cannot you now be induced, Mr. Moulton, to go on, notwithstanding what has happened, and give us a full statement of all your knowledge in these matters? A. I stand upon the communication which I have made to you to-day, sir.

Q. And that you do not mean to change? A. Not without sufficient reason.

Mr. Winslow—Of course I am now referring to the present moment. A. Yes, sir.

Mr. Winslow—There is another point that I would like to ask you about, Mr. Moulton. Considering the great importance of these letters, I submit to you whether it would not be fair and proper that the originals be produced, notwithstanding your readiness to authenticate the copies. You know that in a court copies would not be received where the originals could be produced; and would you not be willing to produce them long enough to have them looked at and examined?

Mr. Moulton—In answer to that question I will say, I have not any desire now, nor have I had any desire, to withhold these originals from you; and I am willing now, or within a few minutes, to produce them. You may send any member of your committee to see them if you doubt the authenticity.

Mr. Winslow—I do not put it on the ground of doubt, but on the ground of business-like regularity.

Mr. Moulton—Pardon me; I call your attention to the language of this statement which I have just made; and if the authenticity, by either party, of these documents is doubted, I hold myself ready to prove their authenticity.

Mr. WINSLOW—I do not feel called upon to put it on any ground of doubt, because there is no reason of doing it.

Mr. MOULTON—I do not think there is, sir.

Mr. WINSLOW—It is merely a matter of customary business regularity.

Mr. MOULTON—I have in good faith come here, and have presented to you copies of the original documents; if you doubt—

Mr. WINSLOW—Do not put it in that way, please.

Mr. MOULTON—Pardon me; I referred to my communication; if there is any doubt I shall remove the doubt.

Mr. WINSLOW—You were about to say something of your willingness to send for them while you are here, and let us see them.

Mr. MOULTON—O, well, you won't doubt them, I think.

Q. If we should conclude that we wanted to see them at some other time, would you send for them? A. Certainly, sir.

Q. Within the present week? A. Certainly. I am willing to go with all the members of your present committee, or any one that you may select, some time during the present week, and show to any accredited member of this committee the original documents. Is that a fair answer to that question?

Mr. WINSLOW—That is satisfactory.

Mr. HALL—Perhaps that question could be determined, so far as the committee are concerned, at the present moment.

Mr. MOULTON—I want the action in reference to these documents determined according to the expression of the document which I have submitted to you.

Mr. WINSLOW—Well, if for any reason we want to see the originals, I understand you to say there is no objection? [Mr. Moulton assented.]

Mr. WHITE—I want to inquire whether your objection to giving a fuller statement is based upon the wording of the letters which seem on one construction to limit it to bringing with you the originals of the letters or papers referred to in Mr. Tilton's statement before the committee, as it seems to me that the letter is susceptible of another explanation, and one which certainly was the understanding of the committee?

Mr. MOULTON—Yes, sir, I will answer your question; I wish to say, and do say, that I have acquiesced just now in the request of your chairman, and that all reasons for the non-production of facts, or the non-exhibition of documents, is given in the communication which I have just read to you.

Mr. WHITE—Well, as I understand it, the first request, antedating all of these, called upon you to come before us and give your testimony in regard to any charges which might affect the character and the Christian standing of Mr. Beecher, in the letter referred to of Theodore Tilton to Dr. Bacon.

Mr. Moulton—Your original letter did not say any such thing.

Q. Have you a copy here, that we may see what it did say? A. I presented to you at the beginning of this interview the letters from your chairman, with reference to which I appear; and as it is a fact that I have fully answered these thrice-repeated requests, I submit that this answer is sufficient.

Mr. Sage—Allow me to ask you one question, Mr. Moulton?

Mr. Moulton—Certainly.

Mr. Sage—One letter of mine, which is before me, contains a request to bring with you the originals of all letters and papers referred to in Mr. Tilton's statement to the committee.

Mr. Winslow—He has covered that by his agreement.

Mr. Moulton—If you doubt or question, or if you require them, you shall have them.

Mr. Sage—When shall we?

Mr. Moulton—My dear sir, you can go with me all together to my house if you want to.

Mr. Sage—The answer is unequivocal that we can have possession?

Mr. Moulton—Not that you can have possession, but that you can see them.

Q. Well, do you mean possession long enough to examine them? A. Yes, sir, in accordance with my statement.

Mr. White—The letters that are referred to, which are produced by you here, three in number, each of them, refer to a request before made, to appear and give your testimony. I desire simply, as one of the committee, to state that it is my understanding of those requests that they cover the same thing that was embodied in the statement, in the request of early in July, that you appear and give your testimony in regard to the matters involved in the Tilton letter to Mr. Bacon; and as they refer to that again, I claim it as my understanding, as one of the committee, that this request is not limited to the simple production of papers; but it does include in it the request to give your testimony in regard to all the matters. That is what I have been trying to make appear here.

Mr. Moulton—I repeat again that I have answered fully, in my interview with you to-day, the request of the chairman of your committee.

In answer to a question put by Mr. Tracy, Mr. Moulton replied: I have stated explicitly, in my communication to this committee, the grounds upon which I deny to this committee the statement of facts and the exhibition of documents that have come into my possession in confidence.

General Tracy—Then you do not mean to put that refusal upon the form of the committee's invitation to you? A. No, sir.

On motion of Mr. Cleveland, it was voted that Mr. Winslow be authorized to go with Mr. Moulton, and examine and verify the documents. After some informal conversation in regard to the publication of the proceedings of the present session, Mr. Moulton retired. The committee remained in consultation until seven o'clock, and then adjourned to meet again on the evening of Tuesday, the 11th inst., at eight o'clock.

XXII.

MR. BEECHER'S DEFENCE.

Mr. Moulton having declined to testify before the committee, or to submit to that body the statement he had prepared, there was no reason why Mr. Beecher should further delay his defence, which was accordingly submitted on the 13th of August. On this day the Investigating Committee met at eight o'clock in the morning in Mr. Beecher's library. The committee having been called to order by the chairman, Mr. Beecher read the following statement:

Gentlemen of the Committee:—In the statement addressed to the public on the 22d of July last I gave an explicit, comprehensive, and solemn denial to the charges made by Theodore Tilton against me. That denial I now repeat and reaffirm. I also stated in that communication that I should appear before your committee with a more detailed statement and explanation of the facts in the case. For this the time has now come. Four years ago Theodore Tilton fell from one of the proudest editorial chairs in America, where he represented the cause of religion, humanity and patriotism, and in a few months thereafter became the associate and representative of Victoria Woodhull and the priest of her strange cause. By his follies he was bankrupt in reputation, in occupation, and in resources. The interior history, of which I am now to give a brief outline, is the history of his attempts to so employ me as to reinstate him in business, restore his reputation, and place him again upon the eminence from which he had fallen. It is a sad history, to the full meaning of which I have but recently awakened. Entangled in a wilderness of complications, I followed until lately a false theory and a delusive hope, believing that the friend who had assured me of his determination and ability to control the passionate vagaries of Mr. Tilton, to restore his household, to rebuild his fortunes



LADIES BRINGING BOUQUETS TO MR. BEECHER.

and to vindicate me, would be equal to that promise. His self-confessed failure has made clear to me what for a long time I did not suspect—the real motive of Mr. Tilton. My narrative does not represent a single standpoint, only as regards my opinion of Theodore Tilton. It begins at my cordial intimacy with him in his earlier career, shows my lamentation and sorrowful but hopeful affection for him during the period of his initial wanderings from truth and virtue; it describes my repentance over evils befalling him of which I was made to believe myself the cause, my persevering and finally despairing efforts to save him and his family by any sacrifice of myself not absolutely dishonorable, and my growing conviction that his perpetual follies and blunders rendered his recovery impossible. I can now see that he is and has been from the beginning of this difficulty a selfish and reckless schemer, pursuing a

plan of mingled greed and hatred, and weaving about me a network of suspicions, misunderstandings, plots and lies, to which my own innocent words and acts—nay, even my thoughts of kindness towards him—have been made to contribute. These successive views of him must be kept in view to explain my course through the last four years.

That I was blind so long as to the real nature of the intrigue going on around me was due partly to my own overwhelming public engagements, partly to my complete surrender of this affair and all papers and questions connected with it into the hands of Mr. Moulton, who was intensely confident that he could manage it successfully. I suffered much, but I inquired little. Mr. Moulton was chary to me of Mr. Tilton's confidences to him, reporting to me occasionally in a general way Mr. Tilton's words and outbreaks of passion only as elements of trouble which he was able to control and as additional proof of the wisdom of leaving it to him. His comment of the situation seemed to me at the time complete, immersed as I was in incessant cares and duties, and only too glad to be relieved from considering the details of and wretched complications, the origin and the fact of which remained, in spite of all friendly intervention, a perpetual burden to my soul. I would not read in the papers about it, I would not talk about it; I made Moulton for a long period my confidant and my only channel of information.

From time to time suspicions were aroused in me by indications that Mr. Tilton was acting the part of an enemy; but the suspicions were repeatedly allayed by his own behavior towards me in other moods and by the assurances of Mr. Moulton, who ascribed the circumstances to misunderstanding or to malice on the part of others. It is plain to me now that it was not until Mr. Tilton had fallen into disgrace and lost his salary that he thought it necessary to assail me with charges which he pretended to have had in mind for six months. The domestic offence which he alleged was very quickly and easily put aside, but yet in such a way as to keep my feelings stirred up, in order that I might, through my friends, be used to extract from Mr. Bowen $7000, the amount of a claim in dispute between them. The check for that sum in hand, Mr. Tilton signed an agreement of peace and concord—not made by me, but accepted by me as sincere. The *Golden Age* had been started. He had the capital to carry it on for a while. He was sure that he was to lead a great social revolution. With returning prosperity he had apparently no griefs which could not be covered by his signature to the articles of peace. Yet the changes in that covenant made by him before signing it, and represented to me as necessary, merely to relieve him from the imputation of having originated and circulated certain old and shameless slanders about me, were really made, as now appears, to leave him free for future operations upon me and against me.

So long as he was or thought he was on the road to a new success his conduct towards me was as friendly as he knew how to make it. His assumption of superiority and magnanimity and his patronizing manner were trifles at which I could afford to smile and which I bore with the greater humility, since I still retained the profound impression made upon me, as explained in the following narrative, that I had been a cause of overwhelming disaster to him, and that his complete restoration to public standing and household happiness was a reparation justly required of me, and the only one which I could make.

But, with a peculiar genius for blunders, he fell almost at every step into new complications and difficulties, and in every such instance it was his policy to bring coercion to bear upon my honor, my conscience, and my affections for the purpose of procuring his extrication at my expense. Theodore Tilton knew me well. He has said again and again to his friends that if they wished to gain influence over me they must work upon the sympathetic side of my nature. To this he has addressed himself steadily for four years, using as a lever without scruple my attachment to my friends, to my family, to his own household, and even my old affection for himself. Not blind to his faults, but resolved to look on him as favorably and hopefully as possible, and ignorant of his deeper malice, I labored earnestly, even desperately, for his salvation. For four years I have been trying to feed the insatiable egotism to make the man as great as he conceived himself to be. To restore to popularity and public confidence one who in the midst of my efforts in his behalf patronized disreputable people and doctrines, refused when I sought him to separate himself from them, and ascribed to my agency the increasing ruin which he was persistently bringing upon himself, and which I was doing my utmost to avert.

It was hard to do anything for such a man. I might as well have tried to fill a sieve with water. In the earlier stages of the history he actually incited and created difficulties apparently for no other purpose than to drive me to fresh exertions. I refused to indorse his wild views and associates. The best I could do was to speak well of him, mention those good qualities and abilities which I still believe him to possess in his higher moods, and keeping silence concerning the evil things which I was assured and believed had been greatly exaggerated by public report. I could not think him so bad as my friends did. I trusted to the germs of good which I thought still lived in him, to Mr. Moulton's apparent power over him, and to the power of my persistent self-sacrifice. Mr. Moulton came to me at first as the schoolmate and friend of Mr. Tilton, determined to reinstate him, I always suspected, without regard to my interests, but on further acquaintance with me, undertook and promised to serve his friend without doing wrong to me. He said he saw clearly how this was to be done, so as to restore peace and harmony

to Mr. Tilton's home and bring a happy end to all misunderstandings. Many things which he counselled I absolutely refused, but I never doubted his professed friendship for me, after friendship had grown up between us, and whatever he wished me to do I did, unless it seemed to me wrong. My confidence in him was the only element that seemed secure in that confusion of tormenting perplexities.

To him I wrote freely in this troublous time, when I felt that secret machinations were going on around me and echoes of the vilest slander concerning me were heard of in unexpected quarters; when some of my near relatives were set against me and the tattle of a crowd of malicious women, hostile to me on other grounds, was borne to my ears; when I had lost the last remnant of faith in Theodore or hope for him; when I heard with unspeakable remorse that everything that I had done to stay his destruction had made matters worse and worse; that my attempts to keep him from a public trial (involving such a flood of scandal as has now been let loose) had been used by him to bring up new troubles; that his unhappy wife was, under his dictation, signing papers and recantations and I knew not what; that, in short, everything was breaking up, and the destruction from which I had sought to save the family was likely to be emptied on other families, the church, the community, with infinite horrors of woe for me, that my own innocence was buried under heaps and heaps of rubbish, and nobody but my professed friend —if even he—could save us. To his assurances that he could still do so I gave at least so much faith as to maintain, under these terrible trials, the silence which he enjoined.

Not until Mr. Tilton, having attempted through Frank Carpenter to raise money from my friends, openly assailed me in his letter to Dr. Bacon, did I break that silence (save by simple denial of the slanderous rumors against me a year before), when, on the appearance of the first open attack from Mr. Tilton, I immediately, without consulting Mr. Moulton, called for a thorough investigation with a committee of my church. I am not responsible for the delay, the publicity, or the details of that investigation. All the harm which I have so long dreaded and so earnestly striven to avoid has come to pass. I could not further prevent it without a full surrender of honor and truth. The time has arrived when I can freely speak in vindication of myself. I labor under great disadvantages in making a statement. My memory of states of the mind is clear and tenacious, better than my memory of dates and details. During four troubled years, in all of which I have been singularly burdened with public labor, having established and conducted the *Christian Union*, delivered courses of lectures, preaching before the theological seminary of Yale College, written the "Life of Christ," delivered each winter lyceum lectures in all the north and west—all these duties, with the care of the great church and its outlying schools

and chapels, and the miscellaneous business which falls upon a clergyman more than upon any other public man, I have kept in regard.

And now, with the necessity of explaining actions and letters resulting from complex influences apparent at the time, I find myself in a position where I know my innocence without being able to prove it with detailed explanations. I am one upon whom trouble works inwardly, making me outwardly silent, but reverberating in the chambers of my soul; and when at length I do speak it is a pent-up flood, and pours without measure or moderation. I inherit a tendency to sadness—the remains in me of positive hypochondria in my father and grandfather—and in certain moods of reaction the world becomes black and I see very despairingly. If I were in such moods to speak as I feel I should give false colors and exaggerative proportions of everything. This manifestation is in such contrast to the hopefulness and courage which I experience in ordinary times that none but those intimate with me would suspect one, so full of overflowing spirit and eager gladsomeness, to have within him a care of gloom and despondency. Some of my letters to Mr. Moulton reflect this morbid feeling. He understood it, and at times earnestly reproved me for indulging it.

With this preliminary review I proceed with my narrative.

Mr. Tilton was first known to me as a reporter of my sermons. He was then a youth, just from school, and working on the New York *Observer*. From this paper he passed to the *Independent*, and became a great favorite of Mr. Bowen. When about 1861 Drs. Bacon, Storrs, and Thompson resigned their places I became editor of the *Independent*, to which I had been from its start a contributor. One of the inducements held out to me was that Mr. Tilton should be my assistant, and relieve me wholly from routine office work. In this relation I became very much attached to him. We used to stroll to galleries and printshops, and dine often together. His mind was opening freshly, and with enthusiasm upon all questions. I used to pour out my ideas of civil affairs, public policy, religion, and philanthropy. Of this he often spoke with grateful appreciation, and mourned at a later day over its cessation. August was my vacation month, but my family repaired to my farm in June and July and remained there during September and October. My labors confining me to the city I took my meals in the families of friends, and from year to year I became so familiar with their children and homes that I went in and out daily almost as in my own house.

Mr. Tilton often alluded to this habit, and urged me to do the same by his house. He used often to speak in extravagant terms of his wife's esteem and affection for me. After I began to visit his house, he sought to make it attractive. He urged me to bring my papers down there and use his study to do my writing in, as it was not pleasant to write at the office of the *Independent*. When I went to England in 1863, Mr. Tilton

took temporary charge of the *Independent*. On my return I paved the way for him to take sole charge of it, my name remaining for a year, and then he becoming the responsible editor. Friendly relations continued until 1866, when the violent assaults made upon me by Tilton in the *Independent*, on account of my Cleveland letter, and the temporary discontinuation of the publication of my sermons in that paper broke off my connection with it. Although Mr. Tilton and I remained personally on good terms, yet there was a coolness between us in all matters of politics. Our social relations were very kindly, and as late as 1868–9, at his request, I sat to Page some fifty times for a portrait.

It was here that I first met and talked with Moulton, whose wife was a member of Plymouth Church, though he was not a member, nor even a regular attendant. During this whole period I never received from Mr. Tilton, or any member of his family, the slightest hint that there was any dissatisfaction with my familiar relations to his household. As late, I think, as the winter of 1869, when going upon an extended lecturing tour, he said: "I wish you would look in after and see that Libby is not lonesome or does not want anything," or words to that effect. Never, by sign or word, did Mr. Tilton complain of my visits in his family until after he began to fear that the *Independent* would be taken from him; nor did he break out into violence until on the eve of dispossession from both the papers—the *Independent* and the Brooklyn *Union*, owned by Mr. Bowen. During these years of intimacy in Mr. Tilton's family, I was treated as a father or elder brother. Children were born; children died. They learned to love me, and to frolic with me as if I was one of themselves. I loved them, and I had for Mrs. Tilton a true and honest regard. She seemed to me an affectionate mother, a devoted wife; looking up to her husband as one far above the common race of men, and turning to me with artless familiarity and with entire confidence. Childish in appearance, she was childlike in nature, and I would as soon have misconceived the confidence of her little girls as the unstudied affection she showed me.

Delicate in health, with a self-cheerful air, she was boundless in her sympathy for those in trouble, and labored beyond her strength for the poor. She had the charge at one time of the married women's class at the Bethel Mission School, and they perfectly worshipped her there. I gave Mrs. Tilton copies of my books when published. I sometimes sent down from the farm flowers to be distributed among a dozen or more families, and she occasionally shared. The only present of value I ever gave her was on my return from Europe in 1863, when I distributed souvenirs of my journey to some fifty or more persons, and to her I gave a simple brooch of little intrinsic value. So far from supposing that my presence and influence were alienating Mrs. Tilton from her family relations, I thought, on the contrary, that it was giving her

strength, and encouraging her to hold fast upon a man evidently sliding into dangerous associations, and liable to be ruined by unexampled self-conceit. I regarded Mr. Tilton as in a very critical period of his life, and used to think it fortunate that he had good home influences about him.

During the later years of our friendship, Mrs. Tilton spoke very sorrowfully to me about the tendency of her husband to great laxity of doctrine in religion and morals. She gave me to understand that he denied the divinity of Christ, the inspiration of the Scriptures, and most articles of orthodox faith, while his views as to the sanctity of the marriage relation were undergoing constant change in the direction of free love.

In the latter part of July, 1870, Mrs. Tilton was sick, and at her request I visited her. She seemed much depressed, but gave me no hint of any trouble having reference to me. I cheered her as best I could and prayed with her just before leaving. This was our last interview before trouble broke out in the family. I describe it because it was the last, and its character has a bearing upon a later part of my story. Concerning all my other visits it is sufficient to say that *at no interview which ever took place between Mrs. Tilton and myself did anything occur which might not have occurred with perfect propriety between a brother and sister, between a father and child, or between a man of honor and the wife of his dearest friend;* nor did anything ever happen which she or I sought to conceal from her husband.

Some years before any open trouble between Mr. Tilton and myself, his doctrines as set forth in the leaders of the *Independent* aroused a storm of indignation among the representative Congregationalists in the West; and as the paper was still very largely supposed to be my organ, I was written to on the subject. In reply, I indignantly disclaimed all responsibility for the views expressed by Mr. Tilton. My brother Edward, then living in Illinois, was prominent in the remonstrance addressed to Mr. Bowen concerning the course of his paper under Mr. Tilton's management. It was understood that Mr. Bowen agreed that, in consequence of proceedings arising out of this remonstrance, to remove Mr. Tilton or suppress his peculiar views, but instead of that, Theodore seemed firmer in the saddle than before, and his loose notions of marriage and divorce began to be shadowed editorially. This led to the starting of the *Advance* in Chicago, to supersede the *Independent* in the Northwest, and Mr. Bowen was made to feel that Mr. Tilton's management was seriously injuring the business, and Mr. Tilton may have felt that his position was being undermined by opponents of his views with whom he subsequently pretended to believe I was in league. Vague intimations of his "feeling hard" toward me I ascribed to this misconception. I had in reality taken no step to harm him.

After Mr. Tilton's return from the West in December, 1870, a young girl whom Mrs. Tilton had taken into the family, educated, and treated like an own child (her testimony, I understand, is before the committee) was sent to me with an urgent request that I would visit Mrs. Tilton at her mother's. She said that Mrs. Tilton had left her home and gone to her mother's in consequence of ill-treatment of her husband. She then gave an account of what she had seen of cruelty and abuse on the part of the husband that shocked me; and yet more, when with downcast look she said that Mr. Tilton had visited her chamber in the night and sought her consent to his wishes. I immediately visited Mrs. Tilton at her mother's, and received an account of her home life, and of the despotism of her husband, and of the management of a woman whom he had made housekeeper, which seemed like a nightmare dream. The question was whether she should go back, or separate forever from her husband. I asked permission to bring my wife to see them, whose judgment in all domestic relations I thought better than my own; and accordingly a second visit was made.

The result of the interview was that my wife was extremely indignant toward Mr. Tilton, and declared that no consideration on earth would induce her to remain an hour with a man who had treated her with a hundredth part of such insult and cruelty. I felt as strongly as she did, but hesitated, as I always do, at giving advice in favor of a separation. It was agreed that my wife should give her final advice at another visit. The next day, when ready to go, she wished a final word; but there was company, and the children were present, and so I wrote on a scrap of paper, "I incline to think that your view is right, and that a separation and a *settlement of support* will be wisest, and that in his present desperate state her presence near him is far more likely to produce hatred than her absence."

Mrs. Tilton did not tell me that my presence had anything to do with this trouble, nor did she let me know that on the July previous he had extorted from her a confession of excessive affection for me.

On the evening of December 27, 1870, Mr. Bowen, on his way home, called at my house and handed me a letter from Mr. Tilton. It was, as nearly as I can remember, in the following terms:

HENRY WARD BEECHER:—For reasons which you explicitly know, and which I forbear to state, I demand that you withdraw from the pulpit and quit Brooklyn as a residence. THEODORE TILTON.

I read it over twice, and turned to Bowen and said: "This man is crazy; this is sheer insanity," and other like words. Mr. Bowen professed to be ignorant of the contents, and I handed him the letter to read. We at once fell into a conversation about Mr. Tilton. He gave me some account of the reasons why he had reduced him from the editor-

ship of the *Independent* to the subordinate position of contributor, namely, that Mr. Tilton's religious and social views were ruining the paper. But he said that as soon as it was known that he had so far broken with Tilton, there came pouring in upon him so many stories of Mr. Tilton's private life and habits that he was overwhelmed, and that he was now considering whether he could consistently retain him on the Brooklyn *Union*, or as chief contributor of the *Independent*. He narrated the story of the affair at Winsted, Conn., some like stories from the Northwest, and charges brought against Mr. Tilton in his own office. Without doubt he believed these allegations, and so did I. The other facts previously stated to me seemed a full corroboration. We conversed for some time, Mr. Bowen wishing my opinion. It was frankly given. I did not see how he could maintain his relations with Mr. Tilton. The substance of the full conversation was that Tilton's inordinate vanity, his fatal facility in blundering (for which he had a genius), and ostentatious independence in his own opinions and general impracticableness would keep the *Union* at disagreement with the political party for whose service it was published; and now, added to all this, these revelations of these promiscuous immoralities would make his connection with either paper fatal to its interests. I spoke strongly and emphatically under the great provocation of his threatening to me and the revelation I had just had concerning his domestic affairs.

Mr. Bowen derided the letter of Tilton's which he had brought to me, and said earnestly that if trouble came of it I might rely upon his friendship. I learned afterward that in the further quarrel, ending in Tilton's peremptory expulsion from Bowen's service, this conversation was repeated to Mr. Tilton. I believe that Mr. Bowen had an interview and received some further information about Tilton from my wife, to whom I had referred him; and although I have no doubt that Mr. Tilton would have lost his place at any rate, I have also no doubt that my influence was decisive, and precipitated his final overthrow. When I came to think it all over I felt very unhappy at the contemplation of Mr. Tilton's impending disaster. I had loved him much, and at one time he had seemed like a son to me. My influence had come just at the time of his first unfolding, and had much to do with this early development. I had aided him externally to bring him before the public. We had been together in the great controversies of the day until after the war, and our social relations had been intimate.

It is true that his nature always exaggerated his own excellencies. When he was but a boy he looked up to me with affectionate admiration. After some years he felt himself my equal, and was very companionable; and when he had outgrown me, and reached the position of the first man of the age, he still was kind and patronizing. I had always smiled at these weaknesses of vanity, and had believed that a

larger experience, with some knocks among strong men, and by sorrows that temper the soul, he would yet fulfil a useful and brilliant career. But now all looked dark; he was to be cast forth from his eminent position, and his affairs at home did not promise that sympathy and strength which make one's house, as mine has been, in times of adversity, a refuge from the storm and a tower of defence.

Besides a generous suffering I should have had a selfish reason for such, if I had dreamt that I was about to become the instrument by which Mr. Tilton meant to fight his way back to the prosperity which he had forfeited. It now appears that on the 29th of December, 1870, Mr. Tilton having learned that I had replied to his threatening letter by expressing such an opinion of him as to set Mr. Bowen finally against him, and bring him face to face with immediate ruin, extorted from his wife, then suffering under a severe illness, a document incriminating me, and prepared an elaborate attack upon me.

On Tuesday evening, December 30, 1870, about seven o'clock, Francis D. Moulton called at my house, and with intense earnestness said, "I wish you to go with me to see Mr. Tilton." I replied that I could not then, as I was just going to my prayer-meeting. With the most positive manner he said, "You must go; somebody else will take care of the meeting." I went with him, not knowing what trouble had agitated him, but vaguely thinking that I might now learn the solution of the recent threatening letter. On the way I asked what was the reason of this visit, to which he replied that Mr. Tilton would inform me, or words to that effect. On entering his house Mr. Moulton locked the door, saying something about not being interrupted. He requested me to go into the front chamber over the parlor. I was under the impression that Mr. Tilton was going to pour out upon me his anger for colleaguing with Bowen and for the advice of separation given to his wife. I wished Mr. Moulton to be with me as a witness, but he insisted that I should go by myself.

Mr. Tilton received me coldly, but calmly. After a word or two, standing in front of me with a memorandum in his hand, he began an oration. He charged me in substance with acting for a long time in an unfriendly spirit; that I had sought his downfall; had spread injurious rumors about him; was using my place and influence to undermine him; had advised Mr. Bowen to dismiss him, and much more that I cannot remember. He then declared that I had injured him in his family relations; had joined with his mother-in-law in producing discord in his house, had advised a separation, had alienated his wife's affections from him, had led her to love me more than any living being, had corrupted her moral nature, and taught her to be insincere, lying and hypocritical, and ended by charging that I had made wicked proposals to her. Until he reached this I had listened with some contempt under

the impression that he was attempting to bully me. But with the last charge he produced a paper purporting to be a certified statement of a previous confession made to him by his wife of her love for me, and that I had made proposals to her of an impure nature. He said that this confession had been made to him in July, six months previous; that his sense of honor and affection would not permit any such document to remain in existence; that he had burned the original and should now destroy the only copy; and he then tore the paper into small pieces. If I had been shocked at such a statement, I was absolutely thunderstruck when he closed the interview by requesting me to repair at once to his house, where he said Elizabeth was waiting for me, and learn from her lips the truth of his stories in so far as they concerned her. This fell like a thunderbolt on me. Could it be possible that his wife, whom I had regarded as the type of moral goodness, should have made such false and atrocious statements? And yet if she had not, how would he dare to send me to her for confirmation of his charges?

I went forth like a sleep-walker, while clouds were flying in the sky. There had been a snow storm, which was breaking away. The winds were out and whistling through the leafless trees, but all this was peace compared to my mood within. I believe that Moulton went with me to the door of Tilton's house. The housekeeper (the same woman of whom Mrs. Tilton had complained) seemed to have been instructed by him, for she evidently expected me, and showed me at once up to Mrs. Tilton's room. Mrs. Tilton lay upon her bed, white as marble, with closed eyes, as in a trance, and with her hands upon her bosom, palm to palm, like one in prayer. As I look back upon it, the picture is like some forms carved in marble that I had seen upon monuments in Europe.

She made no motion, and gave no sign of recognition of my presence. I sat down near her and said, "Elizabeth, Theodore has been making very serious charges against me, and sends me to you for confirmation." She made no reply or sign. Yet it was plain that she was conscious and listening. I repeated some of his statements—that I had brought discord to the family, had alienated her from him, had sought to break up the family, had usurped his influence, and then, as well as I could, I added that he said that I had made improper suggestions to her, *and that she had admitted this fact to him last July.*

I said, "Elizabeth, have you made such statements to him?" She made no answer. I repeated the question. Tears ran down her cheeks, and she very slightly bowed her head in acquiescence. I said, "You cannot mean that you have stated all he has charged." She opened her eyes and began in a slow and feeble way to explain how sick she had been, how wearied out with importunity: that he had confessed his own alien loves, and said that he could not bear to think that she was better than he; that she might win him to reformation

if she would confess that she had loved me more than him, and that they would repent and go on with future concord. I cannot give her language, but only the tenor of her representations. I received them impatiently, I spoke to her in the strongest language of her course. I said to her: "Have I ever made any improper advances to you?" She said: "No." Then I asked: "Why did you say so to your husband?" She seemed deeply distressed. "My friend" (by that designation she almost always called me), "I am sorry, but I could not help it. What can I do?" I told her she could state in writing what she had now told me. She beckoned for her writing materials which I handed her from her secretary standing near by, and she sat up in bed and wrote a brief counter-statement.

In a sort of postscript, she denied explicitly that I had ever offered any improper solicitation to her, that being the only charge made against me by Mr. Tilton, or sustained by the statement about the confession which he had read to me. I dreamed of no worse charge at that time. That was horrible enough. The mere thought that he could make it and could have extorted any evidence on which to base it, was enough to take away my senses. Neither my consciousness of its utter falsehood, nor Mrs. Tilton's retraction of her part in it could remove the shock from my heart and head. Indeed, her admission to me that she had stated under any circumstances to her husband so wicked a falsehood was the crowning blow of all. It seemed to me as if she was going to die, that her mind was overthrown, and that I was in some dreadful way mixed up in it, and might be left by her death with this terrible accusation hanging over me.

I returned, like one in a dream, to Mr. Moulton's house, where I said very little and soon went home. It has been said that I confessed guilt and expressed remorse. This is utterly false. Is it likely that, with Mrs. Tilton's retraction in my pocket, I should have thus stultified myself?

On the next day, at evening, Mr. Moulton called at my house and came up into my bedroom. He said that Mrs. Tilton, on her husband's return to her after our interview, had informed him what she had done, and that I had her retraction. Moulton expostulated with me, said that the retraction under the circumstances would not mend matters, but only awaken fresh discord between husband and wife and do great injury to Mrs. Tilton without helping me. Mrs. Tilton, he said, had already recanted in writing the retraction made to me, and of course there might be no end to such contradictions. Meanwhile, Tilton had destroyed his wife's first letter, acknowledging the confession, and Mr. Moulton claimed that I had taken a mean advantage, and made dishonorable use of Theodore's request that I should visit her, in obtaining from her a written contradiction to a document not in existence. He

said that all difficulties could be settled without any such papers, and that I ought to give it up. He was under great excitement. He made no verbal threats, but he opened his overcoat, and with some emphatic remark showed a pistol, which afterward he took out and laid on the bureau near which he stood. I gave the paper to him, and after a few moments' talk he left.

Within a day or two after this Mr. Moulton made me the third visit, and this time we repaired to my study in the third story of my house. Before speaking of this interview, it is right that I should allude to the suffering through which I had gone during the previous days—the cause of which was the strange change in Mrs. Tilton. Nothing had seemed to me more certain during all my acquaintance with her, than that she was singularly simple, truthful, and honorable. Deceit seemed absolutely foreign to her nature, and yet she had stated to her husband those strange and awful falsehoods, she had not when daily I called and prayed with her given me the slightest hint, I will not say of such accusations, but even that there was any serious family difficulty. She had suddenly, in December, called me and my wife to a consultation to a possible separation from her husband, still leaving me ignorant that she had put into his hands such a weapon against me. I was bewildered with a double consciousness of a saintly woman communicating a very needless treachery to her friend and pastor. My distress was boundless. I did not for a moment feel, however, that she was blameworthy, as would ordinarily be thought, but supposed that she had been overborne by sickness and shattered in mind until she scarcely knew what she did, and was no longer responsible for her acts. My soul went out to her in pity. I blamed myself for want of prudence and foresight, for I thought that all this had been the result of her undue affection for me. I had a profound feeling that I would bear any blame, and take any punishment if that poor child could only emerge from this cloud and be put back into the happiness from which I had been, as I thought, if not the cause, yet the occasion of withdrawing her. If my own daughter had been in similar case, my grief at her calamity could scarcely have been greater. Moreover, from the anger and fury of Mr. Tilton, I apprehended that this charge was made by him, and, supported by the accusation of his wife, was to be at once publicly pressed against me; and if it was, I had nothing but my simple word of denial to interpose against it. In my then morbid condition of mind, I thought that this charge, although entirely untrue, might result in great disaster, if not in absolute ruin. The great interests which were entirely dependent on me, the church which I had built up, the book which I was writing, my own immediate family, my brother's name, now engaged in the ministry, my sisters, the name which I had hoped might live after me and be in some slight degree a source of strength and encouragement to those

who should succeed me, and above all, the cause for which I had devoted my life, seemed imperilled. It seemed to me that my life-work was to end abruptly and in disaster. My earnest desire to avoid a public accusation, and the evils which must necessarily flow from it, and which now have resulted from it, has been one of the leading motives that must explain my action during these four years with reference to this matter.

It was in such a sore and distressing condition that Mr. Moulton found me. His manner was kind and conciliatory; he seemed, however, to be convinced that I had been seeking Tilton's downfall, that I had leagued with Mr. Bowen against him, and that I had by my advice come near destroying his family. I did not need any argument or persuasion to induce me to do and say anything which would remedy the injury of which I then believed I had certainly been the occasion if not the active cause. But Mr. Moulton urged that having wronged so—the wrong meant his means of support suddenly taken away, his reputation gone, his family destroyed, and that I had done it. He assured me of his own knowledge that the stories which I had heard of Mr. Tilton's impurities of life, and which I had believed and repeated to Mr. Bowen, were all false, and that Mr. Tilton had always been faithful to his wife. I was persuaded into the belief of what he said, and felt convicted of slander in its meanest form. He drew the picture of Mr. Tilton wronged in reputation, in position, wronged in purse, shattered in his family where he would otherwise have found a refuge, and at the same time looking upon me out of his deep distress, while I, abounding in friends, most popular, and with ample means, he drew that picture—my prosperity overflowing and abounding, and Tilton's utter degradation—I was most intensely excited indeed; I felt that my mind was in danger of giving way; I walked up and down the room pouring forth my heart in the most unrestrained grief and bitterness of self-accusation, telling what my ideas were of the obligation of friendship and of the sacredness of the household; denying, however, an intentional wrong, seeing that if I had been the cause, however remotely, of that which I then beheld, I never could forgive myself, and heaping all the blame on my own head. The case, as it then appeared to my eyes, was strongly against me. My old fellow-worker had been dispossessed of his eminent place and influence, and I had counselled it. His family had well nigh been broken up, and I had advised it; his wife had been long sick and broken in health and body, and I, as I fully believed it, had been the cause of all this wreck, by continuing that blind heedlessness and friendship which had beguiled her heart and had roused her husband into a fury of jealousy, although not caused by any intentional act of mine. And should I coldly defend myself? Should I pour indignation upon this lady? Should I hold her up to contempt as having thrust her affection

Having proceeded thus far Mr. Moulton seems to have perceived that the tone of this letter was rather likely to determine me in my determination to publish the whole case than otherwise; and as this was opposed to the whole line of his policy, he crossed out with one dash of the pencil the whole of this and commenced anew:

MOULTON TO BEECHER.

SUNDAY, *June* 1, 1873.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Your letter makes this first Sabbath of summer dark and cold like a vault. You never inspired me with courage or hope, and if I had listened to you alone my hands would have dropped helpless long ago. You don't begin to be in the danger to-day that has faced you many times before. If you now look it square in the eyes, it will cower and slink away again. You know that I have never been in sympathy with, but that I absolutely abhor the unmanly mood out of which your letter of this morning came. This mood is a reservoir of mildew. *You* can stand if the *whole case* were published to-morrow. In my opinion, it shows only a selfish faith in God to go whining into heaven, if you could with a truth that you are not courageous enough, with God's help and faith in God, to try to live on earth. You know that I love you, and because I do I shall try and try and try, as in the past. You are mistaken when you say that "Theodore charges you with making him appear as one graciously pardoned by you." He said the form in which it was published in some of the papers made it so appear, and it was from this that he asked relief. I do not think it impossible to frame a letter which will cover the case. May God bless you. I know he will protect you. Yours, FRANK.

In the haste of writing Mr. Moulton apparently failed to perceive what he had written in the first instance, on one side of a half sheet of paper, and used the clean side of that half sheet for the purpose of the letter, which he sent in the shape he had given. But it will be seen that he deliberately, and twice in succession, reaffirmed his main statement that there was nothing in the whole case on which I could not safely stand. He treated my resolution as born of such morbid despair as he had often reproached me for, and urged me strongly to maintain my faith in him. Tilton yielded to his persuasion, and graciously allowed himself to be soothed by the publication of a card exonerating him from the authorship of the base lies to which the tripartite covenant referred. So once more, and this time against my calmer judgment, I patched up a hollow peace with him.

That I have grievously erred in judgment with this perplexed case, no one is more conscious than I am. I chose the wrong path and accepted a disastrous guidance in the beginning, and have indeed travelled on a "rough and ragged edge" in my prolonged efforts to suppress this scandal, which has at last spread so much desolation through the land. But I cannot admit that I erred in desiring to keep these matters out of sight. In this respect I appeal to you and to all Christian men to judge whether almost any personal sacrifice ought not to have

been made rather than to suffer the morals of an entire community, and especially of the young, to be corrupted by the filthy details of scandalous falsehoods, daily iterated and amplified, for the gratification of impure curiosity and the demoralization of every child that is old enough to read.

The full truth of this history requires that one more fact should be told, especially as Mr. Tilton has invited it. Money has been obtained from me in the course of these affairs in considerable sums, but I did not at first look upon the suggestions that I should contribute to Mr. Tilton's pecuniary wants as savoring of blackmail. This did not occur to me until I had paid, perhaps, $2000. Afterward I contributed at one time, $5000. After the money had been paid over in five $1000 bills—to raise which I mortgaged the house I live in—I felt very much dissatisfied with myself about it. Finally a square demand and a threat were made to me by my confidential friends, that if $5000 more was not paid, Tilton's charges would be laid before the public. This I saw at once was blackmail in its boldest form, and I never paid a cent of it, but challenged and requested the fullest exposure.

But after the summer of 1873 I became inwardly satisfied that Tilton was, inherently and inevitably, a ruined man. I no longer trusted either his word or his honor. I came to feel that his kindness was but a snare, and his professions of friendship treacherous. He did not mean well by me, nor by his household; but I suffered all the more on this account. As he had grown up under my influence and in my church, I could never free myself from a certain degree of responsibility for his misdoings, such as visits a father for a wrong-doing son, and in times of great mental depression this feeling sometimes amounted almost to a mania.

Among the last desperate efforts to restrain him from overwhelming himself, his family, myself, the church, and the whole community with the fetid blood of scandal, which he had by this time accumulated, were those connected with the charges of Mr. West, and the subsequent proceedings of the Examining Committee of the church. The prosecution of Mr. Tilton I felt bound to prevent. In any form I would strive to prevent the belching forth of a scandal; but in that form it was peculiarly distasteful. It presented no square issues upon which my guilt or innocence could be tried. It was a roundabout issue, on which Mr. Tilton could have escaped possibly by showing that he believed the stories he told about me, or that he had not "circulated" them, or by the mere failure on the other side to prove that he had done so, or by the decision that he was a monomaniac, and not responsible. Any such half-way decision would leave me in the attitude of overthrow, and yet no party to the case! Moreover, I felt that Mr. Tilton thought I was setting my church against him—and I was bound he should not think that; for if it had not been for me he would have been dropped two

years before for non-attendance, and for his distinct notice to me that he was out of the church. I had got the Examining Committee to postpone the usual action because he was letting his wife still attend the church; and I thought that would gradually influence him for good. Indeed he had deluded me with hopes that he would give up his bad women associates and reform his life.

I felt that we had no right to claim him as a member under the circumstances for the sole purpose of his public trial. Mr. Moulton insisted that everything must be done to prevent that trial, as the Examining Committee was likely to be equally divided whether the facts sustained Mr. Tilton's plea, whether he was out of the church or not. I was so determined to carry out my pledges to Moulton for him, and do all in human power to save him, even from himself, that I was ready to resign if that would stop the scandal. I wrote a letter of resignation, not referring to charges against me, but declaring that I had striven for years to maintain secrecy concerning a scandal affecting a family in the church, and that as I had failed, I herewith resigned. This letter was never sent. A little calmer thought showed me how futile it would be to stop the trouble—a mere useless self-sacrifice—but I showed it to Mr. Moulton, possibly he copied it. I have found the original of it in my house. If I could at this moment remember any of the other letters which I have written to Mr. Moulton, I would do so. If he has preserved all my effusions of feeling, he must have a large collection. I wished him to bring them all before the committee. I should have been glad to get such hints as they may contain to refresh my recollection of facts and sequences.

I have no fear of their full and fair publication, for though they would doubtless make a sad exposure of my weakness, grief and despondency, they do not contain a line confessing such guilt as has been charged upon me, or a word inconsistent with my innocence, nor any other spirit than that of a generous remorse over a great and more and more irreparable evil.

But however intense and numerous may be these expressions of grief, they cannot possibly overstate the anxiety which I constantly felt for the future (the perils of which it is now clear I did not exaggerate), nor the sorrow and remorse which I felt originally on account of the injury which I supposed I had unwittingly done to a beloved family, and afterward for the greater injury which I became satisfied I had done by my unwise, blind and useless efforts to remedy that injury, only as it proved at the expense of my own name, the happiness of my own family, and the peace of my own church.

THE CONCLUSION.

GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE:—In the note requesting your appointment I asked that you should make full investigation of all sources of information. You are witnesses that I have in no way influenced or interfered with your proceedings or duties. I have wished the investigation to be searching, that nothing could unsettle the results.

I have nothing to gain by any policy of suppression or compromise.

For four weeks I have borne and suffered enough, and I will not go a step further. I will be free. I will not walk under a rod or yoke. If any man would do me a favor let him tell all he knows now.

It is not mine to lay down the law of honor, or regard to the use of other persons' confidential communications. But in so far as my own writings are concerned, there is not a letter nor document which I am afraid to have exhibited, and I authorize any and call upon any living person to produce and print forthwith whatever writing they have from any source whatsoever.

It is time, for the sake of decency and of public morals, that this matter should be brought to an end. It is an open pool of corruption exhaling deadly vapors.

For six weeks the nation has risen up and sat down upon scandal. Not a great war nor a revolution could more have filled the newspapers than this question of domestic trouble, magnified a thousand-fold, and, like a sore spot on the human body, drawing to itself every morbid humor in the blood.

Whoever is buried with it, it is time that this abomination be buried below all touch or power of resurrection.

XXIII.

CROSS-EXAMINATION OF MR. BEECHER.

IMMEDIATELY after the conclusion of his statement, Mr. Beecher was cross-examined by the various members of the committee. This examination was as follows:

By Mr. STORRS—You spoke of Mr. Tilton being a reporter for the *Observer;* was it not the *Times?* A. The *Observer* never had a reporter in the sense in which we now have, or the sense in which we use that term, but he was a worker, a man of all work, in the editorial and publishing departments of the *Observer.* I know nothing about his connection with the *Times.*

By Mr. SAGE—I would like to inquire how Mr. Moulton first entered this case, and how he came to be your confidant? A. Mr. Moulton was

a schoolmate and friend of Mr. Tilton, and Mr. Tilton, when his various complicated troubles came upon him in connection with Mr. Bowen, went to Mr. Moulton and made him his adviser and helper. That is the way that he came into the case.

Q. Can you tell us how you came to write that letter of despondency dated February 5, 1872, to Mr. Moulton? A. I would come back from a whole week's lecturing, and would be perfectly fagged out, and the first thing on getting home there would be some confounded development opening on me, in this state of mind in which I had not longer any resistancy or rebound in me. So I would work the whole week out. And that is the way it happened time and time again. On one of these occasions I went to Mr. Moulton's store. Mr. Moulton had always treated me with the greatest personal kindness. He never had refused by day or by night to see me or to listen to me. I never saw him out of mood toward me after the first few months. He treated me as if he loved me. On this occasion I went down to the store to see him and his face was cold toward me. I proposed to walk with him, and he walked with me in such a way that it seemed to me as though it was irksome to him to have me with him, and as though he wanted to shake me off. Now anything like that all but kills me. I don't wish to push myself upon anybody; to feel that I have pushed myself upon any human being who does not want me is enough to kill me; and to be treated so by him at that time made it seem to me as though the end of the world had come. For he was the only man on the globe that I could talk with on this subject. I was shut up to every human being. I could not go to my wife, I could not go to my children, I could not go to my brothers and sisters, I could not go to my church. He was the only one person to whom I could talk; and when I got that rebuff from him it seemed as though it would kill me, and the letter was the product of that mood into which I was thrown.

By Mr. SAGE—When was this interview with the pistol? A. The first interview was at Mr. Moulton's house, December 30, and the next was at my own on the next day.

A THREATENING INTERVIEW.

Q. Did you consider the interview at Mr. Moulton's house a threatening interview? I have heard from some source that the door was locked? A. That is stated in my statement.

Q. What was your impression from that act of locking the door? A. I did not think anything about it, nor care a snap about it. I only remembered it afterward. His family were away visiting, and the family was alone for several days; and when he came in he not only locked the door, but he took the key out and put it in his pocket. I must have noticed it, or it would not have come to my memory. He said some-

thing about not being interrupted in any way. The servant girl was in the house, I think.

Q. Then Mr. Tilton locked the door when you went into the room with him? A. Not that I remember.

Q. Did Mr. Tilton at that time make any charge of adultery? A. No, sir.

Q. What was Mr. Moulton's manner at that time when he demanded the retraction of Mrs. Tilton's threatening? A. I should describe it as being exceedingly one of intense excitement.

Q. Did it impress you with any sense of personal danger? A. No, sir.

Q. Was it the result of that evening conversation, and full and free expression from you, that he came to be your confidant, and that he seemed to sympathize with you? A. No, sir; that was the result, probably, of some months' intercourse.

TILTON'S PROSPERITY.

Q. Do you suppose that you or the community would have heard anything of these troubles of Mr. Tilton with his family had he been a successful man? A. I am morally certain that the thing would have been buried deeper than the bottom of the sea if Mr. Tilton had gone right on to a prosperous career and he had had the food which he had been accustomed to; but Mr. Tilton is a man that starves for want of flattery; and no power on God's earth can ever make him happy when he is not receiving some incense.

Q. I understand, by your statement, that you first met Mr. Moulton at Mr. Page's studio; is that correct? A. The first meeting with Mr. Moulton that ever led me to know him—I think of him as distinctly as a thousand other men—was, that I had undoubtedly met him before, but not in a way that had made any impression upon me. I date my knowledge of the man from that time. He was having his portrait painted at the same time, and we met there occasionally. I remember that on one occasion we walked from Page's studio clear down to his door, or to Fulton Ferry, and talked of public matters all the way; and I recollect being impressed with the feeling that he was an acute fellow, and that he had strong literary tastes—as he has.

Q. Had you ever visited his house in a social way prior to his call at your house on this business? A. Never.

Q. Then you had no intimate personal relations with him? A. None.

Q. So that when he came to you he came rather as Mr. Tilton's friend than otherwise? A. Altogether.

Q. When did you come to believe that that relation was becoming one of mutual friendship? A. I cannot tell you, but it was some

time afterward. The transition was made during the consultation which they held as to how Mr. Bowen should be managed, so as to do, as they said, justice to Mr. Tilton. Once or twice he said to me, when I told him something, "Then that is the right thing." I recollect that on one occasion I made a confidential statement to him about some matter that they never could have found out otherwise, and he said (I don't recollect the words, I only have a recollection of the impression that was made on my mind) that I never should regret putting confidence in him. It sprang from some statement that I had made. He gave token of his pleasure at my trust in him, as if to encourage, as it were, a full trust, and he said that I never should regret having put confidence in him—which I shall regret to the day of my death.

Q. In the course of your conversation when the so-called apology was written, did he say anything to you to the effect that there was nothing about the case but what an apology might cover? A. He made the impression on my mind not only that Mr. Tilton had been greatly injured, but that Mr. Tilton was saturated with the conviction that I was using my whole power against him. When my disclosure of my real feelings was made to him he listened with a kind of incredulity, as if he was acting a part. But when I shed tears, and my voice broke, and I walked up and down the room with unfeigned distress, he seemed to be touched, and finally he said, "Now, if that is the way you feel, if Mr. Tilton could be made to see it, this whole thing could be settled."

Q. If you used the words, "He would have been a better man in my circumstances than I have been," what did you mean by them? A. I do not know, I'm sure. The conversation ran on hypothetically in respect to the betrayal of a friend in an hour of emergency, in respect to undermining Mr. Tilton just at the time when Mr. Bowen and all the world were leaving him; in respect to a want of fidelity. And there is one thing that you are to bear in mind—a thing that I have never mentioned to any of you, and that had a very strong influence upon me. I never can forget a kindness done to me. When the war broke out my son went into a Brooklyn regiment and after being seven months in a camp at Washington, he played a series of pranks on some of the officers and got himself into great trouble, and Colonel Adams recommended him to resign, and he came to me. Well, it broke my heart. I had but one boy that was old enough to go, that I could offer to my country; and I told Theodore, who was in the office with me. He made the case his own. Mr. Tilton has a great deal in his upper nature. If he could be cut into, and his lower nature could be separated from the upper, there is a great deal in his upper nature that is capable of great sweetness and beauty. At any rate he took up my case. He suggested himself that the thing to do would be to get him transferred into the

regular army. He said that he knew Sam Wilkeson, a correspondent of the *Tribune*, who was at that time in Washington, and had great influence, and that he would go right on that night and secure this thing. He did, without a moment's delay, start and go to Washington, and he secured, through Sam Wilkeson, from Simon Cameron, then Secretary of War, the appointment of Henry as a second lieutenant in the Fourth Artillery service. I have felt ever since that in the doing that thing he did the most royal service. I have felt it exquisitely; and there has not been a time when I have done anything that hurt Tilton that that thing has not come back to me; and when it seemed as though I had in an hour of his need and trouble stepped aside and even helped to push him down, I felt it very acutely.

Q. Here are three letters written on February 7, 1871. I am not quite sure whether I understood you correctly in saying that you did not see Theodore's letter to Moulton of that date? A. I have no remembrance of it. I only know that there was an arrangement among us to bring an influence to bear upon Elizabeth in consequence of her state of mind. I used to say to him, "Moulton, I am a man walking in the open air and full of work, and Theodore is at loose and doing whatever he pleases; and we can come down and talk to you and have counsel; but what human being has Elizabeth Tilton to talk with her in her trouble—she is shut up at home sick and unbefriended, and it is not generous for us to let her go unthought of and uncared for." I was always saying that there ought to be somebody who should think of her.

Q. In your letter of the same date to Mr. Moulton this occurs: "Would to God, who orders all hearts, and by his kind mediation, Theodore and Elizabeth and I could be made friends again. Theodore will have the hardest task in such a case." Precisely what did you mean? Why that last sentence? A. It is all a muddle to me, as I don't recall the precise working of my mind. I have no vivid recollection of the making up of the letter, or of the precise moods under which I wrote. I cannot give the reason of the sentence, or of that sentence. I only know the general drift which we were on.

Q. I call your attention to it because criticism is made in certain quarters that it referred to Mr. Tilton's marital trouble growing out of your offence. A. Well, but see: isn't it agoing back to friendship? Isn't it the restoration of the family?

Q. What you ask for is that you three should be made friends again? A. Yes; that we should all co-operate.

Q. And you say that Theodore will have the hardest task? A. There was a family that by circumstances had been brought to the bitterest antagonisms at a time of the most profound adversity, when Mr. Tilton had got to struggle for his livelihood, for his name, for his position, and for his household. Everything put together, he was in a situ-

ation in which he had got to exert himself in every way for restoration in every manner; and the point was that she should co-operate with him, as with his friends. If she had her sorrows to bear at home, he had his too. That is what I think it likely may have suggested those words; but I don't say that it is, because I don't remember. Elizabeth, you know, was at times immensely bitter against Theodore, and felt that she had been the aggrieved one; and I had been led to suppose that she had not been anything like so much aggrieved as I now suppose she has been.

Q. In the same letter of February 7 you say: "Of course I can never speak with her again without his permission, and I don't know that even then it would be best." Why did you say that? A. Because, either at the time of that letter from Mr. Bowen or in its immediate vicinity, Mr. Tilton, as I have the impression now, sent word by Mr. Bowen (though I cannot be sure of that) forbidding me ever to enter his house again.

Q. When was that? A. It was in the vicinity of that whole business, but in what way it came, or what the precise date of it was, I cannot tell. I only know that the message was conveyed to me from him, but by whom, or how, or when, I have forgotten. It was a distinct thing in my memory, and afterward he, on one or two occasions, took pains to revoke it after he had become reconciled.

Q. In the same letter occurred the words (which Mr. Tilton, in his statement, makes appear to come from another letter, but which, in fact, are from the same letter), "When I saw you last I did not expect ever to see you again, or be alive many days." What was in your mind when you wrote them? A. Just what I have stated in my statement already.

Q. Nothing else? A. No. I know I frequently said "I wish I was dead;" and Theodore Tilton, he came in and said he wished he was dead; and Mr. Moulton was frequently in a state in which he wished he was dead; and Mrs. Moulton said, "I am living among friends, every one of whom wishes he was dead," or something like that. I do not know that it was smarter than that, but she put it in a way that was very ludicrous. Every one of us used to be echoing that wish. We were vexed and plagued together, and I used the familiar phrase, "I wish I was dead."

Q. The outside gossip is that you referred in that line to contemplated suicide.

Mr. BEECHER—How do you propose to cure the gossip?

Mr. WINSLOW—I cannot say. But I want to know if anything of that kind was in your mind? A. It was not. My general purpose in the matter of this whole thing was this—(and I kept it as the motto of my life)—by patient continuance in well-doing to put to shame those who falsely accused me. I meant to put down and preach down this trouble. Of course, in my dismal moods I felt as though the earth had come to

an end. Now, in interpreting these special letters everybody is irresistibly tempted to suppose that everything I said was said narrowly in regard to their text, instead of considering the foregoing state of my mind; whereas, my utterances were largely to be interpreted by the past as well as by the present or the future. I cannot interpret them precisely, as I can a note of hand, or a check. A man that is poetical, a man that is oftentimes extravagant, a man that is subject to moods such as make me what I am, cannot narrowly measure his words. And yet, from this writing of over four years, in every conceivable condition, in this large correspondence, proceeding from a mind speaking in hyperbolical moods, and in all manner of states, about everybody and everything—out of this mass they have got only these few equivocal things. "Devices" did not refer to me but to him—his whole style of acting.

Q. Theodore said he was born for war, and Moulton was probably born for diplomacy? A. Yes.

By Mr. CLEVELAND—Were the plan and method by which from time to time these things were managed, by your suggestion or by Mr. Moulton's? A. I made suggestions from time to time, generally without any effect, and the essential course of affairs, so far as it has not been forced upon us from outside influences, has been of his (Moulton's) procuring.

Q. He managed this whole matter with Mr. Tilton? A. Yes; he represented himself always as having all the reins in his hands—as having in his hands such power that if must should come to must he could compel a settlement. He intimated to me time and again that he had such materials in his hands respecting Theodore that, as he said once, "If Theodore does not do as I say I'll grind him to powder."

By Mr. WINSLOW—The "earning the future" I understand was to procure the silence and burial of the scandal? A. No, it wasn't either. It referred to the plans by which Tilton was to get something to do and do it, and get some praise for it and be content.

Q. The "devices," did that refer to all the plans and arrangements and steps that had been taken? A. It referred to this. If I had been left to manage the matter simply myself, I should have said "yes" or "no." That would have been the whole of it; but instead of that the matter went into Moulton's hands; and Moulton is a man that loves intrigue in such a way that, as Lady Montague said of somebody, "He would not carve a cabbage unless he could steal on it from behind and do it by a device," and the smallest things and the plainest he liked to do in the sharpest way. He was consulting with parties here and there and elsewhere, and a great deal of whispering was taking place, and finally it would turn out that something was not going to be done that he said he would do, and he did not tell me why, and I had to guess. There was this wide circuit of various influences through which he was moving all the time.

Q. He had "condoned his wife's fault," what did you mean by this? A. Condoned has a legal meaning and a general meaning, but the general meaning of condoned is to pass over, to make peace, to overlook, and I use the word as a literary man would use it, not as a lawyer. If I used it in a legal phrase the word would have been "offence," not "fault."

Q. In using the word fault, do you refer to some particular act of Mrs. Tilton? A. I refer to the complaints he made in general in respect to her. You know perfectly well what was the impression conveyed to me from the beginning to the end—and that was that I had stolen into his home, and that I had taken advantage of the simplicity of his wife to steal her affection to myself and away from him.

Q. And do you mean to say that you had that in your mind when you used the word fault? A. I suppose I did.

Q. You say in the same letter that he had "enjoined upon you most earnestly and solemnly not to betray his wife"—in what respect? A. Not to betray this whole difficulty into which his household had been cast. Consider how it is. I appeal to every sensitive man and cultivated nature in the world if any greater evil can befall than to have a woman, a wife and mother, made the subject of even investigation as respects her moral character. For no greater harm can befall a woman than to be talked about from house to house, with discussions as to the grade of offence and the probable nature of the offence, and the cause of the offence and everything about it. Next to stabbing a woman dead is to talk about her virtue, and if the public suppose that in order to interpret these letters I must refer to a vulgar, physical, gross indignity, then they are living on a plane where I do not live. You must remember that I was aware that in addition to the trouble involving my name, Mr. Tilton had also in fits of jealousy accused his wife of criminal intimacy with several gentlemen, of whom I was not one, and had asserted in the presence of witnesses that all her children, except the first, were the children of these gentlemen respectively. In his decent moods he was very anxious to have such accusations unknown to the world. The mere rumor of them would cast an ineffaceable blight upon his children. Nothing would have induced me to make this explanation, but that Mr. Tilton has deliberately chosen to cast a blight of precisely the same kind upon those very children by his subsequent course, and all that is left to me is the power to speak of this abominable accusation with the scorn which such a horrible falsehood deserves.

Q. You can refer to some points which have already been considered for a moment. "I have a strange feeling upon me that I am spending my last Sunday and preaching my last sermon." Do you refer to the same condition of health and mind that you have described? A. I refer to the fact simply that that was my state of mind during this great trouble, although if you were to collect all the language I have used at

various times, it might produce an impression that I had wallowed in a sea of unparalleled distress. I have had stormy days, and have suffered more from this than probably all other causes in my life put together. Yet, taking the four years together, I have had more religious peace and more profound insight into the wants and sufferings of men since I have become acquainted with trouble and despair. I have had an experience in the higher regions of Christian life that is worth all the sorrow and suffering that I have had to go through to get it.

Q. Is it or not true that in the course of these matters Mr. Tilton expressed a strong desire that the secrets of his family should not be known? A. Always. At least that was his mood, except when he fell into a strange mania at times. There were times in which it was very evident that he perfectly longed to be obliged to bring out, or to have somebody bring out, a scandalous story on his family, in order that he might have the credit with the world as to be so magnanimous as still to stay at home and live with his wife.

Q. You say, "My mind is clear. I am not in haste. I shall write for the public a statement that will bear the light of the judgment day?" A. I have done it.

Q. You didn't do it, however, then. Had you any present purpose of doing it then? A. I thought a good many times that I had better sit down, before my memory failed me, and make a memorandum of the course of events, and the reasons of my conduct. But I was so busy I could not do it, and every year it became less possible to do it.

Q. Here comes a clause in which you express a profound confidence in Moulton's fidelity. Does that correctly represent your own feelings? A. It does, although Mr. Moulton was not the man that I should select as an ideal man. I thought that in that one particular of fidelity to friends, he was the most remarkable man I ever met, by the amount of time he was willing to give, by the amount of anxiety he was willing to encounter, by the doing of work which I suppose is more agreeable to him than to me—that is, of seeing different parties, and of ferreting out stories and running things back to their source—which I utterly abhor in social relations—and consequently trying to keep me in good heart, and presenting to me the best sides of Tilton's character, which he never failed to do. When I brought to Moulton what seemed to be bad and treacherous things I learned of Tilton, he said, "Don't believe a word of such things: I will make inquiries;" and the next time I would see him he would have a plausible explanation of the whole thing, and I felt as though it was no use to attack Tilton; that he shed every arrow that was aimed against him. I have said this not only in reference to the impressions he produced upon me, but until the time of the Council I was in an abiding faith of Mr. Moulton's truth. Until the reply of Mr. Tilton to Bacon's letters, I never had a suspicion of his

good faith and of the sincerity with which he was dealing with me; and when this letter was published, and Mr. Moulton, on my visiting him in reference to it, proposed no counter operation—or no documents, no help—I was staggered, and when Tilton, subsequently, published his statement, after he came to this committee, when that came out I never heard a word from Moulton. He never sent for me, nor visited me, or did a thing. I waited for him to say, or do something, for I had said to Moulton within the last year, "As things are coming, you never are going to manage Tilton; he is going to manage you." I have said to him once or twice, "Moulton, Tilton is longer-headed than you are, and he has outwitted you;" and I have said to him, "The time is coming in which I see distinctly you have got to choose between Tilton's statement and mine." He said, "There never will be, but I shall stand by you to the death." He said that to me in the last conversation I had with him.

Q. In view of all that has happened, what is your present feeling as to the conduct of Moulton—his sincerity? A. I have no views to express.

Q. In case of an issue between Tilton and yourself, now, in this published issue which exists between you and Tilton? A. I have no expectation of help from Moulton.

Q. Has Moulton any secret of yours in paper, in document, or in knowledge of any act of yours that you would not have see the light this hour? A. Not that I am aware of.

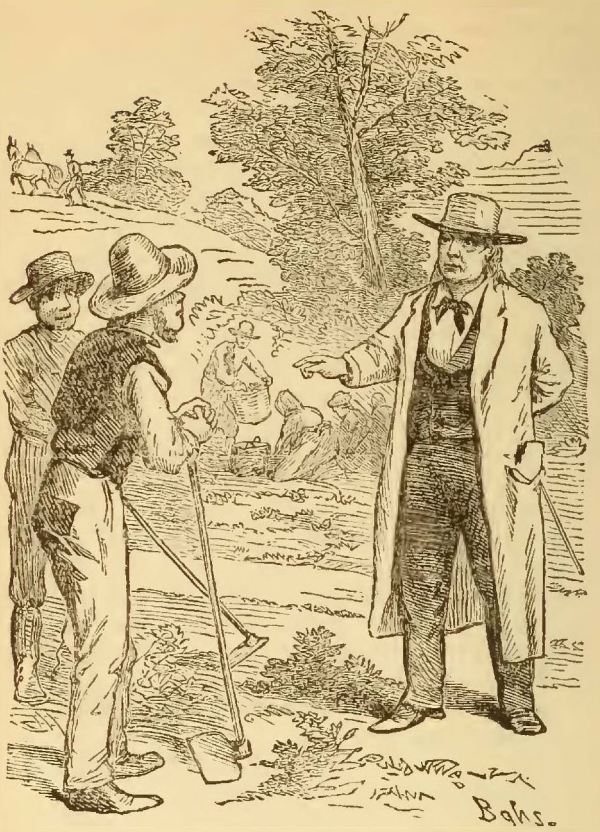
Q. Have you any doubt? A. I have none.

Q. Do you now call upon him to produce all he has and tell all he knows? A. I do, I do.

By Mr. Cleveland—Have you reason, in the light of recent disclosures, to doubt his fidelity to you during those four years? A. The impression made by him during the four years of friendship and fidelity was so strong that my present surprise and indignation do not seem to rub it out. I am in that kind of divided consciousness that I was in respect to Elizabeth Tilton—that she was a saint and chief of sinners—and Mr. Moulton's hold upon my confidence was so great that all that has come now affects me as a dream.

By Mr. Winslow—In your letter of February 5, 1872, you speak of the possibility of a ruinous defence of you breaking out; how could there be any ruinous defence of you? A. A defence of me conducted by ignorant people full of church zeal and personal partisan feeling, knowing nothing of the facts, and compelling this whole avalanche of wind to descend upon the community, might have been ruinous. I think now as I then felt.

Q. It would then be injurious? A. Where you would say injurious, I would say ruinous.



MR. BEECHER SUPERVISING HIS FARM-WORK.

Q. You speak of remorse, fear, and despair? A. I suppose I felt them all. Whether I was justified in so feeling is a question. When I lived in Indianapolis there was an old lawyer named Calvin Fletcher, a New England man of large brain, who stood at the head of the bar. He was a Methodist, Christian man. He took a peculiar fancy to me, and he used to come and see me often when I was a young minister and I would see him a great deal. He would make many admirable suggestions, one of which was that he never admitted anybody was to blame except the party who made complaint. Says he, "I hold myself responsible for having everybody do right by me; and if they do not do right it is because I do not do my duty. And now," said he, "in preaching during your life do you take blame upon yourself, and don't

you be scolding your church and blaming everybody. It is your business to see that your folks are right." Well, it sank down into my heart and became a spring of influence from that day to this. If my prayer meetings do not go right it is my fault. If the people do not come to church, I am the one to blame for their not coming. If things go wrong in my family I find the reason in myself. I have foreseen quarrels in the church, and, if I had left them alone, they would burst and break out; but acting under the advice thus given, and doing my own duty, I have had no difficulty in my church.

Q. An anonymous letter to the committee, from a free lover, says that you have a reservation in your philosophy which would enable you to say, I had no wrong conduct or relations with Mrs. Tilton, having in your own mind a belief that what you are charged with doing was right. What are your ideas on the subject? A. I am not versed in the philosophy and casuistry of free love. I stand on the New England doctrine, in which I was brought up, that it is best for a man to have one wife, and that he stay by her, and that he do not meddle with his neighbors' wives. I abhor every manifestation of the free love doctrine that I have seen in theory, and I abhor every advocate of the free love doctrine that I have known.

Q. Did you ever know anybody who took hold of it seriously who was not ruined by it? A. No, sir; provided they were susceptible of ruin. I have had women write to me that if I did not send them $10 they were ruined, and I wrote in reply that they were ruined before.

Q. You speak about having sent Mrs. Tilton a copy of books. Was that an act of courtesy specially to her? A. No; I gave them out to friends. When one book would come out I would give a copy to a friend, and so on. I have not been a great distributer of my own books —only in cases where it would be a real pleasure, and from an intimation that it would be so.

Q. Are you clear in your recollection that you never met the Woodhulls more than three times? A. I am perfectly clear—that is, to speak to them.

Q. State the times and places? A. On one occasion, I was walking with Mr. Moulton in the general direction of Tilton's house, when he said that Mrs. Woodhull was going to be there. I at first hesitated, and he said: "Come in, and just see her." I said: "Very well." I went in, and after some conversation down in the parlors, I went upstairs into this famous boudoir room, where she sat waiting, and, like a spider to a fly, she rushed to me on my entrance, and reached out both hands, with the utmost earnestness, and said how rejoiced she was to see me. I talked with her about five minutes, and then went downstairs. My second interview with her was on one occasion when I had been with some twenty or thirty gentlemen to look at the warehouse

establishment of Woodruff & Robinson. We were on the steamer that had been chartered for the occasion. And when I came up, Moulton said, "Come with me to town." He never told me there was to be any company. When I came there, I learned there was to be something in New York in the evening, and that there were to be there a number of literary ladies, among whom was Mrs. Woodhull. I was placed at the head of the table, near Mrs. Moulton, I think, on her left. Mrs. Woodhull was next to me, or else she was first and I was next. I do not remember which. At that table she scarcely deigned to speak to me. I addressed a few words to her, for politeness sake, during the dinner, but there was no sort of enthusiasm between us. My third and last interview was at Moulton's house. She had addressed to me a threatening letter, saying that she would open all the scandal if I did not preside at the Steinway Hall, and in reply to that Mr. Moulton advised that instead of answering her letter, I should see her and say without witnesses what I had to say. She brought with her her great subject. It was in type, and my policy was to let her talk, and say little, which I did, and she went on saying, "You know you believe so and so," and I said nothing, and so on, from point to point, until I said, at last, "Mrs. Woodhull, I do not understand your views; I have never read them thoroughly; as far as I do understand them, I do not believe in them, and though I am in favor of free discussion, yet presiding at meetings is a thing I seldom do for anybody, and I shall not do it for you, because I am not in sympathy with your movement."

Q. Has Mrs. Woodhull any letters of yours in her possession? A. Two, I suppose, unless she has sold them.

Q. Upon what subject? A. She enclosed a letter to me with one from my sister, Mrs. Isabella Hooker, inviting me to be present at the Suffrage Convention at Washington. To that letter I replied briefly in the negative, but made a few statements in respect to my ideas of women's voting. The other letter was just before her scandalous publication. She wrote to me a whining letter saying that her reformatory movements had brought upon her such odium that she could not procure lodgings in New York, and that she had been turned out of the Gilsey House, I think, and asking me in a very significant way to interpose my influence or some other relief for her. To that letter I replied very briefly, saying I regretted when anybody suffered persecution for the advocacy of their sincere views, but I must decline interference.

By Mr. Claflin—These are two letters, the signatures of which she showed to Mr. Bowen and myself. It was reported that by these letters you were to be sunk forty thousand fathoms deep. I told Bowen, before I went there, that I knew of the existence of the letters, and that was all they contained. Bowen made the journey clear down from Connecticut on purpose to go up there.

By Mr. WINSLOW—Did you ever meet her at Tilton's? A. The first time I ever saw her was at Tilton's.

Q. Did you ever meet her there any other time? A. Not that I recall. If I saw her I am perfectly sure that I would know it. I remember her well on account of the transcendent description I had heard of her, and because of Mrs. Hooker's feelings toward her. Mrs. Hooker regarded her as Joan of Arc would a vision of the Virgin Mary, and when I went to see her, I went with great expectations, saying to myself, "Here is this woman who is lauded everywhere, and must be a power to rise to the head."

By Mr. WINSLOW—Can you tell us what became of Mrs. Woodhull's threatening letter? A. Mr. Moulton opened it.

Q. Now as to what occurred in your library and in his bedchamber—I refer to the occasions in which he said you touched his wife's ankle, and were found with a flushed face in the bedchamber of his house? A. I do emphatically deny that either of these scenes ever occurred.

By Mr. WHITE—Q. In one part of your statement you say that in December, 1870, you heard of many immoralities of Mr. Tilton, and that you believed in their existence. In a later part of your statement you say that you had been subsequently deceived into a belief that Mr. Tilton was not in fault in respect to his moral conduct. How do you reconcile these two statements? A. Because when the matter came to me from Mr. Bowen, and through the visit of Tilton's family, I was under the full persuasion of the truth of these things. One of the very first things to which Mr. Moulton and Mr. Tilton had addressed themselves was to disabuse my mind of this belief concerning Mr. Tilton's moral conduct. Tilton alluded to the subject of his own purity with circumstantial and historical statements, and Moulton's conduct specially tends to convince me that all the allegations against Mr. Tilton respecting such matters were false.

Q. Did you admit at any time to Mr. Moulton or Mr. Tilton, or to any other person, that you had ever had any relations with Mrs. Elizabeth R. Tilton, or ever commit any act to or with her, or said any word to her, which would be unfit for a Christian man to hold, do or say with the wife of his friend, or for a father to hold, do, or say with his daughter, or a brother with his sister—did you ever admit this in any form or in any words? A. Never.

By Mr. TRACY—Q. Did you ever, in fact, hold any such relations, do any such act, or utter any such word? A. Never.

By Mr. CLEVELAND—Q. In your statement you have alluded to one payment of $5000. Have you furnished any other money to those parties? A. I have furnished at least $2000 beside the $5000.

Q. To whom did you pay that money? A. To Mr. Moulton.

Q. In various sums? A. In various sums, partly in cash and partly in checks.

30th September, from his vacation, showing that in fact the settlement was enabling him to regain his health and spirits. I produce this note, marked "BB":

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

SATURDAY, *September* 30, 1871.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I feel bad not to meet you. My heart warms to you, and you might have known that I should be here, if you loved me as much as I do you. Well, it's an inconstant world! Soberly, I should be glad to have you see how hearty I am, ready for work, and hoping for a bright year.

I have literally done *nothing* for three months, but have "gone to grass." Things seem almost strange to come back among men and see business going on in earnest.

I will be here on Monday at ten A. M. I am, my dear Frank, truly and gratefully yours, (Signed) HENRY WARD BEECHER.

Taking advantage of this lull in the controversy it may be as convenient here as anywhere to state the relations of Mrs. Tilton to the matter and her acts towards the several parties. I shall be pardoned if I do it with care, because my statement, unhappily for us both, must be diametrically opposite to one published as hers. I had been on terms very familiar, visiting at Mr. Tilton's house. I had seen and known Mrs. Tilton well and kindly on my part, and I believed wholly so on hers, and, as I have before stated, I had never known or suspected or seen any exhibition of inharmony between her and her husband during those many familiar visits, and of course I had no suspicion of infidelity upon the part of either towards the other. The first intimation of it which came to me was in the exhibition of her original confession, of which I have before spoken. The first time I saw that confession was on the 30th of December, 1870. The first communication I had from Mrs. Tilton after I had read her confession on the Friday evening, as before stated, was on the next morning, the 31st of December, 1870, the date being fixed by the fact cited in her letter showing that she gave her retraction to Beecher on the evening previous. The letter from her is as follows, marked "CC":

MRS. TILTON TO MOULTON.

SATURDAY MORNING.

MY DEAR FRIEND FRANK:—I want you to do me the greatest possible favor. My letter which you have, and the one I gave Mr. Beecher at his dictation last evening, ought both to be destroyed.

Please bring both to me and I will burn them. Show this note to Theodore and Mr. Beecher. They will see the propriety of this request.

Yours truly,

(Signed) E. R. TILTON.

I could not of course accede to this request of Mrs. Tilton, because I had pledged myself to Beecher that her retraction on the one side, and her confession to Tilton on the other—which are the papers she refers

to as "my letter which you have, and the one I gave Mr. Beecher"—should not be given up, but should be held for the protection of either as against the other.

I learned in my interview with Beecher on the 1st day of January, 1871, that he had been told by his wife and others that Mrs. Tilton desired a separation from her husband on account of his supposed infidelities to her, and that Mrs. Tilton had applied to Mrs. Beecher for advice upon that subject. This being the first I had heard of any asserted infidelity of Tilton to his marriage vows, either the next day or second day after I asked Mrs. Tilton if it were so, and if she had ever desired a separation from her husband on that or any other account, wishing to assure myself of the facts upon which I was to act as mediator and arbitrator between the parties. She stated to me that she had not desired a separation from her husband, but that application had been made to Mr. and Mrs. Beecher through her mother, upon her own responsibility, to bring it about, and on the 4th day of January she sent me the following letter, which, although dated January 4, 1870, was actually written January 4, 1871, and dated 1870, as is a common enough mistake by most persons at the beginning of a new year. But it bears internal evidence of the time of its date, and also I know that I received it at that time, it being impossible that it should have been a year previous. I produce it, marked "D D":

MRS. TILTON TO MOULTON.

174 Livingston Street,
Brooklyn, *January* 4, 1870 (?).

Mr. Francis D. Moulton:

My Dear Friend:—In regard to your question whether I have ever sought a separation from my husband, I indignantly deny that *such was ever the fact*, as I have denied it a hundred times before. The story that I wanted a separation was a deliberate falsehood, coined by my poor mother, who said she would bear the responsibility of this and other statements she might make and communicated to my husband's enemy, Mrs. H. W. Beecher, and by her communicated to Mr. Bowen. *I feel outraged* by the whole proceeding, and am now suffering in consequence more than I am able to bear. I am yours, very truly,

(Signed) Eliz. R. Tilton.

As bearing upon this topic of her husband's infidelity and her desire for separation, I produce another letter dated January 13, 1871, written by Mrs. Tilton, and addressed to the person whose name I have heretofore and still suppress, as the one with whom Bowen had alleged an improper connection with Tilton, and because of which improper connection Beecher had been informed Mrs. Tilton was unhappy and desired the separation. It is marked "EE":

MRS. TILTON TO ——.

174 Livingston Street,
Brooklyn, *January* 13, 1871.

My Dear Friend and Sister:—I was made very glad by your letter, for your love to me is most grateful, and for which I actually hunger. You, like me, have loved and been loved, and can say with Mrs. Browning,

"Well enough I think we've fared,
My heart and I."

But I find in you an element to which I respond; when or how, I am not philosopher enough of the human mind to understand. I cannot reason—only feel.

I wrote to you a reply on the morning of my sickness, and tinged with fears of approaching disaster, so that when mail day arrived I was safely over my sufferings, with a fair prospect of returning health. I destroyed it lest its morbid tone might shadow your spirit. I am now around my house again, doing very poorly what I want to do well. All these ambitions are failures, you know, darling, and when, in your last letter to Theodore—those good, true letters—you tell indirectly of your life with your parents, I caught and felt the self-sacrifice, admired and sincerely appreciated your rare qualities of heart and mind. I am a more demonstrative and enthusiastic lover of *God* manifested in his children than you will believe, and my memories of you fill me with admiration and delight. I have caught up your card-picture, which we have, in such moments, and kissed it again and again, praying with tears for God's blessing to follow you, and to perfect in us three the beautiful promise of our nature. But, my sweet and dear ——, I realize in these months of our acquaintance how almost impossible it is to *bring out* these blossoms of our heart's growth—God's gifts to us—to human eyes. Our pearls and flowers are caught up literally by vulgar and base minds that surround us on every side, and so destroyed or abused that we know them no longer as our own, and thus God is made our only hope.

My dear, dear sister, do not let us disappoint each other. I expect much from you—you do of me. Not in the sense of draining or weariness to body or spirit, but trust and faith in human hearts. Does it not exist between us? I believe it! My husband has suffered much with me in a cruel conspiracy made by my poor suffering mother—with an energy worthy of a better cause—to divorce us by saying that *I* was seeking it because of Theodore's infidelity, making *her* feeling *mine*.

These slanders have been sown broadcast. I am quoted everywhere as the author of them. Coming in this form and way to Mr. Bowen, they caused his immediate dismission from both the *Independent* and *Union*. Suffering thus both of us so unjustly—(I knew nothing of these plans)—anxiety night and day brought on my miscarriage: a disappointment I have never before known—a *love babe* it promised, you know. I have had sorrow almost beyond human capacity dear ——. It is my mother! That will explain volumes to your filial heart. Theodore has many secret enemies. I find, besides my mother, but with a faithfulness renewed and strengthened by experience *we* will, by silence, time, and patience, be victorious over them all. My faith and hope are very bright, now that I am off the sick-bed, and dear Frank Moulton is a friend indeed. (He is managing the case with Mr. Bowen.) We have weathered the storm, and, I believe, without harm to our *Best*. "Let

not your heart be troubled," dear sweet—I love you. Be assured of it. I wish I could come to you. I would help you in the care of your loved ones, for *that* I can do. "My heart bounds towards all." Then your spirit would be free to write and think.

But hereunto I am not called. My spirit is willing. My dear children are all well. Floy, on her return at the holiday vacation, found me sick, and we concluded to keep her with us, and she has entered the Packer. Our household has indeed been sadly tossed about and the children suffer with the parents; but *the end has come*, and I write that you may have joy and not grief, for that has past! I am glad you love Alice. I have kissed her for you many times. I will teach all my darlings to love you and welcome your home-coming. Ralph is a fine, beautiful boy, and to be our only baby—very precious therefore. Carroll is visiting Theodore's parents at Keyport. I hope your mother is now better and that you have reached the sunshine. Our spirits cannot thrive in Nature's gloom. Give much love to your parents. I am yours, faithfully and fondly,

(Signed) SISTER ELIZABETH.

This letter requires a word of explanation. It will be observed that in the course of the correspondence between Bowen and Beecher there had been claimed infidelities on the part of Tilton with a certain lady whose name is not disclosed, although well known to all the parties, and much of the accusations against Tilton connected him with that lady, and it was averred that they came from his wife. The above letter was written to that lady long after the accusations had been made against Tilton, and after they had been communicated to his wife, and I bring it in here as bearing on the question whether Mrs. Tilton desired a separation from her husband, as had been alleged, on account of his infidelities with this lady.

I have already stated that I had, as a necessary precaution to the peace of the family and the parties interested, interdicted all the parties from having communication with each other—except the husband and wife—unless that communication was known to me, and the letters sent through me or shown to me. Mr. Tilton and Mr. Beecher, as I have before stated, both faithfully complied with their promise in that regard, so far as I know. I was away sick in the spring of 1871, as before stated, and went to Florida. Soon after my return Beecher placed in my hands an unsigned letter from Mrs. Tilton, in her handwriting, undated, but marked in his handwriting, "Received March 8, 1871." I here produce it, marked "FF":

MRS. TILTON TO BEECHER.

WEDNESDAY.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Does your heart bound *toward all* as it used? So does mine! I am myself again. I did not dare to tell you till I was sure; but the bird has sung in my heart these *four* weeks, and he has covenanted with me never again to leave. "Spring has come." Because I thought it would gladden you to know this, and not to trouble

or embarrass you in *any way*, I now write. Of course I should like to share with you my joy; but can wait for the Beyond!

When dear Frank says I may once again go to old Plymouth, I will thank the dear Father.

Such a communication from Mrs. Tilton to her pastor, under the circumstances and her promise, seemed to me to be a breach of good faith. But desirous to have the peace kept, and hoping, if unanswered, it might not be repeated, I did not show it to Tilton, or inform him of its existence.

On Friday, April 21, 1871, Mr. Beecher received another letter, of that date, unsigned, from Mrs. Tilton, which he gave to me. It is here produced, marked "GG," as follows:

MRS. TILTON TO BEECHER.

FRIDAY, *April* 21, 1871.

MR. BEECHER:—As Mr. Moulton has returned, will you use your influence to have the papers in his possession destroyed? My heart bleeds night and day at the injustice of their existence.

As I could not comply with this request, for reasons before stated, I did not show this letter to Tilton, nor did I call Mrs. Tilton's attention to it.

On the 3d of May Mr. Beecher handed me still another letter, unsigned, but in Mrs. Tilton's handwriting, of that date, which is here produced, marked "HH":

MRS. TILTON TO BEECHER.

BROOKLYN, *May* 3, 1871.

MR. BEECHER:—My future either for life or death would be happier could I but feel that you *forgave* while you forget me. In all the sad complications of the past year my endeavor was to entirely keep from *you* all suffering; to bear myself alone, leaving you forever ignorant of it. My weapons were love, a large untiring generosity, and *nest-hiding!* That I failed utterly we both know. But now I ask forgiveness.

The contents of this letter were so remarkable that I queried within my own mind whether I ought not to show it to Tilton; but as I was assured by Beecher, and verily believed, and now believe, that they were unanswered by him, I thought it best to retain it in my own possession, as I have done until now. But from the hour of its reception what remained of faith in Mrs. Tilton's character for truth or propriety of conduct was wholly lost, and from that time forth I had no thought or care for her reputation only so far as it affected that of her children.

After this I do not know that anything occurred between myself and Mrs. Tilton of pertinence to this inquiry, or more than the ordinary courtesies or civilities when I called at her house, and I received no other communication from her until shortly before the question of the

arbitration of the business between Bowen and Tilton was determined upon. I had learned that Mrs. Tilton had been making declarations which were sullying the reputation of her husband, and giving it to be understood that her home was not a happy one, because of the want of religious sympathy between herself and her husband, and because he did not accompany her to church as regularly and as often as she thought he ought to do, and she thought it would be well for the children to do, and sometimes speaking of her unhappiness, without defining specially the cause, thus leaving for the busybodies and intermeddlers to infer causes of unhappiness which she did not state. I thought it my duty to the parties to caution her in that regard, and I said to her that I thought she ought not, in the presence of others, to upbraid her husband with their differences in religious feeling or opinions, and that it was not well for her to make any statement which should show her home unhappy, or that she was unhappy in it, because it might lead to such inquiries as might break it up, as well as the settlement, which she was so desirous to maintain for the sake of both families—Mrs. Beecher's and her own.

This conversation drew from her the following letter, marked "II."

MRS. TILTON TO MOULTON.

SUNDAY MORNING, *February* 11, 1872.

MY DEAR FRIEND FRANCIS:—All the week I have sought opportunity to write you, but as I cannot work in the car as Theodore does, and the time at our stopping places must be necessarily given to rest, eating, and sight-seeing, say nothing of lecture-going, I have failed to come to you before.

It was given to you to reveal to me last Sabbath evening two things (for which God bless you abundantly with his peace): First, the truth that until then I had never seen or felt, namely, *whenever* I remembered *myself* in conversing with others to the shadowing of Theodore I became his *enemy!* And the second truth was that *I* hindered the *reconstruction more than any one else.*

Whenever I become convinced I know I am immovable. Henceforth silence has locked my lips, and the key is cast into the depths! Theo. need fear me no longer, for I would be the enemy of no one.

I have not been equal to the great work of the past year. All I have done is to cause the *utter misery* of those I love best—my mother, husband, Mr. B., and my dear children!

But how greatly I prize your counsel and criticisms you will never know. You do not at all terrify me; only convince, and I bless you.

Pardon this hasty line, which I'm sure you'll do, since you forgive me so much else. Good-night. Affectionately,

(Signed) ELIZABETH.

After the signing of the "tripartite covenant," April 2, 1872, Tilton desired that I should return him the paper containing his wife's confession, in order, as he said, to relieve her anxiety as to its possibly falling into wrong hands, and she was very desirous that this paper should

be destroyed. As I held it solely for her protection, and under pledge to him, I gave it to him, and he told me afterward that he gave it into her hands, and that she destroyed it. She also confirmed this statement.

Some time after that—it is impossible for me to fix the date precisely—I learned from Beecher that Mrs. Tilton had told him that when she made her confession to her husband of her infidelity with him (Beecher) her husband had made a like confession to her of his own infidelities with several other women. This being an entirely new statement of fact to me, and never having heard Mrs. Tilton, in all my conversations with her, although she had admitted freely her own sexual intercourse with Beecher, make any claims that her husband had confessed his infidelity, or that he had been unfaithful to her, I was considerably surprised at this intimation made at so late a period, and I brought it to the attention of Tilton, in the form of a very strong criticism of his course towards me, that he had kept back so important a fact, which might have made a great difference as to the course that ought to be taken. Tilton promptly, and with much feeling, denied that he had ever made any such confession, or that his wife ever claimed that he had, and desired me to see Mrs. Tilton, and satisfy myself upon that point; and he went immediately with me to his house, that I might see Mrs. Tilton before he should have the opportunity to see her, after he had learned the alleged fact. We went to the house together and found her in the back parlor. On our way to the house, Tilton said to me: "Frank, what is the use of my trying to keep the family together when this sort of thing is being all the time said against me? You are all the time telling me that I must keep the peace, and forget and forgive, while these stories are being circulated to my prejudice." On arriving at the house I asked Mrs. Tilton to step into the front parlor, where we two were alone. I then put the question to her: "Elizabeth, did you tell Mr. Beecher that when you made your confession to your husband of your infidelity with Beecher, your husband at the same time made a confession to you of his own infidelity with other women?" I said, "I want to know if this is true, for my own satisfaction." She answered: "Yes." I then stepped with her into the back parlor, where her husband was waiting, and I said to him: "Your wife says that she did tell Beecher that you confessed your infidelity with other women, at the time she made her confession to you." Elizabeth immediately said: "Why, no, I didn't tell you so. I could not have understood your question, because it isn't true that Theodore ever made any such confession, and I didn't state it to Mr. Beecher, because it is not true."

I was very much shocked and surprised at the denial, but of course could say nothing more, and did say nothing more upon that subject, and left and went home. The next morning I received the following

letter from Mrs. Tilton, without date, so that I am unable to give the exact date of this transaction; but I know it was after the tripartite covenant. The letter is here produced, and marked "JJ":

MRS. TILTON TO MOULTON.

DEAR FRANCIS:—I did tell you *two* falsehoods at your last visit. At first I entirely misunderstood your question, thinking you had reference to the interview at your house, the day before. But when I intelligently replied to you, I *replied falsely*. I will now put myself on record truthfully.

I told Mr. B. that at the time of my confession T. *had* made similar confessions to me of himself, *but no developments as to persons*. When you then asked, for your own satisfaction, "Was it so?" I told my second lie. After you had left I said to T., "You know I was obliged to lie to Frank, and I now say, rather than make others suffer as *I now do*, I must lie; for it is a physical impossibility for me to tell the truth."

Yet I do think, Francis, had not T.'s angry, troubled face been before me, I would have told you the truth.

I am a perfect coward in his presence, not from any fault of his, perhaps, but from long years of timidity.

I implore you, as this is a side issue, to be careful not to lead me into further temptation.

You may show this to T. or Mr. B., or any one. An effort made for truth. Wretchedly,

(Signed) ELIZABETH.

This letter was wholly unsatisfactory to me, because nothing had occurred the day previous to which she could possibly have referred. After the publication, on the 2d day of November, 1872, in Woodhull & Claflin's *Weekly*, of the story of Tilton and Beecher's conduct in relation to Mrs. Tilton, and as my name was mentioned in the article as one possessing peculiar knowledge upon the whole subject, I was continually asked by my acquaintances, and even by strangers, upon their ascertaining who I was, whether that publication was true; and I found great difficulty in making an answer. A refusal on my part to answer would have been taken to be a confession of the truth of the charges. Therefore, when people inquired who had no right to my confidence, I answered them in such phrase as, without making a direct statement, would lead them to infer that the charges could not be sustained.

In some cases I doubt not that the inquirers supposed that I, in fact, denied their truth; but upon that point I was very studious not directly to commit myself. Finding that my very silence was working injury to the cause of the suppression of the scandal, I told Tilton that I wished to be authorized by his wife to deny it.

I thought it certainly could not possibly be true to the extent, and in the circumstances with the breadth, in which it was stated in that newspaper. Soon after I received the following paper, without date, from Mrs. Tilton, which is produced and marked "KK":

MRS. TILTON TO MOULTON.

MR. MOULTON:

MY DEAR FRIEND:—For my husband's sake and my children's, I hereby testify, with all my woman's soul, that I am innocent of the crime of impure conduct alleged against me. I have been to my husband a true wife; in his love I wish to live and die. My early affection for him still burns with its maiden flame; *all the more* for what he has borne for my sake, both private and public wrongs. His plan to keep back scandals long ago threatened against me I never approved, and the result shows it unavailing; but few would have risked so much as he has sacrificed for others ever since the conspiracy began against him, two years ago.

Having had power to strike others, he has forborne to use it, and allowed himself to be injured instead. No wound is so great to me as the imputation that he is among my accusers. I bless him every day for his faith in me, which swerves not, and for standing my champion against all my accusers.

(Signed) ELIZABETH R. TILTON.

Upon the strength of that I thereafterwards said that Mrs. Tilton denied the story. About the 16th December, 1872, Mr. Carpenter and Dr. Storrs undertook to look up the reports, with the intention, as I understood, of advising some public statement, or as being concerned in some investigation of the matter, and Mrs. Tilton wrote for them the following paper bearing that date, which I produce, marked "LL":

MRS. TILTON'S STATEMENT.

December 16, 1872.

In July, 1870, prompted by my duty, I informed my husband that Mr. H. W. Beecher, my friend and pastor, had solicited me to be a wife to him, together with all that this implied. Six months afterwards my husband felt impelled by the circumstances of a conspiracy against him, in which Mrs. Beecher had taken part, to have an interview with Mr. Beecher.

In order that Mr. B. might know exactly what I had said to my husband I wrote a brief statement (I have forgotten in what form), which my husband showed to Mr. Beecher. Late the same evening Mr. B. came to me (lying very sick at the time), and filled me with distress, saying I had ruined him, and wanting to know if I meant to appear against him. This I certainly did not mean to do, and the thought was agonizing to me. I then signed a paper which he wrote, to clear him in case of a trial. In this instance, as in most others, when absorbed by one great interest or feeling, the harmony of my mind is entirely disturbed, and I found on reflection that this paper was so drawn as to place me most unjustly against my husband, and on the side of Mr. Beecher. So, in order to repair so cruel a blow to my long-suffering husband, I wrote an explanation of the first paper, and my signature. Mr. Moulton procured from Mr. B. the statement which I gave to him in my agitation and excitement, and now holds it.

This ends my connection with the case.

(Signed) ELIZABETH R. TILTON.

P. S.—This statement is made at the request of Mr. Carpenter, that it may be shown confidentially to Dr. Storrs and other friends, with whom my husband and I are consulting.

This paper was delivered to me, and the theory of the confession then was that Mr. and Mrs. Tilton should admit no more than the solicitation; but that endeavor to make an explanation of the business fell through, and after it was shown to those interested, as I was told, the paper remained with me.

I received no further communication from Mrs. Tilton until the 25th of June of this year (1874), and that communication came to me in this wise. When Tilton showed me his Dr. Bacon letter I most strongly and earnestly advised against its publication, and said to him in substance that, while I admitted the wrong and injustice of Dr. Bacon's charges, that he (Mr. T.) had lived by the magnanimity of Beecher, and that he was a dog and a knave, when I believed he had acted a proper and manly part in endeavoring to shield his family, yet that its publication would so stir the public mind that an investigation would be forced upon him and Beecher in some manner which I could not then foresee, and that the truth would in all probability have to come out, or so much of it that Mrs. Tilton and Beecher would be dishonored and destroyed, and he himself be subjected to the severest criticism. Notwithstanding my advice, he was so wrought up with the continued assaults upon him by the friends of Beecher, that he determined on the publication of the letter.

He said to me, in substance, that as the course I had advised in the matter in regard to the church investigation had been so completely set aside by Beecher's friends, and they had so far ignored all propositions coming from me as to the best mode of disposing of the matter, they evidently did not any longer intend to be guided by my counsel or wishes; and if Beecher and his friends set me aside in the matter, he (Mr. T.) could see no reason why he should any longer yield to my entreaties or follow my lead. The only modification that I was able to get of the Bacon letter was this: It originally read that Beecher had committed against him and his family "a revolting crime."

I insisted that that should be changed into "an offence committed against me," which was done, and the letter was published in that form.

The reasons which actuated me to require this change by Tilton in his letter were in the hope that reconciliation and peace might still be possible. As the letter as amended would state an offence only, and also that an apology sufficient in the mind of Tilton had been made for that offence, if Beecher, in reply to the Bacon letter, should come out and state that it was true he had committed an offence against Tilton, for which he had made the most ample apology, which had been accepted by Tilton as satisfactory, and as the matter was nobody's business but that of the parties interested, he would never become a party to any investigation of the subject, and that Tilton had acted not unjustly or

unfairly towards him in what he had done, that in such case the affair might possibly have been quieted and peace maintained. But if the words "revolting crime" remained in the letter, all hope of reconciliation or escaping the fullest investigation would be impossible. After the publication of that letter I so advised Mr. Beecher, his friends and counsel, but that advice was unheeded; and I also gave Mr. Beecher the same advice at a consultation with him for which he asked in a letter, which will hereafter, in its proper place, be produced. Some days subsequent to this advice of mine to Tilton, I received the following letter, of date June 25, 1874, from Mrs. Tilton, which is the last communication I have had with or from her on the subject. It is herewith produced, and marked "MM":

MRS. TILTON TO MOULTON.

June 25, 1874.

Mr. Moulton:—It is fitting I should make quick endeavor to undo my injustice towards you.

I learned from Theodore last night that you greatly opposed the publication of his statement to Dr. Bacon. I had coupled you with Mr. Carpenter as advising it.

Forgive me, and accept my gratitude.

(Signed) Eliz. R. Tilton.

Having now placed before the committee my statement of the facts concerning Mrs. Tilton, and the documentary evidence that I have to support them, and as they are diametrically opposed to nearly all that Mrs. Tilton appears to declare in her published statement, I deem it my duty to myself, and my position in this terrible business, to say that during this affair Mrs. Tilton has more than once admitted to me and to another person to my knowledge—whom I do not care to bring into this controversy—the fact of her sexual relations with Beecher, and she never has once denied them, other than in the written papers prepared for a purpose which I have already exhibited; but on the contrary, the fact of such criminal intercourse being well understood by Beecher, Tilton and Mrs. Tilton to have taken place, my whole action in the matter was based upon the existence of that fact, and was an endeavor, faithfully carried out by me in every way possible, to protect the families of both parties from the consequences of a public disclosure of Mrs. Tilton's admitted infidelities to her husband.

I now return to the documentary evidence, and the necessary explanations thereof, which I have of the condition of the affair as regards Beecher himself, after the fall of 1871, as disconnected with the affairs of Bowen which I have already explained. At about this time I received the following letter, marked "MM 2":

MRS. WOODHULL TO BEECHER.

15 East Thirty-eighth Street, 19th, 11th, 1871.

Rev. H. W. Beecher :

Dear Sir :—For reasons in which *you* are deeply interested as well as myself, and the cause of truth, I desire to have an interview with you, without fail, at some hour to-morrow. Two of your sisters have gone out of their way to assail my character and purposes, both by the means of the public press and by numerous private letters written to various persons with whom they seek to injure me and thus to defeat the political ends at which I aim.

You doubtless know that it is in my power to strike back, and in ways more disastrous than anything that can come to me; but I do not desire to do this. I simply desire justice from those from whom I have a right to expect it; and a reasonable course on your part will assist me to it. I speak guardedly, but I think you will understand me. I repeat that I must have an interview to-morrow, since I am to speak to-morrow evening at Steinway Hall, and what I shall or shall not say will depend largely upon the result of the interview.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) Victoria C. Woodhull.

P. S. Please return answer by bearer.

The foregoing letter occasioned Mr. Tilton much anxiety lest Mrs. Woodhull, in proceeding against Mr. Beecher and his sisters, would thereby involve Mrs. Tilton.

Accordingly, knowing that Mr. Beecher and Mrs. Woodhull were to have an interview at my house on the next day, he came to it, uninvited, and urged Mr. Beecher to preside on that evening at Steinway Hall. After Mrs. W. left, Tilton repeated this urgency to Beecher.

On that evening I went to Steinway Hall with Tilton; and finding no one there to preside, Tilton volunteered to preside himself, which, I believe, had the effect of preventing Mrs. Woodhull's proposed attack on the Beecher family at that time. On the 30th of December, 1871, Mrs. Woodhull also sent a letter to Beecher, desiring that he would speak at a woman's suffrage convention in Washington, to be held on the 10th, 11th, and 12th of January following. That letter Beecher forwarded to me, with the following note of the date of 2d of January, 1872, herewith produced and marked "NN":

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

Brooklyn, Tuesday Evening, 2*d January*, 1872.

My Dear Moulton :—1. I send you V. W.'s letter to me, and a reply which I submit to your judgment. Tell me what you think. Is it too long? Will she use it for publishing? I do not wish to have it so used. I do not mean to speak on the platform of *either* of the two suffrage societies. What influence I exert I prefer to do on my own hook; and I do not mean to *train* with either party, and it will not be fair to press me in where I do not wish to go. But I leave it for *you*. Judge for me. I have leaned on you hitherto, and never been sorry for it.

2. I was mistaken about the *Ch. Union* coming out so early that I

could not get a notice of *G. Age* in it. It was *just the other way*, to be delayed, and I send you a rough proof of the first page, and the *Star* article.

In the paper to-morrow a line or so will be inserted to soften a little the touch about the *Lib. Christian.*

3. Do you think I ought to keep a *copy* of any letters to V. W.? Do you think it would be better to write it again, and not say so much? Will you keep the letter to me, and send the other if you judge it wise?

4. Will you send a line to my house *in the morning* saying what you conclude?

I am full of company.

Yours truly and affectionately, (Signed) H. W. B.

There is a paragraph in this note which needs a word of explanation. I had advised Beecher, in order that he might show that there was no unkindly feeling between him and Tilton, to publish in the *Christian Union* a reference to the *Golden Age*. He agreed to do so, but instead of that he had a notice which I thought was worse than if he had said nothing, and the allusion in the second paragraph of this letter is to a letter which I had written to Beecher upon the two topics—this and Mrs. Woodhull.

A retained copy of my letter I herewith submit, and marked "OO":

MOULTON TO BEECHER.

My Dear Sir:—First with reference to Mrs. Woodhull's letter and your answer: I think that you would have done better to accept the invitation to speak in Washington, but if lecture interferes your letter in reply is good enough, and will bear publication.

With relation to your notice of the *Golden Age* I tell you frankly, as your friend, that I am ashamed of it, and would rather you had written nothing. Your early associations with and your present knowledge of the man who edits that paper are grounds upon which you might to have so written that no reader would have doubted that in your opinion Theodore Tilton's public and private integrity was unquestionable. If the article had been written to compliment the *Independent* it would receive my unqualified approval.

On the 5th of February, 1872, I received from Mr. Beecher the letter which I here produce, of that date, and marked "PP":

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

Monday, *February* 5, 1872.

My Dear Friend:—I leave town to-day, and expect to pass through from Philadelphia to New Haven. Shall not be here till Friday.

About three weeks ago I met T. in the cars going to B. He was kind. We talked much. At the end he told me to go on with my work without the least anxiety, in so far as his feelings and actions were the occasion of apprehension.

On returning home from New Haven (where I am three days in the week delivering a course of lectures to the theological students), I found a note from *E.* saying that *T.* felt hard toward me, and was going to see or write me before leaving for the West.

She kindly added: "Do not be cast down. I bear this almost always,

but the God in whom we trust will *deliver us all safely*. I know you do, and are willing abundantly to help him, and I also know your embarrassments." These were words of warning, but also of consolation, for I believe E. is beloved of God, and that her prayers for me are sooner heard than mine for myself or for her. But it seems that a change has come to T. since I saw him in the cars. Indeed, ever since he has felt more intensely the force of feeling in society, and the humiliations which environ his enterprise, he has growingly felt that I had a power to help which I did not develop, and I believe that you have participated in this feeling. It is natural you should. T. is dearer to you than *I can* be. He is with you. All his trials lie open to your eye daily. But I see you but seldom, and my personal relations, environments, necessities, limitations, dangers and perplexities, you cannot see or imagine. If I had not gone through this *great year of sorrow*, I would not have believed that any one could pass through my experience and be *alive* or *sane*. I have been the centre of three distinct circles, each one of which required clear-mindedness and peculiarly inventive or originating power, viz.:

1. The *great* church.
2. The *newspaper*.
3. The *book*.

The first I could neither get out of nor slight. The *sensitiveness* of so many of my people would have made any appearance of trouble or any remission of force an occasion of alarm and notice, and have excited, when it was important that rumors should die and everything be quieted.

The newspaper I did roll off, doing but little except give general directions, and in so doing I was continually spurred and exhorted by those in interest. It could not be helped.

The "Life of Christ," long delayed, had locked up the capital of the firm, and was likely to sink them. Finished it *must* be. Was ever book born of such sorrow as that was? The interior history of it will never be written.

During all this time *you*, literally, were all my *stay and comfort*. I should have fallen on the way but for the courage which you inspired and the hope which you breathed.

My vacation was profitable. I came back, hoping that the bitterness of death was passed. But T.'s troubles brought back the cloud, with even severer suffering. For all this fall and winter I have felt that you did not feel satisfied with me, and that I seemed, both to you and T., as contenting myself with a cautious or sluggish policy, willing to save myself, but not to risk anything for T. I have again and again probed my heart to see whether I was truly liable to such feeling, and the response is unequivocal that I am not. No man can see the difficulties that environ me unless he stands where I do.

To *say* that I have a church on my hands is simple enough—but to have the hundreds and thousands of men pressing me, each one with his keen suspicion, or anxiety, or zeal; to see tendencies which, if not stopped, would break out into a ruinous defence of me; to stop them without seeming to do it; to prevent any one questioning me; to meet and allay prejudices against T., which had their beginning years before this; to keep serene, as if I was not alarmed or disturbed; to be cheerful at home and among friends, when I was suffering the torments of the damned; to pass sleepless nights often, and yet to come up fresh and full for Sunday—all this may be talked about, but the

real thing cannot be understood from the outside, nor its wearing and grinding on the nervous system.

God knows that I have put more thought, and judgment, and earnest desire into my efforts to prepare a way for T. and E. than ever I did for myself a hundred-fold. As to the outside public, I have never lost an opportunity to soften prejudices, to refute falsehoods, and to excite kindly feeling among all whom I met. I am thrown among clergymen, public men, and generally the makers of public opinion, and I have used every rational endeavor to repair the evils which have been visited upon T., and with increasing success.

But the roots of this prejudice are long. The catastrophe which precipitated him from his place only disclosed feelings that had existed long. Neither he nor you can be aware of the feelings of classes in society, on other grounds than late rumors. I mention this to explain why *I know* with *absolute* certainty that no mere statement, letter, testimony, or affirmation will reach the root of affairs and reinstate them. TIME AND WORK WILL.

But chronic evil requires *chronic remedies*. If my destruction would place him all right, that shall not stand in the way. I am willing to step down, and out. No one can offer more than that. That I do offer. Sacrifice me without hesitation if you can clearly see your way to his safety and happiness thereby. I do not think that anything would be gained by it. I should be destroyed, but he would not be saved. E. and the children would have their future clouded. In one point of view I could desire the sacrifice on my part. Nothing can possibly be so bad as the horror of great darkness in which I spend much of my time. I look upon death as sweeter-faced than any friend I have in the world. Life would be pleasant if I could see that rebuilt which is shattered; but to live on the sharp and ragged edge of anxiety, remorse, fear, despair, and yet to put on all the appearance of serenity and happiness, cannot be endured much longer.

I am well-nigh discouraged. If you, too, cease to trust me—to love me—I am alone. I have not another person in the world to whom I could go.

Well—to God I commit all—whatever it may be here, it shall be well there. With sincere gratitude for your heroic friendship, and with sincere affection, even though you love me not,

I am yours (though unknown to you),

(Signed) H. W. B.

This letter was to let me know that Elizabeth had written him, contrary to her promise, without my permission, and also to inform me of his fears as to the change in Tilton's mind, and its clear statement of the case as it then stood cannot be further elucidated by me. On the 25th of March I received a portrait of Titian as a present from Mr. Beecher, with the following note, as a token of his confidence and respect. It is produced, and marked "QQ":

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

MONDAY MORNING, *March* 25, 1872.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I sent on Friday or Saturday a portrait of Titian to the store for you. I hope it may suit you.

I have been doing ten men's work this winter—partly to make up lost

time, partly because I live under a cloud, feeling every month that I may be doing my last work, and anxious to make the most of it. When Esau sold his birthright he found "no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." But I have one abiding comfort. I have known you, and found in you one who has given a new meaning to friendship. As soon as warm days come I want you to go to Peekskill with me.

I am off in an hour for Massachusetts, to be gone all the week.

I am urging forward my second volume of "Life of Christ," for "the night cometh when no man can work."

With much affection and admiration, yours truly, H. W. B.

After Tilton had written a campaign document against Grant's administration, and in favor of Mr. Greeley's election, Beecher discussed with me the position taken by Tilton. Beecher also gave me a copy of his (Beecher's) speech opening the Grant campaign in Brooklyn. After the speech was delivered, he sent me the following note of May 17, 1872, which I here produce, marked "RR":

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

May 17, 1872.

My Dear Frank:—I send you the only copy I have of my speech at the Academy of Music on Grant, and have marked the passage that we spoke about last night, and you will see just what I said, and that I argued then just as I do now.

Pray send it back, or I shall be left without a speech!

I read Theodore's on Grant. I do not think it just. It is ably written; it is a case of *grape-shot*. *Yet*, I think it will overact; it is too strong—will be likely to produce a feeling among those not already intense, that it is excessive. Yours sincerely and ever, H. W. B.

Don't forget to send back my *speech!*

About the time of this occurrence Beecher and Tilton met at my house on friendly terms. In fact I cannot exhibit better the tone of Tilton's mind in the winter and spring of 1871–72 than to produce here a letter, written to me at that time without date, but I can fix the date as early as that. It is here produced, and marked "SS":

TILTON TO MOULTON.

Hudson River Railroad, *Monday Morning.*

My Dear Frank:—I am writing while the train is in motion—which accounts for the apparent drunkenness of this shaken chirography. Mrs. Beecher sits in the next seat. We are almost elbow to elbow in the palace car. She is white-haired, and looks a dozen years older than when I last had a near view of her. My heart has been full of pity for her, notwithstanding the cruel way in which she has treated my good name. Her face is written over with many volumes of human suffering. I do not think she has been aware of my presence, for she has been absorbed in thought—her eyes rooted to one spot.

A suggestion has occurred to me, which I hasten to communicate. She is going to Florida, and may never return alive. If I am ever to be vindicated from the slanders which she has circulated, or which Mr.

Bowen pretends to have derived from her and Mrs. Morse, why would it not be well to get from her and Mrs. Morse a statement under oath (by such a process as last evening's documents make easy and harmless) of the exact narrations which they made to him and to others.

It would be well to have *them* say what they said before *he* gets a chance to say what they said to *him*. Speak to Mr. Ward about it. Of course, I leave the matter wholly to you and him.

I am unusually heavy-hearted this morning. My sullen neighbor keeps the dark and lurid past vividly before my mind. If she actually knew the conduct which her priestly husband has been guilty of, I believe she would shed his blood—or perhaps, saving *him*, she would wreak her wrath on his *victims*. There is a look of desperation in her eye to-day, as if she were competent to anything bitter or revengeful. But perhaps I misjudge her mind. I hope I do.

I shall not be home till Thursday afternoon instead of morning, as I said—leaving for Washington at 9 P. M. that evening.

Ever yours, THEODORE.

On the 3d of June, 1872, Beecher received from Mrs. Woodhull the following letter of that date, which I here produce, marked "TT":

MRS. WOODHULL TO BEECHER.

48 BROAD STREET, *June* 3, 1872.

REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER:

MY DEAR SIR:—The social fight against me being now waged in this city is becoming rather hotter than I can well endure longer, standing unsupported and alone as I have until now. Within the past two weeks I have been shut out of hotel after hotel, and am now, after having obtained a place in one, hunted down by a set of males and females, who are determined that I shall not be permitted to live even, if they can prevent it.

Now, I want your assistance. I want to be sustained in my position in the Gilsey House, from which I am ordered out and from which I do not wish to go—and all this simply because I am Victoria C. Woodhull, the advocate of social freedom. I have submitted to this persecution just so long as I can endure to: my business, my projects, in fact everything for which I live suffers from it, and it must cease. Will you lend me your aid in this? Yours very truly,

VICTORIA C. WOODHULL.

The above letter was sent to me enclosed in a note from Beecher of the same date, which is here produced and marked "UU":

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

MONDAY EVENING, *June* 3, 1872.

MY DEAR MR. MOULTON:—Will you answer this? Or will you see that she is to understand that I can do nothing? I certainly shall not, at any and all hazards, take a single step in that direction, and if it brings trouble—it must come.

Please drop me a line to say that all is right—if in your judgment all *is* right. Truly yours, H. W. B.

This letter of Mrs. Woodhull, together with those before produced

asking Beecher to speak at a suffrage convention, are all the letters I have from her to Beecher. To this letter no reply was made.

After the publication of the tripartite covenant by Mr. Wilkeson, which I believe was on the 29th of May, 1873, the story of the troubles between Beecher and Tilton was revived, with many rumors, and those claiming to be friends of Beecher were endeavoring, as Tilton thought, to explain the terms of that covenant in a manner prejudicial to him. Some enemies of Beecher were endeavoring to get some clue to the proofs of the facts lying at the bottom of these scandals.

After the publication of this "tripartite covenant" was made, Tilton deemed, from the comments of the press, that the statement reflected upon him, and he desired that in some way Beecher should relieve him from the imputation of having circulated slanderous stories about him without justification, for which he had apologized, and by advice of friends he prepared a card for me to submit to Beecher to have him sign and publish in his vindication. The original card I herewith produce, marked "UU 1":

A CARD FROM HENRY WARD BEECHER.

A letter written by Theodore Tilton to Henry C. Bowen, dated Brooklyn, January 1, 1871, narrating charges made by Mr. Bowen against my character, has been made public in a community in which I am a citizen and clergyman, and thrusts upon me, by no agency of my own, what I could not with propriety invite for myself, namely, an opportunity to make the following statements:

I. By the courtesy of Mr. Tilton, that letter was shown to me at the time it was written, and before it was conveyed to Mr. Bowen, two and a half years ago. By legal and other advisers, Mr. Tilton was urged to publish it then, without delay, or a similar statement explaining his sudden collision with Mr. Bowen, and his unexpected retirement as editor of the *Union*, and contributor to the *Independent*. But although Mr. Tilton's public standing needed such an explanation to be made, and although he had my free consent to make it, yet he magnanimously refrained from doing so, through an unwillingness to disclose to the public Mr. Bowen's aspersions concerning myself. Mr. Tilton's consideration for my feelings and reputation, thus evinced at the beginning, has continued to the end, and I have never ceased to be grateful to him for an uncommon manliness in accepting wounds to his own reputation for the sake of preventing aspersions on mine.

II. The surreptitious and unauthorized publication last Sunday of Mr. Tilton's letter—a publication made without the knowledge either of Mr. Tilton or myself—gives me the right to say that Mr. Bowen long ago retracted his mistaken charges in the following words, under his own hand and seal, dated —— ——, namely;

III. In addition to Mr. Bowen's voluntary statement, above given, I solemnly pronounce the charges to be false, one and all, and to be without any color of reason or foundation in fact.

IV. All my differences with Mr. Bowen, and all temporary misunderstandings between Mr. Tilton and myself growing out of these, were long ago settled justly, amicably, and in the spirit of mutual good-will.

(Signed) HENRY WARD BEECHER.

Beecher felt much aggrieved at this claim upon him by Tilton, feeling that the matter had been all settled and adjusted, and he answered Tilton's application in this regard by the letter herewith produced under date June 1, 1873, marked "UU 2":

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

SUNDAY MORNING, *June* 1, 1873.

MY DEAR FRANK:—The whole earth is tranquil and the heaven is serene, as befits one who has about finished his world-life. I could do nothing on Saturday. My head was confused. But a good sleep has made it like crystal. I have determined to make no more resistance. Theodore's temperament is such that the future, even if temporarily earned, would be absolutely worthless, filled with abrupt charges, and rendering me liable, at any hour or day, to be obliged to stultify all the devices by which we have saved ourselves. It is only fair that he should know that the publication of the card which he proposes would leave him far worse off than before.

The agreement was made after my letter, through you, was written. He had had it a year. He had condoned his wife's fault. He had enjoined upon me with the utmost earnestness and solemnity not to betray his wife, nor leave his children to a blight. I had honestly and earnestly joined in the purpose. Then, this settlement was made and signed by him. It was not my making. He revised his part so that it should wholly suit him, and signed it. It stood unquestioned and unblamed for more than a year. *Then it was published.* Nothing but that. That which he did in private, when made public, excited him to fury, and he charges me with *making him appear* as one *graciously pardoned by me!* It was his own deliberate act, with which he was perfectly content till others saw it, and then he charges a grievous wrong home on me!

My mind is clear. I am not in haste. I shall write for the public a statement that will bear the light of the judgment day. God will take care of me and mine. When I look on earth it is deep night. When I look to the heavens above I see the morning breaking. But oh! that I could put in golden letters my deep sense of your faithful, earnest, undying fidelity, your disinterested friendship. Your noble wife, too, has been to me one of God's comforters. It is such as she that renews a waning faith in womanhood. Now, Frank, I would not have you waste any more energy on a hopeless task. With such a man as T. T. there is no possible salvation for any that depend upon him. With a strong nature, he does not know how to govern it. With generous impulses, the undercurrent that rules him is self. With ardent affections, he cannot love long that which does not repay him with admiration and praise. With a strong, theatric nature, he is constantly imposed upon with the idea that a position, a great stroke, a *coup-d'état*, is the way to success.

Besides these he has a hundred good things about him, but these named traits make him absolutely unreliable.

Therefore there is no use in further trying. I have a strong feeling upon me, and it brings great peace with it, that I am spending my *last Sunday* and preaching my last sermon.

Dear, good God, I thank thee I am indeed beginning to see rest and triumph. The pain of life is but a moment; the glory of everlasting emancipation is wordless, inconceivable, full of beckoning glory. Oh, my beloved Frank, I shall know you there, and forever hold fellowship with you, and look back and smile at the past. Your loving

H. W. B.

Meanwhile, charges were preferred against Tilton for the purpose of having him dismissed from Plymouth Church. This action, which seemed to threaten the discovery of the facts in regard to the troubles between Beecher and Tilton, annoyed both very much, and I myself feared that serious difficulty would arise therefrom. Upon consultation with Beecher and Tilton I suggested a plan by which that investigation would be rendered unnecessary, which was, in substance, that a resolution should be passed by the church amending its roll, alleging that Tilton having voluntarily withdrawn from the church some four years before, therefore the roll should be amended by striking off his name. This course had been suggested to me by Tilton about a year and a half before in answer to a letter by Beecher, dated December 3, 1871, marked "UU 3":

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

My Dear Friend:—There are two or three who feel anxious to press action on the case. It will only serve to raise profitless excitement, when we need to have quieting.

There are already complexities enough.

We do not want to run the risk of the complications which, in such a body, no man can foresee and no one control. Once free from a sense of responsibility for *him*, and there would be a strong tendency for kindly feeling to set in, which now is checked by the membership, without attendance, sympathy, or doctrinal agreement.

Since the connection is really formal, and not vital or sympathetic, why should it continue, with all the risk of provoking irritating measures? Every day's reflection satisfies me that this is the course of wisdom, and that T. will be the stronger and B. the weaker for it.

You said that you meant to effect it. Can't it be done promptly? If a letter is written it had better be very short, simply announcing withdrawal, and perhaps with an expression of kind wishes, etc.

You will know. I shall be in town Monday and part of Tuesday. Shall I hear from you?

December 3, 1871.

But when the meeting of the church was held for that purpose it was charged there that Tilton had slandered the pastor. Tilton therefore took the stand, and said in substance that if he had uttered any slanders against Beecher he was ready to answer them, as God was his witness. Beecher thereupon stated that he had no charges to make, and the matter dropped. But when the resolution was passed, instead of being put so as to exonerate Tilton, it was declared in substance that, whereas certain charges had been made against him, and as he pleaded to those charges non-membership, his name be dropped from the roll.

This action of the church very much exasperated Tilton, who thought that Beecher should have prevented such a result, and that he might have done so if he had stood by him fully and fairly as agreed. In that, however, I believe Tilton was mistaken, because Mr. William F. West,

who preferred the charges against Tilton, did it against the wish of Beecher and without any consultation with him, as appears by the following letter of June 25, 1873, produced here, and marked "VV":

MR. WEST TO BEECHER.

NEW YORK, *June* 25, 1873.

REV. H. W. BEECHER:

DEAR SIR:—Moved by a sense of duty as a member of Plymouth Church, I have decided to prefer charges against Henry C. Bowen and Theodore Tilton, and have requested Brother Halliday to call a meeting of the Examining Committee in order that I may make the charges before them.

Thinking that you would perhaps like to be made acquainted with these facts I called last evening at Mr. Beach's house, where I was informed that you had returned to Peekskill.

I therefore write you by early mail to-day.

Yours very truly, WM. F. WEST.

Meanwhile, through the intervention of Dr. Storrs and others, as I understood, an ecclesiastical Council had been called. The acts of this Council in attempting to disfellowship Plymouth Church were very displeasing to Beecher, and caused him much trouble, especially the action of Dr. Storrs, which he expressed to me in the following letter, dated March 25, 1874, which is here produced and marked "WW":

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

[Confidential.]

MY DEAR FRANK:—I am indignant beyond expression. Storrs's course has been an unspeakable outrage. After his pretended sympathy and friendship for Theodore he has turned against him in the most venomous manner—and it is not sincere. His professions of faith and affection for me are hollow and faithless. They are merely *tactical*. His object is plain. He is determined to *force* a conflict, and to use one of us to destroy the other if possible. That is his game. By stinging Theodore he believes that he will be driven into a course which he hopes will ruin me. If ever a man betrayed another he has. I am in hopes that Theodore, who has borne so much, will be unwilling to be a flail in Storrs's hand to strike at a friend. There are one or two reasons, emphatic, for *waiting* until the end of the Council before taking any action:

1. That the attack on Plymouth Church and the threats against Congregationalism were so violent that the public mind is likely to be absorbed in the ecclesiastical elements and not in the personal.

2. If Plymouth Church is *disfellowshipped* it will constitute a blow at me and the church, far severer than at him.

3. That if Council does *not disfellowship* Plymouth Church, then, undoubtedly, Storrs will go off into Presbyterianism, as he almost, without disguise, *threatened* in his speech, and, in that case, the emphasis will be *there*.

4. At any rate, while the fury rages in Council, it is not wise to make any move that would be *one* among so many, as to lose effect in a degree, and after the battle is over one can more exactly see what ought

to be done. Meantime I am *patient* as I know how to be, but pretty nearly used up with inward excitement, and must run away for a day or two and hide and sleep, or there will be a funeral.

Cordially and trustingly yours, H. W. B.

March 25, 1874.

No one can tell, under first impressions, what the effect of such a speech will be. *It ought to damn Storrs.*

While these proceedings were pending, Rev. Mr. Halliday, the assistant of Beecher, called upon him and upon me to endeavor to learn the facts about the difficulties between Beecher and Tilton. I stated to Halliday that I did not think that either he or the church were well employed in endeavoring to reopen a trouble which had been adjusted and settled by the parties to it, and that it was better, in my judgment, for everybody that the whole matter should be allowed to repose in quiet. The result of the interview between Halliday and Beecher was communicated to me in the following letter, undated and unsigned, so that I cannot fix the date, but it is in Beecher's handwriting, and is here produced and marked "XX":

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

SUNDAY—A. M.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Halliday called last night. T.'s interview with him did not satisfy, but disturbed. It was the same with Belle, who was present. It tended directly to unsettling.

Your interview last night was *very beneficial*, and gave confidence. This must be looked after.

It is vain to build if the foundation sinks under every effort.

I shall see you at 10.30 to-morrow—if you return by way of 49 Remsen.

The anxiety which Beecher felt about these stories, and the steps he took to quiet them, together with the trust he reposed in me and my endeavors to aid him in that behalf, may perhaps be as well seen from a letter headed "25, '73," which I believe to be June 25, 1873, and directed, "My Dear Von Moltke," meaning myself, and kindly complimenting me with the name of a general having command of a battle. It is here produced and marked "YY":

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

25, '73.

MY DEAR VON MOLTKE:—I have seen Howard again. He says that it was not from Theodore that Gilkison got the statement, but from Carpenter.

Is he reporting that view? I have told Claflin that you would come with Carpenter if he could be found, and at any rate by 9 to night (to see Storrs), but I did not say anything about Storrs.

I sent Cleveland with my horse and buggy over to hunt Carpenter.

Will you put Carpenter on his guard about making such statements? From him these bear the force of coming from head-quarters.

Yours truly and ever, H. W. BEECHER.

Meanwhile Halliday had had an interview with Tilton, the result of which, as unsettling the matter between Tilton and Beecher, was very anxiously awaited by Beecher, who communicated to me, and who was also quite as anxious that Tilton should take no steps by which the matter between them should get into the newspapers or be made in any manner a matter of controversy. With this view he stated the situation on the same night of the interview of Halliday and Tilton in the following letter, which is without date and was written in pencil in great haste, and is here produced, marked "ZZ":

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

SUNDAY NIGHT.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

1. The *Eagle* ought to have nothing to-night. It is *that* meddling which stirs up our folks. Neither *you* nor Theodore ought to be troubled by the side which you served so faithfully in public.

2. The deacon's meeting I think is adjourned. I saw Bell. It was a friendly movement.

3. The only near, next danger is the women—Morrill, Bradshaw, and the poor, dear child.

If papers will hold off a month we can ride out the gale and make safe anchorage, and then when once we are in deep, tranquil waters we will all join hands in a profound and genuine *sans Deo*, for through such a wilderness only a Divine Providence could have led us undevoured by the open-mouthed beasts that lay in wait for our lives.

I go on 12 train after sleepless night. I am anxious about Theodore's interview with Halliday. Will you send me a *line* Monday night or Tuesday morning, care of M. P. Kennard, Boston, Mass.?

I shall get mails there till Friday.

I have now produced to the committee all the letters and documents bearing upon the subject matter of this inquiry which I have in my possession, either from Beecher, Tilton, or Mrs. Tilton, previous to the Bacon letter, and there is but one collateral matter of which I desire to speak.

I saw questions put in the cross-examination of Tilton, as published in the Brooklyn *Eagle*, and also published in the newspapers—with how much of truth I know not—that Mr. Samuel Wilkeson had charged that Tilton's case in controversy with Bowen was for the purpose of blackmailing him and Beecher, and that he (Wilkeson) knew that there had been no crime committed against Tilton or his household by Beecher. Beecher never intimated to me that he thought there was any desire on Tilton's part to blackmail him; and as I had the sole management of the money controversy between Tilton and Bowen, which I have already fully explained, I know there was no attempt on Tilton's part to blackmail or get anything more than what I believed his just due from Bowen. So that I am certain Mr. Wilkeson is wholly mistaken in that regard.

The question whether Wilkeson knew or believed that any offence had

been committed will depend upon the fact whether he knew of anything that had been done by Beecher or Tilton's wife which called for apology at the time he wrote the tripartite covenant. It will be remembered that the tripartite covenant was made solely in reference to the disclosures which Bowen had made to Tilton and Tilton had made to Bowen; and Tilton's letter sets forth that the only disclosures he made to Bowen of Beecher's acts towards himself were of improper advances made to his wife, and that he so limited his charge in order to save the honor of his wife. These questions will be answered by the production of the letter of April 2, 1872, written by Samuel Wilkeson, which is marked "AAA":

WILKESON TO MOULTON.

NORTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY,
SECRETARY'S OFFICE, 120 BROADWAY,
NEW YORK, *April* 2, 1872.

MY DEAR MOULTON:—Now for the closing act of justice and duty.

Let Theodore pass into your hand the written apology which he holds for the improper advances, and do you pass it into the flames of the friendly fire in your room of reconciliation. Then let Theodore talk to Oliver Johnson.

I hear that he and Carpenter, the artist, have made this whole affair the subject of conversation in the clubs.

Sincerely yours, SAMUEL WILKESON.

This letter, it will be observed, contains no protest against blackmailing, either on Tilton's part or my own, upon Beecher or Bowen, and is of the date of the tripartite covenant. Wilkeson, also, hearing of Tilton's troubles, kindly offered to procure him a very lucrative employment in a large enterprise with which he was connected, as appears from a letter dated January 11, 1871, which I herewith produce, marked "BBB 1":

WILKESON TO TILTON.

NORTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY,
January 11, 1871.

DEAR TILTON:—You are in trouble. I come to you with a letter just mailed to Jay Cooke, advising him to secure your services as a platform speaker to turn New England. Old England, or the great West upside down about our Northern Pacific.

Pluck up heart! You shan't be trampled down. Keep quiet. Don't talk. DON'T PUBLISH. Abide your time and it will be a very good time. Take my word for it. SAMUEL WILKESON.

It will be observed that this letter was dated after the letter of apology, and after the letter of Tilton to Bowen, and Wilkeson could hardly have desired to employ in so grave an enterprise one whom he then knew or believed to be attempting to blackmail his employer. And besides, his

kindly expressions and advice to Tilton seem to me wholly inconsistent with such an allegation.

I think it just, in this connection, to state a fact which bears, in my mind, upon this subject. On the 3d of May, 1873, I knew that Tilton was in want of money, and I took leave, without consulting him, to send him my check for a thousand dollars, and a due-bill for that amount to be signed by him, enclosed in a letter which I here produce, marked "BBB 2," all of which he returned to me with an indorsement thereon. The following is the document:

MOULTON TO TILTON.

NEW YORK, *May* 3, 1873.

DEAR THEODORE:—I enclose to you a check for one thousand dollars, for which please sign the enclosed. Yours, F. D. MOULTON.

[Indorsement on above by Tilton.]

DEAR FRANK:—I can't borrow any money—for I see no way of returning it. Hastily, T. T.

After the above paper was returned to me, on the same day I sent him the thousand dollars, leaving it to be a matter as between ourselves and not a money transaction.

I know, to the contrary of this so far as Beecher is concerned, that Tilton never made any demand on him for money or pecuniary aid in any way or form. He asked only that Beecher should interpose his influence and power to protect him from the slanders of those who claimed to be Beecher's friends; while Beecher himself, with generosity and kindness towards Tilton which had always characterized his acts during the whole of this unhappy controversy, of his own motion insisted, through me, in aiding Tilton in establishing his enterprise of the *Golden Age*, for which purpose he gave me the sum of five thousand dollars, which I was to expend in such manner as I deemed judicious to keep the enterprise along, and if Tilton was at any time in need personally, to aid him. It was understood between myself and Beecher that this money should go to Tilton as if it came from my own voluntary contributions for his benefit, and that he should not know—and he does not know until he reads this statement, for I do not believe he has derived it from any other source—that this money came from Beecher, or thinks that he is in any way indebted to him for it. I annex an account of the receipt and expenditure of that sum, so far as it has been expended, in a paper marked "CCC":

Statement of Account.

1873. May 2, received	$5000
May 3, paid	1000
July 11, paid	650
August 15, paid	250
September 12, paid	500
September 30, paid	500
December 16, paid	200
1874. February 24, paid	500
March 30, paid	400
May 2, paid	250
May 26, paid	300
Total	$4550

I also annex two letters of March 30, 1874, from the publisher of the *Golden Age*, which will tend to vouch the expenditure of a part of the above amount. They are marked "DDD" and "EEE" respectively:

RULAND TO MOULTON.

THE GOLDEN AGE, NEW YORK, *March* 30, 1874.

[Private.]

DEAR MR. MOULTON:—We are in a tight spot. Mr. —— is away, and we have no money and no paper. Can't get the latter without the former. We owe about $400 for paper, and the firm we have been ordering from refuse to let us have any more without money. Haven't any paper for this week's issue. Truly yours, O. W. RULAND.

If you can do anything for us, I trust you will, to help us tide over the chasm.

FROM SAME TO SAME.

THE GOLDEN AGE, NEW YORK, *March* 30, 1874.

DEAR MR. MOULTON:—I am more grateful than I can tell you for the noble and generous way you came to the rescue of the *Golden Age* this afternoon. Truly your friend, O. W. RULAND.

I think proper to add further that Tilton more than once said to me that he could and would receive nothing from Beecher in the way of pecuniary assistance. I remember one special instance in which the subject was discussed between us. Beecher had told me that he was willing to furnish money to pay the expenses of Tilton and his family in travelling abroad, in order that Tilton might be saved from the constant state of irritation which arose from the rumors he was daily hearing. I rather hinted at than informed Tilton of this fact, and he repelled even the intimation of such a thing with the utmost indignation and anger. Therefore I only undertook the disbursement of this sum at the most earnest and voluntary request of Mr. Beecher.

As I have brought before the committee the somewhat collateral matter of the letters of Mrs. Woodhull to Beecher to influence him into

the support of her doctrines and herself socially, which I thought but just to him, it seems but equally just that I should make as a part of my statement a letter, that came into my possession at the time it was written, from Tilton to a friend in the West—and not for the purpose of publication—explaining his position in regard to Mrs. Woodhull and the injurious publication made against him and his family and Mr. Beecher. The letter I here produce, marked "FFF 1":

TILTON TO A FRIEND IN THE WEST.

174 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, *December* 31, 1872.

My Dear Friend:—I owe you a long letter. I am unwell and a prisoner in the house, leaning back in leather-cushioned idleness, and writing on my chair-board before the fire. Perhaps you wonder that I have a fire, or anything but a hearthstone broken and crumbled, since the world has been told that my household is in ruins. And yet it is more like your last letter—brimful of love and wit, and sparkling like a fountain in midwinter.

Nevertheless you are right. I am in trouble; and I hardly see a path out of it.

It is just two years ago to-day—this very day—the last of the year—that Mr. Bowen lifted his hammer, and with an unjust blow smote asunder my two contracts, one with the *Independent* and the other with the Brooklyn *Union*. The public little suspects that this act of his turned on his fear to meet the consequences of horrible charges which he made against Henry Ward Beecher. I have kept quiet on the subject for two years through an unwillingness to harm others even for the sake of righting myself before the public. But having trusted to time for my vindication, I find that time has only thickened my difficulties until these now buffet me like a storm.

You know that Bowen long ago paid to me the assessed pecuniary damages which grew out of his breaking of the contracts, and gave me a written vindication of *my* course, and something like an apology for *his*. This settlement, so far as I am concerned, is final.

But Bowen's assassinating dagger drawn against Beecher has proved as unable as Macbeth's to "trammel up the consequence." And the consequence is that the air of Brooklyn is rife with stories against its chief clergyman, not growing out of the Woodhull scandal merely, but exhaled with ever-fresh foulness, like mephitic vapors, from Bowen's own charge against Beecher.

Verily, the tongue is a wild beast that no man can tame, and like a wolf it is now seeking to devour the chief shepherd of the flock, together also with my own pretty lambs.

For the last four or five weeks, or ever since I saw the Woodhull libel, I have hardly had a restful day; and I frequently dream the whole thing over at night, waking the next morning unfit for work.

Have you any conception of what it is to suffer the keenest possible injustice? If not, come and learn of me.

To say nothing of the wrong and insult to my wife, in whose sorrow I have greater sorrow, I have to bear the additional indignity of being misconstrued by half the public and by many friends.

For instance, it is supposed that I had a conspirator's hand in this unholy business, whereas I am as innocent of it as of the Nathan murder.

It is hinted that the libellous article was actually written by me; whereas (being in the north of New Hampshire) I did not know of its existence till a week after it had convulsed my own city and family. My wife never named it in her letters to me lest it should spoil my mood for public speaking. (You know I was then toiling day and night for Mr. Greeley's sake.)

Then, too, it is the sneer of the clubs that I have degenerated into an apostle of free love; whereas the whole body of my writings stands like a monument against this execrable theory.

Moreover, it is charged that I am in financial and other relations with Mrs. Woodhull; whereas I have not spoken to, nor met, nor seen her for nearly a year.

The history of my acquaintance with her is this: In the spring of 1871, a few months after Bowen charged Beecher with the most hideous crime known to human nature, and had slammed the door of the *Independent* in my face, and when I was toiling like Hercules to keep the scandal from the public, then it was that Mrs. Woodhull, hitherto a total stranger to me, suddenly sent for me and poured into my ears, not the Bowen scandal, but a new one of her own, namely, almost the same identical tale which she printed a few weeks ago. Think of it! When I was doing my best to suppress *one* earthquake, Mrs. Woodhull suddenly stood before me portentous with another. What was I to do? I resolved at all hazards to keep back the new avalanche until I could securely tie up the original storm. My fear was that she would *publish* what she told to me, and, to prevent this catastrophe, I resolved (and, as the result proves, like a fool, and yet with a fool's innocent and pure motive) to make her such a friend of mine that she would never think of doing me such a harm. So I rendered her some important services (including especially some labors of pen and ink), all with a view to put and hold her under an obligation to me and mine.

In so acting towards her I found to my glad surprise and astonishment that she rose almost as high in my estimation as she had done with Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Isabella Beecher Hooker, and other excellent women. Nobody who has not met Mrs. Woodhull can have an adequate idea of the admirable impression which she is capable of producing on serious persons. Moreover, I felt that the current denunciations against her were outrageously unjust, and that, like myself, she had been put in a false position before the public, and I sympathized keenly with the aggravation of spirit which this produces. This fact lent a zeal to all I said in her defence.

Nor was it until after I had known her for a number of months, and when I discovered her purpose to libel a dozen representative women of the suffrage movement, that I suddenly opened my eyes to her real tendencies to mischief; and then it was that I indignantly repudiated her acquaintance, and have never seen her since.

Hence her late tirade.

Well, it is over, and *I* am left to be the chief sufferer in the public estimation.

What to do in the emergency (which is not clearing but clouding itself daily) I have not yet decided.

What I *could* do would be to take from my writing-desk and publish to-morrow morning the prepared narrative and vindication, which, with facts and documents, my legal advisers pronounce complete.

This would explain and clarify everything, both great and small (including the Woodhull episode, which is but a minor part of the whole

case), but if I publish it I must not only violate a kind of honorable obligation to be silent, which I had voluntarily imposed upon myself, but I must put my old friend Bowen to a serious risk of being smitten dead by Beecher's hand.

How far Bowen would deserve his fate I cannot say; but I know that all Plymouth Church would hunt him as a rat.

Well, perhaps the future will unravel my skein for me without my own hand; but whatever happens to my weather-beaten self, I wish to you, O prosperous comrade, a happy New Year. Fraternally yours,

THEODORE TILTON.

P. S.—Before sending this long letter (which pays my debt to you), I have read it to my wife, who desires to supplement it by sending her love and good-will to the little white cottage and its little red cheeks.

The first intimation of the insanity of Tilton arose in this wise: Prior to Sunday, March 29, 1874, a publication was made of a statement by a reporter of the Brooklyn *Union* purporting to be the result of an interview with Mr. Thomas G. Shearman, Clerk of Plymouth Church, to the effect—I quote from memory—that Tilton was insane, and that he stated that Mrs. Tilton had mediumistic fits—whatever disease that may be—in which she had stated matters affecting the character of Beecher, and to the statement of neither of them, for that reason, was any credit to be given. This publication, as it tended not only to excite Tilton to a defence of his sanity, but also, as coming from the Clerk of Plymouth Church, might be supposed to be an authoritative expression of its pastor, annoyed Beecher very much, and he wrote the following letter, marked "FFF 2," which I herewith produce:

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

SUNDAY NIGHT, *March* 29, 1874.

MY DEAR FRANK:—Is there to be no end of trouble? Is wave to follow wave in endless succession? I was cut to the heart when C. showed me that shameful paragraph from the *Union*. Its cruelty is beyond description. I felt like lying down and saying: "I am tired—tired—tired of living, or of trying to resist the devil of mischief." I would rather have had a javelin launched against me a hundred times than against those that have suffered so much. The shameful indelicacy of bringing the most sacred relations into such publicity fills me with horror.

But there are some slight alleviations. The paragraph came when the public mind was engaged with the Council and with Theodore's letters. I hope it will pass without further notice. If it is *not taken up* by other papers, it will sink out of sight and be forgotten; whereas, if it be assailed, it may give it a conspicuity that it never would have had. But I shall write Shearman a letter, and give him my full feeling about it. I must again [be], as I have heretofore been, indebted to you for a judicious counsel on this new and flagrant element. My innermost soul longs for peace; and if that cannot be, for death, that *will* bring peace. My fervent hope is that this drop of gall may sink through out of sight, and not prove a mortal poison. Yours ever, H. W. BEECHER.

I have written strongly to Shearman, and hope that he will send a letter to T. unsolicited. I am sick—head, heart and body, but must move on. I feel this morning like letting things go by the run!

The letter of retraction, as proposed by Tilton, not being forthcoming, I felt it my duty, in his interest, to take such measures as should result in an apology from Shearman to Tilton. I accordingly carried to him a copy of the paper having the article, and laid it upon his desk in his office, and said to him that if the statements in this article were not actually made by him he ought to retract them. Although it lay on his desk he said to me that he had not seen the article and did not mean to see it. I told him that he must see it, and if it was not true he must say so. He said he didn't want to read it and wouldn't read it. I then left him. Afterwards I saw Tilton and told him what I had done, and he said, "We will go up together," which we did, and met Mr. Shearman. Mr. Tilton called his attention to the statement in the Brooklyn *Union* as having come from him (Shearman), concerning himself and his wife, that one was crazy and the other subject to mediumistic fits. Said he, "Mr. Shearman, this is untrue, and if you are not correctly reported your simple duty is to say so; and if you have made such a statement I demand that you retract and apologize. If you do not, I shall hold you responsible in any way I can for such injurious statement." Shearman then read the paragraph in the *Union*, and made an explanation in this wise: that he might probably have repeated to somebody a story which Tilton had told him of the mediumistic states of Mrs. Woodhull, and perhaps have made the mistake of using Mrs. Tilton's name instead of Mrs. Woodhull's. Tilton said to him, "Mr. Shearman, you know that you are deliberately uttering falsehood, and I won't allow you to think even that you can deceive me by such a statement as you are making now. You must make such an explanation of this statement in the *Union* as shall be satisfactory to me, or, as I said before, I shall hold you responsible." During the first part of this conversation Mr. Shearman called in a witness from his outer office, but when the conversation became earnest and Tilton began charging him with an untruth, Shearman bid the witness retire, which he did. Tilton and I then left the office.

Within a few days of this interview Tilton procured the affidavit of the reporter of the *Union* that the statement that Shearman had been reported as making he did in fact make. On March 30 Shearman sent to me for delivery to Tilton a note, of which I produce a copy under that date, marked "GGG." The original was delivered up to Shearman afterwards:

SHEARMAN TO TILTON.

Brooklyn, *March* 30, 1874.

Dear Sir:—My attention has been called to a newspaper paragraph which I have not seen, but which I am told is to the effect that I stated to a reporter that you had described Mrs. Tilton as having, in a mediumistic or clairvoyant state, made some extraordinary statements of a painful nature.

I have for some years past made it a rule never to send corrections to

newspapers of anything relating to myself, no matter how erroneous such statements may be.

But I have no objection to saying to you personally that this story, if correctly quoted here, appears to be an erroneous version of the one and only statement which I had from you over a year ago, viz.: that Mrs. Woodhull did exactly the thing here attributed to Mrs. Tilton.

I do not know that I ever repeated that story in the presence of any reporter for the paper in question, but I have done so in the presence of others, and I may of course, by an unconscious mistake, have used your wife's name in the place of another and wholly different person. If so, I beg that you will assure Mrs. Tilton of my great regret for such an error. Yours obediently, T. G. Shearman.

When I took this note to Tilton he refused to receive it, saying: "I will not receive any such note from Shearman. He knows it contains a falsehood and I cannot take it from him. You may carry it back to him." I did so, and stated to him Tilton's answer. Afterwards he substituted for that note another, under date of April 2, 1874, which is here produced, marked "H H H":

SHEARMAN TO TILTON.

Brooklyn, *April* 2, 1874.

Dear Sir:—Having seen a paragraph in the Brooklyn *Union* of Saturday last, containing a report of a statement alleged to have been made by me concerning your family and yourself, I desire to assure you that this report is seriously incorrect, and that I have never authorized such a statement.

It is unnecessary to repeat here what I have actually said upon these subjects, because I am now satisfied that what I *did* say was erroneous, and that the rumors to which I gave some credit were without foundation. I deeply regret having been misled into an act of unintentional injustice, and am glad to take the earliest occasion to rectify it.

I beg, therefore, to withdraw all that I said upon the occasion referred to as incorrect (although then believed by me), and to repudiate entirely the statement imputed to me as untrue and unjust to all parties concerned. Yours, obediently, T. G. Shearman.

Theodore Tilton, Esq.

In no part of that negotiation did Mr. Shearman suggest to me that there were any doubts as to Tilton's sanity, and denied both to me and to him that he had ever said anything to the contrary, or that Mrs. Tilton was in any way incapacitated from telling the truth by reason of mediumistic fits or other physical disability. Shearman's action was communicated to Beecher; but meanwhile it had come to be spread about that Beecher had made a similar accusation as to the sanity of Mr. and Mrs. Tilton to that of Shearman.

A member of your committee, Mr. Cleveland, communicated the fact to Beecher, to which Beecher made an indignant denial, as appears by his note to Mr. Cleveland, who communicated a copy of it to me in a note under date of April 2, which I here produce, marked "III":

BEECHER TO CLEVELAND.

[Copy.]

My Dear Cleveland:—You say that I am supposed to have reported to some members of the Council substantially the same story that is attributed to Shearman.

How can any human being that knows me believe any such impossibility? I never opened my lips to any human being on the subject. I will defy any man to face me and say that by word, look, or intimation I ever alluded to it. I have been as dumb as the dead. They that dare to say I have spoken of it are liars, if they mean to themselves, and the bearers of lies if they received it from others.

I have a feeling too profoundly sacred to make such sacrilege possible.

April 2, 1874. H. W. Beecher.

CLEVELAND TO MOULTON.

Frank Moulton, Esq.

Dear Sir:—Herewith you have copy of a note received from Mr. Beecher respecting the matter of which it speaks.

Not seeing you when I called this A. M., and leaving the city, I send by Mr. Halliday. Mr. Beecher wants to see you *before* or *after* the meeting this evening. Truly yours, H. M. Cleveland.

Having retained the friendship of the principal parties to this controversy down to to-day, I have not thought it proper to produce herewith any letters that I have received from either of them excepting the single one exonerating me from blame and showing Mrs. Tilton's confidence in me, which I thought was due to myself to do because of the peculiar statement attributed to her; nor have I produced any papers or proposals for a settlement of this controversy since it has broken out afresh, and since the publication of Tilton's letter to Dr. Bacon and the call of Beecher for a committee; nor have I since then furnished to either party, although called upon by both, any documents in my possession that one might use the same against the other. I have endeavored to hold myself strictly as a mediator between them, and my endeavor has been, even down to the very latest hour, to have all the scandals arising out of the publication of the facts of their controversies and wrongs buried out of sight, deeming it best that it should be so done, not only for the good of the parties concerned and their families, but that of the community at large.

If any evidence were needed that, in the interest of the parties, and especially of Beecher, I was endeavoring to the latest hour to prevent the publication of all these documents and this testimony, and that I retained the confidence of at least one of the parties in that endeavor, I produce a letter of July 13, 1874, being a note arranging a meeting between myself and Beecher in regard to this controversy. It is marked "JJJ":

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

July 13, 1874.

My Dear Frank:—I will be with you at seven, or a little before. I am ashamed to put a straw more upon you, and have but a single consolation—that the matter cannot distress you *long*, as it must soon end; that is, there will be no more anxiety about the *future*, whatever regrets there may be for the past. Truly yours and ever.

H. W. Beecher.

If there is any paper or fact supposed by either of the parties, or by the committee, to be in my possession which will throw any further light upon the subject of your inquiry, I shall be most willing to produce it if I have it, although I do not believe that there is any such; and I am ready to answer any proper question which shall be put to me in the way of cross-examination by any of the parties concerned or their counsel, as fully as my memory or any data I have will serve, so that all the facts may be known. For if any part of them be known, I deem it but just to truth and right that all should be known. As, however, controversy has already arisen as to the correctness of the reports of evidence taken before the committee, I must ask leave, if any cross-examination is to be had orally, to be accompanied by my own stenographer, who shall take down the evidence I may give as a necessary measure for my own protection.

Leaving to your committee, without comment, the facts and documents herewith presented,

I have the honor to remain yours truly,

Francis D. Moulton.

The following extracts from the New York journals will show the manner in which Mr. Moulton's statement was received by the public. The *Graphic* represents the sentiments of Mr. Moulton and his friends. The other papers quoted represent the general sentiment of the better class of the American people:

(*Daily Graphic*, August 21, 1874.)

This statement speaks for itself. Here are original documents that Beecher and his lawyers supposed were destroyed. Here are letters written in the heat of excitement, or under the pressure of great emergencies, showing the flutter of the heart, the agitation, the anguish of the writers—letters all the more valuable as testimony because they bear indirectly on the case, and presuppose a revolting crime. They can be accounted for

self at the meeting. "When the committee saw him, there was a good deal of hurried whispering among them, and Mr. Moulton's desire to speak was sharply discussed. Little deference was paid to the Moderator's opinion. Mr. Shearman favored permitting him to speak. Some members of the committee did object, but one of them was very positively determined that Moulton should not be heard. Leaning forward, he said to the Moderator, 'If Moulton rises to speak, I'll rise to a point of order, and I want you to recognize me.'"

At the conclusion of the reading of the report, it was moved that the resolutions presented by the committee be adopted by the church.

Upon this motion, Mr. W. H. Blair addressed the meeting. He expressed entire agreement with the resolutions and the report, complimented the committee upon the discharge of their difficult duty, and proceeded to bespeak for any who might have dissenting views a calm, full and patient hearing. "I think," said the speaker, "I may promise them an opportunity, in your name, to be heard. I adjure them, if any such there be, to speak now, or forever after hold their peace." These sentiments received the heartiest response from the meeting.

Mr. Moulton at once rose to his feet, and endeavored to address the meeting, but was prevented by loud cries from the audience for Professor Raymond, who at once replied in a speech of considerable length, in which he reviewed the case, and sharply criticised both Moulton and Tilton. In the course of his remarks he said: "It would not do for Mr. Beecher to have replied at once to the charges of Tilton, and then to have called upon Moulton to back up his (Beecher's) statement. Moulton had poisoned the mind of the public with his infernal lies." Moulton was at this moment sitting near the edge of the platform, and close by Mr. Raymond. He rose to his feet, and, looking Raymond full in the face, said to him, loudly enough to be heard throughout the church, "You are a liar, sir!" Half the audience had risen with him, so intense was the excitement. Mr. Raymond, taken completely by surprise by

Moulton's unlooked-for interruption, paused, and Moulton repeated his words loudly, "You are a liar, sir!" In an instant the pent-up anger of the audience broke forth. Great confusion and excitement followed. Men struggled to get at Moulton, with the intention of chastising him, but were prevented by the density of the crowd. Cries of "Put him out!" "He has no right here!" came from all parts of the house. Moulton was cool and self-possessed, and turned to a gentleman near him and said coldly, speaking with reference to the threat to eject him, "You can't do it, sir; you can't do it." A this moment the excitement was so intense that no one could say what would be the result, and it seemed likely that Moulton would pay dearly for his temerity in venturing into the midst of the people whose feelings he had so cruelly outraged. Captain Byrne, of the city police force, forced his way through the crowd, and took his stand by Moulton's chair, to protect him from violence. He was dressed in plain clothes, but wore his shield. At the same moment a policeman in uniform pushed through the throng, and placed himself by his commander. Captain Byrne said, in a low tone, to Moulton, "If you attempt any disturbance, I shall take you out." Assistant Pastor Halliday came to the front of the platform, and in a few earnest words asked the audience to restrain their feelings and preserve order. Pointing to Moulton, he said, "Let him remain; sit down and let him hear." His appeal was successful, and Mr. Raymond resumed his remarks without further interruption.

Mr. Raymond, upon concluding his address, sat down under a burst of applause, and Mr. Shearman read the resolutions again to the church. The motion for the adoption of the resolutions was made again. "All those in favor," said the Moderator, "will signify it by saying aye." There was a loud roar of "aye" from three thousand voices that shook the building to the foundation. "We must have a rising vote," said the Moderator, smiling. "All those in favor of this motion will signify it by rising;" the whole audience, with the exception of Mr. Moulton, rose. "Count them," cried a voice from the throng. A laugh greeted this sally. The Moderator said there

were about three thousand persons voting in the affirmative as near as could be reckoned. "All those opposed," he added as the audience resumed their seats, "will rise." There was a hush of expectancy, in the midst of which one man rose to his feet. It was Francis D. Moulton. He stood until the Moderator noticed him, and a storm of hisses broke from the congregation. Mr. Ovington called to Moulton to sit down, and appealed to the policeman to put him out of the building. "He's not a church member, and has no right to vote," he added. In a moment the church rang again with the cries of "Put him out," and a scene of indescribable confusion set in. It was finally quieted after Moulton had resumed his seat, and a vote of thanks to the committee and to the Council engaged in the case was passed, Mr. Moulton again voting "no."

The organ now burst forth into the strains of "Old Hundred," rising high above the confusion which broke out again upon Moulton's last vote, and the congregation began to sing the doxology, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." Moulton took his hat to go, and, accompanied by Captain Byrne and the policeman, moved towards the door. Instantly there was a rush in the same direction by a number of the more excitable portion of the audience. In the lobby several other policemen were in waiting, and it was evident that their presence was necessary. As Moulton passed out into the hall hisses, jeers, and insults met him on every side; but he passed along between his protectors in silence.

"Rush him! rush him!" "Kill him!" "Give him hell!" was shouted by the angry crowd in waiting for him in the lobby.

One lady cried out, "Iago!"

In the lobby the police formed a cordon around Mr. Moulton, who said he did not require their protection. When he reached the passage-way by the side of the church he found that all the protection he could get was necessary. An angry crowd was waiting for him, and but for a vigilant watchfulness on the part of the policemen would have done him bodily harm. He was "rushed" from the side doors of the church to a carriage, hustled into the carriage, and it was only the courage of the

policemen and the presence of Captain Byrne that prevented Mr. Moulton receiving personal chastisement on the spot. Yells and shouts of indignation followed him as the carriage was driven rapidly away, and he escaped from Plymouth meeting alive and with unbroken bones, thanks to policemen and their ready clubs.

It was greatly regretted by the more steady members of Plymouth Church that their more excitable brethren had given way to their feelings on this occasion; but it was admitted that there were extenuating circumstances to plead for the latter. Mr. Moulton had outraged the feelings of the congregation to an extent which can scarcely be understood by an outsider by his treatment of their pastor, and his appearance in their midst under the circumstances was regarded by them as a deliberate insult. Hence their indignation got the better of their discretion.

XXIX.

MR. MOULTON EXPLAINS HIS ACTION.

Mr. Moulton's appearance at Plymouth Church meeting having excited considerable comment, he addressed the following card to the public in explanation of it:

To the Public:

I will explain the reason of my attendance at Plymouth Church last evening. Immediately after the publication of my extended statement of August 21, I left the city to attend to some business affairs in New England, not returning until yesterday morning. During my absence I learned, to my surprise, from the public prints, that I had refused to submit to cross-examination by the committee, and that the committee's forthcoming report would state this for a fact. I immediately sent by telegraph the following message to the committee:

Lowell, Mass., *August* 27.

"To Jeremiah P. Robinson or Franklin Woodruff, 44 Front street, N. Y.:—I find in the Boston *Globe* the following: 'They (the committee) have asked him (Moulton) three times to submit to cross-examination

and he has as often ignored the request.' I have neither received such request nor made such declination, but have held and hold myself ready to appear on notice. Inform Henry W. Sage, the chairman, of this at once. "FRANCIS D. MOULTON."

Having sent the above message, and not wishing to delay the committee, I took the first train home in order to meet the committee before the time appointed for the presentation of their report to the church. On reaching Brooklyn yesterday morning, I learned that my telegram had been promptly communicated on the previous day to Mr. Sage by Mr. Woodruff in person. I waited for a message from the committee, but none came.

At length, the hour having arrived for the public reading of the committee's report, I went to the church to hear it.

My right to speak was the same as that possessed by any other person there present, for I have been a member of the congregation for many years, and my wife a member of the church.

During the reading of the report I was pained to hear its misrepresentations of me, and I felt it my duty, as it certainly was my right, to ask for the correction of these before the report was put to vote. In order that I might treat the meeting with entire courtesy, I wrote to the chairman a brief note, as follows:

"MR. MODERATOR: I am here and want to say a word.
"FRANCIS D. MOULTON."

Notwithstanding this request, and notwithstanding Mr. Blair's speech adjuring any member of the church and congregation who had aught to say against the report to speak then and there, or ever after hold his peace, and notwithstanding my equal right with Mr. Blair himself, I was not permitted to be heard.

During the proceedings a young man, Mr. Raymond, whom Mr. Beecher had once brought to me saying that I could confer with him in his (Mr. B.'s) absence, chose to fling down upon me some false and offensive words to my dishonor, in reply to which I felt it incumbent on me to characterize him in language appropriate to the provocation, and for which I know no English equivalent.

Mr. Raymond vaunted himself as the only member of the congregation who, with the exception of Mr. Beecher's lawyers, knew all the facts of the case. Mr. Raymond will be chagrined to learn that I have a letter from Mr. Beecher, in which the writer says that he (Mr. R.) knows nothing whatever of the facts of the case.

I will add that the hearing which was last night denied to me in the place where I had the most right to demand and expect it, I shall ask for from the public at large in a few days. The only delay in the publication will arise from the preparation of fac-simile copies of letters and papers, including Mr. Beecher's written certificate of Mr. Raymond's safe and trustworthy ignorance of the case.

I have sought for four years, for the sake of the innocent children of two families, to shield Mr. Beecher from the exposure of his crime of adultery. But Mr. Beecher, his committee, and his church, have united to compel me, for my own self-protection, to reveal him to the world, as I shall shortly do in a still worse light than that wherein he now stands.

(Signed) FRANCIS D. MOULTON.

BROOKLYN, *August* 29, 1874.

P. S.—Mr. Blair's remarks, referred to above, are the following:

"If there be any in this church that have dissenting views in reference to the report, I bespeak for them a calm, full and fair hearing. I think, sir, I may promise to them in your name an opportunity to be heard. I adjure them, if such there be, now to speak, or else forever after hold their peace."

Mr. Raymond's remarks are the following:

"I am the only man, by a concurrence of circumstances, in Plymouth Church or in the United States to-day, not a member of the committee and not a lawyer before the committee, who happens to know all about it."

In a conversation with a reporter for one of the New York papers, Mr. Moulton said, referring to the scene at the church:

"It was one of the worst exhibitions of moral cowardice I ever witnessed. I stood there one man! yes, one man against three thousand, and yet those having charge of the meeting dared not trust my statement to the audience."

"What prompted you to attend the meeting, Mr. Moulton?" "Well, I had a right to be there, and to vote, and would assist me upon being put in possession of the facts of the case."

"What do you propose to do, in view of the present state of affairs?" "I'll tell you. I am preparing a statement, which is nearly completed, and I shall make it public early in the week, accompanied by fac-similes of letters from Beecher and a number of other persons, which have not yet been published." (Excitedly)—"I say, sir, that Plymouth Church, if I choose—an indefeasible right, legal and technical. First, because my wife is a member, and I represent her; and, again, because I myself am a member of the church. I really went, however, simply as a listener, to hear what might be said, but the repeated attacks upon my character and credibility prompted me to attempt a reply in vindication."

"To what particular statement did you refer when Mr. Raymond called you a liar in his harangue?" "It referred generally to Raymond's attack upon myself, but more specially to his assertion that he knew more about this scandal than almost any other person. Relative to that declaration let me say Mr. Raymond came to me with a letter from Mr. Beecher to the effect that Raymond was his friend; he has not counted the costs of the issue they have made with me, and before I am through with the matter, I will grind Mr. Shearman to powder, that I will!"

"Will you indicate what the tenor of your forthcoming statement is?" "It will deal less with Mr. Beecher's relations to Mrs. Tilton than with other women with whom Mr. Beecher has indulged in criminal intercourse. Mr. Beecher has confessed adultery to me and to another person; but the name of that other person has not yet been given. I shall give the name in my forthcoming statements, and that person can sub-

stantiate my declaration on that point. I do not wish it forgotten that my previous statement was prepared before that of Mr. Beecher's was given to the public. It was the original statement, written by me in response to the invitation of the committee to appear before them, but I withheld it, and substituted a shorter and modified statement, from friendly motives toward Mr. Beecher; and yet, after such an exhibition of friendship toward him, Beecher made a bitter personal attack upon me. I felt that after the appearance of such a document I was justified in making public my original statement. And now, after the manifestations of the last few days, and especially the spirit shown in Plymouth Church on Friday evening, a proper self-respect demands that I should show up Mr. Beecher in his true character."

To another reporter Mr. Moulton said: "Why, I've kept the doors of Plymouth Church open for the last four years. In each of these four years Mr. Beecher has come to me and asked whether the sale of pews in Plymouth Church could go on. Up to the time of this act of bad faith toward me by Mr. Beecher, I have been his protector. I protected him against the Woodhull scandal. I protected him against the Bacon letter, and I even protected him against Tilton's statement. My friendship for Mr. Beecher had been of a deep and emotional character. At the altar of Plymouth Church I held a dear child while I consecrated it in baptism. That child subsequently died, and thus I was bound to Mr. Beecher by the tenderest memories. He made a confession to me of having had criminal intercourse with a lady of his congregation, but this lady was not Mrs. Tilton. Even after such confidential revelations I held my peace, and acted for peace, influenced not only by my personal friendship for Mr. Beecher, but by a desire to save the cause of morality and Christianity."

The *Graphic*, of August 29, published the following interview between Moulton and one of its reporters:

Mr. Francis D. Moulton was found at an early hour this morning in his library, looking "as fresh as a lark" after his

adventure and escape from the hands of the Plymouth Church mob last evening. He was reading letters. The dramatic nature of the scene created by his appearance in the church during the reading of the report had already produced proofs of its effect on the public.

"This is what people in New York seem to think of it," said he. "Hear this note:"

MOULTON:—Hurrah for you! One amongst three thousand.

It was signed by one of the best known men in New York. Selecting another letter from the pile, written by a New York lawyer that stands among the first in his profession, he read as follows:

If I had been at your house last evening I should have peremptorily closed the doors against your going to the Plymouth Church meeting, but if I could have known what was to happen there, I should have been the first to keep them open.

Mr. Moulton said he had lately been in receipt of over two hundred letters indorsing his course in the matter.

"I thought I ought to go to the meeting," he continued, thoughtfully. "I knew I had a right to be there, and that in a special manner I had a right to speak. A direct attack was made upon me, and mere regard for consistency and my own self-respect would have prompted me to be present. I did not expect the scene that resulted. I did not go armed. If I had known that I was to be pressed upon by a mob incited by cries of 'Knock him down!' 'Shoot him!' and the like, perhaps it would have been otherwise. The pleasantest thing that has happened to me since the meeting was a call from Captain Byrne. If it had not been for his protection and that of his men last night I cannot tell what would have happened. He had seen me enter the church and face the whole angry partisan mob without flinching, and had himself been called upon to put me out of the church. He came to me of his own accord to say that it was the pluckiest thing he had ever seen. He said (laughing) that I was the best behaved man in the church. Now how is that from a policeman's point of view?"

"No!"—and Mr. Moulton brought his clenched fist down

upon the table with a blow that shook the glass globes in the chandeliers—"I certainly did not flinch. I believe I was, in fact, the coolest man in the whole throng. I went in there having something to say. They would not let me say it, and I came out again."

"What would you have said, Mr. Moulton, if you had been allowed to speak?"

"Said? (laughing). Well, there's one thing I would have done. I would have read a letter from Mr. Beecher, in which he says of this gentleman, Mr. Raymond, 'He's a safe man to conduct affairs. He doesn't understand the facts as you know them; but he represents me in the church.' And yet this is the man who pretends to know all and to throw discredit on my statements. And think of Shearman sitting there and indorsing the acquittal of an adulterer! I'll riddle this affair. I have documents left. They treated me shamefully last night, and when I think of it I am in some degree provoked, but I do not lose my temper. They were angered. They lost their heads, and (bursting into a laugh in his impetuous way) they haven't much heart left."

"Do you know," said he, pausing in the centre of the room and looking thoughtfully at his listener, "that I still retain a friendship for Mr. Beecher? I can't help it. I find my thoughts in spite of myself still running in the old channels. My resentment seems to be against the state of affairs in which I found myself. But I shall right this wrong. Yes; I find myself still looking in a kindly way upon Mr. Beecher. It is a part of my nature that I am unable to rid my mind of the impression which a friend makes upon it. Perhaps it is best. I am glad on the whole that I cannot outlive a friendship."

For a time Mr. Moulton paced the room in deep thought. Then he broke out again, his fine frank face lighting up as he turned toward his visitor.

"Do you remember Charlotte Cushman?" said he. "Do you remember how she used to say as she contemplated the murder of Duncan:

> "'"'Tis better to be that we would destroy
> Than through destruction dwell in doubtful joy.'"

"Plymouth Church will find out the truth of that sentiment to its sorrow. The time will come when it will regret its attempt at my destruction."

"May I ask you what the nature of your coming statement will be?"

"I would rather not anticipate. Say this about it if you think it necessary to characterize it. Say it will be very simple and direct in its nature and sustained by documents."

"When will your next statement be ready?"

"It is ready now," he replied.

Mr. Moulton's attention was called to the remark of S. V. White to a reporter of the *Daily Graphic* yesterday that "the efforts of an Irishman chasing a flea were not to be compared to the committee's efforts to draw the full statement from Mr. Moulton."

In reply to this Mr. Moulton distinctly stated that he had absolutely complied with the request of the committee that he should come before them and produce the documents referred to by Mr. Tilton in his statement, and that he should say nothing further to the committee nor make any statement for publication unless compelled to do so if his action toward Mr. Beecher was questioned. The committee had ignored his statement and had declined to cross-examine him on the ground that he made his statement public instead of to the committee. To this he would reply that Mr. Beecher made his statement to the committee denouncing him (Moulton) as a blackmailer and a treacherous man, and the committee, without notifying Moulton of Beecher's statement, or allowing him to reply to it, published it, and, in his (Moulton's) opinion, any statement to the committee would have been inadequate, and therefore he gave it as Beecher's statement was given—to the world. "If I had had reference to public opinion I should have presented my original statement, and might have saved myself from criticism. No personal reason has influenced me in my conduct."

"Mr. Moulton, I want your version of the affair last night."

"I wish it understood," said Mr. Moulton, "that I was in no sense the cause, either through motive, presence, or action, of

the disgraceful performance which occurred in the church last night. I went to the church, seated myself in a place tendered me by a gentleman of the press, and proceeded quietly to take notes of what was being read. During the proceedings, before the speech by Mr. Raymond, a young man, I sent my request to the Moderator of the meeting, asking permission to say a word. It was not considered; the opportunity for which I asked was denied me, although I had the right to speak as a member of the congregation, besides the right which every man has to defend himself when assailed. When I found myself placed in a false light before the congregation by one of the speakers, Mr. Raymond, I resented his insult by calling him a liar."

"Would Captain Byrne have arrested you, do you think?"

"Yes, I think he would if he had had cause. He is a faithful officer. I did not see him at all in the church during the tumult. Neither dreading the hisses nor threats, I quietly proceeded with my notes, and the only knowledge I had of his presence was through a whisper by a gentleman of the press that the captain was behind me. Byrne, with great fidelity to his duty, rode upon my carriage-step to my house. I suppose he protected me. I say 'suppose,' because I did not realize that I was in any danger."

XXX.

MR. TILTON SUES MR. BEECHER FOR DAMAGES.

Mr. Tilton, having resolved to bring suit against Mr. Beecher for the seduction of his wife, made his formal complaint through his counsel, Messrs. Morris & Pearsall, about the 20th of August, and brought suit for the sum of one hundred thousand dollars as the amount of the damage he had sustained by the injuries which he claims were inflicted upon him by Mr. Beecher. Mr. Beecher's reply was brief, and was as follows:

The City Court of Brooklyn:

Theodore Tilton, plaintiff, agt. Henry Ward Beecher, defendant—Answer. The defendant answers to the complaint: I. That each and every allegation in the said complaint contained (except that the plaintiff and Miss Elizabeth M. Richards were married on October 2, 1855, and lived together as husband and wife up to 1874) is utterly false. II. That this defendant never had, at any time or at any place, any unchaste or improper relations with the wife of the plaintiff, and never attempted or sought to have any such relations.

SHEARMAN & STERLING,
Attorneys for Defendant.

State of New Hampshire, County of Grafton, ss.:

Henry Ward Beecher, being duly sworn, says: 1. That he is the defendant herein, and resides in the city of Brooklyn, Kings county, New York, but is temporarily residing at the Twin Mountain House, Coos county, New Hampshire. 2. That he is sixty-one years of age, and his occupation is that of a clergyman. 3. That the foregoing answer is true of his own knowledge. HENRY WARD BEECHER.

Sworn and subscribed before me this 29th day of August, 1874.
HARRY BINGHAM, *Justice of the Peace.*

State of New Hampshire, County of Grafton, August 29, 1874:

I hereby certify that I am Clerk of the Circuit Court of the said county, and that Harry Bingham resides therein, and is, and was, at the time of taking the foregoing affidavit, a Justice of the Peace throughout the said State, and duly authorized by the laws thereof to take the said affidavit; and that I am well acquainted with the handwriting of the said Harry Bingham, and verily believe that the signature to the jurat of the said affidavit is genuine, and that said affidavit purports to be taken in all respects as required by the laws of the State of New Hampshire. In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the official seal of the said court, the date above written.

C. A. DOLE, *Clerk of the Circuit Court*
For Grafton County, New Hampshire.

Theodore Tilton ag't Henry Ward Beecher:

Please to take notice that the issue in the above action will be brought on for trial at the next Trial Term of the City Court of Brooklyn, appointed to be held at the County Court-house, in the city of Brooklyn, on the first Monday of October next, at ten o'clock in the forenoon of that day, or as soon thereafter as counsel can be heard.

September 7, 1874. SHEARMAN & STERLING.
To MORRIS & PEARSALL.

Due and timely service of the notice of which the above is a copy is hereby admitted. MORRIS & PEARSALL.
September 7, 1874.

A counter notice of trial was at the same time served by Morris & Pearsall upon Shearman & Sterling, who also admitted due service thereof.

At the time of the service of Tilton's complaint and the filing of his answer thereto, Mr. Beecher was in the White Mountains, whither he had gone to escape his annual attack of hay fever, to which he is subject.

XXXI.

MR. MOULTON'S LAST STATEMENT.

Mr. Moulton, on the morning after the meeting at Plymouth Church, gave notice of his intention to publish another statement in which he would produce documents which would effectually ruin Mr. Beecher, and overthrow the report of the Investigating Committee. On the 11th of September, he put his purpose into execution by publishing in the *New York Daily Graphic* the following statement:

To the Public:

I have waited patiently, perhaps too long, after giving to the public the exact facts and documents as they were given to me, in the statement prepared for the Committee of Investigation, of which they have made no use; nor did they call upon me for any explanation, or try to test the coherence of the facts by cross-examination, which, of course, I held myself ready to undergo after I felt myself compelled to make an *exposé* of the facts in full.

I had hoped that Mr. Beecher himself would, ere this, have made a denial of any intimation, insinuation, or averment in his statement that I had acted in any way dishonorably towards him, or had endeavored, in the interests of Mr. Tilton, to extort or obtain by cajolery or promise any money from him; and as such a withdrawal, in accordance with truth as Mr. Beecher knows it, would have rendered it unnecessary for me to take any further part in the controversy between the principals in this terrible affair, I trusted that I never would have felt myself called upon to make further statements which, if made, must be in the nature of accusations against him.

Failing in this hope, it seems to my friends and to myself that as a question of veracity is so sharply raised between Mr. Beecher and me and as there are a large number of well-meaning and confiding men and

women who desire, if possible, to believe him, and, although if the case between us were to be determined only by the thinking, scrutinizing people of the country, it would not be necessary to add another word; yet, to prevent these good, religious persons from being led astray in their convictions, not only as regards Mr. Beecher, but that I may maintain the station in their minds which I feel I ought to hold as a man of honor and purity of motive and action in this disgraceful business, I propose, by the aid of documents which I hold, and the necessary narrative to make them intelligible, and by a comparison of Mr. Beecher's statements with the documents heretofore published, to show that it is impossible for his statement to the committee to be true in many very important particulars, and that the issue of truthfulness is not between his personal averments and mine, but between him and the facts themselves.

From his insinuations and inferences, if not the direct statements, feeling that my character as a man as well as my truthfulness as a witness have been impugned, I will endeavor, in the first place, to reinstate myself so far as I may by showing at how late a day he held other and entirely different opinions of me.

It will be observed that in my statement prepared for the committee I said that I refrained from producing any documents or "any papers or proposals for the settlement of this controversy since it has broken out afresh, and since the publication of Tilton's letter to Dr. Bacon and the call of Beecher for a committee;" and the reason was that in making the statement before the committee, I thought it unjust to the parties to parade before the committee the mutual concessions and arrangements made by the parties whom I had hoped, even at that late hour, might be saved from themselves by an adjustment of the strife.

I extract the following from Mr. Beecher's statement to the committee:

> Until the reply of Mr. Tilton to Bacon's letters. I never had a suspicion of his (Moulton's) good faith and of the sincerity with which he was dealing with me; and when that letter was published, and Mr. Moulton, on my visiting him in reference to it, proposed no counter-operation —no documents, no help—I was staggered.

If this averment were true, he was rightly "staggered," and he rightly lost faith in me; for if I failed, in his then hour of peril, to do everything that in me lay to his satisfaction to rescue him, I was not the friend that I had professed to be, or that he acknowledged me to be, and was unworthy of his confidence or the confidence of any other.

It will be observed that the letter of appointment of the Investigating Committee, of which Mr. Sage is chairman, bears date Brooklyn, June 27, 1874, which was drawn out by the publication of the letter from Tilton in the *Golden Age* on the 21st (?) of the same month.

Mr. Beecher's statement was made before the committee on the 13th of August, wherein the accusation that I had deserted him at first appears. Now, I aver that from the time of the preparation of the Bacon letter, before the 21st of June, down to the 24th day of July, I was in almost daily consultation with Beecher and his counsel, at their request, as to the best method of meeting that publication and averting the storm that was imminent; and until the 4th of August I enjoyed his entire confidence and regard as much as I ever had so far as any expression came from him; and, instead of manifestations of distrust, he gave me, both verbally and in writing, the highest praise for my friendly intervention. I repeat one instance of his oral commendation because I can substantiate it by a witness who was present. After we had been in consultation at my house, on the 5th of July, upon this subject, I walked with him, still continuing the conference, up past Montague Terrace, where we found Mr. Jeremiah P. Robinson, my business partner, standing at his door. We stopped and spoke to him on some indifferent subject, when Beecher, putting his arm around my neck and his hand upon my shoulder, said to Mr. Robinson: "God never raised up a truer friend to a man than Frank has been to me." Mr. Robinson replied: "That is true," and we passed on.

On the 24th of July I received a letter from Mr. Beecher, asking me to return to him certain letters and papers in order to aid him in making his statement to the committee. As previous to the 10th, when Tilton made his sworn statement, I had refused the same request from him, I did not think it right to grant that of Beecher, because it seemed to me to be taking sides in the controversy as between them, which I ought not to do; and especially, as he was about to make a statement of facts which were within his own knowledge, I did not see why he should need documents to aid him if the statement was to be a truthful one. I gave a verbal refusal to his counsel, who brought me the letter, and desired him to take the latter back to Beecher, which he declined to do. On that day I left town on imperative business and was gone until the 4th day of August, when I wrote Beecher a letter giving an answer to his request in form, stating substantially these reasons, which letter he has published, together with a reply, which was the first manifestation of unkindness of feeling I received from him.

It must be borne in mind that the point of veracity which is thus raised between us is not whether my efforts for the adjustment of this controversy were wise or well directed, but whether it is true that I made *any* efforts to aid him, or deserted him, as he asserts. Upon that point let the facts answer, which are, fortunately for me, so substantiated by documentary evidence that as to them there can be no doubt. This is exactly what I did do:

When I was first informed by Tilton that he was preparing a reply to

Dr. Bacon for publication, I said to him that I hoped he would do no such thing, as it would lead to an exposure of all the facts. He said, in substance, that Dr. Bacon being a leading Congregationalist of New England, his statement would seriously damage him there, if not refuted, in his character as a public man, and that he must reply or be deemed the "dog and knave" that the Doctor had characterized him, and be forever held to be simply a "creature of Beecher's magnanimity;" that he had given to Beecher, as I knew myself from being present at the time, an opportunity to repair the mischief which Bacon had done him, asking Beecher merely to write a letter to Bacon making it clear that he (Tilton) was not the creature of Beecher's magnanimity. I said to him: "Do you remember that Beecher pleaded the embarrassments of his situation, which hindered him from doing such a thing as that without in reality making a confession?" Tilton replied: "Beecher has acted in this matter simply with reference to saving himself, and thus leaves nothing for me but my own vindication by myself."

While the Bacon letter was being prepared I did not see it, but after it was written I thought it was but just to all the interests for which I was caring that I should see its contents, and therefore accepted an invitation from Tilton to hear it read. I again objected with great vehemence and warmth to its publication in the presence of witnesses—one of whom was Mr. Frank Carpenter, who, as his friend, had been brought by Tilton into the case without my intervention. After considerable discussion, finding it impossible to control its publication, I then sought to alter the phraseology of the inculpating portion of it in such a manner as would still leave opportunity for such a reply from Beecher as might satisfy Tilton and would prevent the disclosure of Mr. Beecher's acts. To all my arguments and urgings, Tilton replied that he would not hold me responsible at all for the consequences; that he accepted them all for himself alone, and that he could not take my advice upon this subject, since Beecher and his friends had chosen to disregard my counsel by continuing their attacks upon him. After much persuasion I induced him to strike out the words in the letter as originally written—"Mr. Beecher has committed against me and my family a revolting crime"—and instead thereof to insert the words: "has committed against *me* an offence which I forbear to name or characterize;" thus omitting the word "family," and substituting a softer word, "offence," susceptible of various interpretations, instead of "revolting crime" against the family, which might have been regarded as capable of only one. When thus modified even, I told Tilton that I would rather give him, from my own pocket, five thousand dollars in gold than to have him publish it.

During the time of the composition of the paper, while my importunities with Tilton were going on, I had frequent consultations with

Committee or to the church such action as may then seem to you right and wise."

On the same day Tilton came to see me, and announcing to me his wife's desertion and calling my attention to the above publication, was excited by these simultaneous events, which seemed to him to be part of a prearranged plan of action, and also excited him to great indignation. He said that Beecher was again playing him a trick, as he had done before when he attempted to settle the matter, by now appointing a committee to make examination of the facts, then getting his wife surreptitiously to go before the committee and exonerate him fully from the charges of adultery, then tempting her openly to desert her husband, so as to show that he, Tilton, had always been in the wrong, and was simply the creature of his magnanimity; and that now Beecher should have a full statement of all the facts and documents if it destroyed him, his wife, or his family; that justice should be done at length and the truth be known; that if Plymouth Church chose to accept an adulterer for its pastor they should have the opportunity to do it; and that he was going home to prepare his full statement, and wanted me to give him the documents and evidence with which to do it. Upon my refusing to do so, he said that I was a traitor to him, because I had gone into this controversy in the beginning as his friend. I tried to pacify him; said everything I could to quiet him, assuring him that although we had been mistaken as to the purpose of the committee, yet, as Beecher had named them all, he had done so in his own interest and would be surely able to control them. He said that Beecher, by the terms of his letter of appointment, had challenged him before the world, and he accepted the challenge. I told him that I saw nothing in the letter which prevented him from standing upon the terms of the Bacon letter that an offence only had been committed. But he said that this was simply folly on my part—indeed, called me a fool for so believing, and said: "If you choose to desert me in this emergency of my life, I will stand by myself and fight it alone." I appealed again to him for his children's sake, saying: "I cannot be in sympathy with any course of yours that will simply blast them and ruin your household and yourself." But he was obdurate, and left me, reiterating his determination to make a full statement of the facts. Indeed, I had never seen a man so much changed as he had been in a few hours. In reference to this change in Tilton I quote the following from Mrs. Tilton's statement:

I rose quietly, and having dressed, roused him only to say, "Theodore, I will never take another step by your side. The end has indeed come!" He followed me to Mr. Ovington's to breakfast, saying I was unduly excited, and that he had been misrepresented, perhaps, but leaving me determined as before. How to account for the change which twenty-four hours had been capable of working in his mind than many years past, I leave for the eternities with their mysteries to reveal.

The causes of the change had, indeed, been revealed to me in a much shorter time.

I did not call upon Mr. Beecher upon this matter because I believed he was in sufficient trouble already, and I was devoting all my energies to keeping Tilton within the bounds of reason as to his own course.

On the same day—the 11th—I received an invitation from the committee to appear before them on the 13th, which is as follows, marked "F":

SAGE TO MOULTON.

BROOKLYN, *July* 11, 1874.

FRANCIS D. MOULTON, ESQ.:

DEAR SIR:—The Examining Committee of Plymouth Church (at the request of Mr. Beecher) have appointed the following gentlemen, viz.: From the church—Henry W. Sage, Augustus Storrs, Henry M. Cleveland; from the Society—Horace B. Claflin, John Winslow, S. V. White—a committee to investigate, in the interest of truth and justice, certain charges made by Theodore Tilton in his recent letter to Rev. Leonard Bacon, which compromise the character of Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. The committee are informed that you have some knowledge of matters involved in the case, and instruct me respectfully to invite you to appear before them on Monday evening next, July 13, at eight o'clock, at the residence of Augustus Storrs, Esq., 34 Monroe place, and furnish them with such facts as are within your own knowledge in the matters under investigation. Very truly yours,

H. W. SAGE, *Chairman.*

It will be observed that the committee only desired that I should "furnish them such facts as were within my own knowledge in the matter under investigation." The curious phraseology of this requirement would be quite patent to any one, as the committee could hardly suppose that I had been called in to be a personal witness of any intimacies, guilty or innocent, between Beecher and Mrs. Tilton, and my statement, if so confined, would have been necessarily very short; and I might well suppose that the invitation was so worded in order that I might make no disclosure.

On my return to my house on Monday afternoon, at ten minutes to six o'clock, I received the following note from Mr. Beecher, marked "G":

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

MONDAY, 5 P. M.

MY DEAR MOULTON:—Will it be convenient for you to call around here any time this evening after half past six? I shall be in and can be secure from interruption. I need to see you.

Truly yours, and ever, H. W. BEECHER.

To which I immediately replied in a note as follows, marked "H":

MOULTON TO BEECHER.

MONDAY, 5.50 P. M.

MY DEAR SIR:—I shall be at home until 7.15 P. M. I am almost tired, or would go to you. There will be no interruption here.

Truly yours, FRANCIS D. MOULTON.

Your last note grieved me. I have an invitation to appear before your committee this evening.

In reply to which I received the note heretofore published in my former statement, marked "JJJ," which is as follows:

July 13, 1874.

MY DEAR FRANK:—I will be with you at seven or a little before. I am ashamed to put a straw more upon you, and have but a single consolation—that the matter cannot *distress* you long, as it must soon end: that is, there will be no more anxiety about the future, whatever regrets there may be for the past. Truly yours, and ever, H. W. BEECHER.

In pursuance of this note Mr. Beecher called on me and I read him the statement which I was to make to the committee that same evening, and he approved of its tone and character, and declared it, as I therein stated, honorable to both parties so far as I was concerned. I had also read the same to Tilton, and he agreed in the same opinion as to the propriety of its tone. What I did say has already been published, and contains, in the closing part, the advice to the committee which I had before given to Beecher, which was as follows:

I hold now, as I have held hitherto, the opinion that Mr. Beecher should frankly state that he had committed an offence against Mr. Tilton, for which it was necessary to apologize, and for which he did apologize, in the language of the letter, a part of which has been quoted; that he should have stated frankly that he deemed it necessary for Mr. Tilton to have made the defence against Dr. Leonard Bacon which he did make, and that he (Beecher) should refuse to be a party to the reopening of this painful subject. If he had made this statement he would have stated no more than the truth, and it would have saved him and you the responsibility of a further inquiry. It is better now that the committee should not report, and in the place of a report Mr. Beecher himself should make the statement which I have suggested; or that, if the committee does report, the report should be a recommendation to Mr. Beecher to make such a statement.

The interview was somewhat hurried, as I left him to go to the committee.

Seeing in some newspaper a supposed interview of a committeeman, who claimed to speak for Beecher, in which was reported Beecher's opinion of what I had said before the committee, I called upon him, Beecher, in reference to that and other business, and after the usual kindly salutations I told him that I thought his committeemen were acting very foolishly in attempting to throw slurs or imputations upon me, and recited the facts, as I felt certain that he did not authorize or countenance the report. He told me that he had not seen the paper at

all and knew nothing about it. We then commenced a discussion of the situation, and I spoke of the fact that Tilton was preparing a statement, at which he expressed regret and sorrow. I told him Tilton had deemed the publication of the correspondence as to the appointment of the committee a challenge to him to come forward and make a full statement of all the facts; and that he regarded the act of his wife leaving his house a hostile one prompted by the committee under the inspiration of Beecher. He said—as had already been published by an interviewer—that he had not authorized the publication of the letter of appointment at all; that he had intended to keep things quiet in accordance with my suggestion; but that now he thought he was compelled to make a statement, which statement he read to me, and which, while it took very much blame upon himself as to his course towards Tilton and his family, of course denied all guilt, but which thoroughly exonerated Tilton from any dishonorable act towards him. I expressed myself to Beecher, as I was, very much pleased with this statement, and said that if it was made to the committee before Tilton should make his, as Beecher informed me he intended to do, I had no doubt that I could prevail upon Tilton to agree to the statement proposed and to allow the whole matter to drop; and as evidence of his disposition to do so, I showed Beecher a report which Tilton had once consented might be made by the committee provided Beecher's statement exonerated him (Tilton) from any dishonorable act. This report was in Tilton's handwriting, a copy of which I showed Beecher, and is marked "I":

PROPOSED REPORT OF COMMITTEE BY TILTON.

The committee appointed to inquire into the offence and apology by Mr. Beecher alluded to in Mr. Tilton's letter to Dr. Bacon, respectfully report that upon examination they find that an offence of grave character was committed by Mr. Beecher against Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Tilton, for which he made a suitable apology to both parties, receiving in return their forgiveness and good-will. The committee further report that this seems to them a most eminently Christian way for the settlement of differences and reflects honor on all the parties concerned.

Said Beecher: "Will Tilton agree to that?" I answered: "He would have agreed to that, and I hope he will continue in that mind; for although he is writing his statement, yet I am dealing with him as I have dealt heretofore, allowing him to exhaust himself in writing out the statement and then using my influence to suppress the publication, and I have no doubt I can do it again."

The conversation then turned as to what reply Tilton ought to make to Beecher's statement, which he had first read to me, if it were accepted by the committee. Thereupon Beecher stepped to his desk and wrote out the following for me to take to Tilton as the substance of what he should say in reply to Beecher's statement, and I was to use my very

best exertions and all the influence I could over Tilton to have him agree to it. That paper, every word of which was written by Mr. Beecher, so that there is no opportunity for mistaking its language, I have in my possession. It is marked "J":

BEECHER'S PROPOSED STATEMENT FOR TILTON TO MAKE.

The statement of Mr. Beecher being read, and if striking favorably, then a word sent, substantially thus, to the committee:

I have been three years acting under conviction that I had been wronged, but was under the imputation of being the injurer. I learn from a friend that Mr. B. in his statement to you has reversed this and has done me justice. I am willing, should he consent, to appear before you with him, and dropping the further statements, which I felt it to be my duty to make for my own clearance, to settle this painful domestic difficulty—which never ought to have been made public—finally and amicably.

I left Mr. Beecher with this proposed statement for Tilton in my hand, went to Tilton, tried to persuade him not to publish, not to make his statement to the committee on the evening of the 20th, at which time they had summoned him, but found him exceedingly obdurate, and busy in preparing his statement. He again asked me for documents and papers, which I refused, and I then left him.

Several publications were made about this time as to what was to be the nature of Tilton's statement, which caused great anxiety to Mr. Tracy and myself, who had consultations on this matter. Accordingly, on Sunday, the 19th, I received the following note from Mr. Tracy to meet me, evidently written in consultation with Beecher, because the note paper bears precisely the same water-mark and is of the same texture as that of the notes which I had just previously received from Mr. Beecher from his house. It is here inserted, marked "K":

TRACY TO MOULTON.

BROOKLYN, *July* 19, 1874.

F. D. MOULTON:

MY DEAR SIR:—Will you name a time and place to-day where I can see you? I think it important. Yours truly, B. F. TRACY.

We met, and it was there determined between us, upon my suggestion, that I should make one more attempt to prevent Tilton making his statement to the committee. Previous to the reception of this note, at Tracy's suggestion, I had summoned my counsel by telegraph to meet me in New York on Monday, the 20th. At the meeting on Sunday I found Tracy impressed with the idea that the documents relating to this affair had been destroyed, and that Tilton could not verify by the originals any statement from them. I answered him that that was not the case; that all the documents were in my hands with the single exception of Mrs. Tilton's confession, which had been returned to Tilton and

destroyed, as Beecher knew; and that I should feel myself obliged to produce them before any tribunal which would compel testimony.

On the morning of the 20th, by arrangement with Tracy, I went with my counsel to Tilton's house, and there we both strenuously and urgently argued with him against the making of his statement to the committee that evening. We represented to him that such a statement would be ruin to himself, his family, and to Beecher, and that it was not for the interest of either or of the community that so great a calamity should happen as the exposure of all these facts. Tilton reiterated that he had been challenged by Beecher; that he had given his word to the committee that he would appear, and that if they were there he would do so, and that if he should refuse to appear Beecher's advisers would insist that he had no facts and was afraid to appear. It was then suggested to him that if the committee did not meet that evening and he held himself in readiness to appear before them, that would be a sufficient answer to any such charge, and he was again persistently urged to take that course it a meeting of the committee could be prevented. Tilton exhibited great reluctance even to that, whereupon I felt obliged to tell him that I should consider this course in thus presenting the matter against Beecher a personal affront to myself, and that in such case I should take all the means in my power to prevent his statement being effectual. To this appeal, put to him in the strongest language I could command, Tilton finally consented, first, that if the committee were not present, so that he might be excused from appearing before them that evening, he would not publish his statement or let its contents be known until a future meeting of the committee, when I suggested to him the course that had been agreed upon by Beecher and the statement which had been prepared by Beecher might be submitted to the committee and an amicable report made.

After getting Tilton's consent I drove around to Mr. Tracy's house, took him into the carriage, and we drove to my house together, with my counsel. When we arrived there we narrated to Mr. Tracy what had taken place at Tilton's, and he (Tracy), agreeing that this course was best, undertook to get an adjournment of the committee till Wednesday evening, and suggested that it might be difficult to find them before the meeting, in which case it was understood that he himself would not be present on that evening. I undertook to see Tilton and have him agree that if Tracy should not be present he would refuse to go on until a subsequent meeting, on the ground that he desired Tracy to be there to cross-examine him after he had made his statement.

Mr. Tracy left my house for that purpose, and soon after returned and reported that he had called upon the chairman and left him a formal note, saying that he could not be present at the meeting of the committee and requested the adjournment; that he had been to see another

member of the committee, Mr. Cleveland, but failed to find him. He then left, saying that even if the committee held a meeting he would not be present.

I then saw Tilton, stated the difficulties about getting an adjournment of the committee, and asked his acquiescence in the arrangement not to deliver his statement to the committee if Tracy was not there. I made efforts to detain him at dinner until after eight o'clock in order that the committee might adjourn before he came. He left my house after eight o'clock, and not soon returning, in about an hour after I sent a messenger to the committee to learn what was being done, who returned with the word, to the unspeakable grief and surprise of myself and my counsel—who had co-operated with me in the interest of Mr. Beecher as I had requested him—that Tilton was reading his statement to the committee! Almost in despair, but with a last lingering hope of preventing the public exposure of this unspeakably pernicious scandal, and to make one last effort, I went down to the house of the committee and waited the coming out of Tilton, and conjured him not to give any copy of his statement for publication, hoping that the committee would see, as I did, that the necessities of the welfare of the whole community required that it should not be made public; and I got him to consent so to do; and on the next day I was present when he refused the request of a personal friend to allow it to be published in the *Herald*. The manner of its publication has been explained in the card of Mr. Maverick, a publication made without Mr. Tilton's consent or knowledge, and to the indescribable grief of both of us.

After the publication I saw nothing but strife and wretchedness, and nothing was left for me to do but to hold myself sternly aloof and allow the parties to fight it out without the aid of any documents or knowledge in my possession.

On the 24th of July I received a note from Beecher by the hand of Tracy, written on the same cross-lined water-marked paper as the note of Mr. Beecher of the 19th of July, requesting that I would send him the papers and documents in my possession, which note is inserted, marked "L":

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

July 24, 1874.

My Dear Mr. Moulton:—I am making out a statement, and need the letters and papers in your hands. Will you send by Tracy all the originals of my papers? Let them be numbered and an inventory taken, and I will return them to you as soon as I can see and compare, get dates, make extracts or copies, as the case may be.

Will you also send me *Bowen's heads* of difficulty and all letters of *my sister*, if any are with you?

I heard you were sick. Are you about again? God grant you to see peaceful times. Yours faithfully, H. W. Beecher.

F. D. Moulton.

I said to Mr. Tracy that he had better take back that note, as I could not, in honor and conscience, give up the documents to either party to aid them in the preparation of statements against each other. Mr. Tracy suggested that perhaps I might send copies, to which I answered that that would seem to me the same breach of honorable obligation as to send the originals, and that it was impossible for me to have them copied, as I was about to leave town.

On the day of my arrival home, August 4, I received an invitation from the committee to come before it the next day, asking me only to bring the documents referred to in Tilton's statement. Having seen in the public prints that it was said that Beecher had received no answer from me to his request of July 24, I sent him the letter which has been published of the date of August 4, explaining in form what I had said in substance through Mr. Tracy.

At ten minutes to eleven of that evening, a letter was brought to me purporting to be signed by H. W. Beecher, but not in his handwriting, asking for the production of all the documents before the committee, but which afterwards Mr. Sage, chairman of the committee, certified to be a correct copy of the original, which is here inserted, marked "M":

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

BROOKLYN, *July* 28, 1874.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—The Committee of Investigation are waiting mainly for you before closing their labors. I, too, earnestly wish that you would come and clear your mind and memory of everything that can bear on my case. I pray you also to bring all letters and papers relating to it which will throw any light upon it, and bring to a result this protracted case.

I trust that Mrs. M. has been reinvigorated, and that her need of your care will not be so great as to detain you.

Truly yours, H. W. BEECHER.

F. D. MOULTON.

H. W. SAGE, *Chairman.*

Correct copy of original.

The letter of Beecher's of August 4, heretofore published, was the first indication that I had ever had from Henry Ward Beecher of unfriendliness, and I have the very best reason for knowing that the harsh portions of it were the suggestions of others and not of his own mind.

After receiving these notes of Beecher's, I came to the conclusion that if Tilton also consented, I would make the full statement before the committee which I have since published. When I began the preparation of my statement I did not design to include the letters of Mrs. Hooker and her brother, or Mr. Hooker, because, as they had only a collateral bearing upon the controversy, I was very unwilling to drag the name of Mrs. Hooker, for whom I entertain the highest respect, into this matter. But having seen in the newspapers an attack in advance

upon Mrs. Hooker's sanity, inspired by the friends of Mr. Beecher, and Beecher, through the advice of his counsel, as I believe, having asserted that I retained letters of his brother and sister that were not given into my keeping as part of the documents in this controversy, I felt it at once due to the lady's position and myself that they should appear, and hence they were inserted.

After Tracy had learned by my published letter that I would go before the committee and make a full statement, he desired most earnestly that I should do no such thing, bringing to bear every argument that occurred to him to dissuade me therefrom, and among others that if I made the statement it would have to come out in the cross-examination that I had received money from Beecher for the use of Tilton, and that Beecher's friends would thereupon make a charge of blackmail against me. I told him in the presence of my counsel—for whom I had again sent at his (Tracy's) request—that that would not come out on cross-examination, for the facts in regard to the money were already fully disclosed in my statement, and that in that transaction there was nothing dishonorable on Beecher's part or my own that I should fear seeing the light of day. Tracy strongly assured me that I ought not, under any circumstances, to disclose the letters and documents in my possession; that I was bound, by every principle of honor and sacred obligation, to keep them private; and that it would be better, both for Tilton and Beecher, that I should do so.

At his suggestion I called a meeting on Monday morning of some of Mr. Beecher's friends, and some of my most valued friends who could be got together, to lay before them this proposition. At that meeting my counsel advised that there were two honorable courses before me. One was to seal my lips as to personal statements, and produce no documents but those of which extracts had been made and already been put before the committee, as it would be but just to both parties that, a part of a paper being seen, the whole should be known; or to make a full and complete statement of all the facts and documents, both parties having consented. These alternatives were discussed in the meeting of my friends, and by a majority of them it was determined that less harm would come to the community, to the families of the parties, and to the parties themselves if I took the former course. Yielding to the advice of those I so much respected, I concluded to go before the committee and make the simple statement of an intention not to take part in the controversy, and producing only the letters which had in part been before them in Tilton's statement, reserving the right to protect my own honor and purity of action in this matter if attacked, as I have since done.

In order that the exact credit due to Mr. Beecher's statement may be seen and its value as testimony may be fully appreciated as compared

with the facts and documents that I shall hereafter bring forward in my own vindication, I am compelled to notice some other patent misstatements in this special plea of counsel made in behalf of Mr. Beecher, if not by himself; and one of the first in order which claims attention is the averment in his statement that "the only copy of Mrs. Tilton's confession was torn in pieces in his own presence" on the night of the 30th of December, 1870, an act about which he could hardly be mistaken. On the contrary, I have stated that that paper of "confession" was delivered into my hands the night of the meeting of Beecher and Tilton at my house, when Beecher was first charged with his adulteries with Mrs. Tilton; and afterwards, when I demanded the recantation of him, he asked me: "What will you do with it if I give it up?" I answered: "I will keep it as I keep the confession. If you act honorably I will protect it with my life, as I would protect the other with my life." I may be allowed to say here that at this remark I made reference to the pistol in my overcoat pocket, which I always carried in the night, as emphasizing the extremity of my defence of the papers. Yet Mr. Beecher says, "He made no verbal threats, but opened his overcoat and with some emphatic remark he showed a pistol." Why misrepresent? Is it possible that he gave his confidence at once to a man who extorted a paper from him with a pistol? Yet Beecher's committee make a point of this prevarication in their argument for the accused!

After the tripartite covenant I handed back that same paper to Tilton at the request of his wife, in order that she might be satisfied, and herself destroy it.

Now, which of these statements is true? Let contemporaneous facts and acts answer.

It will be remembered that that meeting was on Friday night, the 30th of December, 1870. Mrs. Tilton sent me a note, heretofore published, dated the next Saturday morning, in the following words:

SATURDAY MORNING.

MY DEAR FRIEND FRANK:—I want you to do me the greatest possible favor. My letter which you have, and the one which I gave Mr. Beecher at his dictation last evening, ought both to be destroyed. Please bring both to me, and I will burn them. Show this note to Theodore and Mr. Beecher. They will see the propriety of this request.

Yours truly, E. R. TILTON.

The "letter" referred to, of course, it will be seen is the "confession," the only letter I then had of hers referring to this matter.

And again, to show that I cannot be either mistaken or untrue, I refer to Mrs. Tilton's note to Beecher of April 21, following, heretofore published:

FRIDAY, *April* 21, 1871.

MR. BEECHER:—As Mr. Moulton has returned, will you use your influence to have *the papers* in his possession destroyed? My heart bleeds night and day at the injustice of their existence.

Would not Tilton have caused such a paper to be preserved after he had founded an accusation upon it? This falsehood was put in by Beecher's lawyers lest Tilton might produce a copy, as my statement had not then been published with its documentary evidence.

Still another variation from the truth occurs in Beecher's statement in regard to the destruction of the "letter of contrition." In his explanation of it he speaks as follows:

I did not trouble myself about it till *more* [sic] than a year afterward, when Tilton began to write up his case [of which hereafter] and was looking up documents. I wondered what was in this old memorandum, and desired to see it for greater certainty; so one day I suddenly asked Moulton for that memorandum, and said, "You promised to return it to me." He seemed confused for a moment, and said, "Did I?" "Certainly," I answered. He replied that the paper had been destroyed. On my putting the question again, he said, "That paper was burned up long ago;" and during the next two years, in various conversations of his own accord, he spoke of it as destroyed. I had never asked for nor authorized the destruction of this paper.

Upon this point I have said in my statement that I retained that "letter of contrition" as one of the papers necessary to keep peace between the parties, and I now add that this was well known to Beecher, and I shall prove it at last from his own mouth. It will be remembered, so far from Beecher believing, within more than a year afterwards, that it had been destroyed and burned up, that in April, 1872, Mr. Samuel Wilkeson, Beecher's friend and partner in the publication of his book—and who thinks that Beecher's destruction will knock their enterprise of the publication of the "Life of Christ" "higher than a kite," and who acted in the capacity of counsel in his behalf in drawing up the tripartite covenant—wrote me the following letter, heretofore published in my statement, dated the same day with that remarkable covenant:

NORTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY,
SECRETARY'S OFFICE, 120 BROADWAY,
NEW YORK, *April* 2. 1872.

MY DEAR MOULTON:—Now for the closing act of justice and duty. Let Theodore pass into your hand the written apology which he holds for the improper advances, and do you pass it into the flames of the friendly fire in your room of reconciliation. Then let Theodore talk to Oliver Johnson. I hear that he and Carpenter, the artist, have made this whole affair the subject of conversation in the clubs.

Sincerely yours, SAMUEL WILKESON.

Did Beecher or his friend want me to burn a "letter of contrition" in April, 1872, which Beecher avers I had told him and he believed had been burned long previous? But again in Beecher's letter of June 1, 1873, he says: "The *agreement* [tripartite covenant] *was made after my letter through you was written.* He [Tilton] had had it a year." Yes, from January 1, 1871, to April 2, 1872. Does Beecher really

believe himself when he says that I told him that letter was long before burned up? He had not seen his letter of June 1 when this falsehood was told for him. In view of such false statements, is the anxiety of his counsel to get his letters and papers out of my hands, so they could square their statements by them, at all wonderful?

As bearing upon the want of veracity in the matter that we have just considered as to the destruction of the "letter of contrition," I take leave to call attention to a like misstatement as to the original preparation of this same "letter."

I have stated that it was written out according to the dictation of Mr. Beecher. As an honorable man, looking only to a settlement between the parties, and at that moment certainly without any other possible motive which could be imputed to me, I could have only desired to reproduce exactly the words of Beecher, which I did do with exactness; and the most cursory examination of the phrases will show them to have been *his* words and not *mine*. I am not in the habit of using such language; indeed I hardly believe myself capable of composing it. I should not myself have used the phrase, "Humble myself before him as I do before my God." I was not used to that kind of expression, nor the phrase, "Toward the poor child lying there praying with folded hands." I never called a woman of nearly forty years old a "poor child" in my life. I did not know that she "was lying" anywhere with folded hands. Beecher did, because he says in his statement to the committee that she "lay there white as marble," like a statue of the old world, palm to palm, like one praying, thus reproducing four years afterwards almost the identical phrase and picture which he conveyed to me, and which I put in the "letter of contrition." I could not have used the phrase, "I have her forgiveness," because I did not know whether he had it or not except as he told me, and if I had acted upon my belief in the matter I should suppose that he had not. This letter, after being prepared by me, was read by him before he put his signature to it.

The explanation put by Beecher in his statement—that "this paper was a mere memorandum of points to be used by him [me] in setting forth my [his] feelings. . . . But they were put into sentences by him [me] expressed as he [I] understood them, not as my [his] words, but as hints of my [his] figures and letters, to be used by him in conversing with Tilton. . . . It is a mere string of hints, hastily made by an unpractised writer, as helps to his memory in representing to Mr. Tilton how I felt towards his family"—all this explanation is a mere afterthought made up for the purpose of explanation merely. Beecher always treated this letter as his own in all the after conversations we had upon the subject.

Mr. Samuel Wilkeson, Mr. Beecher's friend and acting counsel, could

have known nothing of that paper except from Beecher, as I had never told him or anybody else save Tilton anything of its contents, and both Beecher and Wilkeson supposed it was delivered by me to Tilton, as it was intended to be. And in his letter heretofore published, speaking in the interest of Beecher, Wilkeson calls it "the written apology *which he holds* for the improper advances." In Beecher's letter of June 1, 1873, just before quoted, he speaks of it as "my letter that he (Tilton) had over a year;" not "a memorandum for the purposes of conversation," written by an unpractised writer, which did not represent his thought.

I have said this was an afterthought. The reason for so believing, outside the intrinsic evidence from the documents, is that when this controversy was about being renewed because of the publication and speeches of Dr. Leonard Bacon which brought it on again, I was in consultation with Beecher upon what might be the effect of them, and predicting that if Bacon went on he would surely reopen the whole matter. In that conversation Beecher said to me—and I remember his words exactly, because it was quite a startling proposition—"Can't we hit upon some plan to break the force of my letter to Tilton? Can't we hit upon some form of note from you to me in which you shall state that that letter was not in fact a letter at all, but simply a memorandum of points of my conversation made by you for the purpose of expressing more accurately my thought and feeling toward Tilton and his family?" I said, "I will think of that, but we must wait, I think, until the necessity arises before determining what I ought to do in that regard." He said, "I will prepare such a note, and you read it over carefully and see whether or not it is possible for you to sign it." I said, "Very well, prepare the note and I will consider it, but as you put the proposition now, of course, it wouldn't be true." He never showed me such a note if he prepared it.

Another instance to show how this lawyer's statement of Beecher cannot be trusted, I find stated in these words: "I never resumed my intimacy with the family; but once or twice I went there soon after my reconciliation with Mr. Tilton, and at *his* request."

Is this averment true? I confess that I believed it substantially true at the time I prepared my published statement, supposing that Beecher was acting according to his distinct instruction to Mrs. Tilton in his letter of February 7, 1871, and in accordance with his promise to me to have no further communication with Mrs. Tilton except through myself. I extract as follows, the whole letter having been published:

> In him [Moulton] we have a common ground. You and I may meet in him. The past is ended. But is there no future—no wiser, higher, holier future? May not this friend stand as a priest in the new sanctuary of reconciliation and mediate and bless you, Theodore, and my most

unhappy self? Do not let my earnestness fail of its end. You believe in my judgment. I have put myself wholly and gladly in Moulton's hands, *and there I must meet you.*

This is sent with Theodore's consent, but he has not read it. Will you return it to me by his hands? I am very earnest in this wish for all our sakes, as such a letter ought not to be subjected to even a chance of miscarriage. Your unhappy friend, H. W. Beecher.

Could Beecher have written that sentence of me if, as his committee reports, forty days before I had extorted a paper from him with threats by a pistol, for which they say I ought to have been handed over to the police?

And therefore I put forth in my statement what, when I prepared it, I believed to be true. I said:

On the same day there was conveyed to me from Beecher a request to Tilton that Beecher might write to Mrs. Tilton, because all parties had then come to the conclusion that there should be no communication between Beecher and Mrs. Tilton or Beecher and Tilton except with my knowledge and consent, and I had exacted a promise from Beecher that he would not communicate with Mrs. Tilton or allow her to communicate with him unless I saw the communication, which promise, I believe, was, on his part, faithfully kept, but, as I soon found, was not on the part of Mrs. Tilton. Permission was given to Beecher to write to Mrs. Tilton, and the following is his letter:

—which is the letter of February 7, 1871, from which the above extract is made. I had no intimation that he received any correspondence from Mrs. Tilton that did not go through my hands, and certainly that he made none to her, or visited her. But since the preparation of that statement there have come into my hands certain letters from him to Mrs. Tilton that now show me that he was unfaithful to his promise to me, and that he kept up his intercourse clandestinely with her, in violation of his solemn promises, his plighted faith to the wronged husband, to his own eminent and deadly peril, without the knowledge of his (Beecher's) wife—for doing all which things there could have been but one incentive. It becomes necessary, therefore, on the question of veracity of his statement as to the renewal of his intimacy with Mrs. Tilton, that some of these letters should be compared.

In her letter dated January 13, 1871, written to a female friend—which certainly will not be claimed to have been dictated by Tilton—Mrs. Tilton says:

My faith and hope are very bright, now that I am off the sick-bed, and dear Frank Moulton is a friend indeed. (He is managing the case with Mr. Bowen.) We have weathered the storm, and I believe without harm to our *best* . . . . These slanders have been sown broadcast. I am quoted everywhere as the author of them. Coming in this way and form to Mr. Bowen, they caused his [Tilton's] immediate dismission from both the *Independent* and the *Union*. Suffering thus, both of us, so unjustly—(I knew nothing of these plans)—anxiety night and day

brought on my miscarriage: a disappointment I have never before known—a *love-babe* it promised, you know. I have had sorrow almost beyond human capacity, dear ——. *It is my mother!*

I do not quote the whole letter, as it has been already published, and may be referred to. The peculiarity of the language of this extract should be noted. We find Mrs. Tilton on the 30th of December sick in bed with what she states to have been a miscarriage a few days before of what promised to be a "*love-babe*, you know"—a very curious expression from a woman nearly forty years old and the mother of six children, to describe a child begotten in lawful wedlock; specially when, as Mrs. Tilton now asserts, she and her husband had been fiercely quarrelling for many months, and, Bessie Turner testifies, even to blows. Within six weeks of her getting off her sick-bed, arising from that confinement, where Beecher says she lay white as marble, with eyes closed as in a trance, with her hands on her bosom palm to palm, like one in prayer, she writes the following invitation to Beecher, which I received from his hand:

WEDNESDAY.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Does your heart bound *toward all* as it used? So does mine! *I am myself again* [sic]. I did not dare to tell you till I was sure; but the bird has sung in my heart these *four* weeks, and he has covenanted with me never again to leave. "Spring has come." Because I thought it would gladden you to know this, and not to trouble or embarrass you in *any way*, I now write. Of course I should like to share with you my joy, but can wait for the beyond! When dear Frank says I may once again go to old Plymouth I will thank the dear Father.

There can be but one meaning in these phrases under such circumstances. "I am *myself again*. I did not dare to tell you *till I was sure*, but the bird has sung in my heart these *four weeks*, and he has covenanted with me never again to leave. 'Spring has come,'" &c. "*Of course. I should like to share with you my joy.*"

I assume it will not be claimed that Tilton extorted from his wife this letter. Was this so significant hint to come "when she was all right," answered? The reply to that question will be found in two notes to Elizabeth from Beecher, the shorter one enclosed within the other. The first is as follows, marked "N":

BEECHER TO MRS. TILTON.

The blessing of God rest upon you! Every spark of light and warmth in your own house will be a star and a sun in my dwelling. Your note broke like spring [sic] upon winter, and gave me an inward rebound toward life. No one can ever know—none but God—through what a dreary wilderness I have wandered! There was Mt. Sinai, there was the barren sand, there was the alternation of hope and despair that marked the pilgrimage of old. If only it might lead to the Promised Land!—or, like Moses, shall I die on the border. Your hope and courage

are like medicine. Should God inspire you to restore and rebuild at home, and while doing it to cheer and sustain outside of it another who sorely needs help in heart and spirit, it will prove a life so noble as few are able to live! and, in another world, the emancipated soul may utter thanks!

If it would be of comfort to *you*. now and then, to send me a letter of true *inwardness* [sic]—the outcome of your inner life—it *would* be safe, for I am now at home here with my sister; and it is *permitted to you* [sic] and will be an exceeding refreshment to me, for your heart experiences are often like bread from heaven to the hungry. God has enriched your moral nature. May not others partake?

This is in Beecher's handwriting, but without direction or signature, but the note enclosed in pencil tells us the direction of it, as the words, "Your note broke like spring upon winter," tells also to what note it was in reply to, because that quotes the words of Mrs. Tilton's, "Spring has come," asking him to "share her joy," she being "all right" now. The enclosure is on a slip of paper, marked O (but which I do not produce here, reserving it for presentation before another tribunal).

Was there ever a plainer case of renewal of intimacy, to say the least, than this? Mark, also, amid the prayers to God contained in the longer note Beecher's suggestion that Elizabeth can write him now "*with safety*," because *he is living alone with his sister—i. e., his wife is away!*

If this stood alone it would be all-sufficient to prove that he speaks falsely who says that Beecher never visited Mrs. Tilton except at her husband's request after the *settlement*, and fill my purpose, but I do not choose to leave it in its solitude as a single act, and therefore I reproduce from my statement the letter from Mrs. Tilton to Beecher which bears date May 3, 1871:

Mr. Beecher:—My future, either for life or death, would be happier could I but feel that you *forgave* me while you forget me. In all the sad complications of the past year my endeavor was to entirely keep from *you* all suffering; to bear myself alone, leaving you forever ignorant of it. My weapons were love, a large untiring generosity, and *nest-hiding!* That I failed utterly we both know. But now I ask forgiveness.

Perhaps Tilton extorted this letter, too, from his wife.

The italics are those of the writer. Will Beecher, in his first sermon after his vacation, please explain what sort of a spiritual "weapon" "*nest-hiding*" is, with which "a poor dear child" of a woman" "keeps all suffering from her pastor" so as to leave him "forever ignorant of it," unless, indeed, "nest-hiding" is a carnal weapon, for in that case no explanation is needed. There are indications in this note that perhaps Beecher did not keep his appointment, and may have been the reason for its writing.

Whether this note was answered I do not now produce documentary evidence to show, nor is it necessary upon the question whether

Beecher renewed his intimacy with her after the settlement, because I produce another note of January 20, 1872, undirected, but enclosed in an envelope addressed "Mrs. Elizabeth Tilton, Livingston street, Brooklyn," bearing the post-mark of the same date. It is marked "P":

BEECHER TO MRS. TILTON.

20 *January*, 1872.

Now may the God of Peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ.

This is my prayer day and night. This world ceases to hold me as it did. I live in the thought and hope of the coming immortality, and seem to myself most of the time to be standing on the edge of the other life, wondering whether I may not at any hour hear the call, "Come up hither."

I shall be in New Haven next week to begin my course of lectures to the theological classes, or preaching. My wife takes boat for Havana and Florida on Thursday.

I called on Monday, but you were out.

I hope you are growing stronger and happier. May the dear Lord and Saviour abide with you. Very truly yours,

H. W. Beecher.

I again call attention to the mixture of prayer and business in this note by the following words: "My wife takes boat for *Havana* and Florida on Thursday. I called on Monday, but found you were out."

But this is not the only note which establishes renewed intimacy. I produce another note, undirected and unsigned, but enclosed in an envelope postmarked the same day, directed "Elizabeth Tilton, care of Theodore Tilton, Esq., Brooklyn." This is the only one addressed to his care, and its contents are such that a husband might read as coming from a pastor to his parishioner, except that the husband was using the intimacy of the pastor with his wife for the purpose of blackmailing him. But why leave it unsigned? It is here inserted, marked "Q":

BEECHER TO MRS. TILTON.

May 6, 1872.

My Dear Friend:—I was glad to see you at church yesterday. It is always a great comfort to me when you are, and a token of God's favor.

I go to-night to Norwich, N. Y., where my granddaughter, six years old, is dying, and her mother, my Hattie, awaiting her own confinement. I seem to live amidst funerals. The air is heavy much of the time with the odor of the grave.

I am again at work on the "Life," making haste while the day lasts—"the night cometh when no man can work."

I pray for you, that God would dwell in you by that spirit of divine love by which we are cleansed from anger, impatience, and all self-asser-

tor with Tilton," "secretly from the beginning" to extort money from Beecher through a series of years, instead of standing as a shield to him, protecting him any and everywhere against the consequences of his own wicked acts, and only receiving money from him to aid in so shielding him —first, to support and educate the girl Bessie lest she might injure him by prattling in the church under the influences of Mrs. Tilton's mother, Mrs. Morse, who, Bessie says, in her letter in former statement, promised her dresses to tell lies, which fact she relates under her own hand —and only otherwise to aid him in some degree to repair the wrong which he admitted and now admits he had done to Tilton in breaking up his business, so that the temptation of poverty and want might not come to him as an inducement to turn upon Beecher, the author of his misfortunes;—I say if I had been inclined to extort money from him, either Tilton or myself might to-day have been the recipients of all the salary, earnings and emoluments of Henry Ward Beecher, except enough only for a reasonably economical living for himself and family.

In view of these terrible revelations, the question will, indeed, well be asked, as it has been: "How could you, Mr. Moulton, sustain Beecher, knowing all these things, so monstrous, horrible and revolting?" To this question, urgently springing from the facts, I answer that I did not know them all at once, as the public now know them. I began in the interest of a friend. I met another man of brilliant genius and high standing, older than I, who asked my friendship, which I promised him, and who trusted me implicitly; and as disclosure came after disclosure, as fact piled on fact, I could only stagger along under the load. These acts of guilt had already been done, many of them, years before, and at the time he promised me most faithfully and with sincere sorrow, tears rolling down his cheek, that all that was past, and his future should be bright and holy, as his past had been deemed to be by those who knew him not. However much I might cease to respect or love any party in the controversy, yet there were other hearts to ache. There were innocent children to be destroyed, families—more than one or three—to be separated, and a blight put upon Christianity and a shock to the moral sense of the community such as it never before received, if I threw down my burden; and therefore I have borne it as best I could, and now only speak in defence of my own honor, which I have endeavored to keep untarnished, so that those who come after me may not be overwhelmed in this maelstrom of vice and wickedness, in which I have nearly been submerged.

It is also objected to me that when I have been questioned in regard to these facts I have made a denial of them; and Mr. Beecher himself, or his lawyers, have had the temerity to publish in his statement a letter of mine to him of June 1, 1873, in answer to his despairing one of the same date, telling me how he had lost all hope, and intimating to

me in writing, as he had frequently before in words, that his only refuge was suicide.

Having made an allusion to Beecher's suicide, it may be well for me to state here the full circumstances of his confession concerning his proposed design. He told me—and repeated to another in my presence—that he had within reach in his own study a poison, which he would take if the story of his crime with Elizabeth should ever come to the public. He told me of a visit which he had made to a photographer's gallery, where he learned that one of the employés had mistaken a glass of poison for a glass of water, and, having taken and drunken it, had fallen dead, with scarcely time to drop the glass. Beecher said that was what he wanted for himself; and, under plea of making some photographic experiments, he procured some of this same poison from the photographer, which he told me he intended to use if the revelation of his crime should be made. "And then," he said, "it would be simply reported that Beecher died of apoplexy; but God and you and I will know what caused my death." If those who blame me could have looked into his grief-stricken face and listened to the tones of his voice in the great emergencies in which he said there was no refuge for him but in death, they would have felt impelled, as I was, to as generous, as open-hearted a service as I practised towards him. It would have taken a harder heart than mine, being witness of his sorrows, not to forget his sins.

"I have [he writes] a strong feeling upon me, and it brings great peace with it, that I am spending my *last Sunday*, and preaching my last sermon." I did, indeed, write to him, "you can stand if the whole case were published to morrow." I did believe that, if he had made, as he was advised to make, a full and frank confession of the whole truth, as he had done to me, accompanied by such expressions of contrition and repentance as he had made to me, his church and the world would have forgiven him, and he would have stood. How much more, then, must I believe it now, when he can stand before the public preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ with all the facts made known, and I am driven by blows and assaults of his people from that which should be the house of God, wherein his adulteries and hypocrisies have been condoned by an admiring church!

For all this, I would not blame the deceived and worshipping Christians of that church, knowing how grossly they have been misled by those who have undertaken to exculpate Beecher at all hazards. They will at some time know. And when they do, they will pardon the strength of my language when I denounced in their presence their orator who was addressing them by the name of "liar." He stood before them vouching for the innocence of Beecher. and told them that he was the only one, besides the lawyers, who knew all the facts. Poor deluded

young man! When he reads the following letter from Beecher, dated December 2, 1873, he will find that Beecher purposely kept him from knowing all the facts, and only introduced him to me that he might tell to me what was going on in the church. It is as follows, marked "X:"

BEECHER TO MOULTON.

LITTLE FALLS, N. Y., *December* 2, 1873.

MY DEAR FRANK:—I send you two letters for Banfield—to choose from,—the one extended, the other short and crisp. I hope that light is not far ahead; the night passes—the morning comes!

I shall hear nothing from home of the progress of my affairs till I return.

I introduced you to young Raymond because he is a personal friend, acute, and safe *should you need*. Of course I have never exchanged a word with him as I have with you—and he represents me only in church action.

I hope you thought to see Woodruff about the matter I spoke of—lending money, etc.

Would not Robinson, who stands strong in the Society of Pilgrims, be able to strike down in some degree the folly, and hold back that folly of running headlong after such malignants as Buck, Johnson, etc.? I only suggest.

Give my love to the mother, and my earnest hopes that she is rapidly recovering. Ever truly yours, H. W. BEECHER.

And when he reads Beecher's letter of February 5, 1872: "If you [Moulton], too, cease to trust me and love me, I am alone. I have not another person in the world to whom I can go;" and again, in his testimony, where he says: "For he was the only man on the globe I could talk with on this subject; I was shut up to every human being; I could not go to my wife; I could not go to my children, and I could not go to my brothers and sisters; I could not go to my church; he was the only one person to whom I could talk; and when I got that rebuff from him, it seemed as though it would kill me, and the letter was the product of that mood into which I was thrown"—will "young Raymond" really think that he was ever the confidant of Beecher? He certainly never was a confidant of mine, for, measuring him at a glance, I never had an interview with him after Beecher introduced him to me. Which will Plymouth Church believe, their pastor's statement that Raymond did and could know nothing of the facts in this case, or believe young Raymond when he says he knows all?

Nay, even more. Beecher's committee rest his exculpation upon my interview with the Rev. Mr. Halliday, in which, in language guarded, but intended to mislead that simple, confiding agent of Beecher, his assistant, I spoke to him what Beecher desired and instructed me to say when even that simple-minded old man's suspicions had been aroused by conferences with Tilton and others; and for that speech, by which I admit Halliday was misled, I received from Beecher the following

letter, heretofore published, sent me on the Lord's day by a Christian minister, giving his thanks for my prevarication in his behalf to his assistant:

SUNDAY, A. M.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Halliday called last night. T.'s interview with him did not satisfy, but disturbed. It was the same with Bell, who was present. It tended directly to unsettling. Your interview last night was *very beneficial*, and gave confidence. This must be looked after. It is vain to build if the foundation sinks under every effort. I shall see you at 10.30 to-morrow—if you return by way of 49 Remsen.

It has been held honorable for men who had had amours with a reputable woman to deny even under oath those amours, to protect from exposure the fair fame and name which had been confided to their keeping. Not by any means intending to set up any such standard of morality, but which is sustained in Beecher by a portion of the press which says he ought to stand by the woman, under how much more temptation was I acting when in my charge had been placed, without any guilt on my part, the honor of women of fair name and high station, the welfare of a church, the upholding of the fame and reputation of the foremost preacher of the world, the well-being of Christianity itself, and the morals of the community—all, and more, involved in my failure to hold the facts concealed from every mortal eye! The silent "volcano," on which he says he was walking, might have been at any time caused to burst forth by my imprudent answers to scandal-loving, curiously-prying men and women, or ministers of the gospel who were engaged in endeavoring to find out; and my silence, when their questions were put to me, stating supposed facts, would have been at once deemed assent.

But if there was any wrong in my concealment of these facts from the world, let Plymouth Church labor with Mr. Bowen, one of its leading members, who concealed them from the church, in consideration of the publication of his pastor's letters and sermons in the *Independent*. Let Mr. Claflin, Beecher's chosen committeeman, who, presumably, had been told the "very bottom facts," be dealt with; and, indeed let him who is without sin among them all in that regard first cast a stone.

I do not review or animadvert upon the report of the committee, because every one has expected the result of its labors from the beginning. No disclosures were made to them, and they took care not to call before them any witnesses who knew the facts except the parties implicated, and have clearly shown that it was a partizan tribunal, organized to acquit—as Beecher confessed to me on the 5th of July last it was. By thinking men no weight will be given to its unsupported opinions, however speciously argued in a report which is but a rehash of the statements of the accused criminals, both written in whole or in part by his lawyers.

I was quite aware that I was to be struck down in case I did not side with Beecher, if "I did not choose between Tilton's statement and mine," as he states he asked me to do. My friends put before me the consequences of my standing firm in what I knew to be the truth and the right; that I must incur the enmity, as I have felt the assaults, of Plymouth Church; that great financial interests were involved in the standing of that church, whereby much gain comes—in money, if from nothing else—to some favored members thereof; and I feel that I have a right to say that, if I could have been swerved from my sense of duty to myself and to justice, every outside inducement urged me to stand by "Beecher's statement." Of course I discerned that any statement I should make must be ruinous to Mr. Beecher, and if I made it I must be taken as siding with the falling cause of my nearly ruined friend, Theodore Tilton. And I appeal to the fair judgment of all men; what motive could I have in making myself his ally and the enemy of Mr. Beecher, except impelled by integrity of purpose and all that makes up the word "duty," to stand by the right as I knew the right to be.

I have, however, the consolation of knowing that I only suffer as everybody else suffers who has dared to say a word for the truth against Beecher. Each and all in turn have been assailed by every form of obloquy and detraction as the new phases of the case required for the exculpation of the accused. First, it was heard through the press that the letters which Tilton put in his sworn statement were forgeries, when it was supposed that the originals would not be forthcoming. Then, Tilton was insane, and a labored analysis of all the maladies of his family was paraded before the public to show that he was insane; but the "method in his madness" exploded that theory. And then, the last refuge was that all that he had done was for the purpose of blackmailing Beecher, and as all that was done was through my hand, of course I must be destroyed, or the new theory of a conspiracy of four years' duration would come to naught. Everybody who should come forward to say a single word upon the subject unfavorable to the accused has received the same treatment. Mr. Carpenter is placarded to the world through Beecher's statement as "a kind of genial, good-natured fool," and Mr. Beecher's sister, the amiable, intelligent, enthusiastic, and clear-headed Mrs. Hooker, now, happily for her peace, abroad, who had become the recipient of the knowledge of the facts of Beecher's guilt, was placarded as insane; and when she had advised him to make a clear and full confession, in the interest of truth and justice, to rescue a woman from jail whom Mrs. Hooker believed was incarcerated for having told simply the truth, and threatened to disclose the truth from his pulpit if Beecher would not, by Beecher's authority, and under his advice, conveyed through me with his approbation, Tilton went to poor Mrs. Hooker and broached the slander that she, too, was

charged with being guilty of adultery from the same source as his wife was, and when Mr. Beecher was told that his sister sunk down in tears and gave up under such a gross accusation, he chuckled at the success of the "device." Whatever "devices" were used to protect Henry Ward Beecher to save himself, it was not one of mine to defile the fair fame of his sister. And, until it was ascertained what part she would take in the controversy, his wife, Mrs. Beecher herself, was struck at in his behalf by his elder brother, Rev. William Beecher, in an interview published in a Western paper, from which I extract the following, the correctness of which has not been, so far as I know, denied.

I believe he [Beecher] looks upon the marriage relation as sacredly as any one. In fact, I know he has suffered great trouble on account of his wife, and has endeavored to be faithful to her, notwithstanding the sore trials she has cost him. It has separated him from his kindred, from his brothers and sisters, who were prevented from coming to the house on her account. Yet he bore with her, and in every way endeavored to arrange matters so that they might visit him. Still I think she loved him and was faithful to him.

Notwithstanding this, Beecher appeals in his statement to "his happy home" as one of the reasons why he could not have been unfaithful to his marriage vow.

Again, it is paraded in the newspapers that Mrs. Beecher produced before the committee all Mrs. Tilton's letters, having opened them before Beecher had had an opportunity to read them, as she did all of his other letters, and this report gains credence from the fact that he wrote to Elizabeth after he declares he had stopped all intimacy, as he had promised to do, "that she was now permitted to write to him because he was living alone with his sister," and in another letter takes care to inform her of the fact that his wife had sailed for Havana and Florida. And Mrs. Tilton, too, after having said and unsaid everything in order to save Beecher, after having falsified and stultified herself in every possible way for his salvation, and so become useless hereafter as a witness or "refreshment," only remains in his mind "under a divided consciousness" that "she was a saint and chief of sinners." And she is thrown aside like a worthless weed in this cruel paragraph of the report of his committee:

It is not for the committee to defend the course of Mrs. Tilton. Her conduct upon human responsibility is indefensible.

All these attacks were before me, and I knew I should not escape, and I have not, although all the blessings of heaven were called down upon me by Beecher in every note he ever wrote me, all of which breathed the fullest confidence in me up to the 4th of August, nine days before he made his statement, wherein he charges me with a most contemptible crime because I refused to give up the papers to him which I

knew were my only protection against him; for I had learned to know the selfishness and cruelty of the man who sacrifices all for himself.

And yet, in view of our relations for the past four years, I can scarcely realize the fact that he turned upon me, even when at his request I was keeping silent for his sake; and now, with all that he has put upon me, it is with difficulty that I summon sufficient of resolution, in anguish of spirit, to enable me to put forth the statement that I am now compelled to do. For I here aver that I never have made public what was the nature of Beecher's offence, or what was the evidence in my possession to prove it, until I did so in my former statement prepared for the committee, although statements were made in the newspapers to that effect which may have inflamed the mind of Beecher against me. I had pledged my honor to silence except I was attacked, and I have redeemed that pledge at whatever violence to my feelings and sense of justice. Nor have I ever made public the facts in this subsequent statement until they now appear, and yet there has been a newspaper report publishing what purports to be a portion of them, but which was gathered from others and not from me. On the contrary, I have taken every and all means that I could to conceal and keep them out of sight, driven even to answer many men who asked me in regard to them in such a way as to mislead them without stating to them any absolute falsehood, although I have no doubt some of them, remembering the impression they got from me, thought that I have stated to them what has since been contradicted by my published statement of what has actually been known to me, and the reasons of which I have heretofore explained.

All the present necessary facts to form a correct judgment of Henry Ward Beecher, and my own course and character are now before the public, and I submit to the candor and judgment of all good men and women whether under all the emergencies in which I have been placed, I have not endeavored to do that which seemed to me to be right and proper, faithfully and loyally to those whose interests I had in charge, and especially to Beecher himself, pleading guilty to everything of want of judgment and unwisdom in trying to master the almost insurmountable difficulties which surrounded me, which can rightly be imputed to me.

If the true interests of the Christian church are promoted, under the light of existing and known facts, by sustaining Beecher, as the foremost man in it, it is a matter of concern to Christian people in which my judgment will not be consulted But let them remember as they do so the teachings of the Master from the Mount:

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery.

"But I say unto you, whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

"And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee, for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell."

FRANCIS D. MOULTON.

Commenting upon this statement, the *New York Tribune* of September 12 wrote as follows:

In the insufferably prolix communication to which we reluctantly surrender nearly three pages of the *Tribune* this morning, Mr. Francis D. Moulton presents not one fragment of fresh evidence in support of his former charges, and advances hardly one new statement. He is by turns defiant and apologetic, lachrymose and malicious. Nearly half his address is an earnest effort to convince the public that he acted toward Mr. Beecher the part of a loyal friend, and half the remainder is a trivial examination of certain minor discrepancies in Mr. Beecher's testimony which in no material way affect the main issue. Towards Mr. Rossiter Raymond, and some other defenders of Mr. Beecher, he betrays a childish animosity, and he labors apparently under the delusion that the world at large is concerned about the judgments which he and they have formed of each other. Throwing aside all this miserable rubbish, we can reduce what Mr. Moulton really has to say about the scandal to a very few points. 1. He gives (from memory) the words in which, as he avers, Mr. Beecher confessed to him his improper relations with Mrs. Tilton. 2. He asserts that the confession has been made in the hearing of another person, whose name he does not give, but it is not Tilton. 3. He reproduces the letters which passed between Mr. Beecher and Mrs. Tilton, after the alleged confession—the same letters which were given to the correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune* and copied into this paper. 4. And finally he declares that Mr. Beecher confessed to him that he had committed adultery with another woman, mentioned though not by name in Tilton's threatening letter to Mr. Bowen. The first and second allegations rest upon Mr. Moulton's unsupported word, and we have no hesitation in saying that the language which he puts into Mr. Beecher's

mouth is impossible. He represents this Christian preacher as not only acknowledging his adultery but declaring that "God would not blame him for it." That overtaxes credulity. The third point refers to the so-called clandestine letters. They are not evidences of guilt. Far from it. We challenge any unprejudiced person to read them without being impressed by their deep religious spirit; and if we are to take them for letters of assignation we must suppose that this man and woman were in the habit of saying grace over their sinful indulgences and mingling all their crimes with prayer—not in hypocritical pretence before the world, but in the secrecy of their own guilty intercourse. In the malignant earnestness with which Moulton tries to twist an evil significance out of these innocent, albeit gushing sentences, there is something of the devil's own temper.

The fourth point also depends principally upon Mr. Moulton's credibility. But here he brings forward a solitary scrap of what he considers documentary corroboration. In the letter from Tilton to Bowen there was a reference to an alleged crime of ravishment. From the lady concerned in this story a letter is printed which Mr. Moulton would have us believe refers to Mr. Beecher's crime. Now we know the particulars of this case. We know the incidents of the trivial quarrel to which the letter does relate. We know Mr. Moulton's charge to be an atrocious calumny without a shadow of justification; and at the proper day the truth will be established by indisputable evidence.

But we shall not waste time and temper in analyzing a statement which will damn Francis D. Moulton deeper than any revelation of baseness and treachery that has been made by Mr. Beecher or his friends. It is about such a document as one might expect from the man who allows his friend to make merchandise of his wife's honor, and acts as a broker in the transaction—brutal, cruel, cowardly, infamous. Because his actions have been misconstrued forsooth, this Bayard of Brooklyn must save his reputation for generosity by blasting the homes in which he has been a favored guest, pulling out the private letters committed to his honorable keeping, showing the

world what ugly things brothers and sisters could say of one another, what sentimental phrases wives could write in the absence of their husbands, and dragging the reputation of ladies whom he has never known and the happiness of families which have never wronged him through the reeking filth of this unparalleled scandal. It would not have been considered nice business for a gentleman in olden times; but we suppose it is all right in these days when a husband undertakes to prove that he is not a dog by showing that he is a cuckold.

It is time for this abominable business to be stopped. The accusers have failed in their case, and every fresh attempt to accomplish their purpose only makes their failure more disastrous. The word of Henry Ward Beecher stands good against a ten-acre lot full of Moultons and Tiltons. The world will tolerate no more of their passionate and unsupported assertions. If they have any proof of what they allege against the pastor of Plymouth Church, let them take it into a court of justice where it can be weighed and sifted. A suit at law may enable them to destroy the character of Mr. Beecher, though nothing will ever mend their own.

XXXII.

MR. MOULTON SUED FOR LIBEL.

THE immediate result of the publication of Mr. Moulton's statement was the commencement, by the lady against whom his infamous charge in the paragraph we have suppressed was made, of an action for libel. The *New York Tribune* thus states the reasons which led her to take this step, in which she has the sympathy of all good citizens:

Gen. Benjamin F. Tracy, of the firm of Tracy, Catlin & Brodhead, announced yesterday that he had been authorized by Miss Edna Dean Proctor, who resides in Massachusetts, to begin a suit against Francis D. Moulton for malicious libel.

She accuses him of publishing a letter of hers in his recent statement, and maliciously charging that it related to the commission of a crime with the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, thereby injuring her reputation for virtue and honor, and damaging her to the extent of $100,000. She charges that the statement was untrue, that she had never committed the crime; that the charges against her which purported to have been made by the Rev. Mr. Beecher to Mr. Moulton in the latter's statement were invented by Mr. Moulton, or known by him to be false in every particular. Wherefore she prays that he be dealt with according to law. Mr. Brodhead has been engaged upon the summons and complaint for several days past, but up to a late hour last night had not completed them, so that they will not be served until to-day. They will contain, however, three charges. The suit will be begun in the United States District Court of Brooklyn, as the plaintiff is living in Massachusetts, and the defendant in New York, and as that court only will have jurisdiction. The ordinary form of an order of arrest will be issued, and be handed to Marshal Harlowe for service, although it is not intended to have Mr. Moulton placed in confinement, as he is possessed of a large amount of property, and it is not believed would run away. The papers in the case will be filed in the District Court to-day before Judge Benedict, who will inform Mr. Moulton, through the marshal, that he must come before him and give bonds. The subject of indicting Mr. Moulton has also been broached to the Acting District-Attorney, and so many persons have made application to go before the Grand Jury of Kings county and make complaints against Mr. Moulton for malicious libel, that the officials have concluded to permit them to make their complaints.

There have been no efforts on the part of the Assistant District-Attorneys to open this case, because they wished to avoid any appearance of being influenced by any personal feeling from their connection with District-Attorney Winslow, who was one of the Committee of Investigation to examine the charges against Mr. Beecher. They state that if the case is brought to the attention of the Grand Jury it will be because their duty to

the people would not permit them to refuse the applications of persons who desire to make charges against Mr. Moulton. They add that they have held no consultation with Mr. Winslow on the subject, and that he has turned all matters relating to that subject over to them. It was stated, however, that the indictment proceedings might be taken to the United States Grand Jury on the complaint of some friends of Miss Proctor and of Mr. Beecher. It was esteemed better to make the complaint before that body, as it not only has jurisdiction in the case, but its members could not be charged with being influenced in forming an indictment by the advice of District-Attorney Winslow. The offence is a misdemeanor according to the laws of the United States, and is made punishable by fine, imprisonment or both, and the fact of publication is *prima facie* evidence of malice, but General Tracy, while explaining the true story of the letter of Miss Proctor, said that in the case of Mr. Moulton it could easily be shown that his statement was shamefully malicious, as he knew before he published the letter that it related simply to a business transaction. This fact, Mr. Tracy added, was brought directly and prominently to Moulton's notice by Miss Proctor's friends, who were familiar with all the facts, when they learned that he contemplated making use of the letter in his statement. The suit will be pressed to trial immediately.

The circumstances of the controversy between Mr. Beecher and Edna Dean Proctor, which gave rise to her letter to Mr. Beecher in 1871, have long been well understood by the friends of both, and as stated by them appear now of very trifling importance, and are wholly of a private character. They attract public interest through the forced construction which Mr. Moulton saw fit to give to Miss Proctor's letter. As long ago as 1858 Miss Proctor was residing in Brooklyn in the family of Henry C. Bowen. While listening from Sunday to Sunday to Mr. Beecher's sermons she took down brief extracts which she thought of striking interest. Having accumulated a large number of these extracts she consulted with Mr. Beecher with regard to publishing them in the form of a book. He was

pleased with her plan and readily consented to her making every advantage from it that she might be able. It was understood, however, that the length of the extracts should be limited to about ten lines. The book was published with the title of "Life Thoughts," and proved to be a splendid hit; many editions were sold in a short time, and Miss Proctor is said to have realized several thousand dollars, to the great pleasure of Mr. Beecher, who was glad to have her prepare another volume. While collecting materials for the second book, one of a similar character was announced collated by Augusta Moore. The approval of Mr. Beecher was claimed for this book by the publishers. It was composed of somewhat longer extracts than the former. When this was announced Miss Proctor knew of it for the first time, and as she was nearly ready to have her second volume issued, was much disturbed. Her friends were likewise very indignant against Mr. Beecher, and neither she nor they were slow to express their disapproval of what Mr. Beecher had done by recommending as they supposed the volume of Augusta Moore. The result was that Mr. Beecher addressed to her a long letter explanatory of all the circumstances. He assured her, it is said, that he had prevented the publication for a time, and had consented to it only after various reasons had been presented. Mr. Beecher's letter somewhat appeased Miss Proctor, but she concluded not to publish the second volume. The letter which Mr. Moulton included in his statement was written in 1871, and had reference, it is claimed, wholly to this difficulty, occurring many years before. While trouble was brewing between him and Mr. Bowen and Mr. Tilton, Mr. Beecher gave this note among other correspondence into Mr. Moulton's keeping.

On the 26th of September, 1874, the Grand Jury of Kings county, New York, framed an indictment of Mr. Moulton, based upon the charges of Miss Proctor. Says the *Tribune* of the 29th:

"He is charged with having 'wickedly and maliciously' libelled Miss Edna Dean Proctor. Two indictments were

found against him, and the alleged libels appear in his last statement. In that document Mr. Moulton charges the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher with having committed a gross outrage upon a woman, whose name he failed to give to the public, although he produced a letter which he claimed was signed by her. Miss Proctor believes that she was the one referred to. So believing, she instituted through her counsel a suit for damages against Moulton, and brought the matter before the Grand Jury on Thursday of last week. The first indictment against Moulton is for the charge that Miss Proctor had illicit intercourse with the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. The second indictment is based on the charge that the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher ravished Miss Proctor. Moulton was officially informed by District-Attorney Winslow yesterday morning that he must appear and give bail pending trial before the Court of Sessions. Soon after receiving this notification Moulton appeared at the office of the District-Attorney. Mr. Winslow was not present. The accused was informed that he would be required to give bail in $20,000, and that he would have to furnish two bondsmen, each of whom must justify for $20,000. Mr. Moulton said that he would like to consult with counsel, and thereupon he was allowed to depart, with the understanding that he would give bail to-day or to-morrow. He immediately proceeded with Theodore Tilton to the latter's residence, where ex-Judge Morris was waiting. Upon their informing Mr. Morris of what had taken place he said that the bail required was too heavy. He stated that in the course of nine years' experience as District-Attorney he had never known a case of misdemeanor in which more than $5000 bail was asked. Moulton replied that if the amount required were oppressive he would ask for a reduction. He then left the house for the purpose of consulting with his counsel, and there is no doubt that application will be made to have the bail reduced.* Annexed will be found a copy of the indictments:

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* Mr. Moulton's bail was subsequently reduced to $3000.

THE INDICTMENTS.

State of New York, County of Kings, ss.:

The Jurors of the people of the State of New York in and for the body of the county of Kings, upon their oath present that Edna Dean Proctor, now or lately of South Framingham, in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, is and was at the times hereinafter mentioned, and at the time of the composing, writing, printing and publishing the false, scandalous, malicious, and defamatory libels hereinafter mentioned, an unmarried woman of pure and chaste character, and a person of good name, fame, credit, and reputation; and as such was esteemed and respected by and among all good and worthy citizens of the State of New York and of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to whom she was in anywise known.

And the Jurors aforesaid upon their oaths do further present, that one Francis D. Moulton, now or lately of the city of Brooklyn, county of Kings, well knowing the premises, then and there unjustly and unlawfully and maliciously, devising, contriving and intending as much as in the said Francis D. Moulton lay to defame, asperse, scandalize and villify the character of the said Edna Dean Proctor, and to insinuate and cause it to be published that the said Edna Dean Proctor was a woman of impure and unchaste character, and that the said Edna Dean Proctor had been guilty of gross and immoral conduct, and had had, previous to the time of the same malicious publication, sexual intercourse with the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher; and to provoke her and her friends to commit a breach of the peace, did, on or about September 11, 1874, at the city and county of New York, unlawfully and maliciously, wickedly and scandalously conspire, write, print and publish, and did cause, and procure to be composed, written, printed and published as aforesaid in a certain public newspaper of large circulation in the county of Kings, and elsewhere, entitled *The Daily Graphic*, the certain false, wicked, malicious and scandalous libel of and concerning the said Edna Dean Proctor.

[Here follows an extract from Moulton's statement upon which the suit is based. It contains an account of an alleged interview between Moulton and Mr. Beecher in reference to a woman not named, and a copy of a retraction which Moulton states was procured by Mr. Beecher.]

That the three marks at the foot of the said letter (the letter of retraction) were designed and understood by the friends of the said Edna Dean Proctor to represent that her name was subscribed to the foregoing letter.

That the said Edna Dean Proctor was the writer thereof, and which fact was then and there known to him, the said Francis D. Moulton, and

to many persons who read said false and defamatory article. "This document shows that Mr. Beecher was not as successful in this retraction, which he evidently did not dictate, as in the case of Mrs. Tilton; and the retraction itself, in its cautious wording, was so much more damaging as evidence than a direct charge of the woman that might be contradicted would be, that it was thought best that it should not see the light of day, and it has not until now.

"The question was, Did he ravish this person? He admitted to me the connection, but insisted that he used no force, only dalliance. That accusation had been repeated by Bowen, and the best Mr. Beecher could get from her was that she had 'told Bowen things injurious' to Beecher; that she 'always speaks strongly,' and was 'nearly beside herself and used unmeasured terms, which represented rather my feeling than my judgment.'

"But what was desired to get denied was the fact itself, and that fact the criminal connection, which was neither matter of 'feeling' nor 'judgment' in the sense in which the words are used in the retraction. But whether done by force or dalliance is a question of both feeling and judgment, and so much is retracted; and knowing the relations between this woman and Beecher to have been not only 'cordial and friendly,' but thereafterward very intimate, I gave credit to this version of his intercourse, and particularly because Mr. Beecher, to confirm his statement that he had not ravished her, brought to me several letters from her to him, which I still hold, showing the continuance of friendly relations with her. I do not give the lady's name, and withhold the photo-lithograph of her letter, because I do not wish needlessly to involve a reputation which has thus far escaped public mention by any of the parties to this controversy. If the facts stated here should identify the person concerned with him, and if those who are interested in her feel aggrieved, let them avenge that grief, if upon any one, upon the pastor of Plymouth Church, and not upon me, as I have been threatened it would be if I ventured to state the facts of Beecher's guilt in this case."

The said Francis D. Moulton then and there, meaning to charge that the said Edna Dean Proctor, who was the writer of said letter, dated January 10, 1871, was the woman concerning whom said communications and impressions were made, and that said false, scandalous, libelous, and defamatory matter which said Francis D. Moulton alleged was committed and confessed to him by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, was as a matter of fact true. And so the jurors aforesaid, on their oaths aforesaid, do say that he, the said Francis D. Moulton, in the manner and form aforesaid, did unjustly, maliciously and unlawfully write, print, utter and publish as aforesaid the false, scandalous, malicious matters as aforesaid, well knowing the said defamatory libel to be false, to the great injury, scandal and disgrace of her, the said Edna Dean Proctor,

and against the form and statute in such case made and provided, and against the people of the State of New York and their dignity.

And the jurors aforesaid, upon their oaths aforesaid, do further present that the said Francis D. Moulton, well knowing the premises, unlawfully and unjustly and maliciously devising, contriving and intending as much as the said Francis D. Moulton lay, to defame, asperse, scandalize, and vilify the character of the said Edna Dean Proctor, and to insinuate and cause it to be believed that the said Edna Dean Proctor had been carnally known and ravished by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, and to provoke her and her friends to commit a breach of the peace, did, on or about September 11, 1874, in the city and county of New York aforesaid, unlawfully, maliciously, and wickedly and scandalously compose, write, print and publish, and did cause and procure to be composed, written, printed and published, as aforesaid, in a certain public newspaper, having a large circulation in the county of Kings, and elsewhere, entitled *The Daily Graphic*, the certain false, wicked, malicious and scandalous libel of and concerning the said Edna Dean Proctor, which said wicked, mischievous and scandalous libel, which the said Francis D. Moulton, so intending and contriving as aforesaid, did on or about the day and year last aforesaid, also maliciously and unlawfully utter and publish and did cause and procure to be so uttered and published in the city of Brooklyn, aforesaid, is to be the tenor and effect as follows, that is to say:

[The extract from Moulton's statement, which appears above, is reinserted here.]

The said Francis D. Moulton then and there meaning to charge that the said Edna Dean Proctor, who was the writer of said letter, dated January 10, 1871, and that she was the woman concerning whom said communications and confessions were made, and that said false, scandalous, libellous, and defamatory matter which said Francis D. Moulton alleged was communicated and confessed to him by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, was, as a matter of fact, true.

And so the jurors aforesaid do say that he, the said Francis D. Moulton, in the manner and form aforesaid, did unjustly, maliciously, and unlawfully write, print, utter, and publish, as aforesaid, the false, scandalous, malicious matters as aforesaid, well knowing the said defamatory libel to be false, to the great injury, scandal, and disgrace of her the said Edna Dean Proctor, and against the form of the statute in such case made and provided, and against the peace of the people of the State of New York, and their dignity. JOHN WINSLOW, District-Attorney.

Miss Proctor has notified to her counsel to bring a suit against the *New York Daily Graphic*, which published the

few extracts to show the spirit and temper of a woman with whom I believe no man could possibly dwell long at peace. These extracts will moreover serve to show how well Mrs. Morse understood her daughter's criminal intimacy with Mr. Beecher. I have hitherto shrunk from making my wife's mother testify against her own daughter, but since these twain have united to wage against me a pitiless war of falsehood and obloquy, I am forced in self-defence to exhibit these extracts from Mrs. Morse's letters:

ELEGANT EXTRACTS FROM MRS. MORSE TO MR. TILTON.

—"You infernal villain! This night you should be in jail. . . . Why your treacherous tongue has not ere this been taken out by the roots is a wonder."

—"Your slimy, polluted, brawny hand curses everything you touch. A perfect type of Uriah Heep. This is not original. It is well understood why I have been turned out of your rotten house."

—"I have said you were not worth the time and paper, and I would never waste either on you; but the hypocrisy and villany of your course has of late been so apparent, and the sight of your base and perfidious person so revolting, I can tell you my opinion better this than any other way."

—"I can with the stroke of my pen bring you to your knees and brand you for life. . . . . The world would be better for the riddance of such a villain, and think no more of putting you aside than killing the meanest cur which runs the street. You diabolical, infernal, I would have killed you," etc., etc., etc.

—"You told Caroll I hit you. You poor deluded fool! Caroll knew you deserved it."

—"Retributive justice has partially overtaken you. Woman's rights have killed you. The remark I made three years ago last summer: If you had gone for your family instead of looking after woman's rights meetings, you would not be obliged to look up your lost trunk. For this I was told to leave the house and never enter it. For this you were made a beggar suddenly. Just as I predicted. And this I call retributive justice."

—"If you have given her [Miss Dennis] the privilege of going to people and insinuating her dark and damning facts regarding your wife and children, it is a poor rule which won't work both ways."

—"I *never* associated my child's name in the most *distant* manner with B. [Mr. Beecher]. The nearest I ever came was when Joseph [Mrs. Morse's son] questioned me how much I knew of the matter—if I thought B. was implicated. I said, 'All I can say is, I will tell you all my darling told me—*she bowed her head*,' just as she did on that '*dark and dreadful night*' when you, with your fist in her face, compelled her to acknowledge this *sacred secret*. And that act, with all its sickening details, will haunt me to my dying day."

—"My poor, dear child never answered your bestial want—too religious by nature and grace for such as you, and this want *he* answered. Till this hour I can swear that the only comfort I have taken has been in the fact that he *was* a comfort and *did* sympathize with her."

—"Mr. M—— knows all, and it has been the sorrow of his life, and he now in a small measure understands my suffering."

—"Do you suppose, after your vile tongue has been permitted to wag to E. D., that *I* would be silent? No, I will not. My poor, distracted child said, not a week since, 'Ma, I fear Ellen Dennis will ruin me and my children forever.'"

—"*You retaliate by exposing the only deed which my martyred child ever did which was not God-like, and this was brought about by the love and sympathy* THAT *man had for her wretchedness; and how she ever came to expose him or herself to one she knew so well could not be trusted, eternity will not be long enough to reveal the mystery.*"

I will not garnish this narrative with further writings from Mrs. Morse, except to add two brief notes of hers—one to Mr. Bowen, the other to myself. Shortly after my retirement from the Brooklyn *Union*, one of Mr. Bowen's clerks, thinking to give me an illustration of public sentiment touching my removal, sent me the following anonymous scrap, which I discovered at a glance to be in the familiar handwriting of my affectionate mother-in-law, Mrs. Morse:

MR. BOWEN:—I congratulate you upon being rid of an Infidel, Liar, Hypocrite, Unbeliever, Free-lover, A Tyrant, Knave, and FOOL.
January 20, 1871. SUBSCRIBER.

The latest communication received by me from the author of the above letters was at the beginning of the present year, and contains the following confession and proposition:

CLINTON PLACE, *January* 29, 1874.

THEODORE:— . . . I am more than willing to agree to this compact. It is this: If you, from this day, will agree to do all in your power to make the remainder of her life [Mrs. Tilton's] peaceful and happy (*as far as the fearful past is concerned*), *shield her from reproach, giving her the feeling of safety*, etc. . . I will, for my part, from this hour speak well of you, etc.

Not to amplify needless illustrations of the character of Mrs. Morse, I will add only one more, consisting of a letter I had occasion to address to Judge Morse, her husband, two years ago, concerning her behavior in my house:

MR. TILTON TO JUDGE MORSE.

174 LIVINGSTON STREET, *December* 6, 1872.

HON. N. B. MORSE:

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I regret to trouble you with any new facts concerning your trials or mine growing out of the temper or mania of Mrs. Morse, but I need your advice.

Mrs. Morse had not been in my house for two years or thereabouts (to the best of my recollection), when suddenly, a few days ago, she first sent me a violent and insulting letter, threatening my life, and followed this with entering the house and insisting on her right to stay in it. I had an interview with her on her first appearance, treating her with kindness and expressing gladness at seeing her. They were the first words we had exchanged for many months. But she soon afterwards exhibited the old traits, and in an aggravated degree, with insults and

outrages to my feelings of a character which self-respect does not permit me here to quote.

I have made no reply to her except to request her to leave the house; then, afterward, on her refusing to do so, positively to demand that she should go as soon as possible.

She, therefore, asserts her claim to live in the house against my will, proposing to take the third-story front room, to keep the key to it, and to encamp herself as a member of the family, having her meals sent to her in order that she may not be annoyed with sitting at the table.

What I want to ask you is, is there any legal measure to which I can quietly resort, so as to save her from a public exposure of her eccentricities, and at the same time to protect myself in my own house?

I will say still further that she does not hesitate to criminate her daughter in the most glaring way; to say that the only pleasure she now takes in the world is in looking back on the time when (as she says) Elizabeth had the solace of a paramour; that she hopes she will have five hundred others, and that she is determined to have what she terms the family secret known and proven to the world.

Yours, with more sorrow than patience, THEODORE TILTON.

The eccentric, uncontrollable, and mischief-making woman whose peculiarities are sufficiently set forth in the above extracts, devised a plan in 1870, as I have already said, to divorce Elizabeth from me in order to prevent my supposed design to divorce myself from her. In furtherance of this plan, Mrs. Morse, during Mrs. Tilton's absence in the West, not only circulated among my neighbors atrocious tales about me—such as kicking my wife while pregnant, knocking her with my fist to the floor, coming home drunk at night, etc.—but she furthermore undertook to win Elizabeth to this plan of divorce by plying her with letters filled with other equally false reports of my behavior—for example, that I was holding orgies in my house with strange women, making myself a —— —— and uttering drunken accusations against my wife, by vilifying her with Mr. Beecher as one of his many mistresses, etc.

Elizabeth, although she was needful to Mrs. Morse's design of divorce, could not be converted to it. Nevertheless, under the powerful influence of her mother's slanders concerning me, my wife became alarmed at the prospect of my using *her* ruin as a prelude to my *own*. She seemed to reflect her mother's idea that I was taking a sudden plunge to perdition, drinking to drown my sorrows, filling my hard-working daily life with more sins than I had time to commit, hoping for my wife's speedy death, and threatening to publish her infamy to the world as soon as she should be under the sod!

Accordingly, Mrs. Tilton wrote me an earnest letter, full of allusions to her own previously confessed criminality with Mr. Beecher, begging me to be merciful to her in her brokenness of spirit, and remonstrating with me for the bad state of mind into which Mrs. Morse had described me to have fallen.

This letter I received at the office of the Brooklyn *Union*, in November, 1870. I well remember reading it twice over, and then destroying it on the spot. I have since come into possession of a copy of it which Mrs. Tilton made at the time, incorporating it in a letter to her mother. This is the double letter to which I have previously alluded. It was written from Marietta, Ohio, to chide me for the supposed recklessness into which she had been informed by her mother that I had lapsed ever since the time of Mrs. Tilton's confession of adultery. The letter is as follows:

MRS. TILTON TO MRS. MORSE.

[Written from Marietta, Ohio, to Brooklyn.]

November, 1870.

I feel my duty now and love to you, my dear mother, impels me to send to you a copy which I this morning have written to Theodore, which I insist that you destroy, and use not in conversation with him. This—because of my trust in you—*you will do, I'm sure.*

Friday Morning.

Oh, Theodore, Theodore! what shall I say to you? My tongue and pen are dumb and powerless, but I must force my aching heart to protest against your cruelty. I do not willingly chide. *I* suffer most when I discover to you my feelings.

Do you not know that you are fulfilling your threat—that "I shall no longer be considered the saint?"

My life is before you. I have aspired to nothing save to do, through manifold infirmities, *my best*, and that not for human praise, but for the grateful love I feel towards Jesus Christ, my God.

Do you not know, also, that when in any circle you blacken Mr. B's name—and soon after couple mine with it—you blacken mine as well?

When, by your threats, my mother cried out in agony to me, "Why, what have *you* done, Elizabeth, my child?" her worst suspicions were aroused, and I laid bare my heart then—that from *my* lips and not yours she might receive the dagger into her heart! Did not my dear child [Florence] learn enough by insinuations, that her sweet, pure soul agonized in secret, till she broke out with the *dreadful question?* I know not but it hath been her death blow!

When you say to my beloved brother—"Mr. B. preaches to forty of his m——s every Sunday," then follow with the remark that after *my* death you have a dreadful secret to reveal, need he be told any more ere the sword pass into *his* soul?

After this "you are my indignant champion," are you? It is now too late; you have blackened my character, and it is for my loved ones that I suffer; yea, for the agony which the revelation has caused *you*, my cries ascend to Heaven night and day that upon mine own head all the anguish may fall.

Believe you that I would thrust a like dart into your sister's or mother's heart were there occasion? No, no, I would not, indeed.

So after my death you will, to the bereaved hearts of those who love me, add the poisoned balm! In heathen lands the sins of our beloved are buried, and only their virtues are remembered!

Theodore, *your* past is safe with me, rolled up, put away never to be opened—though it is big with stains of various hue—unless you force

me for the sake of my children and friends to discover it, in self-defence or their defence.

Would *you* suffer were I to cast a shadow on any lady whom you love? Certainly, if you have any manliness you would. Even so every word, look, or intimation against Mr. B., though I be in nowise brought in, is an agony beyond the piercing of myself a hundred times. His position and his good name are dear to me; and even thus do I agonize —yea, agony is the word—for *your* good name, and if you will only value it yourself to *keep it good*, I am and always will be your helper.

Once again I implore you for your children's sake, to whom you have a duty in this matter, that *my Past* be buried—left with me and my God. He is merciful. Will you, his son, be like him?

Do not be alarmed about mother; you are not responsible for *her* revelations. Do not think or say any more that my ill-health is on account of my sin and its discovery. It is not true, indeed. My sins and my life's record I have carried to my Saviour, and his delicacy and tenderness towards me passeth even a mother's love or "the love of woman." *I rest in him, I trust in him*, and though the way is darker than death, I do hear "the still small voice" which brings to me a peace life's experience has never before brought me. No, my prostration is owing to the suffering I have caused *you*, and will cause those I love in the future if the spirit of forgiveness does not exorcise the spirit of hate. And add to this the revelations you have made of your *fallen condition*, witness of which I am daily! This it is that breaks my heart. How can I but "linger at my praying" at the thought of you?

Oh, do avoid all stimulating drinks, my darling. *I know* many a heart-ache would have been saved, only you knew not what or how the cruel word was said! I have failed in my duty to you from lack of courage to speak of these things. Allow me to advise with you now, my dearly beloved, for surely I am your best friend, and for the sake of our precious born and unborn. I tell you that since I have *been conscious* of wronging you I needed only to *know* that, and always in everything I utterly forsake the wrong, repent before God alone, and strive to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. Will you for the added reason of your soul's sake *do the same?*

I feel that you are not in the condition of mind to lead the "woman's suffrage" movement, and I implore you to break away from it and from your friends Susan, Mrs. Stanton, and every one and everything that helps to make a conflict with your responsibilities as husband and father. My life is still spared; my heart never yearned over you more in sorrowing love than now. But there must be a turning to God that will lead you to forsake forbidden ways, so that the sources and springs of your life be renewed, ere I shall feel it my duty to return.

I have gained a little, and with this small addition of strength my first impulse is to fly to you and comfort you in these new distractions which come to you through your business and its threatening changes. I have long felt, dear husband, you did not fill up your responsibilities towards the *Independent* as its religious chief and head. Oh, that you could be made to see and feel the amount of good you might do for Christ from that pulpit! Oh, my babe would leap in my womb for joy did your soul but awake to love God, and serve him with the fervor of the early days.

As I look out from my retirement here, these are my thoughts and desires.

I shall mourn if there seemeth to your aching heart a harsh word. I

will pray God's spirit to follow the written line, and so it will not, cannot offend.

I do not hesitate to return to Brooklyn and renew my home-work. Far be it from me to shirk my duty; on the contrary, to have again the privilege of being with my entire family is the ambition I feel to gain in health here. Forgive the long letter. Good-night.

YOUR DEAR WIFE.

Postscript.

Dear mother, I will now add a line to you. I should mourn greatly if my life was to be made yet known to father: his head would be bowed indeed to the grave. I love him very much, and it would soothe my heart could you be restored to him. I was greatly touched by his saying to you that "you were still his wife."

Would not his sympathizing heart comfort you in your great sorrow?

Both your letter and Theodore's came together, concerning your interviews with Joseph.

You will see that by reading or showing this letter to any one you discover my secret. It is because I trust you, dear mother, that I send you this, that you may know my spirit completely toward you both.

I have been told "Confide not in your mother"; but I reply, "To whom on earth can I confide?"

I think it pre-eminently wise for us to destroy our letters respecting this subject, lest Florry or some one should pick them up.

DARLING.

What a letter!

The brief confession which Mrs. Tilton wrote of her criminal intimacy with Mr. Beecher, and which was referred to by Mr. Moulton as held by him until I procured it from him and returned to her to be destroyed, has been falsely called a confession wrung from a wife at her husband's command. But no such accusation can hold against the above letter, which a daughter wrote to her mother, and which contains as plain a confession of Mrs. Tilton's intimacy with Mr. Beecher as language can express—a confession all the more veritable because made without design, and in the absence of any other controlling influences upon the writer save the pressure of her own conscience and sorrow, as evinced in her melancholy contemplation of the calamity which had fallen upon her honor and her home.

In view of Mrs. Tilton's truthful confession in the above letter four years ago, of what avail are her recent denials to the committee?

The committee themselves have practically impugned the testimony which their own attorneys prompted Mrs. Tilton to make to them; and Mr. Beecher's own journal, the *Christian Union*, soon after the rendering of the verdict, published a conspicuous editorial article on purpose to put forth, under the stamp of Mr. Beecher's name, the following official rejection of Mrs. Tilton's evidence by the Beecher party. The *Christian Union* says:

"*This poor woman has been shown to be so weak, so wholly subject to the strongest outside influence at the moment, that the general public can give but little weight to her testimony, either for or against Mr. Beecher.*"

The above extract from the *Christian Union* invalidating Mrs. Tilton's testimony necessarily blots out from Mr. Beecher's defence all Mrs. Tilton's recent denials of their criminality, and leaves him to be convicted by Mrs. Tilton's original, honest, dispassionate confession of their mutual sin, recorded in the above-quoted letter to her mother.

This letter, therefore, effectually disposes of two principal points of the committee's verdict. One of these points the committee state as follows:

"Tilton's allegation that she (Mrs. T.) confessed to her mother, Mrs. Morse, *is pronounced false by the mother*, who testified before the committee."

Mrs. Tilton's letter, above given, together with the extracts from Mrs. Morse's letters, show that Mrs. Morse, in denying to the committee that her daughter had ever made to her a confession of adultery, *was a deliberate falsehood*—half pardonable, perhaps, because uttered by a mother to save her daughter. The committee, in relying on Mrs. Morse's testimony, relied on a false basis, which now sinks and carries down with it the committee's verdict into an unfathomed depth.

The other point in the verdict which the above letter effectually settles is the following:

"'She' (Mrs. Tilton), says the committee, 'has always denied the charge *when free from the dominating influence of her husband.*'"

Mrs. Tilton's above letter to her mother was written "*free from the dominating influence of her husband.*" It was written 578 miles from her husband's presence. It was written not at his request, but for his condemnation. It was written to reproduce to him the feelings excited in his wife's mind by the contemplation of her wrong-doing, and to appeal to him, from such a basis, against the moral recklessness which she then believed that her fall had produced upon his religious views and daily life. It was written before Mr. Beecher knew that she had betrayed him, and, of course, before he had indicted his own equally agonizing "letter of contrition." It was written before Mrs. Tilton had any idea of future public proceedings by a church committee who would ask her to deny the truth, in order to save Mr. Beecher. It was written before Mrs. Morse expected to be called upon to add her own falsehoods to her daughter's for this same purpose. It was written with no suspicion that these joint falsehoods of mother and daughter were thus to be exploded by the counter-records of their own correspondence!

On both these points the committee's own witnesses falsify the committee's own verdict.

Candor now requires me to state that the committee are correct in one point. Their report says:

"This unhappy woman (Mrs. Tilton) has been the plastic victim of extorted falsehoods."

The committee are correct in this view. Mrs. Tilton has indeed been "the plastic victim of extorted falsehoods." These are the falsehoods extorted from her during her cross-examination—"extorted falsehoods" which the committee reproduce in their verdict as true, namely, that she was a victim to my "ill-treatment," including deprivation of "food and fire," "imprisonment under lock and key," and other hardships from which she "fled for peace to the graves of her children"—"extorted falsehoods" never prompted by Mrs. Tilton's own mind (if she still remains the kindly and tender-hearted woman whom I knew, but extorted from her as the "plastic victim" of Mr. Beecher's attorneys, who, having first used her for Mr. Beecher's defence, have since repudiated the very testimony which they thus extorted from her, pronouncing it worthless even for the base purpose for which it was thus extorted from this "plastic victim."

V. I now call attention to the difference of tone between Mrs. Tilton's letter to me, written *before* her confession of July 3, 1870, and those written *after* it—as will be seen by comparing the extracts quoted (in section II) from the correspondence published in the Chicago *Tribune*, with my wife's letter from Marietta, Ohio, to her mother in Brooklyn. This same difference is seen in all Mrs. Tilton's correspondence subsequent to her confession. All her letters written from Schoharie in the summer of 1871—of which the Catharine Gaunt letter and other penitential specimens have been heretofore published—exhibit a different woman from that whose portrait is unconsciously portrayed by her own hand in the correspondence published in the Chicago *Tribune*. The early sunshine of her life, which made golden every touch of her pen in those happier years, took a permanent shade at the date of her confession in July, 1870, and has since been never free from a cloud. It is impossible, for instance, to imagine such a letter as the following to have been written to me by Mrs. Tilton as one of the series in the Chicago *Tribune*, ending July 3, 1870:

MRS. TILTON TO HER HUSBAND.

July 29, 1871.

"Your lines sent to me in Florry's letter I respond to from my soul's depths.

"So you do not *hate* "YOUR ——."

Nor in all that early period would she have written thus, dated Schoharie, June 20, 1871:

"My mind no longer insists upon a lonely, daily wandering through my PAST."

Nor would she then have said, as she does in the last quoted letter:

"The romantic love of the sexes doth not satisfy."

Nor would she have cried out as follows, dated July 4, 1871:

"*Oh, my dear husband, may you never need the discipline of being misled by a good woman, as I have been by a good man.*"

Nor could she have, in happier days, penned this, of the same date with the preceding:

"*I thank you for the sufferings of the past year. You have been my deliverer.*"

As a further illustration of Mrs. Tilton's prevailing state of mind, induced by her criminal intimacy with Mr. Beecher, by her confession thereof to her husband, and by the shadowy memories that followed these sad facts, I will mention an incident: One day in October, 1871, during a wearisome railroad ride, I beguiled myself with the composition of a little poem, which I sent in lead-pencil to the *Golden Age*, and which appeared in that paper under the title of "Sir Marmaduke's Musings," containing the following stanza:

"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."

On my return home, after publishing the above, I was piteously assailed by Mrs. Tilton, who, with tears in her eyes, reproached me, saying, "O, Theodore, you might as well have called me by name." Meanwhile, I had not been conscious of any offence against my wife in the above publication, *because no public allusion had yet connected Mrs. Tilton's name with Mr. Beecher's.* The Woodhull story, which first did this, did not appear till more than a year afterward, namely, November 2, 1872!

In still further illustration of the excitable state of Mrs. Tilton's mind at any public allusion—friendly or otherwise—to the scandal which Mrs. Woodhull published, I may mention that shortly after that publication I prepared for the press the card known as the letter to "My Complaining Friend." I wrote it in my wife's presence, and submitted it to her judgment. She approved the card, and seemed pleased and satisfied. It was designed to throw a shield of protection over her against Mrs. Woodhull's attack. Although that card has been extensively published, I beg the favor of reproducing it here, in order that its kindly phraseology towards my wife may be carefully weighed, and in order also that the comment which she subsequently made upon it may be understood. The card was as follows:

THE "COMPLAINING FRIEND" CARD.

No. 174 Livingston Street,
Brooklyn, *December* 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 encyclopedia 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 the 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.

The above card—which was an attempt on my part, with my wife's knowledge and approval, to avoid telling a lie, and yet at the same time to avoid telling the truth—I published solely for the sake of the comfort which I thought its publication would bring to Mrs. Tilton by showing to the public that she and I were of one mind, and that inferentially, therefore, the scandalous story was false. To say that the card was *hostile* to Mrs. Tilton is to make a misuse of the words. It was full of *friendliness* to her. She had approved it in manuscript. But no sooner had the card appeared in the Brooklyn *Eagle*, accompanied with some disparaging editorial comments, than Mrs. Tilton, although she herself had been a party to the publication, wrote and left on my desk the following bitter and reproachful note—the italics being her own:

MRS. TILTON TO HER HUSBAND.

December 28, 1872.

THEODORE:—I have had one of my selfish days. They are rare indeed. But your note in the *Eagle* of last night was so heartless. I did not hear when you read it—only realized it on seeing it in print.

You should have sheltered me (a noble man would) *all the more* because the truth.

Innocence demanded nothing from you.

To you I owe this great injustice of exposure, such as has never before befallen a woman.

Blow after blow, ceaseless and unrelenting these three years!

O cruel spirit born of the devil of anger and revenge!

You know what I am.

Yet now that exposure has come, my whole nature revolts to join with you or standing with you.

As a further illustration of Mrs. Tilton's extreme feverishness of mind at any public allusion to the scandal, I will mention the following: The tripartite covenant, which was signed April 2, 1872, was published May 31, 1873; and its publication drew forth a few days afterward the appended card from Mr. Beecher in the Brooklyn *Eagle*, June 2, 1873:

MR. BEECHER'S CARD EXONERATING MR. TILTON.

To the Editor of the Brooklyn Eagle: *June* 2, 1873.

Dear Sir:—I have maintained silence respecting the slanders which have for some time past followed me. I should not speak now but for the sake of relieving another of unjust imputation. The document that was recently published bearing my name, with others, was published without consultation either with me or Mr. Tilton, nor with any authorization from us. If that document should lead the public to regard Theodore Tilton as the author of the calumnies to which it alludes it will do him great injustice. I am unwilling that he should even seem to be responsible for injurious statements whose force was derived wholly from others. H. W. Beecher.

The agitation of Mr. Beecher's mind, out of which the above card grew, I well remember; and some traces of it appear in Mr. Beecher's reminiscences which he gave to the committee during his examination; but the equally great distress of Mrs. Tilton at the same time has not yet been made public, and will appear in the following letter written by her to a friend who had rebuked her for imputing to me the publication of that covenant, although the bad business of publishing it was done by my friend, critic, and freely forgiven calumniator, Mr. Samuel Wilkeson, Mr. Beecher's Hotspur of a partner:

MRS. TILTON TO MRS. ——.

Wednesday, *June* 4, 1873.

My Dearly Beloved:—The terrible days of Saturday and Sunday last, resulting in the evil condition of soul wherein you found me yesterday, have utterly overcome me. I feel sick all over my body to-day. Indeed I cannot afford to be ugly and wicked.

That you came, I bless God; for I vomited forth all the wickedness into your safe care—*and I am relieved, though profoundly ashamed, that I should judge and injure T. as I did; yet in certain states of mind there are roused in me demons, which fill me with horror that they exist. Surely with so bad a heart as mine I cannot judge him!*

I sincerely hope he has had his last blow from me.—By-bye,

E——.

I have given the preceding letters and extracts to show how heavily Mrs. Tilton's guilty secret pressed on her heart, particularly in exigencies when she feared exposure; and there is much in her agonized expressions to remind the reader of Mr. Beecher's similar strains of woe over the same cause.

VI. Having thus considered Mrs. Tilton's confession of July 3, 1870, together with the various facts which cluster more closely about this

than about any other single branch of this case, I shall now take opportunity, before coming to my dealings face to face with Mr. Beecher, to refer to Mr. Henry C. Bowen. I must do this with some explicitness, because the key-note of Mr. Beecher's attack on me is that my accusation against him originated in my business troubles with Mr. Bowen. In Mr. Beecher's elaborate statement, the first proposition which he lays down, and which forms the basis of his ensuing argument, is in these words:

"*Four years ago, Theodore Tilton fell from one of the proudest editorial chairs in America.*"

I shall show that the above statement, together with the whole argument that Mr. Beecher bases upon it, is so wholly untrue that I might almost say that language could not be put to a falser use.

From the beginning of 1856 to the close of 1870—a period of fifteen years—I was in Mr. Bowen's employ in the *Independent* in various characters, from subordinate to chief. How well I served my employer he himself publicly attested at the end of fourteen years of my service, when, in publishing an illuminated edition of the *Independent*, in commemoration of the twenty-first year of its age—which was the year before I left—he published over his own signature a special eulogy of my labors. In this article, which states that it was written "to do justice to its present editor, Theodore Tilton," Mr. Bowen looks back through my fourteen years of service and records himself as "approving his (Mr. Tilton's) every movement and suggestion," etc. I could not have wished higher praise from my employer, particularly as covering so long a period of service.

During the following year, 1870—which was the last of my connection with the *Independent*—I became temporarily the editor also of the Brooklyn *Daily Union*. I have a letter from Mr. Bowen, dated as late as August 11, 1870, concerning my labors in the *Union*, which the writer begins in the following extravagant style:

Woodstock, Ct.

My Dear Mr. Tilton:—If I had a seventy-four pounder, I would fire it among these hills and set them reverberating in honor of your last leader on politics.

The above is a fair specimen of the cordial way in which Mr. Bowen, during fifteen years, was prompt to approve my course—a degree of appreciation on his part for which, in spite of my subsequent disagreement with him, I always look back upon gratefully. My first difference with Mr. Bowen—a trifling one—occurred shortly after he wrote the above letter. He had meanwhile come to Brooklyn, and taken a strong interest in the election of certain local candidates whom I had opposed. Moreover, he was a supporter of President Grant, whom he entertained at Woodstock, and whom I criticised in the *Independent*. After the

Brooklyn election was over Mr. Bowen and I, in a friendly conversation, reviewed these differences, and other differences growing out of my increasing heterodoxy of religious belief. After two or three friendly interchanges, he expressed a desire to become himself the sole editor of the *Independent*, just as he was its sole owner. To this end he wanted me to transfer my pen to the first page of that paper as its special contributor, while at the same time he wanted me to sign a contract to edit the Brooklyn *Union* for the ensuing five years. The pecuniary inducements which he held out to commend this proposed change to my mind were flattering, consisting of an income of about $14,000 a year and upwards. This arrangement took legal and binding form by the signing of two contracts between Mr. Bowen and myself, about the 20th of December, 1870. Two days afterwards, in pursuance of these arrangements, the *Independent*, in publishing my valedictory, accompanied it with the following eulogy on its retiring editor:

MR. BOWEN'S TRIBUTE TO MR. TILTON.

[From the *Independent*, December 22, 1870.]

The proprietor and publisher, and hereafter editor of the *Independent*, in view of the discontinuance of Mr. Tilton's editorial relations to this paper, as indicated in the above valedictory, is happy to announce to the public that this change is not the fruit of any misunderstanding between Mr. Tilton and himself. His retirement, though involving many regrets to both parties, and sundering an official tie which has always been marked with the largest mutual confidence, is based on reasons in the wisdom and propriety of which both are like agreed.

Mr. Tilton has for the last seven years ably and successfully filled the editorial chair of the *Independent*, doing a great and good work for the country and the world, and uniformly writing the leader in the editorial column.

If the paper has been a power among the people; if its utterances have affected the policy of the nation during the bitter years of our war, and during the process of civil reconstruction; or if a spirit of broader Christian charity has grown upon our readers; all this has been due in no small degree to the genius of Mr. Tilton.

Perhaps no other man in the country combines so many qualities that were needed to give us the position we have gained. Bold, uncompromising, a master among men; crisp, direct, earnest; brilliant, imaginative, poetic; keen as a Damascus blade, and true as the needle to its pole in his sympathies with the needs of man, he was surely designed by Providence for the profession he has chosen.

Our readers who have so long enjoyed the benefit of his racy and gifted pen will be glad to know that they will have an opportunity of meeting him weekly in our columns as a special contributor under his own name. He has consented to perform this service in addition to his labors as editor of the Brooklyn *Daily Union*.

Cordially welcoming him in his new character, and gratified in being able to say that his editorial connection with the *Independent* terminates only with honor and with most perfect satisfaction to himself, we shall in our next issue announce our plans for the future, etc., etc.

HENRY C. BOWEN.

Mr. Bowen, in addition to his published encomium of me above quoted, gave me a gold watch of a reputed value of $500; and Oliver Johnson, then the managing editor of the *Independent*, to whom I had made a similar gift, sent me the following note, December 29, 1870:

"DEAR THEODORE:—Don't buy a chain for your new watch, for I have ordered one which I want you to accept as a New Year's present from me."

The above particulars of my retirement from the *Independent's* editorial chair—a retirement which Mr. Bowen said was to my honor, and which I believed was to my profit—I have thus been compelled to give at tedious length, in order that the exact facts may confront Mr. Beecher's false description of the same event, when he said as above quoted: "Four years ago Theodore Tilton *fell from one of the proudest editorial chairs in America.*"

The preceding record, from the *Independent's* own columns and by its own editors, touching the circumstances of my retirement from that editorial chair, show how I "fell:"—and I may add that I would be happy to experience another such fall.

As soon as I had completed the above-mentioned arrangements with Mr. Bowen, and they had been announced as above quoted, he urged me to make a more prominent figure of Plymouth Church in the *Daily Union*, and remarked on my non-attendance at the church meetings.

This led me to reply that I had a good reason for not going to Plymouth Church, and that I should never again sit under Mr. Beecher's ministry.

On Mr. Bowen's urging me to give this reason, I reminded him first of his own oft-repeated charges against Mr. Beecher as a clergyman given to loose behavior with women, and dangerous to the families of his congregation. I said that I had in past times given little credence to these accusations, being slow to believe ill of my pastor and friend; but that I had been informed by Mrs. Tilton, a few months previously, of improper behavior by Mr. Beecher towards her, and that I should never again attend Plymouth Church.

Mr. Bowen instantly pressed me to know the exact nature of what Mrs. Tilton had told me, but I declined to put him in possession of anything further than that Mr. Beecher had assaulted the honor of my house.

This announcement fanned Mr. Bowen to a flame of anger against Mr. Beecher. All his own past grievances against his pastor seemed to be rekindled into sudden heat. He walked up and down his library, denouncing Mr. Beecher as a man guilty of many adulteries, dating from his Western pastorate and running down through all the succeeding years. Mr. Bowen declared that Mr. Beecher had, in the preceding month of February, 1870, confessed to him certain of these adulteries.

and Mr. Bowen pointed out to me the exact spot in his library whereon Mr. Beecher, with tears and humbleness, had (as Mr. Bowen said) acknowledged to him his guilt.

Mr. Bowen in this interview declared that he and I owed a duty to society in this matter, and that I ought to join him in a just demand on Mr. Beecher to retire from the ministry, to quit the city, and to betake himself beyond the reach of the families whose homes he was invading like a destroyer.

Mr. Bowen challenged me to write such a demand, and begged for an opportunity to bear it to Mr. Beecher in person, saying that he would support it by a great volume of evidence, and would compel its enforcement. I wrote on the spot the note mentioned in Mr. Moulton's statement, and which seemed to please Mr. Bowen greatly. Just as I was leaving his house, his last word to me was, "Henry Ward Beecher is a wolf in the fold, and I know it; he ought never to preach another sermon nor write another word in a religious newspaper; he endangers families and disgraces religion; he should be blotted out."

This interview with Mr. Bowen occurred on the 26th of December, 1870, and was partly in the presence of Oliver Johnson, who retired before it was ended.

On that same day I informed Mr. Moulton of this interview, as he has noticed in his narrative.

I also informed Mrs. Tilton, who, as she was then just recovering from a recent miscarriage, received the intelligence with great distress. She spoke alarmingly of Mr. Bowen's long hatred of Mr. Beecher, which now seemed to her to be about to break forth afresh, and said that if Mr. Bowen and I should thus combine against Mr. Beecher she would run a risk of an exposure of her own secret. She wept, and reminded me of the pledge which I had given her six months before, to do her pastor no wrong. She said, moreover, that Mr. Beecher might not altogether understand my letter to him demanding his retirement "for reasons which he explicitly knew," because she had not yet informed him that she had made her confession to me. I was surprised at this intelligence, for in the previous August she told me that she had communicated to Mr. Beecher the fact that she had told me the story of their sexual association. She went on picturing to me the heart-break which she would suffer if, in the coming collision between Mr. Bowen and Mr. Beecher, her secret should be divulged. I well remember the pitiful accents in which, for the children's sake and her own, she pleaded her cause with me, and begged me to be gentle with Mr. Beecher, and to protect him from Mr. Bowen's anger; also, to quench my own.

Lying on her bed sick, she said that unless I could stop the battle which seemed about to open, and could make peace between Mr. Bowen and Mr. Beecher—if not for *their* sakes at least for *hers*—and could my-

self become reconciled to the man who had wronged me, she would pray God that she might die. She then begged me to send for Mr. Beecher, desiring me to see him in her presence, to speak to him without malice when he came, and to assure him that I would not proceed in the matter of his expulsion from the pulpit. I declined such an interview as not comely for a sick woman's chamber, nor was I willing to subject her to the mortification of conferring with her paramour in the presence of her husband.

After this conversation with Mrs. Tilton, I notified Mr. Bowen that I intended to see Mr. Beecher face to face. In response to this intelligence, Mr. Bowen came into my editorial room at the *Union* office, and without asking or giving me any explanation, but exhibiting a passion such as I had never witnessed in him before, and speaking like one who was in fear and desperation, he exclaimed in a high key that if I divulged to Mr. Beecher the story of his numerous adulteries as he (Mr. Bowen) had narrated them, he (Mr. Bowen) would interdict me from ever again entering his office or his house. He then suddenly retired.

This unexpected exhibition on Mr. Bowen's part I could not comprehend; for I did not dream that Mr. Bowen, who was so determined an enemy of Mr. Beecher, had meanwhile entered into sudden league with the object of his hate, in order to overthrow, not Mr. Beecher, but myself!

I informed Elizabeth at once of Mr. Bowen's excited interview. She believed that his excitement was only a further evidence of his ancient malice against Mr. Beecher. She said that Mr. Beecher had often told her how greatly he feared Mr. Bowen. She was now appalled at the prospect of Mr. Bowen's violent assault on her pastor. She renewed her entreaty to me that I would prevent the coming conflict between the two men. Elizabeth's distress, in view of this expected conflict, it would be impossible to exaggerate, as it was heightened by her still enfeebled condition. She begged me to see Mr. Beecher without delay, and, for *her* sake, to put him on his guard against Mr. Bowen, and to explain to him that though I had written the letter demanding his retirement from the pulpit, yet that I had afterwards listened to my wife's entreaty, and had promised her that I would not press the demand to execution.

At her own suggestion she wrote a note to Mr. Beecher, and gave it to me, stating therein that she was distressed at the prospect of trouble, and begged, as the best mode of avoiding it, that a reconciliation might be had between Mr. Beecher and myself. She informed him in this letter that she had made to me a confession, six months before, of her sexual intimacy with him, and that she had hitherto deceived her husband into believing that her pastor knew of this confession having been made. She said she was distracted at having caused so much misery, and prayed

that Mr. Beecher and her husband might instantly unite to prevent Mr. Bowen from doing the damage which he had threatened in instigating Mr. Beecher's retirement from the church.

This letter of Mrs. Tilton's was written on the 29th of December, 1870. I carried it in my pocket during the remainder of that day and all the next until evening, and then resolved that I would accede to my wife's request, and for her sake would prevent the threatened exposure of Mr. Beecher by Mr. Bowen.

I accordingly went to Mr. Moulton, as he has stated, and put into his hands my wife's letter, which conveyed to him his first knowledge of her adultery. He then, as he has described, brought Mr. Beecher to me, on Friday evening, December 30, through a violent wintry storm, which Mr. Beecher referred to on the way as appropriate to the disturbed hour.

VII. The interview which followed between Mr. Beecher and me I shall relate somewhat in detail, because his recent distorted description of it is mainly a pretence, and not the truth. Mr. Beecher fills his false account with invented particulars of what he calls my complaint to him of my "business troubles," "loss of place and salary," and the like, with cognate complaints against him for his supposed agency in bringing about these results: whereas he forgets that I had *not yet lost* my "place and salary," and *had not yet come* into my "business troubles," nor did I then dream that he had conspired with Mr. Bowen to displace me from the *Independent* or the *Union*, or that any such disaster was then pending over my head, particularly as I had only a few days before signed two new contracts securing to me a lucrative connection with those two journals for years to come.

It was not because I had first "lost my place" that I held this interview with Mr. Beecher, for I did not "lose my place" until after this interview was held. Mr. Beecher confesses to an "imperfect memory of dates." This imperfection of memory has betrayed him here. My interview with him, as he acknowledges, was on Friday evening, December 30, 1870. This is correct. But it was not until Saturday evening, December 31, at nine o'clock at night, during the closing hours of the year, that my notification of dismissal came from Mr. Bowen. See the *Daily Graphic*'s fac-simile of my letter to Mr. Bowen, January 1, 1871, in which I said:

"I received *last evening* [that is, not December 30, but 31] your sudden notice breaking my two contracts, one with the *Independent*, the other with the Brooklyn *Union*."

It is thus plainly proven, as by mathematics, that my interview with Mr. Beecher—which he says occurred on account of my having "lost my place and salary"—occurred *before* I "lost my place and salary."

the effrontery to accuse me of having in 1869, "shadowed" in my editorials "loose notions of marriage and divorce."

XII. Mr. Beecher with equal inconsistency seeks to becloud me with the odium which attaches to Mrs. Woodhull's name. I am justly entitled to a severe—perhaps to an unsparing—criticism, by the public, for having linked my name with that woman, and particularly for having lent my pen to the portrayal of her life in the exaggerated colors in which I once painted it in a biographical sketch. But among all my critics who have stamped this *brochure* with their just opprobrium, I have never yet found any one who has denounced me for it half so severely as I have condemned myself. Nobody shall have my consent to defend me for having written that sketch. I refuse to be defended.

But having made this explicit statement against myself—which justice requires—I am entitled to tell the precise story of my relations with Mrs. Woodhull, and to compare these with Mr. Beecher's relations with the same woman, at the same time, and to the same end.

About a year after Mrs. Tilton's confession to me, and about a half a year after Mr. Beecher's apology, and after Mr. Moulton had put forth the many strenuous efforts to which Mr. Beecher's letters written during this period bear witness, a new and sudden enemy of our safety appeared before the public in the person of Victoria C. Woodhull, who published in the *World* and the *Times* the card quoted in my sworn statement, saying that a "distinguished clergyman in a neighboring city was living in concubinage with the wife of another public teacher in the same city."

On the publication of this card Mrs. Woodhull—to whom I was then a stranger—sent for me and informed me that this card referred to Mr. Beecher and Mrs. Tilton. I was stunned by the intelligence, for I instantly felt that the guilty secret which Mr. Moulton was trying to suppress was in danger of coming to the surface. Taking advantage of my surprise on that occasion Mrs. Woodhull poured forth in vehement speech the hundred or more particulars (most of which were untrue) that afterwards constituted the scandalous tale of November 2, 1872.

Meanwhile the fact that she possessed such knowledge, and had the audacity to fling it into my very face, led me to seek Mr. Moulton at once for counsel. We felt that some influence must be brought to bear upon this strange woman to induce her to suppress the dangerous tale. We thought that kindness was the best influence that we could use. Mr. Beecher concurred with us in this view, and we all joined in the policy of rendering her such services as would naturally (so we supposed) put the person who received them under obligations to the doers.

In carrying out this policy Mr. Beecher joined with us and approved our course. He made Mrs. Woodhull's personal acquaintance, and strove by his kindly interest in her to maintain and increase her good-

will. He says that he saw her but three times, but his "memory of dates and details is bad;" and I myself have been in her presence with him more times than that. He took uncommon pains to impress upon her his respectful consideration, and though I never heard them discuss each other's views to any prolonged extent, I once heard him say to her that the time might come when the rules by which thoroughbred animals are brought to perfection would govern the relations of men and women.

I declare explicitly that Mr. Beecher fostered the acquaintance which Mr. Moulton and I made with Mrs. Woodhull. He urged us to maintain it, and begged us not to lose our hold upon her; he constantly inquired of us as to the ascendency which we held over her, and always said that he looked as much to our influence with Mrs. Woodhull to keep back the scandal from publication as to any other possible means of future safety, both for *my* family and *his*.

When Mrs. Stowe made an elaborate attack on Mrs. Woodhull in the *Christian Union*, Mr. Beecher, who had not seen the proof-sheets before publication, was in great distress until Mr. Moulton and I reported to him that we had seen Col. Blood (Mrs. Woodhull's husband), and had urged him to publish a kindly instead of a revengeful reply to Mrs. Stowe's attack. Mr. Beecher's gratification, which he expressed at this evidence of our power with Mrs. Woodhull and her husband to prevent mischief, was of no ordinary kind. Mr. Beecher said to me on that occasion that every service which I could render to *her* was a service to *him*.

Among the services which I thus rendered—for *his* sake, because for Mrs. Tilton's—was the writing of an elaborate pamphlet on woman suffrage, which cost me a week of hard labor. Another service was the biographical sketch to which I have already alluded, and which, so far as I was concerned, was the work of only a single day, for my task consisted only in the rewriting of a sketch already prepared by her husband, the original manuscript of which I still possess. The third and last public service which I rendered to her was to preside at Steinway Hall on an occasion when I had some expectation that Mr. Beecher himself would fill the chair.

My entire acquaintance with Mrs. Woodhull was comprised between the month of May, 1871, and the month of April, 1872—less than a year—and during a great part of that time I was absent from the city on a lecturing tour. During my whole acquaintance with her I never heard from her lips an unladylike word nor noted in her behavior an unchaste act. Whatever she may have since become (and I know not), she was then high in the esteem of Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Isabella Beecher Hooker, and other persons whose judgment of what constitutes a good woman I took to be sound and final. The story

of any ill-behavior between Mrs. Woodhull and me she herself has done me the justice—unasked by me—to deny with the proper indignation which belongs to an outrage against the truth. I broke with her suddenly in the spring of 1872, because she threatened to attack several of the lady advocates of the woman suffrage cause, whom I knew and honored. In a frank conversation which I had with her at that time, full of vehemence on my part, I denounced her proposed course, washed my hands of all responsibility for *it* and *her*, and have never seen her since.

But in thus voluntarily breaking my acquaintance and co-operation with Mrs. Woodhull, I did not have the approval either of Mrs. Tilton or Mr. Beecher, both of whom felt that I had acted unwisely in parting from her so suddenly. Mr. Beecher, in particular, feared that the future would not be secure if Mrs. Woodhull were left unrestrained by Mr. Moulton or myself. Mrs. Tilton, though she grew to have a personal antipathy towards Mrs. Woodhull, nevertheless took several occasions to show friendliness towards her, and once sent her a gift-book inscribed with the words:

"To my friend, Victoria C. Woodhull. ELIZABETH R. TILTON."

Moreover, Mrs. Tilton wrote to me from Schoharie, June 29, 1871, expressing her satisfaction with an article which I had written in the *Golden Age*, the object of which was to give to Mrs. Woodhull an honorable place in the woman suffrage movement. This article was entitled "A Legend of Good Women," and the women whom I named in it were Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Julia Ward Howe, Mary A. Livermore, Lucy Stone, Paulina Wright Davis, Victoria C. Woodhull, and Isabella Beecher Hooker. In this article I spoke of all those persons in such complimentary terms as I then thought their lives and labors deserved. The article was dated June 20, 1871. Mrs. Tilton's letter approving it contained the following words:

"The 'Legend' seems an ingenious stroke of policy to control and hold together the fractious elements of that noble band."

In view of such a letter, with such a date—namely, a year after Mrs. Tilton's confession, and a half a year after Mr. Beecher's apology—I need not comment on the pretence that one of the causes of the trouble which led to the scenes of December, 1870, ending with Mr. Beecher's apology, was my relations with Mrs. Woodhull—whom I never saw till half a year afterwards, and whom Mrs. Tilton herself was complimenting at a still later period as one of "*a noble band.*"

Mr. Beecher's extraordinary statement that he besought me to part from Mrs. Woodhull is not only wholly untrue, but even after I *had* parted from her, which I did in the spring of 1872, he wanted me to renew my good-will towards her for the sake of the influence which he

thought I could exert over her plans and purposes—an influence for the suppression of the scandal and for his personal safety.

It was not until after the publication of her malicious story, November 2, 1872, that Mr. Beecher besought me to print a card publicly disavowing Mrs. Woodhull; but his sole object in then wishing me to do so was that my disavowal would be a denial of Mrs. Woodhull's charge incriminating his character.

I have thus given an exact history of my personal relationship with Mrs. Woodhull, and of the motive which inspired my services towards her. Now that I look back upon those days and sacrifices, my only marvel is that I did not commit acts of greater folly for the sake of preventing the exposure of my family secret. I ought to have known that such efforts could not, by their very nature, be successful, except for a short time. We do not learn everything in a day. But, however much I am to blame for my association during a few months with Mrs. Woodhull, the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher is not the man to criticise me for it, for he participated in it, urged it forward, was the first person to express to me his regret at its discontinuance, and never asked me to "disavow" that dangerous woman until she published a story which he wanted me to deny for his own sake.

I will simply add that my relations with Mrs. Woodhull differed in no kind, almost in no degree, from Mr. Beecher's relations with her, except that I saw her more frequently than he, and was less smooth-spoken to her face, and less insulting behind her back; nor can Mr. Beecher now throw over me the shadow of Mrs. Woodhull's darkened name, without also covering his own with the same cloud.

XIII. In my sworn statement I made oath to the fact that Mr. Beecher confessed to me his criminal intimacy with Mrs. Tilton. I will state the substance of this confession, which was often renewed and repeated.

On the night of December 30, 1870, during my interview with him at Mr. Moulton's house, he received my accusation without denial, and confessed it by his assenting manner and grief.

In the apology written January 1, 1871, which he sent me through Mr. Moulton, his contrition was based on the fact that both Mr. Moulton and I had become acquainted with his guilt.

During the subsequent personal interview which took place between Mr. Beecher and myself at Mr. Moulton's house a few mornings afterward, Mr. Beecher in set terms spoke to Mr. Moulton and myself of the agony and remorse which he had suffered within the past few days at having brought ruin and blight upon Elizabeth and her family. He buried his face in his hands and wept, saying that *he* ought to bear the whole blame, because from his ripe age and sacred office he was unpardonably culpable in leading her astray. He assured me that during the

earlier years of his friendship for Elizabeth he and she had no sexual commerce with each other, and that the latter feature of their intimacy had been maintained between them not much over a year and less than a year and a half.

He said to me that I must do with him what I would—he would not resist me—but if I could possibly restore Elizabeth to my love and respect he would feel the keen edge of his remorse dulled a little into less pain. He asked me if I would permit the coming pew-renting to proceed, and said that if I insisted on his resignation he would write it forthwith. He reminded me that his wife was my bitter enemy, and would easily become his own, and begged that she might not be informed of his conduct. He said that he had meditated suicide, and could not live to face exposure. He implored me to give him my word that if circumstances should ever compel me to disclose his secret, I would give him notice in advance, so that he might take some measure, either by death or flight, to hide himself from the world's gaze. He said that he had wakened as from a sleep, and likened himself to one sitting dizzy and distracted on the yawning edge of hell. He said that he would pray night and day for Elizabeth, that her heart might not be utterly broken, and that God would inspire me to restore her to her lost place in my home and esteem.

All this, and more like it, took place in the interview of which I speak, including his voluntary proposition to mend certain ill work which he had done in giving to Mr. Bowen false reports about me.

Shortly afterward, I sent for Mr. Beecher to come to my house to hold an interview with me on the subject which I shrink from mentioning here, yet which the truth compels me to state. In June, 1869, a child had been born to Elizabeth R. Tilton. In view of Mrs. Tilton's subsequent disclosures to me, made July 3, 1870—namely, that sexual relations between Mr. Beecher and herself had begun October 10, 1868—I wished to question Mr. Beecher as to the authenticity of that date, in order to settle the doubtful paternity of the child. This interview he held with me in my study, and during a portion of it Mrs. Tilton was present. They both agreed on the date at which their sexual commerce had begun—namely, October 10, 1868, Mrs. Tilton herself being the authority, and referring again, as she had done before, to her diary.

Certain facts which Mr. Beecher gave me on that occasion, concerning his criminal connection with Mrs. Tilton—the times, the places, the frequency, together with other particulars which I feel a repugnance to name—I must pass over; but I cannot forbear to mention again, as I have stated heretofore, that Mr. Beecher always took the blame to himself, never imputing it to Elizabeth; and never till he came before the Investigating Committee did he put forth the unmanly pretext that Mrs. Tilton had "thrust her affections on him unsought."

On numerous occasions, from the winter of 1871 to the spring of 1874, Mr. Beecher frequently made to me allusions, in Mr. Moulton's presence, to the abiding grief, which, he said, God would never lift from his soul for having corrupted so pure-minded a woman as Elizabeth Tilton to her loss of honor, and also for having violated the chastity of friendship towards myself as his early and trusting friend.

Never have I seen such grief and contrition manifested on a human countenance as I have often seen it on Henry Ward Beecher in his self-reproaches for having accomplished Elizabeth's ruin. The fact that he suffered so greatly from constant fear of an exposure of his crime made me sometimes almost forget the wrong he had done me, and filled my breast with a fervid desire to see him restored again to peace with himself. At every effort which I made in conjunction with Mr. Moulton to suppress inquiry into scandal, Mr. Beecher used to thank me with a gratitude that was burdensome to receive. He always put himself before me in so dejected, humble and conscience-stricken a mood, that if I had been a tenfold harder man than I was I could not have had the heart to strike him. When I wrote the letter to the church declining to appear for trial, on the ground that I had not been for four years a member, he met me the next day at Mr. Moulton's house, and, catching my right hand in both of his, said with great feeling, "Theodore, God himself inspired you to write that letter."

When, at a later period, in the same house, he gave me the first intimation of the coming Council, he said: "Theodore, if *you* will not turn upon me, Dr. Storrs cannot harm me, and I shall owe my life once again to your kindness."

I could record many different expressions and acts of Mr. Beecher like those which I have above given, to show his perpetual and never-relieved distress of mind through fear of the exposure of his adultery, accompanied by a constant and growing fear that I could not really forgive him, and must sooner or later bring him to punishment.

I ought to say that I sometimes half suspected that Mr. Beecher's exhibitions to me of profound dejection and heart-break were not real but feigned, being of the nature of appeals to my sympathies, which (he knew) were always readily aroused at the sight of distress. But Mr. Moulton never admitted any doubt of Mr. Beecher's real penitence, and this was one of the reasons why Mr. Moulton sought so zealously to shield this sorrowful man from the consequences of his sin.

I close this section by declaring, with a solemn sense of the meaning of my words, that Mr. Beecher's recent denial under oath that he committed adultery with Mrs. Tilton is known to him, to her, to Mr. Moulton, to me, and to several other persons to be an act of perjury.

XIV. Perhaps there is no single touch of hypocrisy in Mr. Beecher's statement that exceeds his following allusion to his domestic happiness:

"His (Mr. Tilton's) affairs at home [says Mr. Beecher] did not promise that sympathy and strength which makes one's house, *as mine has been*, in times of adversity, a refuge from the storm and a tower of defence."

In no ordinary controversy would I be justified in taking up such an allusion as this of Mr. Beecher to his own home in contrast with mine, as mine once was. But the truth constrains me to do so now. Mr. Beecher's purpose, thus adroitly expressed, is to set himself before the public in the light of a man who has so happy a home of his own that he does not need to covet his neighbor's wife.

But, on the contrary, as Mrs. Tilton has repeatedly assured me, and as she has assured confidential friends to whom her confessions have been made, Mr. Beecher had a house which was not a home—a wife who was not a mate; and hence he sought and found a more wifely companion. He often pictured to Mrs. Tilton the hungry needs of his heart, which he said Mrs. Beecher did not supply; and he made his poverty and barrenness at home the ground of his application to Mrs. Tilton to afford him the solace of a supplemental love.

In the days when I was confidential with Mr. Beecher, he used to pour in my ears unending complaints against his wife, spoken never with bitterness, but always with pain. He said to me one day, "O Theodore, God might strip all other gifts from me if he would only give me a wife like Elizabeth and a home like yours." One day he walked the streets with me saying, "I dread to go back to my own house; I wish the earth would open and swallow me up." He told me that when his daughter was married, Mrs. Beecher's behavior on that occasion was such as to wring his heart; and when he described her unwifely actions during that scene he burst into tears, and clenched his hands in an agony which I feared would take the form of a revenge. He has told me repeatedly of acts of cruelty by Mrs. Beecher towards his late venerable father, saying to me once that she had virtually driven that aged man out of doors. A catalogue of the complaints which Henry Ward Beecher has made to me against his wife would be a chapter of miseries such as I will not depict upon this page.

Many of his relatives stand in fear of this woman, and some of them have not entered her house for years—as one of Mr. Beecher's brothers lately testified in a public print. I have seen from one of his sisters a private letter concerning the marital relations of Mr. and Mrs. Beecher which it would be scandalous to reproduce here. And yet this man, in order to give to the ignorant public one of human nature's most plausible reasons why a man should not invade another's house, paints a false picture of the sweet refuge of his so-called happy home.

I know that my allusion to Mr. Beecher's home-life is rough and harsh, but I know also that it is true; for as I pen it down there arises in my mind a vivid recollection of the many years of my daily associa-

tion with Mr. Beecher, during which he taught me to sympathize with him for the very reason that his house, instead of being what he now calls it, "a refuge from the storm," was more often the storm itself, from which he sought refuge in mine.

Mr. Beecher has charged me with blackmail. This charge wore a cold and keen point for a single morning, but soon melted away like an icicle in the sun. The angry indictment had so brief a vitality that the life was all gone from it before the committee wrote their verdict. In that verdict the committee did not repeat that charge, knowing that it could not be sustained. They made only the faintest possible allusion to the subject, by suggesting that "innocent men have sometimes been blackmailed," but they even neglected to mention that Mr. Beecher was one of these.

Now, although the committee have dismissed the subject of blackmail as too tenuous to be made a part of their special pleadings, I am not willing that this outrageous pretence shall be allowed to pass into swift and easy oblivion. I will do what the committee had not the courage to do—I will revive Mr. Beecher's charge of blackmail, in order that I may take apart, piece by piece, the ingenious but fallacious argument which he put forth to sustain this visionary indictment.

In the first place, before Mr. Beecher ventured on such an extravagant accusation he prepared the way for it by misrepresenting me as a man reduced to such poverty and desperation that I would be likely to resort to blackmail. As a preliminary requisite for the coming charge Mrs. Tilton was instructed to say that I had deprived her of food and fire—a statement showing a condition of distress not only on her part, but on mine; a distress so great that (as hunger is said to break through stone walls) would presumably tempt me to commit murder, highway robbery, or blackmail.

But it so happens that at the very time when (according to this description) I was without the means to furnish food and fire to my family, namely, the winter of 1870–71, *I had several thousands of dollars in cash* to my account on the books of an eminent commercial house in New York—a larger sum than I ever had at any one time in loose money even in my most prosperous days. *And Mr. Beecher knew of this fact at the time*, because when Mrs. Morse wrote to him the letter in which she falsely and impudently said that if my honest debts were paid I would not be worth a cent, Mr. Beecher was then informed by one of the custodians of my money, first, that I had no debts unpaid, and next that I had several thousands of dollars in cash to my account.

I distinctly declare, therefore, that the story put into Mrs. Tilton's mouth by the persons who advised her to say that she had not the means wherewith to feed and warm herself and family, was a fabricated statement put forth to be one of the necessary preliminaries to the subsequent charge of blackmail.

After thus falsely misrepresenting me as passing the winter of 1870–71 without food and fire, Mr. Beecher's second preliminary to the intended charge of blackmail consisted in his saying that in the following winter of 1871–72 I was driven in disgrace from the public platform, and that my lecturing engagements were brought to naught. In vivid language he portrays my supposed distress at this time thus:

"The winter following (1871–72), Mr. Tilton [he says] *returned from the lecturing field in despair. Engagements had been cancelled, invitations withdrawn, and he spoke of the prejudice and repugnance with which he was everywhere met as indescribable.*"

The above statement is not only the direct opposite of the truth, but when I first came upon it in the midst of Mr. Beecher's defence, and before I saw the end to which it pointed—namely, that it was a step in the argument to prove me a man in sufficient desperation to resort to blackmail—I could not understand the mysterious purpose of his coining such an unnecessary fiction; but soon afterwards I saw that, as Mrs. Tilton's invention of her privations of food and fuel came first in order, so next came Mr. Beecher's equally fanciful invention of my lecturing losses and disgrace. Both of these alleged events—one occurring one winter, the other in the next—were to create the desperate determination of mind on my part which was to turn me into a blackmailer.

Mrs. Tilton's falsities (I call them hers, always remembering that they were not of her own prompting) have already been sufficiently answered. I need only to answer Mr. Beecher's. And if he does not blush for his statement above quoted when he reads the following refutation of it, then he must be lost to a proper regard for that strict truth which should form the basis of any and every accusation which one man brings against another.

NOTE FROM MR. TILTON'S LECTURE AGENT.

COOPER INSTITUTE, NEW YORK, *September* 1, 1874.

DEAR SIR:—In reference to our books, I find that *you filled more lecture engagements during the season of* 1871–72 *than any other of the one hundred or more lecturers, readers, etc., on our list, save one.*

Only three of your engagements were cancelled, and two of these were in the West, where the great Chicago fire had almost paralyzed the lecture business. All lecturers in the West that season suffered from cancelled engagements. In seven places you were called to give a second lecture, and in one place a third. Very truly yours,

AMERICAN LITERARY BUREAU,

THEODORE TILTON, Esq. CHARLES MUMFORD, *Vice-President.*

Mrs. Tilton, who accompanied me at my request during a portion of the above-named lecturing trip (for I thought that if she were thus seen travelling with me, the stories against her would receive in that way a most effectual rebuff), wrote home the following:

MRS. TILTON TO MRS. ——.

WATERTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS, *March* 1, 1872.

MY SWEET FRIEND :— . . . . Theodore has about twenty engagements remaining, which will bring us home the last week in March. We have met with exceedingly nice people, *and always Theodore reinstates himself against the prejudices grown up the past year.* . . . .

YOUR DEAR ELIZABETH.

It will thus be seen that Mr. Beecher's declaration that I had lost my lecturing engagements, and was heaping up prejudices against myself wherever I went, is flatly contradicted by Mr. Mumford, my lecturing agent, who says that of his hundred lecturers and readers I had more engagements than any other person save *one;* and Mrs. Tilton testifies that instead of my giving rise to prejudices against myself I was everywhere clearing them away.

What becomes of Mr. Beecher's case when its principal statements are thus, one after another, seen to be utterly baseless, and therefore utterly base?

Mr. Beecher—after first instigating Mrs. Tilton to say that in the winter of 1870–71 our house was a hovel of privations, and then permitting himself to declare that in the following winter of 1871–72 I was hunted from the public rostrum and deprived of my livelihood—had by these two misrepresentations plausibly reduced me, in his statement, to the condition of a man whose next alternative would be to levy blackmail.

After these progressive preparations for his intended indictment, Mr. Beecher next exhibits the same cat-footed care in presenting his successive charges.

Thus he cautiously pretends, before directly preferring his main accusation of blackmail, that I made use of him to extort from Mr. Bowen the sum of $7000.

There is something to provoke a smile in this insinuation, for I have yet to hear of any man, living or dead, who has been able to extort from Mr. Bowen a cent of money not justly due.

What is the story of the $7000 which I received from Mr. Bowen? It was a just debt which Mr. Bowen owed me and paid me, and that was the whole matter; but he did not pay me through Mr. Beecher's influence, nor through any other influence save the necessary obligation devolving on a man who owes money to pay it. The transaction was as follows: According to the contracts made between Mr. Bowen and myself in the latter part of December, 1870, I was to edit the Brooklyn *Union* for five years, at an annual salary of $5200, together with ten per cent. of the profits; and I was to furnish to the *Independent* a weekly article at an annual salary of $5200, making, from these two sources, a yearly income estimated by Mr. Bowen at $14,000 and upwards. These two contracts contained the following provisions, namely:

They could be annulled by the death of either party, or by the consent of both parties, or by one party giving to the other half a year's notice of intention to do so, or at once by either party paying to the other a forfeit equal to half a year's income, say about $7000. Mr. Bowen, through Mr. Beecher's influence (as Mr. Beecher admits), chose to terminate these contracts *at once*. He had a perfect right to do this on paying the stipulated forfeit of $7000. If these contracts had been terminated in this manner by me instead of by Mr. Bowen, I would have been legally bound to pay Mr. Bowen a half year's income, or $7000. In like manner, the contracts having been terminated by Mr. Bowen, he was bound to pay the same amount to me. The contracts showed on their face exactly what they meant, and were as peremptory as a note of hand. The only possible doubt as to the precise amount of money due under them was, How much did ten per cent. of the *Union's* profits amount to? Mr. Bowen, who has a clever business faculty for submitting all money claims to arbitration, on the economical ground that arbitrators usually compromise by cutting the disputed claim in two, like a knife through a peach—giving each party half—sagaciously urged me to arbitrate. This proposition I first declined, fearing that my just claim would be cut in two like the peach. This declinature I made by the advice of Mr. Moulton, who was not willing that I should lose a penny of my just due. Meanwhile Mr. Bowen, who knew something but not everything of Mr. Beecher's relations with Mrs. Tilton, naturally felt that I would be sensitive about collecting my claim through a lawyer and in a court, from my unwillingness to involve Mr. Beecher and thereby compromise my family. Accordingly Mr. Bowen felt safe in dilly-dallying concerning the payment beyond my point of patience. At length I instructed Mr. F. A. Ward, of the law firm of Reynolds & Ward, of Brooklyn, to stop Mr. Bowen's sharp practice and collect my claim at once in court. About the same time, but wholly unconnected with this affair, I wrote an article for the *Golden Age*, correcting, in behalf of my western readers (among whom I had just been travelling as a lecturer), some unfounded reports that my retirement from the editorial chair of the *Independent* had not been (as Mr. Bowen publicly said it was in December, 1870) "to my honor," but was from some cause not honorable to myself. The proof-sheet of this article I showed in advance to Mr. Moulton, who, seeing that it disagreeably introduced the name of Mr. Beecher, begged me on that account to suppress it. He showed it to Mr. Beecher, who shrank from the prospect of its publication because it contained Mr. Bowen's charges against him. Mr. Moulton, finding Mr. Beecher greatly concerned and full of trepidation, conferred, at Mr. Beecher's request, with Mr. Horace B. Claflin, who, having some mysterious influence over Mr. Bowen (which I am not able to this day to understand), advised Mr. Bowen to settle my claim at once and not permit

me to put it into the courts, since legal proceedings would reflect equally on Mr. Bowen and Mr. Beecher by exhibiting their mutual grievances in a glaring light to the public.

It was wholly in Mr. Beecher's interest, and not in mine, that Mr. Moulton and my legal advisers withheld my claim of $7000 from a public court, and handed it over to private arbitration. The following letters will prove this point to a demonstration:

MR. MOULTON TO MR. CLAFLIN.

BROOKLYN, *April* 1, 1872.

MY DEAR MR. CLAFLIN:—After full consideration of all interests, *other than Theodore's*, I have advised him to arbitrate, etc. . . . .

Cordially yours, FRANCIS D. MOULTON.

JUDGE REYNOLDS TO MR. TILTON.

LAW OFFICES OF REYNOLDS & WARD, *April* 1, 1872.

MY DEAR MR. TILTON:—On strictly legal grounds I should strenuously advise you against any submittance to arbitration of your differences with Mr. Bowen. I consider your case so clear in law that there is no reason, *so far as you are concerned*, for diverting its prosecution from the regular course.

But there are weighty moral considerations arising out of the fact that *other parties* might be seriously involved, which lead me to hope you may secure your rights through the proposed arbitration.

You can only do so, however, by obtaining not only the money due you but a personal vindication at the hands of Bowen. A trial of the case in a public court would afford such vindication, and if you forego that, Mr. Bowen must expect to clear you himself from the imputations which his conduct has cast upon you. Yours very truly,

GEORGE G. REYNOLDS.

MR. WARD TO MR. TILTON.

LAW OFFICES OF REYNOLDS & WARD, *April* 2, 1872.

MY DEAR SIR:—I fully share in the reluctance which I believe Judge Reynolds has expressed, that this matter should be left to arbitration.

The case is as clear as daylight, and the arbitration is entirely in the interest of a *third* party, not yourself.

I am acting of course as your *legal* adviser; if *you* are acting as the counsel of a *third* party, I have nothing to say.

Personally I would not consent to the arbitration unless Bowen would pay the full amount due under the contract, and give a full justification besides of your integrity.

In other words, there is no possible object in arbitration, as all your rights can be clearly established in a court of law.

Very truly yours, F. A. WARD.

The "third party" mentioned in the above letters was none other than the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. It was for Mr. Beecher's sake—for

his alone, not mine—that my just claim against Mr. Bowen was held in abeyance for a year and a half, and was then finally kept out of court and settled privately, through Mr. Moulton's fear that a public lawsuit, which Mr. Bowen seemed at one time to invite, for the sake of the mischief which it promised to disclose against Mr. Beecher, would result in irretrievable damage to Mr. Beecher's name. Mr. Moulton's special apprehension was that Mr. Bowen, cherishing a secret hostility to his pastor, was tempting me to carry the case into court for the purpose of involving Mr. Beecher in a public scandal.

When, therefore, Mr. Beecher says that I made use of him to extort $7000 from Mr. Bowen, he speaks what is not true. The truth is, that my just claim of $7000 would have been paid long before it was except for Mr. Moulton's reluctance to give Mr. Bowen an opportunity to use legal proceedings as an indirect means of gratifying his supposed revengeful feelings against Mr. Beecher.

It was Mr. Claflin who persuaded Mr. Bowen to withhold the case from court and submit it to arbitration. The three arbitrators were Horace B. Claflin, James Freeland and Charles Storrs. They met at the house of Mr. Moulton, who was present during the interview. Mr. Bowen and I appeared before them. I made no claim for a specific amount, but simply laid my two contracts on the table, and said, "Here are two contracts, which Mr. Bowen and I mutually signed. Read them, and judge for yourselves how much money is due me." Mr. Claflin then took out his lead-pencil, asked how much the profits of the *Union* were, footed up the figures, requested Mr. Bowen and myself to retire into the front parlor for a few minutes, summoned us back shortly afterward, and announced that the arbitrators, after having read the contracts, had unanimously decided that Mr. Bowen owed me $7000. Mr. Bowen thereupon took from his pocket a blank check, filled it out on the spot for $7000, and handed it to me, saying that the next week's *Independent* should contain a handsome tribute to me at the head of the editorial columns.

Before this proposed tribute was printed I had meanwhile sent to Mr. Bowen a note asking him to correct certain false reports concerning my retirement from the *Independent*. In reply to this note he sent me privately the following:

MR. BOWEN TO MR. TILTON.

MR. THEODORE TILTON:

SIR:—I shall publish, with great pleasure, in the *Independent*, your letter to me, followed by such editorial remarks as, I trust, will please you and your numerous friends.

We have been bound together as co-workers for many years, and I now most solemnly declare to you that never, for one moment, have I entertained a single unfriendly feeling towards you.

To-day I rejoice that we may meet and clasp hands as friends.

If I have done you any wrong in the past, I most sincerely regret it, and ask you to overlook and forget it. Henceforth let us have peace and good-will between us, each doing his own work in his own way, as it seemeth best in the sight of God.

We shall meet now as friends, and, I hope, as Christian friends; and no act of mine shall disturb our friendly relations.

With many good wishes for you and yours, I am truly your friend,

HENRY C. BOWEN.

In addition to the above letter, Mr. Bowen sent me, within a day or two, the following:

MR. BOWEN TO MR. TILTON.

MR. THEODORE TILTON:

SIR:—I authorize you to say at any time, at your discretion, and on my authority, that your retirement from the *Independent* and *Daily Union* was for no unfriendly reasons, or any desire on my part to reflect on your character or standing; and furthermore, that whatever tales or rumors may exist to your injury, I most sincerely regret and condemn.

With a sincere desire for your best present and future welfare and prosperity, and that of your respected family, I remain your friend,

HENRY C. BOWEN.

BROOKLYN, *April* 3, 1872.

Simultaneously with the receipt of the above private letters from Mr. Bowen came the *Independent*, containing, at the head of its editorial columns, a very handsome personal tribute to myself, which, as Mr. Moulton quoted it in substance, I need not reproduce here. In this article Mr. Bowen referred to what he was pleased to style "my long and brilliant services to the *Independent*," and he said in it:

"We have felt too kindly towards him to allow the *Independent* to countenance the abuse heaped upon him by some other papers."

Furthermore, as if expressly to furnish me in advance with the best possible material for answering Mr. Beecher's charge that I had extorted money from Mr. Bowen, he (Mr. Bowen) spoke particularly as follows:

"Our disagreement with him on some religious and other questions does not prevent our recognizing his honest purposes and his chivalrous defence of what he believes to be *true*, as well as those qualities of heart which make him dear to those who know him best."

I have thus quoted Mr. Bowen's effectual answer to the charge that I had wronged him in any way; but I am happily able to quote Mr. Beecher's own answer to it, which will be still more triumphant! Mr. Beecher was so gratified at my settlement with Mr. Bowen and the encomium of me in the *Independent*, that he copied it into the next week's *Christian Union*, with an added eulogy of his own, as follows:

MR. BEECHER PRAISES MR. TILTON.

[From Mr. Beecher's article in the *Christian Union*, April 17, 1872.]

"This honorable testimony from Mr. Bowen [says Mr. Beecher] ought to clear away the misconceptions which have shaded the path of this brilliant young writer. *We have never parted with our faith that time would reconquer for Theodore Tilton the place in journalism, literature and reform to which his talents and past services entitle him.* . . . . Upon this testimony of the estimation in which his principles and character are held by a wise and strong man, who was closely associated with him for fifteen years in the conduct of the *Independent*, the public must needs put aside prejudices of judgment which they have permitted to cloud this young orator and writer. Those who know him best are the most sure that he is *honest in his convictions, as he is fearless in their utterance, and that he is manly and straightforward in the ways in which he works for what seems to him best for man and for society.*

"We trust that the gold in the *Golden Age* will not grow dim, but that, dropping its drops in the refining fires, it will shine with the lustre of gold seven times refined and purified."

I leave the above article by Mr. Beecher, written two years ago by his own pen, in his own journal, touching the settlement of this very disputed claim with Mr. Bowen concerning the identical $7000 now in question—I leave this article by Mr. Beecher to confute Mr. Beecher's recent pretence that I used him to extort this money from Mr. Bowen!

Mr. Beecher's next step in the fanciful argument to prove me a blackmailer is his mention of the payment to Mr. Moulton of certain sums of money amounting to $2000. I had nothing to do with this money or any part of it. But I happen to know that it went, either in whole or in part, to pay the girl Bessie's school bills at the Steubenville Seminary, Ohio. (See receipt signed by the principal.)

This child came to my house a dozen years ago as a waif, bearing the name of McDermott, knowing neither father nor mother, nor relative, nor circumstances of her birth, nor her age, concerning all whom and which she remained in total ignorance for years until, after many efforts, I traced her parentage, and learned that her true name was Turner, which she has since borne.

This unfortunate child, when she lived in my family, was afflicted frequently with strange glooms, so that she sometimes passed days together in sullen silence without speaking to any one in the house, then bursting gayly into an incessant noise; and at night she would often fall into a species of nightmare which would control her so powerfully that her moans and cries would alarm the house.

Miss Anthony, who knew her well, describes her (though I think a little too roughly) as a "half-idiot, into whose head it was impossible to instil principles of truth."

My father and mother in their joint card, from which I have already quoted, dated Keyport, N. J., August 30, 1874, refer to this child as follows:

"The girl Bessie, before she was sent to boarding-school at the West, was often an inmate of our house, and we were well acquainted with her character at that time. We grieve to say that this girl was guilty of such ill conduct in our family, including falsehoods and insults to us, that in 1870, when she went from our house, we forbid her entering it again."

My wife's letters used to contain frequent allusions to her troubles with Bessie, which were of so vexing a kind that Mrs. Tilton often doubted the rightfulness of keeping such an eccentric child in the house, for fear of her evil influence on our children. For instance, Mrs. Tilton, in a letter to me dated February 6, 1867, speaks of this troublesome girl as follows:

"Libby [says Mrs. Tilton] continues to be the only disturber of the peace of our household. Saturday and Sunday are the time usual for her moods, and as the little girls grow older she wins them less and less to herself, owing to her unfortunate disposition. They do not love her nor get along pleasantly. I am perplexed lest my children grow irritable through her influence over them."

The above expresses a frequent complaint of Mrs. Tilton against Bessie; and yet as my wife was a kind-hearted and self-sacrificing woman —especially zealous to do good to lowly and unfortunate persons—she could never permit herself to dismiss Bessie, and send her forth helpless into the wide world. A thousand times over has Bessie expressed her gratitude to Mrs. Tilton and me for having rescued her from some horrible fate which she used to fancy would have been hers had not our family given her a home. Nor do I believe that she would have proved an ingrate to me had she not been made a tool in Mrs. Morse's ingenious hands for working out her scheme of a divorce for Elizabeth, by breaking down my reputation. It will be remembered that Bessie wrote to Mrs. Tilton, January 20, 1870, saying:

"Mrs. Morse has repeatedly *attempted to hire me by offering me dresses and presents* to go to certain persons and tell them stories injurious to the character o your husband."

The young girl whom Mrs. Morse "bribed," Mrs. Tilton "deceived," as is seen by Mrs. Tilton's letter to Mrs. P., dated November 8, 1872, as follows:

"*I have mistakenly felt obliged to deceive Bessie these two years* that my husband had made false accusations against me, which he never has to her nor any one."

The young girl—"bribed" by Mrs. Morse and "deceived" by Mrs. Tilton, and always the easy instrument of either—became suddenly one day the terror of both, for she overheard a conversation between Mrs. Tilton and myself, in which allusion was made to Mrs. Tilton's sexual intimacy with Mr. Beecher. The committee, in their verdict, admit that

the girl overheard this remark, for they quote her as using the following words:

"*He* (Mr. Tilton) said she (Mrs. Tilton) *had confessed to him that she had been criminally intimate with Mr. Beecher.* She identified the date at which she overheard the remark. The question was put to her, 'When was that?' and the committee received her answer, 'This all occurred on the day that we went back in the fall of 1870.'"

After overhearing this remark, the young tell-tale went to several members of the family and reported it with her prattling tongue. She also went to Mr. Beecher and did the same. Mr. Beecher, in his statement, *acknowledges that Bessie came to him;* but, with that disregard of the truth which characterizes his entire defence, he changes the story which she came to him to tell, and makes it appear that her disclosure was not what the committee admit, namely, that she had heard of Mr. Beecher's criminal relations with Mrs. Tilton, but quite another tale. The same reluctance which Mr. Beecher has since had to put the true story of Bessie's errand into Bessie's recent testimony, he long ago manifested at having her tell it to our friends and relatives. Such a tell-tale tongue was dangerous to Mr. Beecher's peace. Accordingly, no sooner had Mr. Moulton undertaken the task of organizing Mr. Beecher's safety, than one of the first necessary "devices" to this end was the removal of Bessie to a safe distance from Brooklyn. So she was housed, at Mr. Beecher's expense, in a western boarding-school for a term of years. The money which Mr. Beecher paid for Bessie is all the money which I ever heard (until recently) of his paying either directly or indirectly in consequence of his association with my family or with this scandal.

After Bessie was put to school one of her first acts—and this wholly destroys the false statement that I ever sought to injure her—was to write me a letter of thanks and gratitude for her school privileges, on the supposition that *I* was her benefactor. This letter I did not answer, because I thought it not prudent to undeceive the child as to her pecuniary relationship to Mr. Beecher, believing that her knowledge of this fact (if she should learn it) would only increase the very mischief which we all sought to hide. Moreover, I did not wish to take to myself an expression of thanks for benefactions which another man had made. Accordingly, I sent Bessie no answer to her letter.

Some time afterwards, however, a proposition was made to Bessie by a lady in Marietta, Ohio, one of Mr. Beecher's friends, to the effect that a young hunchback in that town, who had money enough to support a wife but who found it difficult to find a girl who would marry him, was willing to take Bessie out of school and marry her. The moment I heard of this "device" I wrote to Bessie, giving her such good counsel as I thought the occasion demanded, warning her against marrying any

one whom she did not know or respect or love. In reply to this letter she wrote me seven or eight school-girlish pages, which I still possess, dated "Steubenville, January 13, 1873," beginning: "Mr. Tilton, my dear friend," acknowledging my letter and the admonitions which it contained; describing to me her astonishment at Mrs. ——'s proposal to her to marry the deformed stranger; expressing her repugnance to marry such a disfigured person; and ending her long letter to me as follows:

"I should have written you many times [she says] and told you how much I enjoyed and appreciated being here at school, but as I had written you one letter and you had not answered it, I dreamed you did not care to hear how I was getting along."

In Bessie's letters to my wife, with whom she corresponded regularly, she often addressed to me kindly messages, and on one occasion spoke of sending one of her schoolmates on purpose to be introduced to me.

I mention these trifles to relieve this foolish girl in part from the odium which attaches to her of having spoken with falsehood and ingratitude of a man who never showed her anything but kindness, and of whom I know she would never have thought of saying an ungrateful word until taught, four years ago, to do so by Mrs. Morse, who then invented for a bad purpose the tales which the young tale-bearer has since been instructed to repeat for a worse.

The habit of story-telling which Mrs. Morse instilled into this maid's mind is still further illustrated in the false statement which Bessie made to the editor of the Pittsburgh *Leader*, a marked copy of which journal, of August 21, 1874, has been sent to me, containing a statement made by Bessie in that city, as follows:

"Her tuition and board, she said, were paid out of her own money, and that Mr. Tilton held $1000 as her guardian."

I never was her guardian, nor had she ever any money of her own, nor did I ever hold any in trust for her.

This story—so wholly unnecessary and apparently without any purpose—is of a piece with the other shallow and false tales which this partly irresponsible girl has since promulgated concerning Mrs. Stanton, Miss Anthony, and myself.

It is not strange, however, that Bessie, under the influence of the deception habitually practised upon her by Mrs. Tilton, and under the inspiration of her own native and unfortunate instinct in the same direction, and having long ago fallen into the snare of Mrs. Morse, and more recently into the manipulation of Mr. Beecher's lawyers—it is not strange, I say, that through all these influences she should have been easily fashioned into a willing tool in their hands for the reproduction of the false testimony which Mrs. Morse long ago fabricated, and which

Mrs. Morse's own regard for consistency has required that Bessie should repeat afresh in the same old form.

My regret is that this shallow-minded girl, in permitting herself to be used by these people to my discredit, finds *her* name brought into the general ruin in which they have involved their *own*.

How much of Mr. Beecher's $2000 has been spent on Bessie Turner, I do not know; but I do know that almost every letter which Bessie has written to Mrs. Tilton for the last three or four years has asked for money; I know, also, that this money came through Mr. Moulton from Henry Ward Beecher; and I know still further that the sole purpose of Mr. Beecher's paying this money, and the sole purpose of Mrs. Tilton's keeping Bessie "deceived," was because this girl accidentally overheard four years ago the remark which she repeated to the committee, and which the committee admit, namely, a disclosure of the criminal intimacy between Mrs. Tilton and Mr. Beecher.

I must therefore put upon Bessie the burden of blackmail, so far at least as the school-bills go, say the whole or a large part of the aforesaid $2000.

The next step in Mr. Beecher's untruthful indictment against me brings me to the mortgage.

On the 1st of May, 1873, Mr. Beecher deceived his wife by obtaining her signature to a mortgage on his house; and he has since attempted to deceive the public by saying that the $5000 which she thus helped him raise from a Brooklyn bank was an extortion by Mr. Moulton for blackmail in my behalf. If Mr. Beecher had succeeded in proving (which he did not) that I had used him to extort $7000 from Mr. Bowen, and that I then had levied on him (as he likewise charged) successive assessments amounting to $2000, he might reasonably have expected, on the basis of these two robberies of him by me, to prove me guilty, through Mr. Moulton, of a third.

Before Mr. Beecher made this charge Mr. Moulton, with a straightforward honesty which does not belong to a blackmailer, had already set forth a plain and business-like acknowledgment or receipt of $5000 from Mr. Beecher in May, 1873—being a sum contributed by Mr. Beecher unbeknown to me, through Mr. Moulton, for the *Golden Age*. This is not all the money which Mr. Moulton contributed to the *Golden Age*, but it is all which he derived in any way from Mr. Beecher for that purpose. I never knew or dreamed that Mr. Beecher had made through Mr. Moulton such a contribution until I first learned of it, as the general public did, two months after I had ceased to be the owner of that journal.

In June last, a quarter of a year before Mr. Moulton gave to me or to the public this intelligence of the $5000, the *Golden Age*, with its goodwill, subscription list, office fixtures, and debts, together with Mr.

Beecher's unknown share of contributed capital, was sold by me for a nominal sum. I have thus been saved the mortification of feeling myself at any time, even for a day or an hour, the conscious possessor of Mr. Beecher's money. I have pride enough to say that were I clothed in the rags of beggary and perishing with hunger, I would not accept a penny from Mr. Beecher for food or raiment. Had I known of this man's surreptitious gift to the *Golden Age* I would have returned it to him, saying, "Thy money perish with thee!"

Mr. Beecher trifles with the truth and is merely playing a bravado's part when he says I tinkled his gold in my pocket, and sent him in return a mock message of good-will. I sent him that message, not in mockery, but in earnest, one day last summer, shortly after the publication of the tripartite covenant, followed as that was by the pressing of Mr. West's threatening charges, and these in turn by the rumors of a future council. Mr. Beecher was reported to me to be in a state of profound depression, bordering on despair. Mr. Moulton begged me to speak some word to the stricken man to prevent him from sinking into hopeless gloom. I remembered a favorite text with Mr. Beecher, which I often heard him use years ago, and I sent it to him one Sunday morning, written on a scrap of paper, thus:

"H. W. B.—Grace, mercy, and peace. T. T."

The next time I saw him he told me that this line, greeting him in his pulpit, had shone like a sunbeam through his mind during all that morning's service, and that I would never know how greatly it had cheered him. He added also that the least word of kindness from me always had the power to reanimate him like wine. This message of mine to Mr. Beecher has since been held up to ridicule by his attorneys, but when Mr. Beecher thanked me for sending it he was in no mood of ridicule, but only of gratitude. I told the committee that I had sent to him at other times of his despondency other messages of like import; and I hope that so long as I live I shall always be able to do the same in similar circumstances, even to an enemy. Little did I suspect that in sending such a message to Mr. Beecher—like a straw to a drowning man—I was thereby furnishing him with materials out of which he would construct a future charge against me of blackmail.

I must not forbear to mention that the suggestion that Mr. Beecher should contribute money to the *Golden Age* came, not from Mr. Moulton but from Mr. Thomas Kinsella, editor of the Brooklyn *Eagle*, who, having made a similar offer of a larger sum to the husband of a wife whom he seduced, naturally felt, perhaps, that all men who have committed similar crimes have no alternative of safety except to purchase with money their exemption from exposure.

I have asked myself the question whether Mr. Beecher and Mr. Kin-

sella deliberately sought by such gifts to entangle me in their toils, and perhaps I would be rash if I were to acquit them of such a charge; for the appearances are against them in one particular, namely: both Mr. Beecher and Mr. Kinsella are simultaneously to be tried in court as seducers, and both have meanwhile simultaneously accused me of blackmail. The joint attack which these two gentlemen thus made upon me constrains me to relate the following circumstances:

On the Saturday before my Sworn Statement was read to the committee, and while the public were expecting it with much anxiety, Mr. Kinsella called at my house, and in a long and earnest interview with me, in which he expressed in warm terms his appreciation of what he called my high intellectual and moral character, begged me to withhold from the committee my forthcoming statement. He said to me emphatically: "Mr. Tilton, I know the justice of your case; Mr. Beecher has himself admitted to me his guilt; he has wronged you most foully; I acknowledge it all. But remember that he is an old man; his career is nearly ended, and yours has only just begun. If you will withhold your forthcoming statement, and spare this old man the blow which you are about to strike him, I will see that you and your family shall never want for anything in the world."

I declined Mr. Kinsella's polite proposition.

A few weeks afterward, while the public were similarly expecting Mr. Moulton's statement, Mr. Kinsella's business partner, Mr. William C. Kingsley, sought and obtained an interview with me, in which he urged me to use my influence with Mr. Moulton to secure the suppression of *his* statement, as Mr. Kinsella had sought the suppression of *mine*. Mr. Kingsley freely admitted to me Mr. Beecher's guilt, not from personal knowledge, but only from assured belief, derived (as I understood) from Mr. Kinsella. Mr. Kingsley's argument with me was that if Mr. Moulton's statement were added to mine, Mr. Beecher would be "struck dead." "What, then," asked Mr. Kingsley, "will happen to Mr. Moulton and yourself? Be assured," he said, "the world will never forgive either of you for your agency in destroying Henry Ward Beecher." At the close of this interview Mr. Kingsley expressed his sympathy with me for the pecuniary losses which he said he knew I must have sustained, growing out of the calamity which Mr. Beecher had brought upon my name and popularity, after which, feeling that I was perhaps a man to be dealt with like a member of the Legislature, Mr. Kingsley benignantly said to me—and he repeated it in Mr. Moulton's presence—that "I needed only to give him (Mr. K.) twenty-four hours' notice and he would be happy to make me a friendly token of his appreciation in the shape of $5000."

Now, when it is remembered that Mr. Kinsella first suggested the idea that Mr. Beecher should contribute money to the *Golden Age*, and that

Mr. Kingsley, Mr. Kinsella's co-proprietor of the *Eagle*, made to me a direct offer of money to purchase the suppression of the truth against Mr. Beecher, I think the public at large will put a new construction on the joint charge which Mr. Beecher and the *Eagle* have made against me of blackmail!

If it be thought strange that the editor of the Brooklyn *Eagle* should privately admit Mr. Beecher's adultery (as Mr. Kinsella has often done at club-houses and card-tables), and that he should at the same time publicly proclaim in his newspaper Mr. Beecher's innocence, let it be remembered that Mr. Kinsella is not the only editor in this neighborhood who, on this question, expresses one opinion in private and another in public: Mr. Kinsella shares this prerogative with the editor of the *New York Tribune*.

"Finally," says Mr. Beecher, adding the cap-sheaf to his argument, "a square demand and threat was made to one of my confidential friends that if $5000 more was not paid, Tilton's charges would be laid before the public."

Mr. Beecher's weapon, which he draws in these words, is struck at one of the most honest and truthful of men—Mr. Francis B. Carpenter. As soon as Mr. Carpenter heard this accusation in his summer camping-ground in the woods of Lewis county, in this State, twenty-five miles from a post-office, he sent to New York the following message:

"This charge against me is a lie, concocted since Mr. Tilton's statement."

Mr. Beecher, in order to communicate the impression that Mr. Carpenter is a man capable of machinations (though, on the contrary, his character is of uncommon guilelessness and simplicity), made the following singular statement concerning Mr. Carpenter:

"I recollect [says Mr. Beecher] but one interview with him that had any peculiar significance. He came to see me once when the Council was in session and our document was published. There was a phase introduced in it that Tilton thought pointed to him, and that night was in a bonfire flame and walked up and down the street with Moulton. I was at Freeland's and in comes Carpenter, with his dark and mysterious eyes. He sat down on the sofa, and, in a kind of sepulchral whisper, told me of some matters. Says I: That is all nonsense; that it meant . . . and . . . and Carpenter was rejoiced to hear it, and then went out."

Mr. Beecher's bugaboo paragraph about Mr. Carpenter, with its ominous stars and blanks, shall be explained; and the explanation will prove little to the credit of a clergyman who condescends to tell not only great falsehoods but small. I had read in that evening's Brooklyn *Union* the document sent by Plymouth Church to the Council. There was an allusion in that document, as there printed, which prompted me to send to Mr. Beecher, through Mr. Carpenter, the following message:

MR. TILTON TO MR. CARPENTER.

No. 174 Livingston Street,
March 25, 1874.

Mr. Francis B. Carpenter:

My Dear Sir:—As you are a friend both to Mr. Beecher and myself, I request you to call his attention to the following paragraph which occurs in an official paper adopted by his church this morning, and reported in the Brooklyn *Union* this evening:

"It was not given to us always to be indifferent when Sanballat and Tobias mocked—still less when our own familiar friends, in whom we trusted, which did eat of our bread, lifted up the heel against us."

You will do me the favor to ask Mr. Beecher whether or not the above allusion to Sanballat or Tobias was pointed directly or indirectly at myself. Furthermore, please say to him, in my behalf, that I will give him the opportunity to undo such an impression, if he wishes to embrace it. If not, I shall feel at liberty to take such notice of it as I think my own self-respect requires.

Truly yours, Theo. Tilton.

Mr. Carpenter, on bearing the above message to Mr. Beecher, received from him, in reply, the statement: "No, I did not refer to Theodore; for Sanballat and Tobias are Storrs and Budington."

Before Mr. Carpenter came away, Mr. Beecher, apparently forgetting that he had already made one answer, wrote another to be sent to me, as follows:

MR. BEECHER TO MR. CARPENTER.

My Dear Mr. Carpenter:—The paragraph which appeared in the *Union* respecting Sanballat and Tobias was *not* in the copy read to the Council, nor in the printed copy distributed, as you will see by the copy given you herewith.

A number of things in the original draft were stricken out as having too much *feeling* towards our antagonists. This was among them. It was directed to *Buck and Dwight Johnson.* But I protested against it and thought it was struck out before going to the printer. When the "revise" came this morning I had it struck out of the ten or twelve copies—and the regular edition does not have it. But nothing was further from the mind of the writer, and nothing further from the thought of the committee, and certainly from *my* thought, than that it referred to Mr. Tilton. Yours cordially, H. W. Beecher.

I have little respect for any man, and particularly for a clergyman, who can trifle with the truth in the manner indicated by the two different answers which Mr. Beecher gave to Mr. Carpenter within the same hour.

Mr. Beecher's whole charge against Mr. Carpenter is as false as the spirit of the above note.

Nor can I understand how Mr. Henry M. Cleveland, who has visited my office many times in company with Mr. Carpenter, and has always professed to be a warm friend to both Mr. Carpenter and myself, could consent to be referred to by Mr. Beecher as having received from Mr.

Carpenter a proposition of blackmail. My associates in the *Golden Age* will testify that during the last year or more, whenever Mr. Cleveland has called to see me (as he has frequently done) he has always expressed a cordial interest in my welfare, and evinced an esteem for me of a more than ordinary kind. He has repeatedly referred to the pleasure which he professed to take in my society, at his country residence. Moreover, only a few months ago, being one of the proprietors of the *Christian Union*, and finding that that paper was in need of one hundred thousand dollars to carry it forward, he intimated to me his intention to quit Mr. Beecher as "a sinking ship." About the time of my publishing the Bacon letter, Mr. Cleveland called on me, and, taking from his pocket a letter from his wife, said that if he felt at liberty to read it to me, which he did not, I would be glad to hear that that good lady sympathized with my side of the controversy as thus far developed. During the session of the present committee, Mrs. Tilton came home on the night of her first meeting with it, and quoted to me a remark which Mr. Cleveland had made to her, in the presence of the whole committee, in these words: "Mrs. Tilton, you don't know how much I love your husband." And yet this is the gentleman who—having a pecuniary interest in Mr. Beecher as his business partner—undertakes, for the furtherance of a desperate defence, to accuse his intimate friend, Mr. Carpenter, of being a conspirator, with me, another friend, in the heinous crime of blackmail! I do not wonder that neither Mr. Cleveland nor any of his five associates in the committee had the courage, in making up their verdict, to perpetuate a charge of which they grew so quickly ashamed.

Let me adduce a few further particulars touching this charge of blackmail; for it is not enough that the committee have abandoned it—they ought never to have entertained it.

Mr. Beecher, after mortgaging his house, May 1, 1873, "mentioned that fact," he says, "to Oliver Johnson."

This statement leads me to refer to a striking evidence of the profound effect which this information—namely, my conspiring in a scheme of blackmail—must have produced on Mr. Johnson's mind. Among my souvenirs is a beautiful little book, printed on tinted paper, entitled "In Memoriam," containing a funeral tribute spoken by me at the bier of Mrs. Mary A. Johnson, wife of Oliver Johnson, on June 10, 1872. It was about a year afterward—May 1, 1873—that Mr. Beecher mortgaged his house, and "mentioned the matter to Oliver Johnson." On the ensuing June 4 of that year, when the mortgage must have been a fresh and recent topic of reflection by all who had been informed of it as a blackmailing operation, Mr. Johnson wrote me an affectionate letter, from which I make the following quotation:

My Dear Theodore:— . . . . I have often thought that when I should be dead I should wish you to speak words of comfort to those who love me, and pay a tribute to my memory.

Yours lovingly, Oliver Johnson.

Mr. Johnson omitted a good opportunity in the above note to accuse me of blackmail, if he then believed me guilty of it.

Moreover, a few months afterwards, Mr. Beecher neglected a striking opportunity to expose me, when, on the 31st of October, 1873, just about six months after the mortgage, I ascended the platform in Plymouth Church and asked if the pastor had any charges to make against me, and he replied in a most conspicuous manner as follows:

"Mr. Tilton asks me if I have any charges to make. *I have none.*"

If Mr. Beecher then knew me to be a blackmailer, who had extorted a mortgage from him of $5000, why did he not brand me for it on the spot, and have me mobbed at once, as the same congregation afterwards mobbed Mr. Moulton?

It will not be forgotten that during the proceedings of the Congregational Council, held in the spring of 1874, a year after my alleged extortion of money from Mr. Beecher through Mr. Moulton, Mr. Beecher wrote a letter to Mr. Moulton, in which, while denouncing so good a man as the Rev. Dr. Storrs, he at the same time took occasion to pay a tribute to myself in these words:

"*Theodore, who has borne so much,*" etc.

These are Mr. Beecher's words, written a year after the mortgage! Against all Mr. Beecher's present pleadings and pretences these words, "Theodore, who has borne so much," show that when Mr. Beecher thought of me in private he thought of my forbearance, which gives the lie to his public pretence of my extortion.

It only remains for me to say further touching the charge of blackmail—a charge impossible to attach for a day to a man like Mr. Moulton, whose honor is above such infamy and whose wealth is above such temptation—that this charge is the false defence of a desperate man who, in thus basely pretending that his best friend blackmailed him, thereby unconsciously confesses the guilt which would have made blackmailing possible.

Wherefore, as the committee dismissed the charge of blackmail from their verdict, so I dismiss it here.

XV. Mr. Beecher says that I have "garbled his letters." I presented in my sworn statement brief extracts from his letters simply because I had not access to the letters complete. But the letters complete bear more severely against him than the fragments which I quoted. I now ask the public to judge him by his complete letters, not by my extracts, for he will thus fall into far greater condemnation.

When in my Bacon letter I quoted a few lines of Mr. Beecher's apology, it was said that if I had added the remainder of that apology the second part would have explained away the first. But it was found afterwards that the entire apology, when printed, was tenfold weightier than the few lines in my first extract. In like manner the brief phrases and paragraphs which I gave in my sworn statement from his letters were not afterward softened, but intensified, by the publication of the letters in full. The brief extracts were the wind—the complete letters were the whirlwind. I no more garbled Mr. Beecher's letters by making from them the extracts which I did, than I would garble the decalogue by quoting to him from it the single commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

Nevertheless, it *is* true, as Mr. Beecher says, that his letters have been "garbled." He goes so far as to say that they have been "wickedly garbled;" and this, too, cannot be denied. But it is not I who have garbled Mr. Beecher's letters, it is Mr. Beecher himself. For I maintain that the pretended explanations which he has given of them—against their plain meaning—against what he knows to be the facts to which they refer—and against the common sense of an intelligent public; all this is garbling of a heinous kind. Mr. Beecher is the man who has garbled his letters. It is he who has tried to take out of them their manifest meaning. It is he who has perverted their plain phrases into doubtful interpretation.

Mr. Beecher saw at a glance that his letters, on being read in a straightforward manner by the public, convicted him of adultery. He knew that unless these letters could be explained into something which they did not mean he would stand self-condemned—put to death by the point of his own pen. It is the part of a brave man when he speaks to abide by his words. Mr. Beecher's behavior towards his own letters proves him to be that most pitiable of all cowards—a man who dares not face his own handwriting.

His defence is that these letters were written to express his remorse for having given to Mrs. Tilton bad advice. I have already proven by the written testimony of Mrs. Tilton's mother that Mr. Beecher never gave any such advice to Elizabeth, but gave just the opposite. But even had he given such advice—namely, that Mrs. Tilton should separate from her husband—I hold that such advice, given on the theory that her husband had deprived her of food, fuel, and personal liberty, would not have been bad, but good; and the giver of such advice would never need to have repented of giving it.

But I will go further and say that, granting such advice to have been given, and to have been bad, yet, since Mrs. Tilton did not accept this advice, but rejected it—since she did not separate from her husband and home, but remained with her family as before—in other words, since

Mr. Beecher's bad advice was not followed by ill consequences, but no harm whatever came of it—it is a mockery of human reason to say that he spent four years of remorse in contemplating the giving of bad advice which was never taken, and which produced no effect of harm or ill!

Such an explanation of Mr. Beecher's letters is "garbling" indeed!

Had Mr. Beecher's alleged advice ever been given, as I believe it was not; had this advice been followed by Mrs. Tilton's separation from her husband at that time, though no such separation then ensued; had a permanent sundering actually taken place between husband and wife, induced without other cause than simply a clergyman's bad advice—involving the scattering of a family of children, made fatherless and motherless by that worst of all orphanage which comes by the divorce of parents; had Mr. Beecher seen all this during the past four years, as he will see it during the next four, he might well have had occasion to mourn the giving of such advice; but I repeat that the advice which he pretends to have given was not followed; and there is the best evidence that he never gave any such advice at all, nor ever wrote one of his letters for any such reason.

It is he, then, who has garbled away the meaning from his letters.

Mr. Beecher's adroit effort to persuade the public to accept a false interpretation of these letters is vain. They have a plain meaning, which no counter-explanation can ever blot out. They are all based on one central fact—a criminal intimacy between himself and Mrs. Tilton, which had been confessed by both parties to her husband and to Mr. Moulton. This simple fact is the key which unlocks all the mysteries of these letters—if mysteries they contain. All the letters, notes and memoranda refer to the crime of adultery, to the fear of disclosure, and to the consequent "devices" for the safety of the participants.

When Mrs. Tilton made to me her confession of July 3, 1870, it was a confession of adultery. When, in her note of December 30, following, she said, "I gave a letter implicating my friend Henry Ward Beecher," it was an implication of adultery. When, in her second note of the same evening, she said that Mr. Beecher had visited her bedside and reproached her for having "struck him dead," it was because she had disclosed his adultery. When Mr. Beecher cast himself upon Mr. Moulton's strong and faithful protection, it was because the wretched man had been detected in his adultery. When, during the four years that followed the 1st of January, 1871, hardly a month or week passed which did not witness Mr. Beecher in some consultation with Mr. Moulton, either by letter or in person, was to concoct measures for concealing this adultery. When Mr. Beecher, conscious of his guilt and fearing detection, fell often into hopeless gloom at the prospect of disclosure, it was because the crime to be disclosed was adultery. When, from the beginning to the end of Mr. Moulton's relationship with Mr. Beecher,

those two men pursued a common plan—in which I, too, participated—this plan was to guard two families of children from the consequences of this adultery. When Mr. Beecher wrote to me his letter of contrition, it was because he sought to placate me into forgiveness of his adultery. When he asked me to remember "all the other hearts that would ache," it was because of the misery which two households and their wide connections would suffer by the discovery of his adultery. When he wrote to Mrs. Tilton that Mr. Moulton had "tied up the storm which was ready to burst upon their heads," it was because Mr. Moulton had skilfully held back Mr. Bowen's meditated proceedings against Mr. Beecher for adultery. When Mr. Beecher wrote that it would "kill him if Mr. Moulton were not a friend to Mrs. Tilton's honor," he meant that this lady's "honor," like every other "lady's honor," was her reputation for chastity, and he relied on Mr. Moulton to keep the world from knowing that this lady's pastor had soiled her "honor" by adultery. When Mr. Beecher requested Mrs. Morse to call him her "son," which she did, and when she begged him to come and see her, pledging herself not to allude to her "daughter's secret," it was because this mother knew that this "son" and daughter had committed adultery. When this mother gave this "son" the troublesome information that "twelve persons" had been put in possession of this secret, it was the guilty and perilous secret of adultery. When Mr. Beecher shuddered at the likelihood that Mr. Bowen had communicated to Mr. Claflin "the bottom facts," it was because the chief fact lying at the bottom of all was adultery. When Mr. Beecher said to Mr. Moulton, "Can't we hit upon some plan to break the force of my letter to Tilton," it was because the letter whose force he wished to break was his letter of contrition for his adultery. When in his despair he wrote, "Would to God, Theodore, Elizabeth and I could be friends again. Theodore would have the hardest task in such a case," it was because this "hardest task" would consist of forgiving a wife and her paramour for their adultery. When Mrs. Tilton wrote imploringly, both to Mr. Moulton and to Mr. Beecher, that "the papers should be destroyed," it was because those papers were records of adultery. When, in brokenness of spirit, Mrs. Tilton wrote to ask her seducer's forgiveness, it was because of her womanly distress at having betrayed him for his adultery. When, in one of her clandestine notes to him, she referred to her "nest-hiding," it was a means of more pleasantly reminding him of his own poetic expression for their adultery. When her destroyer wrote to Mr. Moulton, February 5, 1872, saying, "I would not believe that any one could have passed through my experience and be alive or sane," he confessed the agony of living on the verge of public punishment for adultery. When he said to Mr. Moulton, "You are literally all my stay and comfort," it was because this brave and tender friend was the barrier between the public

and the knowledge of a clergyman's adultery. When Mr. Beecher, who was never tired of sending to his friend such love-letters as a man seldom writes to a man, said to him, "I would have fallen on the way but for the courage with which you inspired me," it was his ever-grateful acknowledgment to one who was saving him from the fate which punishes clergymen for adultery. When he bewailed the "keen suspicions with which he was pressed," these were the dangerous suspicions of a congregation to whom public rumor had carried a horrible hint of their pastor's adultery. When he feared an "appeal to the church and then a council," and prognosticated thereby a "conflagration," it was because he foresaw how the public mind would be influenced by the knowledge of his adultery. When he portrayed himself as standing in daily dread of those personal friends who were making a "ruinous defence" of him, it was because he feared that their clamorous statements of his innocence would blunderingly lead to the detection of his adultery. When he cried out that he was "suffering the torments of the damned," he was pouring out his heart's anguish to the only man to whom he had liberty to unburden his remorse for his adultery. When he said that he could not carry this burden to his wife and children, it was because he was ashamed to acknowledge to them his adultery. When he wrote to Moulton, saying, "Sacrifice me without hesitation if you can clearly see your way to his (Mr. Tilton's) safety and happiness thereby," he alluded to the sacrifice of his good name in expiation of his adultery. When he said of himself, "I should be destroyed, but he (Mr. Tilton) would not be saved," it was because all that was needed for his destruction was simply that the world should be told of his adultery. When he said, "Elizabeth and her children would have their future clouded," he saw hanging over this ruined mother and her brood the black and awful cloud which hangs over every matron guilty of adultery. When he wrote, "Life would be pleasant if I could see that rebuilt which is shattered," he referred to the moral impossibility of reconstructing a home once broken by adultery. When he compared himself to "Esau, who sold his birthright and found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears," it was because the unpardonable crime which this minister had committed was adultery. When he spoke in eulogy of Mr. Moulton's wife as reviving "his waning faith in womanhood," it was because his thoughts were then of another and weaker woman, whose moral nature he had overcome, and who afterwards had betrayed him for his adultery. When the strong woman, who had thus restored "his waning faith in womanhood," counselled him to make "a frank and manly confession of his sin, asking man's forgiveness for it, as he expected God's," and when he afterwards wrote that "her clear truthfulness laid him flat"—all this shows how he quailed before a virtuous woman's rebuke for his adultery. When

he said to me that I "would have been a better man than he in such circumstances," he meant that I would have disdained to stoop to the crime of seducing the wife of an intimate friend, or of using the power of a clergyman to corrupt a trusting parishioner into adultery. When he said of me that I had "condoned my wife's fault," pointing me to this condonation as constituting on my part a pledge of forgiveness towards him, he wrote in that word "condone" the plainest possible confession of his adultery. In like manner all Mr. Beecher's letters, when read in view of the one sad and guilty fact which is the key-note to their tragic meaning, constitute a four years' history of a mind afflicted with "anxiety, remorse, fear and despair"—all in consequence of a discovered adultery.

If I have been thus explicit in reiterating Mr. Beecher's crime, it is not for the sake of proving it from his letters, for I have sufficiently proved it without help from these, but only to show that I did not *garble* these letters when I pointed to them as proofs of adultery; and I repeat that, if Beecher's letters have been (as he says) "wickedly garbled," it is he who has garbled them. It is I who have restored them to their true meaning.

XVI. I revert now to a letter of my own—the Bacon letter. Why did I write it? Let the facts speak.

I wish to be candidly judged by the following statement:

Ever since 1870, when I quitted Plymouth Church because of its pastor's crime against my family, I had been year after year persecuted by certain members and officers of that church—a persecution which its pastor might and ought to have prevented, and for which I always held him responsible; a persecution including the introduction of charges against me for slandering him, whereas the so-called slanders, instead of being false, were true; a persecution including the dropping of my name from the roll in a manner craftily designed to cast opprobrium upon me, under an appearance of official fairness by the church; a persecution involving a public insult to my family by Mr. T. G. Shearman, Clerk of the church, for which he was compelled to apologize; a persecution including the presentation to the Brooklyn Council of a document in which Mr. Beecher and his church defended themselves before that tribunal on the ground that I had been dropped for "bringing dishonor on the Christian name," whereas I had been dropped because Mr. Beecher himself was the man who had "brought dishonor on the Christian name;" a persecution culminating at last in a public implication cast upon me by the Moderator of that Council, the Rev. Leonard Bacon, D. D., who, after carefully studying the records of Plymouth Church in my case, decided from these that I was proven a "knave and dog," and that Mr. Beecher's behavior towards me showed him to be "the most magnanimous of men."

This accumulation of wrongs I resolved no longer to bear. I announced this to Mr. Beecher, and told him that either he or I must correct Dr. Bacon's misrepresentations of my conduct, since these would ruin me before the world. I provided an easy way by which Mr. Beecher, without a confession of his guilt, and even without a humiliation to his feelings, could assure Dr. Bacon—and Dr. Bacon the public—that I had acted towards Mr. Beecher the part of a fair and honorable man.

I waited three months for Mr. Beecher to put this plan (or some other) into effect. But he did not choose to embrace the opportunity. He neglected—perhaps disdained it.

I then resolved—against Mr. Moulton's expostulations, but at the dictate of my self-respect—to rescue myself from the false position in which Plymouth Church and its pastor had placed me, and to make a struggle to regain my good name which I had done nothing to forfeit.

The best method of vindication which suggested itself to me was to write a public letter to Dr. Bacon giving the true reason of my retirement from Plymouth Church, which was that a wrong had been committed against me by the pastor, in evidence of which I quoted a few lines from his apology.

I well knew that I could thus make the world see at a glance (which it did) that I was less the creature of Mr. Beecher's magnanimity than *he* was of *mine*. I sought and accomplished this purpose, and this only, by the Bacon letter, and did it solely in self-defence.

Now, in so doing, I not only had no wish to compromise my wife, but, on the contrary, I sought, while rectifying *my* position, to do the same by *hers*. To this end I introduced into the Bacon letter Mr. Shearman's apology to Mrs. Tilton, together with a eulogistic reference to her in my own words, as "a lady of devout religious faith and life." The Bacon letter was thus a tribute to, not an attack upon Mrs. Tilton.

Mr. Beecher saw by this tribute (and by others which I habitually paid to my wife) that, however willing I might be to cope with *him*, I was never willing to endanger *her*. No other man in the world knew so well as Mr. Beecher did how strong an affection I have always held—and shall always hold—for my wife. He had seen, by long observation of my sympathy for her, that his safest protection against any possible resentment of mine was always in my unwillingness to compromise this tender and wounded woman.

Accordingly, on the appearance of the Bacon letter, Mr. Beecher, after contriving various methods of meeting it (which Mr. Moulton has described), finally adopted the bold and wicked expedient of appointing a committee to inquire into the acts of a lady whom he first led into adultery, and whom he then delivered up to a tribunal for examination for her crime! Never can I forget my sickening astonishment, on her

account, on the day when, by public proclamation from Mr. Beecher's pen, and amid the published clamor of his partisans, he called all the world to witness that he had commissioned six committeemen *to inquire into his offence*—his offence being also *hers*, so that an inquiry into it also involved equally the ruin of both—but especially (as in all such cases) the woman, albeit the lesser offender. On that ominous morning I shuddered for the fate of the woman whom Mr. Beecher was thus ruthlessly exposing to the hazard of public shame.

Mr. Beecher's design in this public inquiry into his "offence" and "apology" was to make a bold pretence that he had never committed any "offence" nor ever offered any "apology."

To make this pretence of innocence the more plausible to the public, his agents had previously arranged that on this same day Mrs. Tilton should take flight from her home to join Beecher in his attack on me; and she has never recrossed my threshold since that hour.

Distinctly should it be borne in mind that Mr. Beecher's publication of his challenge, and Mrs. Tilton's desertion to him to sustain it, occurred on the same morning, namely, July 11, 1874. On that morning at six o'clock she quitted the house, not to return to it; and an hour afterwards the daily papers were furnished to me, containing, under flaming head-lines, Mr. Beecher's commission to his Committee of Investigation.

These two acts—one by Mrs. Tilton, the other by Mr. Beecher—were parts of one and the same event; a joint attack on me—the two assailants striking their opening blows at the same moment.

Mr. Beecher's assault was the more public of the two, for it reached me through all the newspapers on that first morning; but in order that Mrs. Tilton's act towards me might lose no force through lack of prompt publicity, Mr. Ovington hastened to publish a card in the Brooklyn *Argus* announcing that Mrs. Tilton, on the previous Saturday, had "parted from her husband forever."

That eventful Saturday morning, the 11th of July, found me in the strangest situation of my whole life—a situation which I had not foreseen, and which I could with difficulty realize—a situation consisting of the following elements: First, I had been publicly challenged by Mr. Beecher to divulge to a church committee the story of his criminality with Mrs. Tilton; and second, Mrs. Tilton herself, by her open desertion to her paramour, had publicly seconded him in this audacious demand.

What should I do? After two days of reflection—the most agonizing which I ever endured—I felt it my duty to accept this challenge; and in one week afterwards I laid the facts before the committee in a document now known as my Sworn Statement.

It will thus be seen that my sworn statement was not given to the

committee until the ninth day after Mrs. Tilton's desertion from her husband, and after her publicly joining his enemies, who were seeking by their powerful ecclesiastical enginery to crush out his little remnant of a broken name.

Had Mrs. Tilton remained with me my sworn statement would never have been made; nor did the thought of making such a statement enter my mind until after her desertion; but at last, when Mr. Beecher and Mrs. Tilton publicly turned upon me and demanded that I should expose them, I had no course open to me but to state the plain truth, and to let all the parties abide by the consequences.

Mr. Moulton has shown how great was my desire, during the earlier sessions of the committee, to shield my wife: in other words, how little I demanded from the committee in my *own* behalf and how much in *hers*. My proposed form for their report (as quoted by Mr. Moulton) concluded as follows:

"The committee cannot forbear to state that the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Mr. Theodore Tilton, and Mrs. Tilton (*and in an especial manner the latter*) merit and should receive the sympathy and respect of Plymouth Church and congregation."

It was on the very next morning after I wrote the above proposed kindly and charitable report for the committee to adopt, and showed it to my wife, who not only approved it, but expressed with tears her marvel that I should have demanded more for *her* good name than I had done for *mine;* it was, I say, on the very next morning after my writing the above report that Mrs. Tilton, in obedience to Mr. Beecher's advisers, deserted the home to which she has never since returned.

I repeat, therefore, that the exposure which I made to the committee and to the public was no suggestion of mine, but was brought about by Mr. Beecher and Mrs. Tilton, who united in demanding it at my hands, and who, by this demand, left me no alternative but to comply or to refuse; my compliance being ruin to *them;* my refusal, ruin to *myself.* Forced to make choice between these two alternatives—both almost equally horrible to my feelings—I at last determined not to be thus brow-beaten by two persons who, having received my past pardon and my continuous forbearance, seemed at last attacking my very life.

I ask the public, therefore, to weigh the one fact which I have thus set forth, namely, that the responsibility for the revelations which I have made rests, not on me, but on Mr. Beecher and Mrs. Tilton. I wash my hands of it.

XVI. This rehearsal of events will now enable me to answer two points which have been made against me. One is this—I am asked frequently: "Mr. Tilton, how could you, after condoning your wife's fault four years ago, proclaim it at so late a day?" My answer has been just foreshadowed, and it is this: I made this exposure, not of my

free will, but from compulsion; I made it because Mr. Beecher and Mrs. Tilton compelled me to make it. I did not volunteer it. I would gladly have continued to shield both parties for the sake of one. But when Mr. Beecher and Mrs. Tilton made a public league against me, and in the face of the whole community defied me to tell the facts, I was either forced to accept their joint challenge, or, by declining it, to deserve the contempt of mankind. That is my answer, and candid men and women will acknowledge it to be just.

Next, I have an equally plain answer to those critics who condemn me for having committed, as they say, a blunder in condoning my wife's fault at first.

And my answer is: I am perfectly willing to accept this condemnation from all who choose to offer it—whether from foes or friends. Before God I hold that I did right, and not wrong, in forgiving an erring woman who went astray through a powerful temptation. No regret beclouds my mind for this forgiveness of my wife—which, I am sure, I shall look back to from my dying-bed with pleasure, not with pain. I forgave this gentlewoman because I loved her; I forgave her for her children's sake; I forgave her because I despise the public sentiment which condones such faults in men, and then compels men to punish them in women; I forgave her because, even after her grievous error, she still remained a woman loving right rather than wrong, and seeking good rather than evil; I forgave her because I tenderly remembered that Christ himself forgave a similar fault in a more wicked woman—and who was I to scorn the law of his great example? No criticism of my forgiveness of Mrs. Tilton can prick me with any pang. If all the acts of my life had been as righteous as this good deed of charity—albeit towards a woman who has since but poorly requited me for it—I would now be a better man than I am.

XVII. I have only to add that I know no words of measured moderation in which to characterize fitly Mr. Beecher's recent treatment of this broken-hearted lady, whom he has flung against the wall of Plymouth Church and dashed to pieces. First, he instituted a public committee to inquire into her adultery with him, whereas he ought to have protected her against this exposure; then he beckoned her away from her husband's house, making her very flight bear witness to her guilt; then he suborned her to give false testimony against her husband, with a view to destroy him before the world; then, with unparalleled baseness, he turned upon the companion of his crime and accused her of having been the tempter rather than the tempted—declaring that she had "thrust her affections upon him unsought;" then he variously indicted her for what he called "her needless treachery to her friend and pastor," expressing his doubts whether to call her (as he says) "a saint or the chief of sinners," arguing (as he says again) that she must be either

"corrupted to deceit or so broken in mind as to be irresponsible," debating with himself (as he says still further) whether he should not "pour out his indignation upon her and hold her up to contempt;" and then, after making all these contemptuous references to her in his published statement, he prompted his committee to render a verdict against her in which they declare her conduct towards Mr. Beecher, even on their own theory of her innocence, to be "utterly indefensible;" and, last of all, he permitted his own journal, the *Christian Union*, to stigmatize her as a "poor, weak woman," whose testimony was of no value either for or against the man who had tempted her to utter her falsehoods in his own behalf!

All this base and brutal conduct by Mr. Beecher towards Mrs. Tilton prompts me to speak of him in fierce and burning words. But I forbear. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." I have become so used to sorrows in my own life that I cannot wish for their infliction upon another man, not even on my worst enemy. I will not ask the public to visit upon Mr. Beecher any greater condemnation for the desolation which he has brought upon those who loved, trusted, and served him, than I have in past times seen him suffer from his own self-inflicted tortures in contemplation of the very crime for which he has now been exposed to the scorn and pity of the world. I know well enough how his own thoughts have bowed him in agony to the dust; and this is enough. Wherefore, in contemplating my empty house, my scattered children, and my broken home, I thank Heaven that my heart is spared the pang of this man's remorse for having wrought a ruin which not even Almighty God can repair. THEODORE TILTON.

BROOKLYN, *September* 16, 1874.

And so the great scandal case reduces itself to a personal issue of veracity between Theodore Tilton and Francis D. Moulton, on the one side, and Henry Ward Beecher, on the other. Public opinion naturally sustains the man of pure and upright character, who, for nearly forty years, has lived so conspicuously in the light of the open day and whose whole life has been a monument of purity. Summing up the evidence, the *New York Tribune* thus states the conclusions of most reputable persons:

The man at whose door the shameful sin is laid is a clergyman whose name has been honored wherever the English lan-

guage is spoken. Over sixty years of honest life bear witness for him. The lady denounced as his paramour has been universally praised as a fond wife and mother, and a woman of such strong religious feeling and devout impulses that her husband can only account for her alleged fall on the supposition that she did not suppose adultery with a minister to be any sin. Mr. Tilton, on the other hand, has pursued during the last few years the most discreditable courses. He has consorted with loose women. He has written a scandalous biography of a notorious she-devil, and afterward confessed that he knew it to be a pack of lies. He has lied about these very charges. He has taken money from the man whom he accuses of dishonoring his wife. His career has been an affront to social decency, and a grief to his friends. His character for veracity in particular is said by those who have known him long to be extremely bad. All the presumptions are against him, and he has only himself to blame if the world refuses to take his word.

XXXIV.

PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN MR. BEECHER.

TILTON and Moulton assert that their attacks have utterly destroyed the reputation of Mr. Beecher, and have shaken the public confidence in him to its very foundations, and they claim that they have established all their charges. The *Christian Union* thus states the manner in which Mr. Beecher has been treated by the public during the progress of this unhappy affair. Its statements are all the reply that is necessary to Tilton, Moulton & Co.

Since the trial to which Mr. Beecher has been exposed he has frequently been heard to say, "My experience reverses all that has ever been said of the inconsistency of human friendship in adversity. Never man had such friends as I have!" Ever

since this public accusation the daily mail of Mr. Beecher has been a most singular and wonderful testimony to the steadfastness and purity and strength of that faith which a long, consistent life of goodness inspires. In view of these numerous and daily recurring letters, he has been known to say, "It is almost worth while to have had so great a sorrow, in order to have seen this nobler side of human nature." Mr. Beecher's mail often numbers 60 or 70 letters a day. It comes from every part of America, and, indeed, of the world. Very recently a letter was received from Australia from a Methodist missionary desiring to exchange papers with the *Christian Union*, and speaking with deep feeling of the great usefulness of Mr. Beecher's weekly sermons in their Australian missionary work. Letters have been received from Canada and from England, in which, with a noble confidence, the writers—some, men high in churchly and literary rank, others from among the great mass who read and love him—professed their faith in him, simply from the spirit of piety and purity in his published writings. The testimony of hundreds of letters which came before Mr. Beecher had published his vindication was of the writers' unshaken faith in him, from their knowledge of his past history, and the good which they had received in his writings.

Many of these letters are from old political enemies; many of them from places where once his name was execrated. From Baltimore, from Natchez, from New Orleans, have come noble letters of trust and encouragement, denouncing the slander with a generous indignation, and expressing unshaken faith that his innocence would be made to appear. Not the least affecting of these letters are from poor, or obscure, or desolate and sorrowful people whom Mr. Beecher has been able to comfort. That same tender and merciful spirit which exposed him to the snares of designing men has made him ever full of compassion for the weak, the tempted, the poor and sorrowful. Many of these letters say, "You have enabled me to live under great sorrow." "You have taught me the meaning of affliction." "But for you I know not how I could have lived under my affliction;" and then follow touching, earnest attempts to return

comfort to him. In one case the writer makes a selection of comforting and encouraging passages from Mr. Beecher's own writings to people under affliction and earnestly begs him to remember them now.

It is worthy of remark, also, that members of all denominations have joined in this tribute. Baptist and Methodist brethren, from distant fields of labor, send voices of encouragement. A Jewish rabbi sends words of confidence and trust worthy a son of the Old Testament. And, finally, a man writes: "I believe neither in God nor in the Christian religion, nor in priests, but having read your statement I believe in you, as an honest man, and will say, furthermore, that it has come nearer to making me want to be a Christian than anything I have ever read."

Now it has been proved abundantly that Mr. Beecher has made great mistakes in this matter. It has been proved that he has given his confidence and his affection with unwise credulity to seeming friends who have betrayed him. But for two treacherous friends there have been thousands of constant ones. A cold-hearted, wary, prudent man never would have made such mistakes as Mr. Beecher has—nor such friends, friends whose constancy and devotion may well renew our faith in human nature. The Rev. Leonard W. Bacon writes from Geneva, Switzerland, to the publishers of the *Christian Union* words that embody, we believe, the belief of very many: "I never have had a doubt of him. His power of patient waiting convinced me that he knew himself to be right. 'He that believeth shall not make haste.' Despite the blunders of these last four years, I believe they will be shown to be the most heroic and Christ-like of his life."

One of Mr. Beecher's most devoted friends thus states the reasonable grounds for the confidence with which the people have clung to the great preacher throughout his trials:

It is evident that the best sentiment of the community is gravitating steadily to a firm faith in Mr. Beecher. Consider-

ing the violence and extraordinary ingenuity of the attacks upon him, the strength which was lent to them by his own mistakes, and the difficulty of clearly proving a negative which weighs so heavily upon the defence in such a case, it is remarkable that the public confidence in him is rallying so rapidly. Yet, there is still an amount of uncertainty and a desire for a fuller vindication which is wholly out of proportion to any weight in the proofs. We wish to dwell for a moment on the causes which have given to the accusations a degree of credit wholly in excess of their intrinsic credibility.

Mr. Tilton's charge was openly proclaimed to the public only in last July. But, for years previously, slanders had been disseminated in a way in which it was impossible to meet them. Stories had been whispered in the ears of influential men. Vile accusations were repeated "in confidence" to those who were sure to give them wide and speedy currency. Mr. Beecher's absolute reticence left his friends for a long time without even his word of denial to oppose to these calumnies. In particular, the seeds of slander were carefully sown among newspaper men, and a part of the press has treated the matter throughout under a bias thus covertly given in advance.

Then, the open assaults were made in a way to produce the maximum effect, and, as usual, truth was slower in refuting than falsehood in asserting. The publication in Tilton's letter to Dr. Bacon of the so-called "confession" gave a shock to the public mind. It was seven weeks before the slow process of a formal investigation brought to light the fact that that paper was signed by Mr. Beecher without reading, and utterly perverted his expressions. The delay in the explanation increased ten-fold the practical effect of the publication of the paper. Mr. Tilton's full story, as told to the committee and instantly given to the world, was so framed and colored as to make on minds unaccustomed to scrutinize evidence—that is, on the great mass of the community—an impression utterly beyond the weight that would be allowed it by a trained judge. It was three weeks before Mr. Beecher's statement could be set against it, and every day of that delay told in the accuser's favor. Mr.

Moulton absolutely evaded the committee and the cross-examination, and through the safe channel of the public press has let loose one deluge after another of disgusting stories. The whole affair has illustrated the saying, "Throw mud enough, and some of it will stick." Mr. Beecher's reputation has suffered less from all the evidence—using the word in its widest sense—than from the mere connection of his name with a mass of foulness. A man who has been pelted with bad eggs, be he in his own behavior the most immaculate of mortals, is for a time in bad odor with his neighbors. But, as the falsehood of these charges becomes apparent, their very foulness must intensify the revulsion of feeling in favor of the man who has suffered from them.

We have spoken of some of the causes which have, for a time, lent undue effect to the accusatory evidence. That evidence, sifted and weighed, resolves itself into the word of two men, both of whom the public has the best reasons for distrusting, and certain of Mr. Beecher's letters, of which he has given a full and sufficient explanation. We turn now to that evidence which establishes a presumption of innocence, that, weighed against such proof, amounts to an absolute moral demonstration. We mean the evidence of character.

Mr. Beecher's virtues and public services have sometimes been spoken of, not as proof of his innocence, but as ground for his forgiveness by the community. We reject with abhorrence such a plea as that. That a minister of the gospel should retain his public charge after being guilty of adultery is repugnant to every sentiment of religion and every conviction of right reason. The worst enemies of the public good in this discussion have been those journals—happily very few—which said, in effect: "Oh! we guess he's guilty, but he is a great preacher and a good fellow: let him go on with his preaching and have no more fuss about it!" The men who have written in this tone have written their own condemnation, as insensible to the plainest instincts, we will not say of religion, but of morality and decency.

Rejecting, then, indignantly, the idea of condoning such an

offence as Mr. Beecher is charged with on account of any public services or personal merits whatsoever, we say that the tenor of Mr. Beecher's life, as the whole world may read it, of itself affords an overwhelming presumption that the charge is utterly false. And before pressing the general argument, we wish to correct misapprehension on a single point. The original version of this calumny pretended that Mr. Beecher, a "progressive" and "radical" thinker, sympathized with the "advanced" doctrine of free love. Without fully believing this assertion, many persons among the class who are conservative in theology and politics have a vague feeling that Mr. Beecher, in their view a very unorthodox and "loose" thinker, may be liable to strange vagaries upon social topics. Now, while Mr. Beecher has not adhered closely to the traditions of orthodox theology, while he has been in ardent sympathy with genuine reforms in politics and in society, while he has been the advocate of the highest personal freedom and a political equality irrespective of nationality or sex, on one subject he has been absolutely conservative: the relations of marriage and the family. From his multitudinous writings not one word can be produced that betrays the slightest sympathy with anything tending to weaken the marriage tie. His whole teaching and influence has tended to maintain, in utmost sacredness and purity, the Christian ideal of the family. The readers of this journal will bear witness that, while we have been sometimes counted unorthodox in our theology, and have said some things, and allowed our contributors to say more that ran counter to established ideas in various respects, there has never been a line in the paper, editorial or contributed, that lent shadow of countenance to the unholy theories that tend to make the marriage tie less sacred. In his paper, in his pulpit, and in his life, Mr. Beecher has been thoroughly consistent in this matter. As he said in his cross-examination: "I stand on the New England doctrine in which I was brought up, that it is best for a man to have one wife, and that he stay by her, and that he do not meddle with his neighbors' wives. I abhor every manifestation of the free love doctrine that I have seen in theory, and I abhor every advocate of the free love doctrine that I have known."

We spoke last week of the publicity in which Mr. Beecher has lived. But the real meaning of his life has not always been penetrated even by those who admired him. His genius, his wit, his oratorical power, have sometimes diverted attention from the quality which underlies and ennobles his talents. That quality is devotion to the service of his fellow-men. If there has been one central force in the life of Henry Ward Beecher it has been this—the desire and purpose to help those who needed help. His preaching, his theology, his whole public and private life, have taken their color from this quality. He has taught it and he has lived it. Whoever reads the self-disclosures which abound in his writings will see this disposition revealed as the mainspring of his laborious life, and the highest source of his power. It shines out in all his preaching. "A love that does not count *itself* dear; that is measured not by what it can get, but give; that is tested not by the exquisiteness of its enjoyment, but by the degree to which it is willing to *suffer;* and yet farther, by the remoteness of the objects of love from ourselves, and the degree in which they are unable to recompense us again—this is Christ's ideal of love." So, in a private letter, he expresses what he has said in a thousand sermons. With infinite variety and richness of expression, the same ideal shines everywhere in his teaching. It is just this disposition which has inspired and moulded his life. The whole story of that life would have to be told, all its public utterances garnered, countless incidents drawn from the men and women he has met in private intercourse, to fully bring to light this quality in the man. We can give one or two illustrations only.

Hardly any preacher in our time has presented the Divine character with such power and attractiveness as Mr. Beecher; and the secret of this exalted and ennobling conception is largely to be found in that sympathetic, helpful element in the preacher's own disposition which enables him to conceive of beneficence and sympathy in their truly Divine forms. No mere intellectual power ever enabled a man to so think of Christ and God, and so draw men's hearts by the presentation of

them, as Mr. Beecher does. It is only through the life that such truth is reached.

We must look, however, not only at his abstract presentation of truth, but at the effects wrought on his hearers, and at his own walk and conversation. The only collective test that can be had of the fruits of his teaching is furnished by Plymouth Church. The impression which a casual observer sometimes gets, that the church is simply an audience gathered by the attraction of a popular speaker, is wholly away from the truth. The church may be judged by that quality on which its pastor loves to dwell—its activity in good works. Its contributions to charities far exceed those of any similar body in the country. Its mission schools are among the largest and most beneficent to be found anywhere. And wherever its members have gone —and they have been scattered all over the land—we appeal to their new associates, whether, not only in warmth of Christian feeling, but in disposition toward all charitable and helpful labor, they have not done honor to their mother-church and to the pastor who is the heart of that church, and to the Divine Source of that pastor's strength.

More trustworthy than any other test of character is the simple record of the daily life. That cannot be laid at large before the public. But they can see one thing: while two men who have lived near Mr. Beecher have bitterly accused him, for the rest, just in proportion as people have been near him in daily life has their faith in him been strong. His church has not, it is true, been very "judicial"; perhaps it has not in all things been wise; but it has been white-hot in its love and trust toward the man who for twenty-seven years has dwelt in its midst. His daily life, as we have said, it is impossible to portray at large. But we cannot forbear to give an outline of one or two days which happened to fall within our immediate knowledge. We give it merely as a sample of the characteristic life of the man who is called a libertine and a scoundrel.

On successive days, Mr. Beecher delivered two of his powerful lectures to the Yale Divinity School. At the close of the second lecture, he took the cars to visit a family who, in sudden

and great sorrow, had asked for the comfort of his presence. As he took his seat in the car, a young man behind him, an entire stranger, leaned forward and addressed him abruptly: "Mr. Beecher! must I believe every word in the Bible, to be a Christian?" "No!" "Well—what then?" "You must believe the *truth* that is in the Bible." After a moment's pondering: "Now, about the Incarnation. Why do I need to believe in that?" In rapid sentences Mr. Beecher laid open the subject to his comprehension. "I see. And now, about Conversion?" That, too, was swiftly discussed. The train reached a station, and the young man rose to go, saying: "Mr. Beecher, you have laid my ghosts." "I hope they will never rise again," was the reply; and they parted. In another hour Mr. Beecher was in the midst of a household upon whom had just fallen a sudden and terrible bereavement. With his very entrance a ray of peace and comfort came to their hearts. The next morning, he stood beside their dead, and spoke words, tender, gentle, that lifted them up out of the region of sorrow and gloom, until at last the very radiance of heaven shone upon them, and life and all its sorrows were glorified in the hope of the hereafter. He left, without pause, the household he had comforted; returned to the city; snatched an hour or two for his own affairs, already darkened by the lowering of the present cloud; and that same evening gave to his people the wonted instruction and cheer of his "Lecture-Room Talk." Only a day's intermission, and Sunday followed with its two sermons. And so the man's life goes on.

It is those who have had such experience of him—and there are tens of thousands of them all over the land—who have held to Henry Ward Beecher in the darkest hours with a faith like adamant. They may say who will that there is more of faith than of reason in that confidence. It is such faith as a man gives to the wife who has been by his side for a lifetime, such faith as children give to parents who have through many years led them up into happiness and virtue.

That ardent faith is not to be expected of the great world which is judging Mr. Beecher, and his friends ought not to de-

mand it. But that world, in soberly weighing the evidence, must take full account of the significance of a life whose character is thus written in broad letters, and vouched for by unnumbered witnesses. In one scale is to be laid the testimony of such a life, and the word of such a man; and in the other scale is the word of Theodore Tilton and F. D. Moulton, with whatever evidence their personal character may afford as to the value of their word.

XXXV.

MR. BEECHER BRINGS SUIT.

On the 3d of October, Mr. Beecher made a formal complaint against Theodore Tilton and Francis D. Moulton before the Grand Jury of Kings county, New York, in consequence of which both Tilton and Moulton were indicted for malicious libel. At an early hour on that day Mr. Beecher, accompanied by Mr. Cleveland, of the Investigating Committee, Mr. Henry Beecher, and one or two other gentlemen, went to the Court-House in Brooklyn, where the Grand Jury was in session, and, after consultation with the District-Attorney, appeared before the Grand Jury for the purpose of procuring the indictment by that body of Theodore Tilton and Francis D. Moulton for malicious libel. When, at a later hour, the foreman of the Grand Jury presented to the presiding judge of General Sessions the roll of indictments found during the sittings of that body, it was generally understood that among them was one against each of the persons mentioned. The text of the indictment of Tilton contains two separate counts. The first count, after reciting the facts establishing jurisdiction, sets forth the publication in the *Daily Graphic* of a certain false, scandalous, malicious, and defamatory libel of Mr. Beecher, "intending to assert and cause it to be believed that the said Henry Ward Beecher, in the month of October, 1868, had been guilty of adultery with and then had criminal intercourse with one Elizabeth R. Tilton, who in October, 1868, as well as at the time of the wrong aforesaid, was a married woman,

and was the wife of him, said Theodore Tilton, and to cause it to be believed that said Henry Ward Beecher had admitted the fact of such adulterous intercourse to him." As a specification of this count of the indictment the interview between Mr. Beecher and Mr. Tilton, at which Mrs. Tilton is alleged to have been present and in the course of which Mr. Tilton claims they both confessed criminality and agreed upon the date of its commencement, is specially recited as embodied in Tilton's second statement. The second count recites the charge of perjury made by Tilton against Beecher in his statement, and quotes as specially "false, scandalous, malicious, defamatory, and libellous," the passage in which Tilton says: "I close this section by declaring, with a solemn sense of the meaning of my words, that Mr. Beecher's recent denial under oath is known to him (said Henry Ward Beecher) and to her (said Elizabeth R. Tilton), and to several other persons, to be an act of perjury." This was also published in the *Daily Graphic*, and, in the words of the indictment, "to the great damage, scandal, and disgrace of the said Henry Ward Beecher, contrary to statute in such cases made and provided and against the peace of the people of the State of New York and their dignity."

The indictment of Moulton is similar in form to that of Tilton, and, after reciting in general terms the efforts of Moulton to defame the character and fair fame of Mr. Beecher, quotes as a first count in the indictment, and as specially libellous, the portion of Moulton's statement, already published, alleging that on the night that Moulton went for the retraction of Mrs. Tilton Mr. Beecher did not deny the charge of adultery with Mrs. Tilton, and subsequently, in specific terms, confessed the same and enunciated a specific justification of the doctrines of free-love. The second count of this indictment recites as libellous the entire passage of Moulton's statement in which he accuses Mr. Beecher of having confessed to him that he had taken improper liberties with a woman whose name is not mentioned in the statement, and who is described as having enticed Mr. Beecher with what he is alleged in the statement to have denominated "a paroxysmal kiss."

The popular judgment of Mr. Beecher's course is well stated by the *Tribune* of October 5:

The only measure by which the light can be made to shine upon the dark places of the Brooklyn scandal was taken on Friday by Mr. Beecher, in appearing before the Grand Jury and procuring the indictment of Theodore Tilton and Francis D. Moulton for the crime of malicious libel. The indictment does not rest on any technical point or any side issue. The question raised is one involving the vital merits of the case. Tilton is accused of malicious lying in charging Mr. Beecher with a criminal intimacy with Mrs. Tilton, and with perjury in his affidavit denying such intimacy. Moulton is indicted for falsely saying that Mr. Beecher had confessed to him his criminal intimacy with Mrs. Tilton and with another person. No verdict can be given on such an issue which shall not be decisive. If Mr. Beecher is innocent these men are guilty. If they are acquitted he is condemned. There can no longer be any middle ground. This trial will decide between the pastor of Plymouth Church and his assailants. When it closes he will have to leave his pulpit, or they will have to go to jail. It is scarcely possible that the contest before a court of justice can result in a drawn battle, with a cloud of doubts and mystifications, and no positive assurance of truth on either side. If the case be now thoroughly tried, the matter may be finally put to rest.

While no one can help regretting the new floods of foul evidence which this judicial investigation will pour out upon the country, we think there will be few who will not approve the conduct of Mr. Beecher in forcing the present issue. There was no other way of settling the dispute. The suit of Tilton against Beecher for adultery was a derisory one from the beginning. If it ever came to trial the fact of Tilton's confessed condonation would put him out of court. The libel suit brought against Moulton by a lady whom he had so brutally assaulted did not touch the merits of the principal question. The public unquestionably looked to Mr. Beecher to appear in the attitude of a prosecutor against the men who have stirred up this unprecedented scandal. It was not a matter of merely personal con-

cern. The community is directly interested in the issue now joined. If these men tell the truth, then Mr. Beecher should not be allowed to pollute the Christian religion by his ministrations. If they lie, it would be a general disgrace to permit them to escape punishment after having for so many months filled the public mind with such poisonous defilement. Mr. Beecher might forgive, if he chose, the crime against himself. But he has no right to forgive the crime against the public involved in that unwholesome familiarity with the vilest forms of domestic misery which Moulton and Tilton have propagated throughout the length and breadth of the land. Ten thousand immoral and obscene novels could not have done the harm which this case has done, in teaching the science of wrong to thousands of quick-witted and curious boys and girls.

It is the fate of Mr. Beecher and nothing else which is to be decided by the result of this trial. We do not wish to prejudge it, nor to depart from that impartiality we have maintained since the miserable business began. We shall not relinquish the hope which we share with all cleanly people, that the most eminent preacher of our time may prove to be innocent of the disgusting crimes which are laid at his door. But the truth is more important than any man's fair fame, and we trust that the truth may be ascertained in the strict analysis of a criminal trial, no matter who suffers by it. We must repeat, however, that as it appears to us, Mr. Beecher is the only person whose reputation can suffer materially. The others have nothing left to lose, and little to gain. If they established the fact of Mr. Beecher's infamy, they could drag him down to their own level, but could not make of his ruin a pedestal for their own rehabilitation. Mr. Tilton has given a picture of himself which even to those who believe his story makes him something monstrous and repulsive. And Moulton in his last statement showed a depth of ferocious depravity which is entirely independent of the issue of this particular case. The question to be decided is not what manner of men they are. That is well enough known. The public now wait to hear a court of justice say merely what kind of man Mr. Beecher is.

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