

# THE NAKED TRUTH,\* or, The Situation Reviewed!

DELIVERED IN COOP. INSTITUTE, NEW YORK, JAN. 9, 1873.

BY

Victoria C. Woodhull and Tennessee C. Claflin.

## TENNIE C. CLAFLIN'S ADDRESS.

[This address, which was to have been delivered upon the above occasion, was not so delivered, as will be seen by reference to our editorial columns.]

As introductory to the principal speech of the evening upon the subject "The Naked Truth," I shall swiftly glance at some of the principal and important events and the causes and reasons that together led to the recent extraordinary circumstances, which are the occasion for this gathering. I shall not touch upon anything that might, by any strained rendition, be classed among tabooed subjects, therefore if the very pious representative of the very pious Young Men's Christian Association is present, he need not flatter himself that he is to have an opportunity to arrest me because I shall presume to touch the reputation of any revered citizen. But I may, in strict confidence, as I am going to be very confidential to you this evening, tell you a little secret, in which this worthy fellow is mixed up, which will not only serve to illustrate the motives that lie behind all this, but also to instruct you in the newly-defined rendition of obscenity. This representative, this paragon of consistency, this pink of perfection, this Comstock, I was informed, was taken aback by surprise and indignation at the audacity of my sister in daring in his very face and eyes, to proclaim that she would speak upon so obscene a subject as "The Naked Truth." In his pure-minded Christian judgment, a speech upon any naked subject ought not to be permitted, and especially upon that of truth, which is so generally kept concealed; and my sister and I are not yet certain that he may not be present, armed with an order of arrest for the horrible obscenity of presenting a naked subject for your consideration. If he is, I hereby notify him that it will not accomplish its purpose, since if he arrest my sister and me, we have provided another to make the address, for whom he can neither have nor obtain an arrest. Moreover it will be printed in *extenso*, in the next WOODHULL & CLAFLIN'S WEEKLY; therefore, if, as I said before, he be here, armed with one of his familiar weapons, he may as well put it in his pocket and permit the speech to be made by my sister and listen to it, as well, and he may, perhaps become a wiser, even if it be impossible that he become a better, man.

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

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

We know, as well as any of you know what you are engaged in, that we are engaged in introducing new social views to the notice and for the consideration of the general public; and that those views look to radical and sweeping changes in present systems, which everybody knows, must be changed, before anything like the millennium, in which all Christians pretend to believe, can be realized. Step by step have we been led on, from one thing to another, sometimes, ourselves, even fearing the results, which might come, but ever being justified by what has come, until we now stand on the very brink of what we know is to be a social earthquake.

What this earthquake may destroy, who may be swallowed in its yawning chasms, or whether we, ourselves, may not be swept away, we do not know; but that great good to the great human family will come of it, we feel assured. Our course has not always brought us peace, happiness and comfort; on the contrary we have suffered almost all the terrors to which human life is subject. Even now, we stand under two criminal indictments, upon both of which, if present public opinion, under the manipulations of the church and press, could have its way, whether according to law we are or are not guilty, we should be so adjudged; yet we rely upon the truth, as against all other powers that may be conjured up, to oppose it, and we know that it shall triumph, even if we are crushed in the process.

You must remember that many, if not most of you, to-day, worship One who in doing His duty to His Father, died upon the cross. None of you imagine that it was a pleasant duty He

performed in thus yielding up His life; He did not live selfishly, for himself, as I fear, most of those who profess him so loudly, live for themselves. He was despised of the authorities, in government, in philosophy and in religion. His associates were Magdalenes, sinners and lowly fishermen; and yet you now exalt him to the throne of the Universe, and pretend weekly, at least, to bow in homage before His shrine.

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

It has been freely circulated in the press that we are simply notoriety seekers. Now let me ask you to consider, calmly, for a moment, the probabilities of such a thing. Do people usually invoke upon themselves continuous persecution, merely to obtain notoriety? Do they consciously invoke the terrible bower of the press to crush them, to brand them before the world by every vile and detestable epithet known to language; do they seek the hoots and jeers of the common multitudes, and the sneers and the upturned noses of the select few, wherever they go; do they purposely render themselves friendless, homeless and distressed in all possible and conceivable ways merely to become simply notorious? Nay, my friends! none of you can honestly say that you believe this. It requires stern convictions of duty; unflinching allegiance to purposes; undying devotion to principles, and an unwavering faith, to enable any one, and especially frail women, to endure unto the end, under all these trials.

We have been charged, over and over again, with "forcing ourselves upon the public." Now for a moment, again, look at this, and see how utterly gratuitous and preposterous it is. Did we force any of you to come here to-night? No! Every one of you came of his or her own accord and consent. And so, too, has it been with every one who has ever heard either of us speak, or who has ever read any of our writings. If, however, they mean that we have been persistent in endeavoring to explain to all who would listen or read, the principles of the new dispensation, then we plead guilty to the charge. But you must remember that to do this is the right of every American citizen, in the exercise of which no one can rightfully be abridged.

But beyond these general charges of practices, to which only the most unwise would ever think of resorting, there have been many and specific charges of still more criminal things. There is scarcely a crime in the calendar that we have not, in some way, either directly or by implication, been accused of. While we have regretted these things, and while we have been grieved beyond expression, that they have been cast upon us to impede the progress of the ideas which we advocate, we have, nevertheless, continued persistently to follow our path of duty. It is the same old story repeated again. We have presented arguments that could not be refuted by arguments, and abuse has been resorted to, to supply the deficiency. If one-half that has been charged against us, had even had a shadow of foundation in fact, we should have been long ere this, and justly too, in the Penitentiary.

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

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

But we have been conscious of righteous zeal directed, if not always in the wisest way, at least for high purposes, and this consciousness alone has sustained us in the many trials through which we have passed. Even this consciousness, had it not been accompanied by the approval and support of our Friends in Spirit, would have been unequal to our support. Thousands of men have sunk under even a moiety of the trials beneath which we have stood erect. If it be hard for men to battle with the misfortunes of life, how much more so is it for women to do so, in the existing social conditions.

There are thousands upon thousands in this country, who hate us with the most inveterate hate; who think us the personification of everything that is bad; who honestly believe that no fate could be too cruel for us to endure, and yet, not one of these people, of their own knowledge, know a single fact to justify their convictions. Especially is this true, now, in this city. Every possible circumstance is thrust in our way; every possible hindrance is brought to bear upon us. The "powers that be" resort arbitrarily to every high-handed measure within their reach. The Police of Brooklyn threaten to arrest everybody who attempts to sell the WEEKLY in that

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city; while in this city, newsmen are intimidated in nearly the same way; so that it is next to impossible to get it before the public, and thus to make the public acquainted with our side of the case—all of which is nothing more or less than a high-handed outrage upon our civil rights, done without the slightest authority of law. But our counsel tell us that it would be useless to apply to the courts to vindicate our rights, since none of them would even consent to consider a case presented by us at this time. And yet you call this a republican government, built upon the sovereignty of the individual!

But, all this we must endure with as much patience as we can summon, still a little longer. The force of persecution, when so rigorously pressed, must shortly expend itself; and, when the reaction comes, the tide will set as strongly in the opposite direction, carrying confusion and dismay to every one who has joined in this unhallowed warfare. Man proposes, but God disposes; and we are very willing to act our part as best we may, and trust the rest to Him who "maketh even the wrath of man to praise Him." We have cast ourselves into the gap, broken in social despotism, and there we shall stand firmly and proudly, until the war shall be ended and the victory secured, even if it bring death to us. And I say here and now, We shall be justified!

Thus through storm and sunshine alike, we have steadfastly pursued our way, battling at nothing; but, shoulder to shoulder, battling together for what we believe to be the right and the truth. We began the publication of the WEEKLY, scarcely knowing for what it was destined or what work it was to perform; but, from the first, opening its columns to authors, whose thoughts were denied expression in all other journals. The WEEKLY has been, in fact, a free paper; and in the sense of subserviency to public or private opinion, the only Free Paper in the World. In its columns all earnest writers have found a place; and I believe it has made a more profound impression upon public thought than was ever made by any other journal, in the same length of time.

Most of you are, doubtless, well persuaded, that we were not arrested and cast into prison without an examination, because we had published anything which could, by any possible stretch of imagination, be called obscene; or that we had libeled anybody by willfully stating anything maliciously false; but you must be well aware that it was done wholly for the purpose of destroying the WEEKLY, and through it, our further influence upon the public thought. This must be evident to all, when they see that the editors of other papers, publishing the self-same things that we published, have been arrested neither for obscenity or for libel.

But though having crippled us severely, the WEEKLY still lives, to high defiance in the faces of the enemies of freedom, and to proclaim the truths of the coming social epoch. And though I say it, who, perhaps, ought not to say it, it would be a calamity if it were to die from the present attack upon it, since its death by these means, would be a blow not only to the WEEKLY, but to every journal in the land; to a free press, as well as to free speech and free thought, from which it would require a half century to recover.

It is because it represents those principles more fully than any other journal, that I appeal to all who feel a deep and abiding interest in them to come to the support of the WEEKLY. These are the fundamental principles upon which a free government must be based, and they will be outraged, if, through continued persecution, we become so crippled, financially, as to be unable to continue its publication. Just a little additional present support from those, only, who are friendly to the freedom it advocates, and it will be carried through its period of weakness and become fully, strongly and permanently established, as the foremost exponent of advanced thought upon all subjects.

And you must allow me again to remind you, though it may be only the WEEKLY that is threatened to-day by our persecution, that to-morrow it may be any other recalcitrant journal which dares to utter a thought beyond the standard prescribed by the Young Men's Christian Association. One step, securely taken in the direction of despotism, is sure to be followed by more arbitrary steps in the same direction. Therefore, for your own safety, and for the safety of the general principle of freedom, it becomes the duty, not less than it should be the privilege, of every American citizen, to see to it that this attempt upon the liberty of the press and against free speech does not succeed. Not merely, nor mainly, because it is the WEEKLY, and the advocate of advanced social ideas; but for the other, and more fundamental reason—that it is a vital and necessary principle to Republican institutions—should such a precedent be not established.

I should be glad to speak to you about the complementary attempt in Boston to suppress free-speech; but since it was the self-same spirit there, that I have been speaking of as being exhibited here, I will not consume the time. Suffice it to say that we can well afford to have our names enrolled with those of Garrison, Phillips, Channing and Webster as suffering as they suffered, from that spirit of puritanical despotism, for which Boston is proverbial, but which I pray Heaven may never obtain a foothold here, and thus add to the foul blotch of the abridgment of the freedom of the press under which we already labor that still fouler one—the abridgment of free speech.

I now with pleasure give way to my sister, Victoria C. Woodhull, who will address you upon that terrible subject, "The Naked Truth."

### VICTORIA C. WOODHULL'S ADDRESS

MY FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS.—I come into your presence from a cell in the American Bastile, to which I was consigned by the cowardly servility of the age. I am still held under heavy bonds to return to that cell, or to meet my trial in a United States Court, upon a scandalous charge trumped up by the ignorant or the corrupt officers of the law, conspiring with others to deprive me, under the falsest and shallowest pretences, of my inherited privileges as an American citizen. In my person, the freedom of the press is assailed, and stricken down, and such has been the adverse occurrence of circumstances that the press itself has tacitly consented, almost with unanimity, to this sacrilegious invasion of one of the most sacred of civil rights. Public opinion too has been abused into concurring, for a moment with this outrage.

But I have no intention of entering upon a specific defense of myself to-night. I was not unaware of what would be done when the method of social agitation, which furnished the grounds for the tyrannous exercise of power, was begun, and I am not disappointed. I was informed of the old United States statute, regarding the transmission of obscene literature through the mails, and also of the law as amended last June to specially meet this case. To suppress our paper was the only method of procedure by which the *old regime* could meet our argumentation; but its representatives, though wise in their own conceit, have unwittingly played directly into my hands, and for the benefit and ultimate triumph of the very thing they sought to crush.

In this, which to me, is the higher and truer sense, instead of being my enemies and persecutors, as they are in spirit and purpose, they are my active, most efficient and most effective allies; and I wish it to be distinctly understood, at the very outset, that whatever I may feel called upon to say in arguing the subject upon the plane, and for the more complete understanding of the people, I here and now claim that Mr. Comstock, the characteristic agent of the Young Men's Christian Association, acting under the inspiration of Messrs. Bowen, Challis & Co., members of Plymouth Church; that District Attorney Noah Davis, and his assistant, General Davies, and Mr. Commissioner Osborne, backed up by those who are determined, as was stated in the *Tribune*, "to ruin her to the earth if it took every hour of his life and every dollar of his fortune," and the United States Grand Jury; that Mr. Challis, with his hundred thousand dollars, and Mr. Justice Fowler; in a word, that all and every one of them who have had any active or passive hand in what, in the common acceptance, is personal and vindictive persecution, though personally enemies to me, are, indeed, my most esteemed friends, without whom and their recent active and well-calculated interference, no such vantage as the present revolution has attained could possibly have been gained.

Therefore, without further argument, I hold that I am justified in claiming them all as my faithful though unwilling allies in the social revolution in which I am engaged; and to whatever length their ire, their hate, their vindictiveness, their bitter foolishness, their stupidity or ignorance may push them on in their line of action, they inevitably proceed just so much the further to secure the rapid and complete success of the latest, greatest and grandest revolution of the centuries, to the inauguration and completion which I am thoroughly and entirely devoted and consecrated.

But from this morally philosophic standpoint of observation, which is the one from which I wish it to be understood that I wage my warfare and upon which I can have no enemies, I shall descend to the more common plan of general controversy to discuss the matter with you, and from this position I am compelled, in the first place, to arraign the courts; secondly, as the moulder of public opinion, the press; thirdly, a bigoted, ignorant, and persecuting public opinion. Moreover I am also compelled, and here you must pardon the frankness of my speech, to arraign you who are my friends and who are my fellow-citizens, for moral cowardice and traitorousness to the spirit of American institutions.

But in all this I shall criticise them with as little personality as I can give to action, all of which has been so personal, I shall withhold, too, as far as I can, every expression of resentment; and no one who knows all I knew of this matter, would fail to credit me with singular and great moderation. For behind what I shall relate, there are other histories every incident of which I have rescued from the obscurity to which they were confined; and as I think of them, it is with difficulty that I restrain my just indignation; but I shall confine myself to a brief and dispassionate discussion of what is already before the public, leaving other things to rise to the surface when circumstances which I do not care to control, shall permit or compel them. Saul of Tarsus, when he stood by and held the garments of them who stoned the martyr Stephen, took on his soul the guilt of the blood of "the first martyr," and you, in so far as you have consented, even tacitly and inertly, to the unheeded persecution which has been directed against my sister and me in the name of the law, have been implicated in that great wrong, and perhaps before I am done, you will perceive your unconscious guilt to have been far greater than you have heretofore supposed. But I repent of the intention of arraigning you, even before entering upon its execution.

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ing to action behalf of the people, and in the interests of public virtue, have interfered with the high hand, have seized our types, have broken up our business, have purloined our private papers, have suppressed our paper in transitu in the mails, have thrown us into jail, and have so cut us off from the means of communicating with the public, that our voice could not be heard; that the truth of the matter, as we see it and know it to be, has never come to your knowledge; and that you have been obliged, therefore, in a great measure, to form your opinions in ignorance of the facts.

My sister and myself are now indicted in the United States Court on the preposterous charge of sending obscene literature through the United States mail—a charge which the officers of the Government will never dare to bring to trial, as they can not afford themselves to be brought into complete ridicule. If anything which I can say in this address, or which I can say or write at any time, can provoke or sting them into the folly and madness of exposing the weakness and the damnable outrage of this unhallowed proceeding against peaceable and law-abiding citizens, by bringing the case to trial, I shall consider that success the most fortunate event of my life. But I now predict before you, and make my formal record of that prediction for future reference and use, that I shall fail, utterly fail in the attempt. The District Attorney, and everybody concerned in this nefarious matter, have either already accomplished all they aimed at, by covering my sister and me with the odium of being prisoners and accused of a scandalous offense, or they have had enough of the whole matter, seeing that it was a blunder from the start, and wish themselves fairly rid of it.

I repeat my prediction, and make it as marked and distinct as possible: the United States Government will never proceed to trial, in the case now on their court docket in the Southern District of New York, against Victoria C. Woodhull and Fannie C. Claffin, for violating the statute of Congress against transmitting obscene literature through the mails. They will never dare to do it. On the other hand, I predict that the Government will not enter a *nolle prosequi*, and make thereby the only honorable reparation, to some slight extent, which it would be in their power to make, for the outrage they have committed on our individual rights. And, my friends, you must not forget that, when an individual is wronged, by the supercilious of law officers, the whole people is thereby outraged; I predict, however, that the course they will pursue will be to hold the case over our heads, as a threat, to delay and postpone it from time to time, to pretend that they intend to bring us to trial, and yet never to do so in fact; in the hope that fortune will favor them in getting them out of the scrape, through our death or poverty, or virtual surrender to the force of a long-continued persecution.

But they reckon without their host. The cards of fate are shuffled for a different deal. I give notice here and now, I hope the occasion is a sufficiently public one, that the publication office of WOODHULL & CLAFFIN'S WEEKLY is at 48 Broad street, New York city, and that from that office there will soon be issued and sold to all applicants a revised edition of the suppressed number of WOODHULL & CLAFFIN'S WEEKLY, containing the "Beecher-Tilton Scandal," and that within a few weeks there will probably have been sent a million copies of it to every part of the world, so that the whole public shall be my jury and decide whether there is anything obscene in that earnest and all-important statement.

The United States officials can afford anything else better than to become utterly ridiculous in the eyes of the legal profession and of the public generally; and they know already that there is not a respectable lawyer or citizen, who has read our journal, and knows its character, who supposes for a moment that the United States have any case against us. They can even better afford to be known as persecutors of individuals, having the rights only of public prosecutors, rather than to continue to hold to the charge of obscenity. The pretension is too flimsy to bear a moment's inspection.

The issue of our paper in question, that of Nov. 2, 1872, is, undoubtedly, one of the boldest we have ever issued in the war we are conducting in behalf of progress, free thought and untrammeled lives; breaking the way for future generations; but throughout all its fifty closely printed columns, there is only one passage, and that of only three lines, to be found in the article now known as the Challis article, which the most fastidious literary critic, who was honest, could by any possibility construe into obscenity; and that is not half so bad as a hundred isolated passages which might be selected from the bible, and which pious fathers and mothers and moral teachers, and perhaps they who belong to the Young Men's Christian Association, read in the family before prayers, to youth of both sexes, morning and evening, all over the land.

But neither the zealot Comstock, nor the District Attorney, nor the Grand Jury had, as yet, got their eye on this dreadful three-line paragraph when they had my sister and me arrested and, with unseemly haste, indicted for obscenity. Their procedure was based entirely on the "Beecher-Tilton Scandal," and it was an after-thought altogether when the Assistant District Attorney said in court that he "meant the whole paper"—an after-thought for which I am greatly obliged to him, as it puts him in my power in ways of which he is, as yet, totally unconscious.

Their action was, as they then avowed, entirely for the purpose

of "protecting the reputation of revered citizens," as if it were any part of their business to protect the reputation of anybody by instituting an arbitrary censorship of the press in this free country, or except in an action for libel which had not been instituted, nor even thought of, as if Americans were living under the paternal wing of self-constituted legal protectors, self-constituted tyrants, otherwise speaking; and finally as if the charge of obscenity was in any way related to that of the attack on, or the defense of, "revered citizens."

The law was open to Mr. Beecher and others for any wrong done them, and they did not move in the matter, for reasons which were alike satisfactory to them, and to us, at the time, and which are now rapidly becoming satisfactory to the whole public. What right, then, had the District Attorney, and through his agency and solicitation, the Grand Jury—the United States, in other words—through their representatives to interfere, and still without charging any libel, to trump up another factitious and scandalous, flimsy and ridiculous, irrelevant and preposterous charge, to get, by indirection, at the result they wished to achieve—that, in a word, of simply stopping our mouths at any cost, to protect the reputations of "revered citizens," and entirely irrespective of the question whether we were telling the truth or not, or of the other question, whether our motives were good or bad! As in the case of the slave-holders and Garrison, it was no question of the truth, nor of the motive, but of the absolute necessity for their keeping us hush on the subject.

Now, it so happens that in another case, that of Challis against Col. Blood, entirely apart from that of the United States against my sister and me, the whole Challis article came before the public and was published in full, or, as the lawyers say, *verbatim, literatim et punctatim*, in the New York *Herald*, and various other newspapers; has been, in a word, pretty extensively circulated over the country in other newspaper columns than our own, and Mr. Comstock has not informed upon, and Mr. District Attorney Noah Davis has not presented, and the Grand Jury have not indicted the publishers of the *Herald* and the other papers.

Is it that men are so generally accustomed to say and print obscenity that these paragons of purity and protectors of pions and revered citizens don't mind that? Is it that the masculine sex has the monopoly of obscenity as they have of tobacco and bad whisky? Is it that obscenity is any less obscenity when it appears in the *Tribune* or the *Times* or the *Herald*? Or is it that those publishers are known to be rich and powerful, while we were supposed, from our recent misfortunes, to be poor, and possibly friendless? Or is it, after all, that the whole world knows that these respectable and well-to-do publishers and editors don't mean anything by it, except merely to make money in the ordinary course of business, while it feels instinctively that we are in earnest, and mean to do what we can to put an end to the vicious conditions of society, obscenity among the rest of them? Is it, then, the old story that the craft is in danger, that practices and habits and modes of life exist, and are held to be respectable, and must be protected, which are so obscene in their character, that we cannot even mention them without seeming to be, ourselves, guilty of obscenity? Is it the old cry of "stop thief," merely to turn away attention? Is it the old fear that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshipped? Finish out the reading of the nineteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, when you go home to your houses, and inwardly reflect on it and digest the old story, and you will understand the whole subject better than by the reading of all the newspapers.

It is not the question of Henry Ward Beecher, nor of Theodore Tilton, nor of Theodore Tilton's Wife, nor of Victoria C. Woodhull, nor of John H. Noyes, nor of Stephen Pearl Andrews, nor of Brigham Young, nor of all these combined, nor of a thousand more like them; but it is the question of a new gospel, of the new "word of God," adapted to this age and generation, as the truth of that olden day was to that. Put for the Jesus then preached, the Logos that "became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory \* \* \* full of grace and truth," first chapter of John; put in the place of this narrower and more infantile conception, ALL TRUTH WHATSOEVER, scientific, socialistic, universal, and read for Paul and Silas, and Barnabas and Timotheus, and Erastus, and the other faithful missionaries of that day, the Mary Woolstenhrofts, the Fanny Wrights, the Owens, the St. Simons, the Fourriers, the Comtes, the Garrisons, the Warrens, the Andrews, the Noyes, the Woodhulls—in a word, the expounders and the agitators for liberty, and a new order of social affairs, in this epoch all over the world—and the old book may be read again; and every word will be true still, and true in a higher sense, or at any rate in a farther on development. The teachers and reformers of this, the social era, are but the prototypes, under other names, of the teachers and reformers of all other and past eras. But new truths will always persist in being new. The world is always taken again by surprise, and on its weak side, by every new gospel, by every new dispensation of truth, and betrayed again into the unseemly conduct of receiving and treating its annunciations as enemies of the public welfare and as criminals to be persecuted or punished! I might, perhaps, complete the parallel by substituting Henry Ward Beecher in the place of Nicodemus, and somebody, I will not even guess who, in the place of Judas Iscariot. Whoever

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nor of Theo- Victoria C. phen Pearl e combined, is the ques- d? adapted olden day o Logos that ed his glory John; put in exception, all at, and read Erastus Mary Wool- Simons, the Andrews and the flours in this read again then sense, or others and re types, under of all other s, persist in un by sur- sel, by every the unseemly as enemies of or punished, cutting Henry everybody. I will. Whoever

he may be his name will pass into history, perhaps in some subsequent edition of one of the gospels or of the Acts of the Apostles, which may be part of the standard religious literature of the next eighteen centuries.

But I am diverted from my direct purpose which was to point out to you the inconsistency of our honorable representatives of the law, and to show you why they will not dare to arrest me again for defying them, and doing again precisely what I did, just as innocently and rightfully, before.

I have told you that the New York *Herald* has boldly and unhesitatingly reprinted the most objectionable matter which was contained in the number of our paper which was suppressed by violent and illegal seizures, and for which we were arrested. Not only this, but, in our very next issue, we deliberately reprinted the language of that terrible three-line sentence, the same as contained in the *Herald*, repeating it several times; and we have not been complained of for doing so.

But that is not all. George Francis Train, like a true knight errant as he is, flew to our side as a champion, when we were in prison, and treating the matter with his peculiar idiosyncrasy, he published and had circulated broadcast through the city and sent through the mails, several numbers of a newspaper sheet which he styled *The Train League*. In it, he repeated and paraded and rang the changes in every possible way, upon every one of the possible objectionable passages in our whole paper, being purposely, if we were obscene in a direct, simple statement of facts, ten times more audaciously obscene in reproducing us, flaunting his utterances in the very faces of those distinguished legal authorities who had arrested us, "stumping them" as the boys say, with every insulting circumstance of provocation to arrest him on the same charge.

But the heroes of the United States law had become wary in conducting the warfare. They saw that they had already, so to speak, "put their foot in it," or, permit me still to be homely in my expressions, and "not to put too fine a point upon it," they "smot a rat," after the District Attorney found that revered citizens could not be brought into court. They couldn't afford to become utterly ridiculous, and there was something in the atmosphere that warned them that they were becoming, just a little ridiculous, just a little odious, and just a little contemptible already; contemptible for their ignorance of the law and of the literature they assumed to judge of; contemptible for their ignorance of the American principle of the freedom of the citizen and the press; contemptible for their unconscionable usurpation of authority, and contemptible, above all, for their un gallant and ungentlemanly discrimination against women, in their exercise of their judicial functions when there were so many men who could be charged as we were charged.

You now see why the District Attorney will not have me arrested again for repeating my offense against "revered citizens"— offense, forsooth!—for exercising my simple and unquestionable rights as an editor and an advocate of social reform. He can't arrest all the James Gordon Bennetts, all the George Francis Trains and all the Victoria O. Woodhulls; and he can't, in the face and eyes of this exposure, arrest Tenie and me and throw us again into Ludlow-street Jail, for publishing precisely the same things which they publish, and which Train published, purposely exaggerated, to show that they dare not trouble him. He cannot arrest us unless he is ready to arrest us all, or along with us, all the other editors in the city.

The District Attorney can't afford to arrest everybody who says a naughty word, not even to carry out his assumed new office of protector of the reputation of "revered citizens." Pushed one step too far, his procedure in that direction incurs ridicule. "Come shortly off," not impartially carried out; not applied even to those who flaunt their offenses and try to get arrested, in order to bring out the absurdity, it will at a certain point provoke universal indignation. The United States District Attorney cannot afford either to have a ridiculous cognomen annexed to his name, that would swamp him in this community. "A hasty plate of soup" tacked to the reputation of even a great man, and in good-natured jocosity, haunted and annoyed him to his grave. The District Attorney is not even a great man, and his nickname may have real meaning in it. I warn him not to defy the stab of a steel pen. Inventive genius sometimes displays itself in other ways than in devising new offenses against the law or new offices as public protectors of the reputation of revered citizens.

Another reason why the Government cannot, very well, proceed to trial, is this: Since our arrest, Attorney-General Williams, of President Grant's Cabinet, has, at the instance and by request of Postmaster-General Creswell, rendered an opinion having a direct bearing upon this case, as follows:

"Post-office officials have no right to open or detain letters or other matter transmitted through the Post-office, though they may know they contain obscene matter. And Postmasters have no more authority to open letters, other than those addressed to themselves, than have other citizens of the United States."

Coupled with this, we have, the denial of, the officials of the New York Post-office, as to their complicity in the outrage committed upon the mails. Mr. Knapp, the special agent of the Post-office Department, said he read the paper of November 2, from beginning to end, and he would not take any responsibility, such as the District Attorney desired him to take, to hold the entire mail on account of alleged obscenity. Therefore, under the opinion of the Attorney-General, and the disclaimer of Mr. Knapp, the District Attorney stands in the position of having, with the cognizance of somebody, robbed the mail of the package of papers upon which the charge was based. Do

you not see, then, that Mr. District Attorney Davis or Mr. Assistant District Attorney Davies cannot afford to move further in this matter?

The fellow Comstock is, I think, too conceitedly egotistic to realize the position into which his action has placed him. He is also, I think, just enough fool and knave combined, to believe he can himself "put up a job," and then make others responsible for it. He it was instead of ourselves who procured the placing in the Post-office of the package complained of, by buying the papers and having them addressed and sent to the Post-office on his own account, by a person having neither right or authority to act for my sister and me.

The watchword that led Mr. Greeley to an untimely grave was "Anything to beat Grant"; but the watchword of this set of worthies who, by arresting us, hoped to squelch the WEEKLY, is anything to save "revered citizens" who have unwritten private histories. Obdurate as they must have been, ever to have attempted such a proceeding; impervious to common sense and impossible of wise judgment as they were, to seek to evade the very issue they had themselves evoked, by an indictment grown, like a mushroom, in a single night, I do not think that even they are so utterly foolhardy, in respect to their future reputation, as to push what has already been fully passed upon and adverse to them decided by all thoughtful people.

I tell you, Mr. District Attorney, very frankly, I have your head "in chancery" and I intend to punch it. I believe this is a correct use of the language of the ring, although I am not, literally, a pugilist; and I may make a mistake in the thing said, but not in the thing meant. That you may rest assured of, unless you mend your manners, and then I may have larger game to fly at and may forget my little appointment with you. In the meantime please don't have me arrested,—forgetting my sex—for this unfortunate allusion to the prize ring, on a charge of being a prize fighter; for I perceive, now I have said it, that this verbal expression holds precisely the same relation to an offense against the laws prohibiting pugilistic encounters, by professional bruisers, as what we published in our paper, holds to an offense against the laws prohibiting obscene literature.

Pickwick, as a prosecuting official, enhances the dangers of literature generally. By some mental obfuscation of such a public functionary, there is no telling how soon some woman may be arrested for adultery, for kissing her own boy baby. I commend the subject to the consideration of the Young Men's Christian Association. The blue laws of Connecticut had the advantage of being printed, after a sort; but these new rip raps of Journalism are not laid down on any chart. They must be sought for in the experiences of women thrust into Ludlow-street Jail, through the professional ignorance, stupidity, and lack of common intelligence, or what not, of men who happen to fill the public offices.

I would not be misunderstood, and you might not understand me if I were not to explain that Mr. Train is arrested; but you must remember that it did not come through the efforts of the gentleman of whom I have been speaking, although the case was, I believe, urgently presented for his action. The two cases present this paradox: while the United States authorities acted upon our case only after the State authorities had refused to take cognizance of it, the State authorities acted upon the case of Mr. Train only after the United States authorities had refused to take cognizance of it. Therefore, though Mr. Train is under arrest, upon a charge of obscenity, what I have said of the District Attorney, with whom I have an account to settle, is, nevertheless, strictly true.

Again: This affair with Mr. Train is, to me, utterly incomprehensible. I can very well understand why the youthful zeal of the Christian Young Men should stand horrified at the doctrines of the WEEKLY, especially when they are accompanied by personal illustrations of the mysteries of godliness; but that their reverential piety should pretend to be shocked because Mr. Train, in his zeal to expound the Bible to the understanding of those who are not as familiar with it as they should be, considering that they account themselves as good Christians, is, as I said, simply incomprehensible. Can it be possible that he is a better Biblical scholar than are the representatives of the Young Men's Christian Association, that he should have found a phase of religion in their Holy Book of which they knew nothing? It seems that this must be so, since there is no other explanation for their conduct in arresting him for quoting the Bible on them, except that they are themselves actually ashamed to have the attention of the world called to the true character of the Book which they claim to be the infallible word of their God.

I speak with no feeling of disrespect for this venerable Book, or of Him whom they claim as its Author; but what must we think of a God who speaks language to his people that, when used by others than by those of their own household, even His Elect feel called upon to prosecute the intruder upon what is all their own, for obscenity? If Mr. Train is guilty of obscenity for printing extracts from the Bible, is not the American Bible Society equally guilty for printing the same in the Bible as a whole? Nor can they dodge the issue they themselves have evoked, by saying that the charge is not based upon the Bible quotations, since those quotations form, by far, the most objectionable part of the *Train League*; and I am free to confess that, if any language can be called obscene, the extracts in question must be so considered; and it is clear that Mr. Train so considered them, since his nice sense of honor would not permit him to plead "not guilty" to the charge of obscenity.

But I do not quite understand how the beyond-discretion-zealousness of the Christian Young Men is going to extricate

them from the ridiculous position into which they have been led. Of course it was ridiculous for them to have arrested my sister and me for obscenity for the language contained in the *WEEKLY* of November 2d, and not to arrest Mr. Train for the infinitely more obscene language contained in the *Train League*. I pitted them for the scrapes into which their hate of me had betrayed them. Having put their foot into it, in our case, they did not know exactly how to escape ridicule and permit Mr. Train to pass unnoticed, he having purposely haunted them, and, as it usually occurs when people are in a predicament, in attempting to get out of it, they have the more perceptibly floundered in it. Perhaps but a few of the community realized, in fact, how deeply they "got into it," in our case, but now the whole community cannot fail to know the full extent to which the Only Elect will go—the utter folly they will commit, the altogether frantic efforts they will put forth to save the only escape known to them from the hell of which they stand in mortal fear.

But excuse me that I have not as yet told you anything of what this is all about. The events that I alluded to have formed so intense a portion of my life for the last few weeks, that I forgot that the truth of the matter has never even been stated to you. The press, for reasons which I will state presently, has been just as nearly silent as it has been possible to be. Only the fact that we had been arrested and thrown into jail, because we had been doing something, or saying something, awfully naughty, which even must not be mentioned—and that we, who until recently, have rather been potted and favored by the public, had suddenly become awfully bad people, was suffered to go out to the world. Meantime we have bided our time and waited for the storm to blow over, to see whether it was really we or somebody else who had been hurt.

I speak of myself as conducting a warfare on the present impaled mass of love and hate, of confidence and jealousy, of prudery and flippancy, of deceit and hypocrisy, marital indolence, sexual debauchery, seduction, abortion and consequent general moral degradation, all mingled in frightful confusion, and labeled the social system. When I think of this as being the foundation of morality, as it is called, I wonder if to the label it ought not to be added, "to be well shaken before taken." Unfortunately, however, it is a warfare, because the world will insist on making war on me and my ideas. For myself, I love everybody, every human being, and have no desire to my soul to fight or contest with anybody; I would far rather be engaged in teaching what I know, and in learning of others who are wiser than I am, what they know. Least of all, have I any piques to gratify, or any personal hostilities to wage with any one.

In the prosecution of a mission to which I feel myself called, for the annihilation of ideas, and, for so much of warfare and attack, as the natural reaction against those ideas has provoked, or may provoke or demand, I resolved to lay open to the world, something of the convictions and of the lives of leading individuals in the community, which would go to strengthen my position, if they were known, and which, while concealed and believed to be wholly opposite, went to weaken it, and to render my task, and the task of others who openly stand with me, infinitely harder.

In accordance with this determination, and for reasons which are more elaborately set forth in the article itself, we published in our issue of November 2d, the Beecher-Tilton Scandal. In that article I stated what I happened very well to know to be true, by means therein fully stated, that Henry Ward Beecher is, on conviction, a free-lover, as I am, and as many of the noblest and wisest of the representative men and women of the land, and of the world; really are, whether they have or have not the moral courage—which I mean fidelity to their convictions—to avow it; and, to make good my assertions in respect to his theory—derived, probably, as many as fifteen or twenty years ago, from the writings and counsels of Fourier, Warren, Andrews and other great socialistic thinkers—I stated, with detail and circumstances, facts which were also in my knowledge, derived in a great part from Mr. Beecher himself, in a way which dispensed me from any obligation of confidence to the effect that he had not hesitated to live his own life of social freedom in his own way, and I added, that these facts were well known to a considerable circle of Mr. Beecher's church and congregation; and that I had been taken into this circle socially and intimately, because they learned that I had become possessed of these facts (in the first instance through Paulina Wright Davis and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and subsequently through Mr. Tilton himself, and others), and because they feared that I would publish them, and because by communicating them unreservedly, they hoped to divert me from my purpose to use them in behalf of the interests of social emancipation, and the great principle of human freedom.

In finally making this publication, I was actuated by no other motive. To make this fact, if possible, comprehensible to you and the public, I will again state for the hundredth time what I mean, and what the great thinkers who have come to conviction on this subject, which they have been trying for half a century to intimate or communicate to the world, mean, by social freedom or free love—an idea which it seems so very difficult for the majority of mankind to understand, or rather which they seem determined not to understand.

For love means nothing more and nothing less, in kind, than free-worship, freedom of the press, freedom of conscience, free trade, free thought, freedom of locomotion (without a passport

system), free schools, free government, and the hundred other precious, special systems of social freedom, which the great heroes of thought have fought for, and partially secured for the world, during this last period of the world's growth and expansion. It is all one and the same thing, it is just freedom and nothing else. It is simply impossible that any great thinker like Mr. Beecher, if the subject is once fairly brought before his mind, can see the matter in any other light; and, if he is on the side of freedom at all, if he believes in the American principle, in the Declaration of Independence, in anything distinctly American, that he should come to any other conclusion, than that the compulsory regulation of our love affairs by statute law, is a remnant, as slavery was, of an old and opposite order of things, is simply ridiculous.

Mr. Beecher believes in free worship, that is to say, in the freedom of every individual to worship God as he sees fit, or not to worship him at all; he believes also in freedom of conscience, and also, doubtless, that every act of his life should be made a matter of conscience; how then can he or could he be anything else than a free lover? How can I regulate my life by my conscience, in the most secret and sacred things, if it has already been regulated for me by the hurried and ignorant legislation of a set of crude and corrupt legislators at Albany? It is the question whether our virtue, if we have any, shall be something vital and self-regulating, or whether it shall be something dead, formal and legal, merely.

But what, in the next place, is freedom? Folks talk and think—I fear, my dear hearers, that you yourselves still think—that freedom means merely the license to do something bad. Is there, then, no need of freedom equally to do good things and right things? How easily you understand all this subject if we take it into any other sphere than just this one of love. We Americans believe in the freedom of worship, which is evidently an American doctrine. It is already secured, for at least this country. Does it follow that all Americans rush at once into devil worship? Do they as a matter of fact, erect altars and churches to the devil? Is it true, even, of the majority, that they do so? You know it is not; and yet anybody is perfectly free here—anywhere from the broad Atlantic to the broader Pacific—to erect altars and churches to the devil; and if they did so, you and I, Mr. Beecher, and the most conservative and orthodox divines, all over the land, would stand staunchly up together, as one man, in defense of their perfect (civic) right to do so; for if anybody can say, arbitrarily, that anybody else, shall not worship the devil, that same somebody may next say, in the same arbitrary way, that nobody shall worship God.

If anybody have the right to prohibit the erection of a Chinese Joss temple on off-shores, he must have equally the right to prohibit baptism by immersion or by sprinkling, or the elevation of the host, or the saying of mass.

As the condition of our freedom, therefore, we as Americans, insist on the freedom of others, on the right of others, to do even that, and just that, which we, as individuals, believe to be wrong. Nay, more, I hope that the doctrine reaches far deeper; that it is not because it is the condition of our own freedom, that we assent to all this, but that it is that THAT ITSELF IS OUR RELIGION; not merely or chiefly that, in certain times, it favors and secures us, which is still a selfish and insecure basis for freedom, but that we penetrate to the divine essence of the idea, and see and know that this ultra, radical idea of freedom is the profoundest of moral truths and of sound solutions; and hence that we are devotees for its maintenance and defense, because it is intrinsically true, and whether it works well or ill for our individual predictions at the time.

I know that this is a fearful and tremendous doctrine. I know that it is the most searching and testing of all doctrines, of the fidelity and honesty of our own love of truth. I doubt if one in a million of this great American people, who have nevertheless founded their institutions on the idea, have yet penetrated to the full significance of the idea. I doubt whether you, any of you, fully realize the profundity of the moral convictions, on which this Government was founded. And yet in this matter of worship, we have substantially realized the ideal. A hundred churches lift their spires to heaven, side by side, in the same city, dedicated to as many different orders of worship and creed, and all the congregations, peacefully and with mutual respect, pursue, from Sabbath to Sabbath, their various attractions and convictions; and all this, simply because we have wisely concluded (after thousands of years of bloodshed and strife over the subject) to say "hands off," and to remit the whole subject to the conscience, to the judgment, to the good taste (or the bad taste), in a word, to the individuality of the individual—which is freedom.

Now let us return to the matter of love. The real thinkers believe, that this same principle will work the same harmonious and beautiful results, in this sphere also, and will completely and divinely regulate in the end, and, coupled with all other good influences, all our social disharmonies. They believe that our social disharmonies, those, I mean, of the family, are prolonged and aggravated, by the futile attempts of legislation to regulate them, just as the religious strifes of the past were fomented by a similar outside interference; and that, left entirely to themselves, they will regulate themselves.

It is not now the question whether this is true or not. I am simply saying that those who have thought most about it believe it is true. I believe it, and Mr. Beecher believes it; and thousands of the most thoughtful and refined people, who do not dare to approve it, except cautiously to each other, believe it; and it is your

prejudices, pet them not, never, it is not, more vicious, about the vail more.

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prejudices, and the prejudices of the people at large, which compel them to hypocrisy in concealing opinions which they cannot, nevertheless, be wholly hindered from acting upon. And it is not, as the country people believe, because the cities are more violent, but simply because they are more enlightened about the real significance of freedom, that these doctrines prevail more extensively in the great cities.

But now, again, how you, and the people at large, misunderstand us on this subject. I have said sometimes and often, that I live my own free life in accordance with my doctrine; and I said in my Steinway Hall speech, something to the effect, that I have the right to change my love every day or every night if I choose to do so; and the public press, and the public itself, cry out in chorus, Mrs. Woodhull confesses that she lives an utterly abandoned life, she lives and sleeps with two or three or five hundred, or some other egregious number of men.

Now all this is very absurd, and the public will come, at some early day, to be very much ashamed of it. Let us return to the matter of worship; and suppose I had been engaged in fighting the battle for that freedom; and suppose I had said, I go to church or not, as I please, and I have a right to go to a different church, and worship God in a different way, every Sunday of my life, and suppose on the strength of this, the public said, Mrs. Woodhull confesses that she has no religious convictions whatever, and that she is an out-and-out infidel, or that one church is no better than another, and all are equally bad, etc. Why, the merest tyro in reasoning would see how utterly inconsequential were these conclusions, and would set down their holders as the stupidest of asses.

Now, probably there are not ten in this audience—in many an audience that I address there is not one—who know or have any right to assume to know, from anything I ever said, or from anything they know of my life, whether I live the life of a nun, or whether I live as the exclusive wife of one man, or whether I am what the cry indicates, Mrs. Hooker and several other of my anxious female friends, who have had the opportunity to know most about my life, have on various occasions taken the pains to assure the public that I am one of the most exclusive and monogamous of matrons. For my own part I have been perfectly willing that the world should think just the other way, if that same public chose to humbug itself into whatsoever preposterous idea—both to agostom the world to accept the idea of freedom for others, who might want a broader social sphere than I do, and also to give the world just this lesson—that it is none of its business (except for very special occasions) what my private life is, as it is none of my business (except for very special occasions) what the private life of anybody else is.

Do you not now begin to understand, that whosoever believes in the bitter policy, for society, of leaving the love affairs of the community to regulate themselves, instead of trusting to legislation to regulate them, is a free lover; and that being a free lover no more determines that one is low or promiscuous in one's habits, than believing that people shall have the right to choose their own food, determines that the person who believes so, has the personal habit of living on rotten meat or bad eggs.

But, I think I hear you say: "Well, possibly we might agree with you, that the mere abstract doctrine of free love is all right, at least for some millennial order of society in the future; and we might accept Mr. Beecher and forgive him, if he has really been forced by his convictions to this conclusion." But you go immensely beyond this, and tell the world that Mr. Beecher not only believes it as a doctrine, but that he lives it promiscuously or, at least, outside of his own marriage relation; and, then, that he has been secret and hypocritical in doing so.

Well, as to the first of these points, if we have really agreed that freedom is the true doctrine, then that means that it is none of your business, and none of mine how he lives or with whom; any more than it is what he eats or when he sleeps; except (exceptionally), for the moment, as an example, for teaching you and me this very lesson, new and strange in our several ideas, it is true, that it is none of our business. Undoubtedly, I have a general interest that you and all others should eat healthy and good food, but you have a far more special and direct interest in the matter, and it would be sheer impertinence for me to interfere, even if you should insist on eating very bad food.

Our old habits, under the marriage *regime*, now happily coming to an end, have made us all intolerably impudent; until our social order is an impacted conspiracy of mutual spies and informers, so dense, so tyrannous, so awful, that if it were political, no civilized community world could endure it; and such that the socially enfranchised communities of the future will look back upon it, with the same horror with which we regard the atrocious despotisms of Commodius or Caligula. Mrs. Grundy has a despotism, a million times more overwhelming and degrading, over the entire populations of England and New England, and generally, of all other countries, than ever any Nero or Tarquin had over Rome. Like slavery, hers is a despotism, which reaches every homestead, and is all pervading, and utterly terrible, to all but the stoutest hearted heroes and heroines; and religion, which seldom establishes anything, but only consecrates what is, has consecrated this severe despotism. Better a thousand times say, with nonchalance, like Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?" than to belong to this hellish conspiracy to keep our brothers and sisters, so hugged by the iron arms of false morality and custom, that the life and spontaneity is all pressed out of them. Anybody, with half an ear, who knew the meaning of logic, who has listened to Mr. Beecher's stirring sermons on individuality, in-

terspersed along through the last twenty years, would have heard in them the whisperings of social emancipation.

If, therefore, Mr. Beecher, in being true to the new doctrine of freedom, has been infidel and false to the old, that is none of our business, except to rejoice, if it come incidently to our knowledge, and if he has on any grounds been unwise, he is the one to learn the fact, and to improve in the use of freedom by availing himself of the privileges which it alone confers, to improve. And if we had any business to know, yet, how could we know? Solomon says, "The heart of man knoweth its own bitterness." Are any of us competent to tell what domestic sufferings have been endured by the man and the woman in the two involved households, or by the men and the women in any households; and what consolations must come, or the heart must break! I know nothing of promiscuity by Mr. Beecher. I suppose variety is not necessarily promiscuity, any more upon the social keyboard, than it is upon the keyboard of the piano; and every soul must find for itself, the harmony of its own chords.

As to the second point: that I have charged Mr. Beecher, and that the facts charge him with hypocrisy and concealment. I have, it is true, complained of him, in behalf of truth and freedom, that he has hid, in some measure, his light under a bushel; but that, I think, is far more your fault and the fault of his congregation, the fault of the world, in fine, of the social despotism. I have talked of, then, it is his fault individually. It is part of what his brother, Rev. Edward Beecher, once so appropriately named "The Organic Sin." It will be time for us to insist, therefore, that he repent when we remove from him the repressive force of our own past bigotries and prejudices. It is our constant assumption that our great teachers, in the pulpit and elsewhere, have truths of which we are ignorant. How much do we know of how terribly we are all the time tempting them, compelling them even, to resort to hypocrisy and concealment by our unreadiness to hear the truth.

But let me ask this question: Would Mr. Beecher's congregation have tolerated him in preaching the doctrine, or doing the acts? If not, and if the doctrine and the acts are both right for him to accept and act, then they do not stand in any place to reproach him. "Let them first cast the beam out of their own eye," and so of the great repressive public, Mr. Beecher, would, I assure you, feel himself the most emancipated dominie that ever stood in a pulpit, if his congregation and the public were simply prepared to permit him to preach to them this very sermon; for the preaching of which, because he is not emancipated, I am called upon to fill his place. Every member of highchurch and congregation will read this lay sermon, when it is printed and circulated among them, and they may talk every word of it for what he would most gladly say to them, if their prejudices did not forbid him to tell them the whole truth.

But on the whole I have no quarrel whatever, with either the preacher or his congregation. The deportment of both, under the exposure which I felt called upon to make, of the doctrine and the life of the pastor, has been magnificent and unprecedented, whether we regard it as a manifestation of convictions, or merely as a splendid instance of pure strategy. The statement which I made dealt too much in detail, involved too large a number of distinguished individuals; great writers and speakers, competent to answer for themselves, touched upon circumstances too well known, by too large a number of persons, showed too intimate an acquaintance with both the public and private aspects of the subject, and was, in every respect, too convincing of its truth upon the bare face of it, to be met successfully, in any other way, than by that perfect silence and masterly inactivity which have characterized the church, congregation, pastor and all the individuals without a single exception.

The public has stood aghast, with anxious expectation, for some denial from some quarter, of the truth of these allegations; but days passed into weeks and weeks rolled into months, and not a word of denial, nor even of explanation had been volunteered from any source; until the conviction has now gradually settled down upon the public mind, that there is no answer or explanation which can possibly be made. The whole case has been suffered to go by default. The admission has virtually been made; or, in any event, has been assumed by the people to have been made, that what I stated, and all that I stated was a simple narrative of the truth, which both pastor and congregation, have been compelled, in this tacit way, to admit.

The scene which these people have enacted, during these weeks and months, has been one of the most lofty and magnanimous which any people on earth, ever manifested toward a great leader of opinion. The language and the deportment of Plymouth Church and congregation, toward the pastor of Plymouth Church, was and is, not that of disbelief in the statements made—the probability, the almost certainty, of which many of them in private admit; but it has been the sublime faith of true devotees to their great leader, that to whatever point his convictions may have led him—whatever the course of life he may have conscientiously adopted, that they, too, believed in it to the extent of justifying and standing by him, through all the vicissitudes of fate, which may result, from his own fidelity to his own convictions.

They have said to him almost unanimously: Whether these allegations be true or not, we do not feel bound, even to inquire; whether they be true or not, we believe in you, Henry Ward Beecher; we accept you as our teacher, and you as our instructor, in any new and higher truth; and if there be any truth, which you have felt bound to withhold from us, and wait, which you have not felt required to forego in your own life, we wait in confidence—we abide in faith, until the circumstances, and the growth in public opinion, shall enable us to come to a better understanding of that which you have already learned.

[Continued on page 14.]

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NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 1873.

## TO THE PRESS.

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

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

One copy one year	\$3.00
Five copies one year	15.00
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Six month half those rates.

## OUR NEXT ISSUE.

The next *WEEKLY* will be one of the most extraordinary and interesting numbers ever issued. It will contain our examination upon the charge of sending obscene literature through the mails; upon which Mr. Constock, to get himself out of the first bad scrape which he put us in, but which was really upon himself, and specially to stop our lecture at Cooper Institute, has night had us arrested and cast into Ludlow. It will give a detailed statement not only of his (Constock's) different renditions of obscenity upon the same language which is found in the *WEEKLY* and the *Bible*, but also how we managed to deliver our lecture in Cooper Institute, in spite of Constock and his half dozen U. S. Marshals, who guarded the entrances to Cooper Institute, Beside this, there will be a rigid cross-examination (the cause for which came too late for this issue) of Mr. Tilton, who is endeavoring to make it appear that Henry C. Bowen is our authority for many of the facts stated in the Beecher article and also a clear statement from his own pen, of his position upon the social question. We wish to state now, and distinctly, that the time for evasion, either by direction or induction, is gone by, and if we have "thunderbolts" without them, it is better that he discharge them at once within his breast. It is better that he let the "lion" quietly repose therein, and retire it, than to let the "lion" quietly repose therein, since the community are anxious to, and will, know the hearts that are to be their objective points. For further light see editorial, "Beecher, Tilton, Bowen," in another column.

HENRY C. BOWEN.

Our old friend, Henry C. Bowen, has got into trouble. The Brooklyn *Eagle* has gone to him, and says all sorts of unkindnesses and uncharitableness. The lack of Christian charity is probably hurtful to Mr. Bowen's fine sympathies, for it is reported that he uses the *Eagle* for the libel, and also the New York  *Tribune* for its damnable iteration. "A mad world, my masters," in which even the saints and the elect are not safe from the hand of the spoiler and the tongue of the informer. We are sorry, very sorry, for Henry C. Bowen. We know how it is ourselves. The only crumb of comfort we can draw from it is, that he is said to row in the same boat with us. We would rather have chosen our traveling companion, as we think we have read in "Pilgrim's Progress," that companionship makes a hard path easy. H. C. Bowen knows that book, and its definitions of Christian charities and worldly propensities. How curious it would be if the *Eagle* and the  *Tribune* and H. C. Bowen should turn out our best friends, and justify us in the inner life of the Plymouth Brethren, with its Beecher-Bowen parities and puritanic conflicts.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS AND THE FRIENDS OF  
FREEDOM, OF FREE SPEECH AND A FREE  
PRESS, GREETING!

## HENRY WARD BEECHER.

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

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

My critics say I have struck my warm friends an unwarranted blow. I deny the charge. Had no such intention? was actuated by no such motives as the charge suggests. I hold if Social Freedom belongs to humanity that I have done both it and the greatest good that lay in my power.

I felt it a duty, and I did it fearlessly, and I am willing to bear all the present censure that comes from an imperfect understanding of social science, resting my justification with those who shall come after me, and enjoy the benefits that must flow from the almost fearful agitation that I have precipitated.

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

But Mr. Beecher has as yet utterly failed to make a great and wise use of the occasion presented him, for which his own teachings had prepared his friends, and upon which I compelled him to a choice; and in this failure he would seem to have justified my fears, that moral courage is a less prominent feature of his character than is the capacity to perceive new and grand truths. Forced into the position as he was, there was but one course for him to pursue that was certain to ultimate in good to himself; though humanity may be equally benefitted by what ever course. Had he been as wise as I hoped he would be, but which he would not permit me to advise him to be, he would have sold at once, to all of Mrs. Woodhull's indications I plead guilty. I have not broken the bread of life to my flock in the same measure I have received it. I have failed to do this, not on my own account, but from the fear that you my friends and scholars—your mental stomachs—were not yet ready to digest its strong aliment. I find, however, that I was somewhat mistaken in my estimate of your capacities. Indeed I ought to have judged you better, since I am so well acquainted with so many of you, and know that, equally with me, you have accepted and lived, as I have, the truths of the new dispensation. But in extenuation I would plead that I feared to divide my flock, and while I knew, or ought to have known, that many of you would thrive better on the new and vigorous manna than you have on the stale bread I have administered, I felt that you could live by the latter until all should be brought to require a change to the former. I hope you, whom I have deprived of what they desired of me, equally with those to whom I have denied the good I had for them, will forgive me for this, my error of judgment, which I assure you, was entirely of the head, and entirely at variance from the prompting of my heart.

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

This opportunity may, however, be improved by Mr. Beecher, and he thus become the hero of the new social order; but his danger lies in this: every day he delays making a definite movement in this direction—in a word, every day that he fails to publicly take the new position that he must

soon take or become which of right, before another, who, although less fully in freedom, and not so eminent a responsible man, Mr. Beecher's rival, is equally as evident not to have so long, quality—the grandeur.

That Mr. Beecher he has lost by not early from his recent trial, and to make him to come into his own course, to justify himself to the friends of the *WEEKLY*, to regular Friday evening, including his remarks, he used the following, which is altogether his part. He said, "Christ into heaven and sympathy Mary and Martha stranger. Mary le. Everything shows with the sister, his friends on earth."

My readers will the *WEEKLY*, entitled the Orient, and the press, to nothing more than the *Illustration*, freely backing in Beecher for this part of Jesus for men and women for having made sense. But I like this one of Mr. Beecher, and mankind, should do what Jesus did as he loved the *WEEKLY* stand uncondemned.

Again has the teacher itself, tandem. Doubtless what we are abundantly given us more distasteful disagree upon, were instruments think they have appear. The n. William Lloyd Channing, Calves, of which, see an by the outrage authorities of 1 reprimand again away, while we the 1st with the engineer to them.

We have spoken and always receive from the front. At a recent con we made an ind of the facts in the issue of Boston press w tales of the So to mention of with our reader it may be difficult to believe are of the present persecu in a social revol facts as we find obscene, indecent, charge, but we people become. Therefore we hear our recent John no justifiable pr in the city. He relate the circum On the 14th Phillips, Esq., to for a lecture in every evening the advertised. New say of our frien the outrage of Mayor of Boston.

## THE SUPPRESSED PAPER.

It has generally been supposed that our last issue had been regularly and legally suppressed. This is a mistake. We can find no proceedings to that end, and yet our papers were seized wherever they were found, our office and residence searched and many private papers carried off. This being the case, there will be a new edition of that paper issued, and it will be for sale at our office, No. 48 Broad street, containing the Beecher-Tilton Scandal entire, revised so as to exclude the Biblical language which constitutes the alleged obscenity, as well as the alleged obscenity, but containing the Beecher-Tilton Scandal entire. Newsdealers in the country and all other orders supplied at the rate of \$10 per hundred copies. Other issues of the *WEEKLY* at \$7 per hundred copies.

you take or become disengaged from it, the opportunity which is right, belongs first to him, is liable to be seized by another, who stands equally with him, is well situated, though less fully imbued with the principles of individual freedom, and not so well calculated to understand the tremendous responsibilities of the position. Who this is that is Mr. Beecher's rival for the future leadership of such reform? Mr. Beecher is as evident as it is evident that Mr. Beecher ought not to have so long, as he already has, neglected his opportunity—the grandest that ever fell to the lot of man.

That Mr. Beecher is not entirely unmindful of what he has lost by not coming immediately to the front, appears from his recent teaching. What he should have taken at a single leap he is endeavoring to reach by another, and a circuitous course. In mid-lecture, though palpable why he stuck to justify himself by falling back on Christ, and quoting him on the facts of the same direct, while evidently violating his lectors to think it was done without premeditation. At the regular Friday evening meeting of the 27th ultmo., in concluding his remarks, and as though entirely by accident, he used the following significant words, the application of which is altogether too apparent to pass unnoticed on his part. He said: "He was in the habit of projecting Christ into heaven as he had been upon earth, full of tenderness and sympathy, and love. Look how Jesus lived with Mary and Martha. How familiar he was. He was not a stranger. Many loved Christ, and he permitted her to do so. Everything showed that he was on friendly familiar terms with the sisters. If Christ was so familiar and loving with his friends on earth, he would be more so in heaven."

My readers will remember a series of poems published in the WEEKLY, entitled, "Amours D'hynes, or Love Stories on the Orient," and how terribly I was seathed by the clergy and the press for blushing up Christ. The poem is still quoting more than Mr. Beecher said in these words. Indeed, the "Institution" contained in his language was entirely lacking in the poem. Will the press howl at Mr. Beecher for this too apparent imputation of a by-on the part of Jesus for the sisters that he did not feel for all other men and women? If not, then indeed can I congratulate him for having made an advance in the direction of common sense. But I think a more frank and direct method than that of Mr. Beecher's would more become his dignity and manhood, since he evidently meant to say, May not I do what Jesus did—love the Marys and Marthas of this age as he loved the Marys and Marthas of his age—and like him stand uncondemned? I say, Amen!

VICTORIA C. WOODHULL.

#### THE DISGRACE OF BOSTON.

Again has the hypocritical puritanism of Boston overreached itself, and added another instance to its role of Infidels. Doubtless our reader will be as confounded as what we are about to say as we were by hitting the opportunity given us to say it; but we confess we never did a more distasteful task than that we shall do in writing down the disgrace upon the Modern Athos. Those persons who were instrumental in perpetrating this disgrace, doubtless think they have disgraced us; but in history it will not appear. The names of Roger Williams, Ann Hutchinson, William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, William Ellery Channing, Caleb Cushing and Daniel Webster, the details of which, see article in another column, were not disgraced by the outrages heaped upon them by the people and authorities of Boston; but their cases stand a never-fading reproof against that city, which nothing can ever wash away, while we can well afford to have our names stand in the list with those grand men, as having suffered in a similar manner to them at the hands of the same people.

We have spoken in Boston upon several different occasions, and always received the approval of our audiences, which were from the best people of the city and suburban towns. At a recent convention held there, the city papers claimed we made an indecent speech, because we recited somewhat of the facts in the Beecher case, which were given at length in the issue of November 2d. Against the opinion of the Boston press we oppose that one of the most talented tales of the South, Mrs. E. A. Merriweather, as given in the last number of the Weekly, and are willing to rest our case with our readers upon it. We are perfectly well aware that it may be difficult for prejudiced people to separate the fact of obscenity from the relation of facts, when the facts themselves are of that character; and it is just here where all our present persecutors have fallen into error. We are engaged in a social revolution which compels us to take hold of such facts as we find existing in the community. If they are obscene, indecent, or vulgar, it might not be held to our charge, but we ought rather to merit the sympathy of the people because we are compelled to deal with them in our tasks. Therefore we hold that whatever the press may have said of our recent John A. Andrew Hall speech, it could be made no justifiable pretence for preventing us from again speaking in the city. But the excuse that was made will appear as we relate the circumstances.

On the 14th ultmo. we dispatched our agent, William P. Phillips, Esq., to Boston to engage Music Hall, and to advertise a lecture in the same. The hall was engaged, for Monday evening the 23d, and the same was duly and extensively advertised. Never for a moment did it occur either to us or to any of our friends that the present authorities would repeat the outrage upon free speech that Moses Kinial, when Mayor of Boston, perpetrated upon Daniel Webster in shut-

ting Faneuil Hall against him for a whole month. Nevertheless they did it.

Late on Thursday before the lecture was to be given, Mr. Phillips was informed that on no account would we be permitted to speak in Music Hall, although at that time there had been a large number of tickets sold and seats secured. Remonstrance was made, and the contract for the hall abandoned; but all to no purpose. "Let what might come, it would make no difference." Music Hall simply would be closed against us.

It soon appeared that the trustees of Music Hall Association, stimulated by the Beecher influence, had been hastily called together and had decided upon this course—to prevent, if possible, our speaking in Boston. They totally ignored the agreement of Mr. Peck, the agent having the ball in charge, which was a high-handed outrage upon that gentleman, since it placed him in the position of making a bargain that he was competent to make, but which he could not carry out. An honorable course, gentlemen trustees! We trust you will fully realize it some day, when your passions shall have ebbed, and your idol shall have fallen. If you have never before done a deed of which you will be ashamed, when the history of the present shall be written, this one will certainly make you blush for your lack of manhood.

That it may not appear that we overstate the case, and that it may appear that we properly place the source of the influence that brought about the result, we shall state the very language used by several prominent persons. On Friday, Governor Claffin appeared in the office of Music Hall and vented his spleen to Mr. Peck, and in the presence of Mr. Phillips, in the following chaste and elegant language:

"We have had women enough in Boston now, without permitting this one to come here, to further demoralize us. Why, she might repeat the vile stories about Mr. Beecher, or even attack some of us in Boston. No, sir! This cannot be permitted! This prostitute shall not disgrace this hall or bring discredit to the city by speaking in it. She is no better than a pauper child, or a common street-walker, and I will see that she don't open her vile mouth in the city, which was so recently honored by Mr. Beecher's presence."

Another gallant, fanatico-champion of the Plymouth Church Pastor, Mr. James Redpath also came to the rescue, as follows: "What, allow this harlot to insult Mr. Beecher by standing on the same platform where he stood only a few nights since! Oh, no, not in Boston! We have too much respect for ourselves, and too much regard for Mr. Beecher, to permit any such outrage."

Nothing daunted by the positive refusal of Music Hall, Mr. Phillips determined that free speech should not be entirely crushed out by the Music Hall clique—friends of Mr. Beecher—and organized the St. Jame Theatre. But this failed, in Beecher, which was utterly refused. Upon this second application was made to the Board of Aldermen; but they absolutely refused to grant it, saying they did not care whether right or wrong this woman should not speak in Boston, and ordered the Chief of Police to be instructed to arrest her if she dared to attempt to speak anywhere.

After our arrival in Boston and consulting with Judge Cowley about the matter, the authorities were called upon and remonstrated with. The lecture which was to be delivered was fortunately in print and was shown them; but it made no difference. "They would listen to nothing." They had made up their minds and would not be moved, and the Chief of Police personally informed us that, though he was sorry to say it, he had orders to arrest us if we should appear upon my platform in Boston, and that he should be obliged to execute them if we persisted.

It becoming known that we should not be permitted to speak in Boston, halls in Cambridge, Charlestown and Chelsea were offered us; but we determined to hide our faces, being satisfied that the good sense of the people of Boston shall become aroused to what the authorities have done, that they will demand that the first and greatest principle of American Liberty shall no longer suffer outrage at the hands of their representatives. Even the press that thus seemed to be totally unconscious of the volume upon the brink of which they are fast asleep. One paper alone of the great number there published was willing to open its columns to give the people our statement of the case. Are we indeed verging into despair in that the press can be paralyzed into silence over two weak women whom the long-faced hypocrites are endeavoring to crush? It may be thought that other wise not intended when we are assailed, but they do not even think what is invited by their apparent acquiescence in what has been done. One outrage paves the way to others, and worse ones; and thus they progress until they culminate in revolution.

Dear readers, let us realize what a ferment the Beechers, the Pharoahs and the Hypocrites are in over the progress of the social revolution. Every one of them fears that his mask may be the next to fall. What else can it be that leaves them to all their desperate deeds, their conditions, astray upon the fundamental principles of liberty? Do they forget the teachings of their professed Master, that if this thing is "of the devil" they will "come to nought": but it is ever thus. In the days of the Nazarene it was not different from what it is now. The same divisions and spirit everywhere and at all times present, but related to different and higher broader and deeper questions. Those of to-day are upon the most fundamental and vital that ever existed—individual freedom, and will be administered with a

vindictive bitterness equal to the magnitude of the interests involved.

We were not prepared for the Boston outrage. We knew of no reason why we should not speak where we had already spoken to enthusiastic audiences several times before, and where we had every reason to believe a very large number of people desired to hear us again, upon the great question of Free Press, which was the subject of the lecture. It was meet, however, that the action of the United States authorities in New York—bowing in abject servility to the power of Plymouth Church, for the suppression of a Free Press—should be supplemented by the authorities of Boston, in obedience to the same mandate regarding Free Speech. Oh Shame! where is thy blush, that these things can be perpetrated with impunity in this age and country! Have the people forgotten that they are American citizens, and that they who have been called to execute the laws, have become their masters? Are they really ready to acknowledge themselves slaves to the powers they have created? Indeed it is time that some thunder-clap should come to rouse them to a sense of their condition, else the enemy may, unresisted, bind them hand and foot and render them utterly defenseless. For ourselves, indignant and sick at heart over the continued brutality to which we are subjected, we returned to New York, to permit the people of Boston to think awhile over their action. But we shall speak in Boston, with a license, if it can be had—without one, if the authorities in defiance of the Constitution of the United States, shall continue to refuse it. Therefore, Governor Claffin, Mr. Tourgee, James Redpath, Mr. Fairbanks, and the Chief of Police, need not set it down that they have succeeded in driving us from the Boston rostrum. And when we shall stand upon it, we shall not hesitate to speak in plain terms of their despotic, disgraceful and disloyal conduct, and rest assured the people of Boston will sustain us.

DEECHER, TILTON, BOWEN.

Very few persons have any adequate idea of the immense interests that are dependent upon the maintenance, at least to outward semblance, of the peace among this trinity; but impending events justify us in calling the public attention to the possibilities of an open rupture. There are a few prominent interior facts behind the fair external seeming, now presented by this trio, which it may not be amiss to bring forward, since they have an important bearing upon what is about to transpire, and since they form the basis upon which a rotten structure has stood and seemed sound.

A few persons only know the real causes that led to the dismissal of Theodore Tilton from the editorship of the Independent; and we say dismissed, advisedly, in the face of the initial admiration expressed at the time by the parties to it. And right here we cannot refrain from mentioning the fact that, wherever a fatal feud is concealed for the sake of reputation, beneath a fair exterior, the ultimate results are always more disastrous than if concealment were never attempted.

Mr. Tilton was for a long time the responsible editor of the Independent, and it is well-known that it was his bold and brilliant articles that won for that paper the immense influence which at one time it had. It is also well known that the patrons of that paper were thunderstruck when Mr. Tilton left it; they were at a loss to even surmise any sufficient cause for such a movement, since it must have been a fearful one that could justify it to Mr. Bowen, which he has since learned to his cost.

It is not, however, so generally known that, after his resignation of the editor's chair, he was retained to write leading articles at a large salary; or that, at an equally large salary and to share in its profits, he was engaged to conduct the Brooklyn Union, also belonging to Mr. Bowen; and by a still less number of individuals is it known what brought this arrangement to a sudden close, which culminated in a suit-at-law against Mr. Bowen, that was finally arbitrated by several prominent members of Plymouth Church, acting in the interests of Messrs. Beecher & Bowen, to break the sword of justice, manufactured by Mr. Bowen, but held by Mr. Tilton.

It is not immaterial to inquire why Mr. Bowen, up to the time of arbitration, should have refused to pay to Mr. Tilton what was justly his due, and why he afterward paid it with so much alacrity. Was there a consideration other than damage for breach of contract previously demanded by Mr. Bowen and refused by Mr. Tilton? In short, was there not a significant letter, written by Mr. Bowen from Woodstock, Vermont, to Mr. Tilton, danting to Mr. Beecher, which was the root bone of contention, and which the arbitration decided Mr. Tilton should pay to Mr. Bowen, upon receiving from him the payment of this demand? If this be so, what was that letter? Did it merely confirm Mr. Bowen, and if so why were Mr. Beecher's friends called into the arbitration; and was personal and confidential arbitration necessary to settle a matter of which law could take no cognizance?

That there was a letter is certain; and that the letter must have been important, is evident; but are the persons who composed the arbitration simple enough to believe that Mr. Tilton gave it up without keeping a certified copy? If so, they must indeed have a decidedly poor opinion of Mr. Tilton's wisdom, and a very exalted opinion of his veracity.

Again, was this letter read before the arbitration, and if so, and it was important as involving Mr. Beecher, how is it that they, as prominent members of Plymouth Church,

have made no movement to vindicate him, or to inquire into the case, but determine if he were worthy to continue in its pastoral charge? These things are very significant when it is understood that Mr. Bowen was wont to say that he had only "to open his fingers to Mr. Beecher, to drive him out of Brooklyn in twenty-four hours," and that since the settlement he has been one of his most ardent supporters. Had vision, as witness his weeping on Mrs. Beecher's neck, at the recent silver wedding to Plymouth Church.

When we consider all the various circumstances that envelope this case in present darkness, we cannot help exclaiming: Is it possible that all those members of Mr. Beecher's church, being cognizant of the real difficulty between Mr. Tilton and Mr. Bowen, conceal it, because they are involved in something of the same sort sufficiently well known to make suppression impossible? Is it a "break" once begun? If this be so, then indeed is Brooklyn sleeping on a volcano; and it is no wonder that herculean efforts are being made by those aware of the danger to prevent an eruption that would arouse the sleepers to a comprehension of what had existed for so long a time under their very eyes, unheeded or unknown.

Violent convulsions always precede great changes, let them both whatever department of nature, and great changes usually occur simultaneously in the several departments. Wherever we now look over the face of the earth, whether it be to the earth itself, or the elements themselves there, is confusion or spasmodic convulsions, fire, flood or tempest to its inhabitants as nations, to their intellectual, moral, industrial, social capacities, there is the uncertainty that forbodes coming changes everywhere present, and the earnest efforts of leonine revolutionaries, urged by unseen forces, they scarcely know why or whence, precipitate them.

In the past history of the world, there have been earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, islands submersed and thrown up; there have been tempests, hurricanes and electrical convulsions; there have been war, pestilence, famine and flood; there have been revolutions in religion, politics, science, deduction and philosophical formula; but until now there has been nothing that could be called purely a revolution. In social matters disconnected from other questions, in the relations of individuals to each other and to society, the right of sovereignty has gradually ascended without rapidity from the one supreme control to the very verge of perfect individual control; and it is here, on this very verge, that the enlightened portion of the world is now hesitating, half in fear and half in doubt, as to what may follow the leap, but nevertheless venturing, as individuals, to take it. When it can be done and a return made secretly. We reiterate that we believe the conscious and well-calculated interference of the spirit-world has foreseen and prepared the very events that have occurred and that are to occur in Plymouth Church, with which to usher in the grand and final social revolution which must precede complete individual freedom.

#### FLOATING LIARS.

We have numerous inquiries regarding certain statements that are circulating through the press about the alleged denials of Mrs. Stanton and Davis of their involvement in the Beecher affair. We did not purpose noticing any of these unless the denials should be made publicly by themselves, but since they are now beginning to be made semi-officially, by some of the interested parties, we feel we are justified in noticing them.

It is said that Mrs. Stanton has written a letter. Why, then, is it not published? It is sufficient for us to quote from the letter of "Justina" in the *Hartford Times*, copied in our last number, to indicate what that letter may contain, in answering the query, says:

The papers have stated that Mrs. Stanton, on reading Mrs. Woodhull's denunciation of it, related to herself, "Perhaps she did deny something." But Mrs. S. is a public woman, and knows how to write; why have we not a card from her explaining the matter in full? I will tell you why, Mr. Editor: simply because Mrs. Stanton does not impair her own reputation for veracity; for she has herself charged Mr. Beecher, to parties residing in this city (Philadelphia) any known to me, the writer, and elsewhere, with very much the same offenses of which Mr. Woodhull speaks.

Whatever letters there may be purporting to have emanated from Paulina Wright Davis, denying her connection in the matter, we take it upon ourselves to declare them to be forged. We know what Mrs. Davis' feelings upon this question was, and her short residence in Europe cannot have so changed them as to cause her to deprecate what has been done by us. Therefore we can say that we know there are no such letters as it is stated there are in the papers.

To our friends we must again say, wait patiently! This is a great and grave issue that is upon the church, and everything in heaven and earth will be moved to prevent the further bursting of the bubble which we have so fearfully entered. Even now are the props that have so long held it a giving way; and, if we mistake not, a new year will surely have progressed beyond a month before the earth will come that shall disrupt the entire church, and strip the masks from hypocrites, small and great, showing real causes that have so long upheld them in high places.

The culmination of an organized hypocrisy of nearly two thousand years duration is near at hand. Do not be impatient! If it do not come "in a day," and do not recite the means necessary to precipitate it, since from its ashes, when it shall come, will arise a new and beautiful civilization, not merely Christian in name, but Christ-like in fact.

#### ABOUT OURSELVES.

Agreeably to many urgent requests we below shall reprint extracts from letters and articles having personal reference to ourselves, with the view of showing what those who know us best have from time to time recorded. Under no other circumstances than such as exist at present could we have consented to do this, but some who heretofore have spoken well of us, having claimed a change of views, we hereby invite them to explain the causes of such changes, to which we will gladly give space in the *WEEKLY*. We are aware that many think we have made unwarrantable use of confidence, in the Beecher Article, but, as we said in that article, we possessed no confidences except such as were forced for the very purpose for which they were used. Moreover, this is a great cause in which we were engaged, and required all the weight of testimony that was at our command; and though some of it involved those who would not have chosen to be known in the matter, and who, probably, now deprecate what has been done, still we have faith to believe that, in the not-distant future, they will voluntarily come to the front and eagerly engage in the then to be moving revolution, and fully justify our course. We are not aware that we are different from what we were when the extracts given below were written, except that we have written the Beecher Article. If it be that which has caused us to be held in less esteem than formerly, we can easily endure the censure, since we know the future will vindicate our course and regain the favor we have lost; but if other causes exist, we trust that they who have been so kindly disposed toward us in the past, and who have spoken to the public in such graceful and (to us) grateful terms, will now do that same public justice by showing to it our faults which they have discovered. This is a duty owed both to themselves and the public, and we hope, if any of the sentiments below set forth are now obsolete in the hearts that conceived them, that their writers will avail themselves of these columns to rectify their previous errors of judgment or to correct too hastily formed opinions.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., February 1, 1871.

BRAVO! MY DEAR WOODHULL! Your letter is here, and the telegram of the "Majority and Minority Report," the glorious "old boy!" He is surely going to promote the word that will settle the woman question, just as Hegel did "Contradiction," that so settled the negro question.

Everybody here chimies in with the new conclusion that we are already free. But how absolutely dead, dead, dead, are the Woman's Journal and Revolution! one would think them in a Rip Van Winkle sleep. It is beyond my comprehension how anybody can be so dull—so behind the times.

Mrs. Livermore, in her speech here, said: "Some able lawyers have said not Victoria C. Woodhull had petitioned, and Congress and the National Woman's Suffrage Committee had claimed in) that the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments enfranchised women. She could afford to wait; but all of them are as 'dead as door-nails' to the new and living gospel."

I have never in the whole twenty years felt so full of life and hope. I know now that Mr. Train's prophecy—say, aeronaut—that women would vote for the next President, will be realized. I am sure that you and I will vote for somebody, if not for George Francis Train or Victoria C. Woodhull.

Go ahead! bright, glorious, young and strong spirit, and believe in the best love, hope and faith.

S. B. ANTHONY,

#### PAULINA WRIGHT DAVIS.

The following letter was called forth by the attempt of a prominent member of the Boston Wing of Suffragists and of prominent to charge Mrs. Davis' European trip to the account of her desire to escape from the odium of her connection with us. She is justly rebuked:

351 West THIRTY-FOURTH STREET, CITY.

MY DEAR VICTORIA: I have just learned that the amiable Mrs. Grundy has been busy conjuring up reasons for my going abroad, stating that I am driven away by the present position of our movement. Will you permit me to say, through your columns, that I go abroad for my own personal reasons; and may be absent three months, or may stay one or two years. In the meanwhile, believe me, I shall not relax my efforts for the enfranchisement of woman, or for her social and spiritual emancipation from bondage for worse than her political slavery. I need not urge you to increased effort. I am sure of your unflagging zeal—of your noble, generous, disinterested spirit. I want to feel that my heart is throbbing beside yours in full sympathy, love and hope, for you and our great work. Let me not feel or fear that because the ocean rolls between us, that I lose my place in the ranks of the real workers. Yours, for truth,

PAULINA WRIGHT DAVIS.

New York, June 10, 1871.

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

She has strange traits occasionally, indicating over-excitement of mind, and she gives undue credence to spirit influence; and, above all, she uses the term free-love in a sense wholly different from that in which it is understood by the world, and so is fearfully misconstrued. But I give my testimony to the fact that she is one of the most upright, truthful, religious and unusual souls, I ever met.

Just at present, when everybody seems willing to treat her with bitterness, I thank you for standing as I do, her unchanging friend.

[From "A Legend of Good Women," in the "Golden Age." By Theodore Tilton.]

JUNO 26, 1871.

Victoria C. Woodhull is a younger heroine than most of the foregoing—having come into the cause after some of her elders had already become veterans. But her advocacy of woman's right to the ballot, as logically deduced from the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, has given her national notoriety. If the woman's movement has a Joan of Arc, it is this gentle but fiery genius. She is one of the most remarkable women of her time. Little understood by the public, she is destined, in the most outrageous manner by people who do not appreciate her moral worth. But her sincerity, her truthfulness, her uprightness, her true nobility of character, are so well known to those who know her well, that she ranks, in the estimation of these, somewhat as St. Theresa does in the admiring thoughts of pious Catholics. She is a devout religious enthusiast—a user of visions—a devout communian with the other world. She gets under spiritual influence, and, like St. Paul, is "not disobedient to the heavenly vision." Her bold social theories have startled many good souls, but anybody who, on this account, imagines her to stand below the white and purest of her sex, will misplace a woman who in moral integrity rises to the full height of the highest.

WYOMING, June 21, 1871.

VICTORIA WOODHULL:

Dear Madam.—To you, the last victim sacrificed on the altar of woman's suffrage, I send my first word from the land of freedom.

I left New York after our May conventions, sad and oppressed with the barbarism, falsehood and hypocrisy, of the press of our country, knowing that when liberty runs into license, the reaction that must come is tyranny. The fearful scenes being enacted in Paris to-day should warn us who believe in the great idea of self-government to rebuke every violation of individual rights. It may be a light thing for the press of the country to hold up one frail little woman to public ridicule and derision; but this reckless hurling of individual reputations is destructive of all sense of justice and honor among our people, and will eventually force on us a censorship of the press. The grief I feel in the vile raking of your personal and family affairs was three-fold—sympathy for you, shame for the men who persecuted you, and the general I saw in the abuse of one of our greatest blessings—a free press.

Why did our editors all over the land dip their pens in gall to crush the one woman whom the Congress of the United States honored, for the first time in the history of our Government, with a hearing before the Judiciary Committee of the House and an able report on her memorial? Was it because they so loved purity and principle, and felt the cause of woman's suffrage too sacred to be advocated by any one not as pure and chaste as Diana? Nay, my, but because they hated the principle of equality, and could not answer her able argument. Those crafty ones see that this reform has passed the court of moral discussion, and is now fairly ushered into the arena of politics. Jeremy Bentham tells us it is an old dodge of the enemies of progress, that when they cannot answer the arguments of reformers, they try to blacken their characters, and thus turn public thought from principles to personalities.

It occurs to me that some commentaries on your very able arguments on natural rights and constitutional law would be higher game for men supposed to be specially gifted with the power of reason and trained to logical deductions, and more in harmony with the tastes of educated gentlemen, than all this low gossiping about the blunders of your childhood and the sorrows of your mature years.

Let not the women of the country be deceived by these hints of the press, lest woman's virtue be sacrificed; little care they for that, for the same pens that sacrifice Victoria Woodhull to-day, were more remorseless in their persecution of Harriet Beecher Stowe two years ago, when, by unavailing the social infamies of Lord Byron's life, she shook the civilized world. To a man the press of England and America rushed to his defense. No whining then about social morals, or warnings to women to beware of the men of their own households, but flat denials of what, from common report, and Byron's own writings, all knew to be true; and stern rebukes of the woman who had thus shaken the confidence of her sex in their natural protectors.

"Ah!" cried these gentlemen of the press, "what monstrous sacrilege, thus to unmask the dead!"

Do dead men feel persecution or betrayal more than living women?

Is it harder for a man to bear the world's scorn and contempt in the solitude of a British sepulchre than for a woman while earning her living in the busy streets of our metropolis, with the scarlet letter forever beating on her bruised heart.

Hawthorne's sketch of that base, craven coward sitting high in the judgment seat, to pass sentence on the woman he had seduced, standing alone in the market-place, with the eyes of the multitude and the intense rays of a summer's sun burning into her very soul, is all realized in our midst every day.

When I think of all the world's baseness, softness and hypocrisy toward my sex through the long, long past, and the mountains of sorrow and shame they groan under; even in this Christian civilization, I sometimes blush that one drop of my woman's blood has ever warmed the heart of any living man.

But you have not suffered in vain. You have made some grand points of assault on the old tyrant Custom.

In declaring that women are already citizens and pointing the short way to freedom, you have inspired the strongest of us with new hope and enthusiasm. In securing a hearing before the Judiciary Committee of Congress, and that able report of Butler and Longbridge, you have lifted the debate on woman's suffrage from the low ground of expediency, where ordinary men insist on holding it, into the higher

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rules of constitutional law. You have attacked, too, the strength of the enemy—the social subordination of women.

Mrs Anthony and I have laughed over a letter of Washington's in the Springfield *Republican*, describing the trepidation of our friends at the Hall—*Is your friend Mrs. Hooker's presence should make them responsible for your social theories and your advent to the Woman's Rights platform? Why did you not pass a resolution against Congress, or giving you a hearing and reporting your memorial? If you are the questionable character they assume, your wives would be far more dangerous among our representatives at the capital than in a convention of strong-minded women in Boston?*

But you must pardon those sweet sisters, for most of their speakers on the occasion seem to have been new recruits who did not believe in woman's suffrage five years ago.

But their alarm is not more amusing than the prophetic vision of their chosen seer, in the *Woman's Journal*, N. W. H., who now thinks we may vote in sixty years. Does not the reverend gentleman know that all women are voting in Wyoming to-day, and some have voted in other States? That we have declared ourselves "citizens," and intend to vindicate our rights at the ballot box and in the courts, and that unless Congress gives us a declaration not securing us in all our inalienable rights we shall secede from this bosom republic, and set up a pure democracy of our own, isolated by all the just men who wish to enjoy the blessings of liberty and equality in government.

Verily, this New England prophet has more skill in the rhetorical turn of sentence than in reaching the signs of the times. From Cheyenne we go to Denver.

Respectfully yours,

ELIZABETH CADDY STANTON.

NEW YORK, June 25, 1871.

MY DEAR MR. BANCROFT: I take for granted that the remarks in the *Republican* concerning Mrs. Woodhull are yours, but you are in the estimate of the woman. She is a purist in moral—just the opposite of what you imagine her to be. I know her well—very well. Her character, I believe (and I cheerfully testify), is spotless. Her social views are not those of Stephen Pearl Andrews, but of John Stuart Mill. Except for her mistaken use of the term "Free Love"—a term which she employs in a wholly different sense from that which it bears when you read it in the writings of Mr. Andrews. I believe her social theories would not differ at all from your own.

I take pains to write you this line because Mrs. Woodhull is a woman of singular moral excellence—a model of truthfulness, sincerity and uprightness. Her unfortunate reputation is due wholly to an intellectual use of words. Persons who know her well hold her in uncommon respect. Never have I met, whether among women or men, a character of greater simplicity or goodness than hers. Excuse my boldness, and believe me, faithfully yours,

TILTON.

FROM MRS. DAVIS.

PROVIDENCE, August 20, 1871.

MY DEAR VICTORIA: Despite the *Telegraph's* idea of my silence and craven I find every hour assailed with duties that friendly letters are often deferred, not wholly neglected, for I usually bring up at the last moment. This must be my excuse for not having sooner congratulated you upon your nomination by the *Victorian League* to the Presidency. But I have not been either idle or mindful of our, your interests, for in the one I consider the other bound up.

From the time when I picked up your paper with your name at the head as the future President of the U. S. A., and read your pronouncements, I have never named any other candidate for President.

That step at once pricked you fearless, self-sacrificing and strong in the right. Your platform of a just government I regard as a most able state paper, one that will bear a favorable comparison with any which has been put forth for years; and I am proud that it is bound up with the history of the first twenty years' work for human freedom. It is a most excellent beginning of the history of the next decade.

The meeting held in Apollo Hall, though seemingly an affair of failure, has certainly not been without its results. If there had been no other, the issuing that one document (though not endorsed, it should have been, by the meeting) would have been worth the time; but the great social question receives an impetus that it will not soon lose in its onward progress. I believe people begin to see that suffrage will not give woman social equality any more than it gives it to the negro now. It is but a stepping-stone toward the greater. The black man votes, but ask him if he does not still feel the ban of public sentiment against his tinted skin, and he will answer "yes"; and sex will still be the word to stifle woman's aspirations for a larger life, even though she may vote for years.

Though as a scientist I regard the social questions as of the greater importance, I am none the less ready to accept your nomination; and though I may be on the other side of the globe, I shall come home to vote for you in 1872; and every woman will be recreant to duty who fails in standing firmly in this crisis by your side, strengthening, encouraging and aiding in all and every possible way.

Yours ever truly,

PAULINA W. DAVIS.

FROM MR. TILTON'S BIOGRAPHY OF MRS. WOODHULL.

"He that uttereth a slander is a fool."

Solomon, Prov. x. 18.

I shall briefly sketch the life of Victoria Claflin Woodhull: a young woman whose career has been as singular as any heroine's in a romance; whose ability is of a rare and whose career of the rarest type; whose personal sufferings are of themselves a whole drama of pathos; whose name (through the malice of some and the ignorance of others) has caught a shadow in strange contrast with the whiteness of her life.

whose position as a representative of her sex in the greatest reform of modern times renders her an object of peculiar interest to her fellow citizens; and whose character (inasmuch as I know her well) I can portray without color or tinge from any other partiality save that I hold her in uncommon respect.

In speaking of her former husband, he said: To be now turned out of doors by the woman he wronged, but who would not wrong him in return, would be an act of inhumanity which it would be impossible for Mrs. Woodhull and Col. Blood either jointly or separately to commit. For this piece of noble conduct—what is commonly called her living with two husbands under one roof—she has received not so much censure on earth as I think she will receive reward in heaven. No other passage of her life more significantly illustrates the nobility of her moral judgments, or the superlative courage with which she stands by her convictions. Not all the clamorous tongues in Christendom, though they should simultaneously cry out against her "Fie, for shame!" could persuade her to turn this wretched wreck from her home. And I say she is right; and I will maintain this opinion against the combined Peccatines of the whole world.

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

"In thy white blamlessness accounted blame!"

In speaking of the Woodhull Memorial, he said: The document was shown to a number of friends, including one eminent Judge, who ridiculed its logic and conclusions. But the lady herself, from whose sleeping and yet unleeping brain the strange document had sprung like Minerva from the head of Jove, simply answered that her antique Instructor, having never misled her before, was guiding her along then. Nothing doubting, but much wondering, she took the novel document to Washington, where, after a few days of laughter from the shallow-minded, and of neglect from the indifferent, it suddenly burst upon the Federal Capitol like a storm, and then spanned it like a rainbow. She went before the Judiciary Committee, and delivered an argument in support of her claim to the franchise under the new amendments, which some who heard it pronounced one of the ablest efforts which they had ever heard on any subject. She caught the listening ears of Senator Carpenter, General Butler, Judge Woodward, George W. Julian, General Ashley, Judge Longbridge, and other able statesmen in Congress, and impressed these gentlemen as steady to her character. Such was the force of her appeal that the whole city rushed together to hear her, like the Athenians to the market-place when Demosthenes stood in his own and not a borrowed clay. A great audience, one of the largest ever gathered in the capital, assembled to hear her defend her thesis in the first public speech of her life. At the moment of rising, her face was observed to be very pale, and she appeared about to faint. On being afterward questioned as to the cause of her emotion, she replied that, during the first prolonged moment, she remembered an early prediction of her guardian spirit, until then forgotten, that she would one day speak in public, and that her first discourse would be pronounced in the capital of her country. The sudden fulfillment of this prophecy photo her so violently that for a moment she was stunned into apparent unconsciousness. But she recovered herself, and passed through the ordeal with great success—which is better luck than happened to the real Demosthenes, for Plutarch mentions that his maiden speech was a failure, and that he was laughed at by the people.

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

I might say something of her personal appearance although it defies portrayal, whether by photograph or pen. Neither tall nor short, stout nor slim, she is of medium stature, lithesome, elastic, free and graceful. Her side face, looked at over her left shoulder, is of perfect profile outline, as classic as ever went into a Roman marble, and resembles the mask of Shakespeare taken after death; the same view, looking from the right, is a little broken and irregular; and the front face is broad, with prominent cheek bones; and with some unshapely nose lines. Her countenance is never twice alike, so variable is its expression and so dependent on her moods. Her soul comes into it, and goes out of it, giving her at one time the look of a superior and almost saintly intelligence and at another leaving her dull, commonplace and unprepossessing. When under a strong spiritual influence, a strange and mystical light irradiates from her face, reminding the beholder of the Hebrew Lawgiver who gave to men what he received from God and whose face during the transfer shone. Tennyson, as with the hand of a gold-beater, has beautifully guided the same expression in his stanza of St. Stephen the Martyr in the article of death:

"And looking upward, full of grace,  
He prayed, and from a happy place  
God's glory shone like on the face."

In conversation, until she is somewhat warmed with earnestness, she haults; as if her mind was elsewhere; but the moment she brings all faculties to her lips for the full utterance of her

message, whether it be of persuasion or indignation, and particularly when under spiritual control, she is a very orator for eloquence—pouring forth her sentences like a mountain stream sweeping away everything that frets its flood.

Her hair which, when left to itself, is as long as those treasured of Mortensa in which her son Louis Napoleon used to play hide-and-seek, she now mercilessly cuts close like a boy's, from impatience at the daily waste of time in suitably taking care of this prodigal gift of nature.

"Difficulties," says Emerson, "exist to be surmounted." This might be the motto of her life. In her lexicon (which is still of youth) there is no such word as fail. Her ambition is stupendous—nothing is too great for her grasp. Present of the grandeur of her destiny, she goes forward with a relentless fanaticism to accomplish it. Believing thoroughly in herself (or rather not in herself, but in her spirit-aids) she allows no one else to do for her or them. In her case the old miracle is enacted anew—the faith which removes mountains. A soul set on edge by conquering weapon in the battle of life. Such, and of Damascus temper, is hers.

In making an epitome of her views, I may say that in politics she is a downright democrat, scorning to divide her fellow-citizens into upper and lower classes, but ranking them all in one comprehensive equality of right, privilege and opportunity; concerning finance, which is a favorite topic with her, she holds that gold is not the true standard of money-value, but that the government should abolish the gold-standard, and issue its notes instead, giving to these a fixed and permanent value, and calculating them as the only money; on social questions, her theories are similar to those which have been taught by John Stuart Mill and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and which are styled by some as free-love doctrine; while others reject this appellation on account of its popular association with the idea of a promiscuous intimacy between the sexes—the essence of her system being that marriage is of the heart and not of the law; that when love ends marriage should end with it, being dissolved by nature, and that no civil statute should outwardly bind two hearts which have been inwardly sundered; and, finally, in religion, she is a spiritualist of the most mystical and ethereal type.

Engrossed in business affairs, nevertheless at any moment she would rather die than live—such is her infinite estimate of the other world over this. But she disdains all commonplace partyings with the spirit-realm such as are had in ordinary spirit-manifestations. On the other hand, she is passionately eager to see the spirits face to face—to summon them at her will and commune with them at her pleasure. Twice (as she unshakably believes) she has seen a vision of Jesus Christ—honored thus doubly over St. Paul, who saw his Master but once, and then was overcome by the sight. She never goes to my church—says to the solemn temple whose stony arch spans her house-top at night, where she sits like Simon Stylites on his pillar, a worshiper in the sky. Against the incitations of her childhood education, the spirits have taught her that he whom the church calls the Saviour of the world is not God but man. But her reverence for him is supreme and entire. The Sermon on the Mount fills her eyes with tears. The exciting exclamation of the Psalmist are her familiar outbursts of devotion. For two years, as a talisman against any temptation toward untruthfulness (which, with her, is the unpardonable sin), she wore, studded into the sleeve of every one of her dresses, the 2d verse of the 120th Psalm, namely, "Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue." Speaking the truth punctiliously, whether in great things or small, she so vigorously exacts the sum of others, that a devil practised upon her unkindles her soul to a flame of fire; and she has acquired a clairvoyant or intuitive power to detect a lie in the moment of its utterance, and to smite the liar in his act of guilt. She believes that intellectual power has its fountain in spiritual inspiration. And once when I put to her the searching question, "What is the greatest truth that has ever been expressed in words?" she thrilled me with the sudden answer, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."

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

Let me say that I know of no person against whom there are more prejudices, nor any one who more quickly disarms them. This strange faculty is the most powerful of her powers. She shoots a word like a sudden sunbeam through the thickest mist of people's doubts and accusations, and clears the sky in a moment. Questioned by some committee or delegation who have come to her with idle tales against her busy life, I have seen her swiftly gather together all the stones which they have cast, put them like the miner's quartz into the furnace, melt them with fierce and fervent heat, bring out of them the purest gold, stamp thereon her image and superscription as she were sovereign of the realm, and then (as the marvel of it all) receive the sworn allegiance of the whole company on the spot. At one of her public meetings when the chair (as she hoped) would be occupied by Lucretia Mott, this venerable woman had been persuaded to decline this responsibility, but afterward stepped forward on the platform and lovingly kissed the young speaker in presence of the multitude. Her enemies (save those of her own household) are few. To see her is to respect her—to know her is to vindicate her. She has some impetuous and headlong faults, but were she without the same traits which





The scene has been, from the first, sublime. Mr. Beecher has gone forth, preaching, praying and pouring forth his great soul of inspiration, as if nothing had happened. His elders and deacons have gathered around him as a solid phalanx, saying: "Make no explanation—not even to us; we ask none; we will see that the church and congregation accept and maintain the same facts in regard of disengagement." And they have done so; and church, and congregation, and the public—to a large extent—have quietly submitted into the acceptance of his position, whatsoever it may be.

By this magnanimous system of tactics, which could not have been carried out at any former period of the world's history—which could not have been carried out, probably, in any other church and congregation in the world—which marks grandly and sublimely the exalted influence which the great preacher has rightly acquired, during all these years, over the minds of his people—what otherwise would have been a disastrous fall, has been broken; opinion has been modified, adverse judgment of the conduct itself, mollified; and the way prepared for the interior acceptance, by the whole world, of that which, but a few weeks before, it would have been deemed impossible to have projected, in any form, into the public thought, in such a way as to secure acceptance.

The cause, in so far as it implied any charge deemed immoral by old standards, or unwise, has been suffered to go, as I have said, by default; but not only that—not only has a defeat been warded off, but a positive triumph for new ideas, has been secured by this masterly inactivity. Not only has it been found safe for an orthodox preacher, and for a great leader of opinion, to commit every breach of the old and *safe* code of morals, and to stand upon the tacit admission of the fact, *mildly but firmly* surrounded by his cohorts of elders, deacons and people—defying all criticism; but, more than this, that same conduct and that same sublime justification of that conduct on the part of his congregation and people, or what amounts to the same thing, their utter refusal even to investigate, what they half believe to be true, or what they admit may have been true, and holding Mr. Beecher in any event all right, or sufficiently right to command their allegiance—have almost lifted humanity up to a new plane—have prepared for its new departure in morals—have reversed the currents of opinion of the ages past, and have opened the way for the fullest and freest discussion of every social problem.

From this time forward, the question is no longer, what has been thought and taught to be right in social affairs, no longer, merely, what has descended to us by tradition, and what has been consecrated to us by religion; but it is the new and higher question, of what is virtually true in the social relations, which is presented for our consideration; of what is natural and right; of what would lead to the highest and best results in the social architecture of the future; of what is our duty in respect to that future; of what, in other words, are the signs of the times; what is the nature and tendency of the age we live in; and who are the men, and the women who can lead the world to higher and better conditions? What of the night, how far are we along toward the breaking of the perfect day? What is the significance of modern socialism, of Christian socialism, and what of all the socialisms, and prophecies of the hour in respect to the future?

These and ten thousand others pressing and urgent questions which ignorance, prejudice and the impacted and obstinate reluctance of the community, to investigate radically new subjects, have hitherto hindered and kept back, are now fairly launched upon the tide of public investigation, and can no longer be charged upon a few erratic individuals, as a restless disposition to disturb the public peace. These great questions, which are now pressing forward in the place of the old anti-slavery agitation, or the temperance reform, and of the woman's rights movement specifically, and of the hundred and one subjects and questions of reform, which have occupied the public attention during the last three or four decades, have been more fostered and favored, with reference to their early triumphant solution, by the conduct of Mr. Beecher and his congregation in this matter, than by any preceding event. I felt assured that in some way, which I was incompetent fully to foresee, the step which I took to force Mr. Beecher and his people, more openly into the current of reform, would have this desired result; but I see clearly now, that in no possible other way, could so much have been achieved, in behalf of this result, as by this course of tacit admission and quiet default, into which their good instincts have directed them. If I ever had any, I have, therefore, no longer, any quarrel, as it now stands, with anybody about this matter.

I have said, that no one of the numerous parties mentioned by me in connection with this subject, has uttered one word of denial or explanation. There was an evidently unauthorized paragraph floating through the newspapers, to the purport that Elizabeth Cady Stanton had denied the truth of what I have stated; but the item bore no authentication of her signature, and was evidently untrue. She is not denied and will not deny what I have said in the matter. A correspondent of the *Hartford Times* forwarding a communication from Philadelphia, advertizing to the subject, says:

"But Mrs. E. Cady Stanton's course needs explanation. The papers have stated that Mrs. Stanton, being at Lewiston, Me., on reading Mrs. Woodhull's story, denounced it as far as it related to herself. Perhaps she did deny something. But Mrs. S. is a public woman, and knows how to write; why have we not a card from her explaining the matter in full? I will tell you, Mr. Editor: simply because Mrs. Stanton dare not impugn her own reputation for veracity; for she has herself charged Mr. Beecher, to parties residing in this city and known to me, to the writer, and elsewhere, with very much the same offenses of which Mrs. Woodhull speaks."

Mrs. Stanton knows all these facts too well, has mentioned them too extensively, has too much respect for her own veracity, and knows me too well in the earnestness and veracity of my serious avowments, and in the boldness and energy with which I prosecute my undertakings, wantonly to deny any statement which she has made to me, and to others along with me, in relation to this important affair. She is also too deeply interested in the general progress of social emancipation to wish even, in any manner, to injure the effect which this particular campaign, in the great social warfare, is now so happily producing. None of the persons involved will, hereafter, any more than they have hitherto, deny the statement I have made of the facts. The same writer in the *Hartford Times*, just quoted from, has the following with regard to Mr. Moulton:

"And now a word regarding Mr. Frank Moulton. Of the integrity, culture and fine social position of this gentleman we are fully assured,

and we are also authentically informed that his 'painful silence' means a great deal, for whether Mr. Moulton, at the point of a pistol, extorted from Mr. Beecher such a paper as Mrs. Woodhull defines or not, it is certain that he forced Mr. Beecher to deliver up a paper of some kind. Mr. Moulton is a gentleman, who does not go to vulgar extremes; and the fact that he felt obliged to compel Mr. Beecher to deliver up that paper, as he did, is sufficient evidence that the paper was an important one, and Mr. Moulton considered that Mr. Beecher had forfeited esteem as a gentleman, if not as a Christian. If Mr. Beecher, relying upon his former reputation, scornfully refuses to notice Mrs. W.'s main charges, perhaps he could be induced to explain the cause of Mr. Moulton's ungracious visits to him. One thing is sure, namely, that if Mr. M. ever breaks his 'painful silence' (for he will not), it will be found that an important paper was wrested by force from Mr. Beecher; and that this paper relates to the act which Mr. Beecher, for reasons of his own, does not yet see fit to make public."

The moment the silence should be broken, that defense or denial should be attempted, that discussion should be instituted, a hundred witnesses would spring up on every side, confirming, in general and in particulars, all that I have said; and among these witnesses not a few would be from among the members of Plymouth Church. I therefore repeat, that no sublimer spectacle has been witnessed, in any age, than the perfect rotteness and complete personification of the policy of inaction, on the part of all the parties concerned. We may therefore dismiss them from our large list of obstacles in the way of social progress, and may enroll them at once, and for all future time, as at least the tacit friends and co-operators with the army of social emancipation.

But I promised to tell you why the press has been silent. It was partly because they were astonished by the magnitude and revolutionary nature of the facts stated; because they were therefore taken, as it were, unaware and unprepared with any well-defined opinions on the subject; and because the subject was too pregnant with importance to be dealt with in the ordinary flippant way. It was, partly, because of a highly honorable sentiment of friendship and veneration for Mr. Beecher which pervades in fact, the whole country, and which is similar in kind to the feeling which has controlled so powerfully his church and congregation; and from a general unreadiness to do or say anything, which would embarrass him in selecting his own system of tactics and his own method of defense, in the serious dilemma into which he had been thrown. It was in part sympathy with the new ideas, with which fully one-half of the members of the press in this city, are more or less imbued, and the hope that if left alone, the matter would, in some way, turn out favorably for the cause of a reform, in which they were to some extent interested, while still unprepared to incur the odium of its defense; and it was in part the fear of that despotism of opinion, under which we all live, and which has, hitherto, almost preemptorily forbidden the free discussion of the social problem.

But no one of these causes, nor all of them combined, could have long prevented the open protest of the press against the abuse of the power of the law and the assault on the rights of free speech and free publication, which were involved in our arrest, if we had remained incarcerated, or could prevent it now, if we should be again arrested.

The New York *Herald* generously opened its columns (paying only its pipercorn of allegiance to Mrs. Grundy in its editorial columns) for me in my defense while I was in jail. The Brooklyn *Eagle* published a succession of caustic editorials, arraigning the officers of the law for their usurpation, and urging Mr. Beecher and his congregation to take the only legitimate measures for defending against, or denying my statement, if they were to be defended against or denied, at all. The Catholic newspapers of the country, republished extensively from us, and showed but an ill-concealed exultation, that Protestant clergymen were not exempt from the liability to the same charges which Protestants, in their assumed superior purity, have delighted to invoke against Catholic clergymen. In a word, the sympathies of the Catholics of these two cities, and perhaps of the country at large, are strongly with us in this contest; and I wish to acknowledge my great obligations to leading Catholics who have busied themselves in aiding me, in the securing of bail, and in other important matters, during my incarceration.

The Protestant pulpit had also begun to growl forth its disapprobation of Mr. Beecher's position. In a sermon preached in the West Church, Boston, on November 4, 1872, by Rev. C. A. Bartol, reported in the *Liberal Christian* of Saturday, December 7, this distinguished clergyman says:

"Having such a good opinion of ourselves makes us think lightly of our guilt. We eat and wipe our mouth; but we cannot suffice witnesses of our error; and it is a mistake to leave specific indictments unexamined, as if simple standing could put them down. Not were we high as Colossus. The grim accusations of the woman in jail in New York will serve the commonwealth if they lead to a probing of those deepest wounds inflicted on it by secret iniquity; while the multiplication of crimes of violence arising out of jarring affectional relations ought, if anything can, short of the last fire and last war, to alarm custodians of order and Christians in their pews."

And again:

"For the only safety is truth. A lie is no more safe than good. Things cannot be hushed up, nor crimes concealed more than flames. If anybody charges me with a sin, I shall not rely on my reputation; I shall demand investigation, and you for my investigators straightforward. What corruption is that crew of suspicion after? He is not flying through the air for nothing! The church dares not explore the evil? Then let its members bear the stain!"

Socialism, the belief that just as great changes are impending, and must be effected for the ultimate good of mankind, in the relation of the sexes—in the more widespread influence of love—in the elevation of love out of its lower forms of mere passionnal excitement, of its purification, without repression or destruction of any part; however, of the sentiment; the belief that the construction of our homes must be radically changed, to accommodate these new ideas; that industry must be organized around the great composite home or hive of people; that women must be cared for and sustained, not in domestic bondage, but in complete freedom, and all that stands connected and related with these beliefs—in a word, Socialism is no longer confined to the few agitators and radical thinkers—it is widely diffused, even in the most religious circles, and where the sentiments of piety most profoundly prevail.

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John H. Noyes and the Oneida Community, with their system of complex marriage or practical Free Love, were the outbirth, not of French Socialism, but of New England Revivalism, and of the more vital interpretation of the spirit and letter of the New Testament. Prof. Upham, who has recently died, and who stood for fifty years at the head of New England theology, a vital pietist of the Madame Guion school, was for many years a full convert through his study of the Scripture, to the belief that unlimited freedom in the relations of the sexes would, in the Millennial order, supersede our present marital restrictions. These doctrines were taught by him, in a subdued and partial sense, to the hundreds of young men who have gone forth from Bowdoin College to preach, and to pursue the various professions, during the past generation.

During the last twenty years Prof. Upham has steadily visited, from year to year, and communed with Noyes and Andrews and all the other leaders of the most advanced social doctrines. He has encouraged and upheld them by his great words, filled with religiousunction and sound philosophy. He has believed that men and women were to be lifted to higher and still higher excellencies, through the deepest and most varied experiences of the heart, and that the doctrine of Love divine as promulgated by Christ, meant nothing less and nothing else than the ultimate introduction upon the earth of a complete social emancipation.

I have heard Mr. Andrews say that he has been closeted, at his own house, with no less than five or six of the leading Doctors of Divinity of the country, during a single year, in the closest and most confidential consultation in respect to these great subjects; and I might occupy the remaining portion of my hour in detailing to you the simple evidences of what I can now only reaffirm as the fact; and which is, that the whole public sentiment of this great Republic is permeated and honey-combed with the belief in, and expectation of, an early and complete overturn of the existing social order, and the introduction of a higher type of moral and social truth.

Now then, in what manner can those who would stave off the discussion, those who dread the light, either with regard to existing evils or future remedies, proceed, other than by charging obscenity or indecency, upon those who persist in the discussion? Anything and everything short of these real offenses against the law, is permitted and authorized, and justified by our Republican institutions, by our doctrine of the freedom of the press, and by our habits of thought as a people. The obscenitists and old-togies, the resisting and unready conservatives have, therefore, no other grounds of defense, no other possible means of repression; no other hopes of success, in keeping under and down, the uprising tendency to gentilize this whole subject, except by charging upon the champions of reform, these disgusting offences. Necessarily the subjects dealt with, are of a delicate nature; necessarily the public mind has to be accustomed to the treating of, and to the reading about, and to the consideration of things, which have hitherto been tabooed or held to be improper for public discussion.

The science of physiology is liable to the same imputation, and has been struggling for the last twenty years for admission, in the most limited way, into our public schools, although vastly the most important of the sciences for the young, simply on the ground, that it is next to impossible to treat it, without some infringement upon established prejudices. Socialism inevitably bears a similar liability; it is impossible to present or discuss the evils or the remedies, in which all socialism deals, without, at times, saying things, in very plain speech, about matters which are ordinarily hushed up or barely referred to by allusion.

But the world grows in its strength and capacity for facing the consideration of every subject. At one time the whole community was shocked and agitated, in respect to the exhibition of nude figures in statuary and painting, here in America, as against the puritanical notions of a previous generation; but all that has gone past, and the beautiful works of art, which base themselves upon the culture and admiration of the human figure, are now familiar visitants in every family.

The admission of women to the ranks of the medical profession, has been hooted at and hindered on the same grounds. A prurient and fastidious morality would, in a thousand ways, keep back the progress of the world; but the world's progress moves in too powerful a current to be repressed. Mystery and mock modesty are giving way, rapidly, before universal enlightenment, and this little puny effort, of the inferior law officers, of the United States Government at New York, to repress the freedom, and hinder the discussion, of great and vital questions; to institute a censorship over thought and morals and free speech, is too ridiculous and is too much an anachronism, too much out of harmony, both with our institutions and the spirit of the age, in which we live, to be more than mere ripple upon the surface. The time has gone past for such measures to intervene successfully, in the intellectual discussion of the age. The toxin of a new order of thinking and acting, was inaugurated, for this country and the world, when Jefferson affirmed, in a single terse epigram, that error need never be feared so long as the truth is left free to combat it.

But let us consider for a moment, what it is which constitutes obscenity or indecency or indecency. Where is the line to be drawn between what it is proper to discuss, or speak of, or put in type, and what ought to be, or may rightly be suppressed by the law? And in reply, I would say, that nothing said with an earnest purpose and for a good end, is or can be obscene. If any other standard than this be erected, the very first book to be condemned and burned for obscenity is the Bible itself. The next books will be the law books. Not a book on medical jurisprudence can be permitted to be printed or sent through the mails. The next will be the medical books. I have in my library an anatomical atlas and other works of the kind which must be instantly repressed.

I am having, at this time, an exhaustive collection made of all the passages in the Bible which may be considered, by this mode of interpretation, obscene; and I am having, through my counsel, a similar collection made, of the prints, discussions and expositions to be found in the legal and medical books. I

am having a similar research made throughout the literature of the world; although, in this respect, I have been nearly saved from the necessity of labor, by a remarkable work which has already performed this service.

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

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

My counsel have taken this whole subject in hand; and, in case the Government of the United States ever dare, which I have assured you they will not, to press the case against me and my sister, for trial, the court house, the public press and the country will be flooded with such oceans of reading matter of an unusual character from all these sources, from the Bible down to the last novelette, that those who have moved in this business will, it is hoped, be fully satisfied with the results.

Such are some of the great words of the great poets found in defense of the free scope and untrammeled career of genius in literature. I recur, now, for one moment, in conclusion, to the more direct and far more weighty purpose of this discourse. I stand here to make my defense of the spirit of this age; of that drift toward social freedom, which is now bursting all bounds, and insisting upon the complete enfranchisement of the human affections.

The head and the hand are already free. Free-thinking and free-action within the just limits which inhibit encroachment, are now grandly tolerated in the world, except in that one department of human affairs, which includes the centraum of love. In that local centre of our lives, we are still slaves. The hand mourns with the bitterness of its bondage. The reverend clergymen, who have labored earnestly and honestly to fasten still on the community their traditional ideas of morality, never permitting themselves even to ask if there is anything wrong in their methods; or if there is, perchance, some better way, have felt the reaction of the vital forces within their own persons and within the community and the age in which they live, as severely as any other class. The old fear of hell-fire has lost its repressive terrors, even over their consciences and lives. Somebody, it is said, has gathered the names, of no less than seven hundred preachers of all sects and denominations, who have been driven from their pulpits within the last four years, and in this country alone; their congregations and the public scandalized, and themselves and their families disgraced and socially ruined by their sexual offences against the effete and false systems of their own moral teachings.

All the other classes of society suffer no less terribly. There is a skeleton in every house. There is hardly a family of ten persons in the land which does not contain in its numbers, some one or more poor, wretched, heart-broken or tortured victim of our ill-advised laws and perverted notions of purity and prosperity; and sometimes every adult person in the entire household is such a victim of repression or compression, or else of starvation, or else, still, of gorging and satiety of their sexual nature.

Every third person of the audience I am now addressing is a conscious, and to some extent a rebellious slave under this tyrannical social system, begotten of other ideas than those that now prevail, and which was, perhaps, well enough adapted to other times, but which now has become a galling tyranny over their domestic lives; and they know that what I say is true. Most of the remainder of my audience, and they are surely representatives of the country at large, if not so consciously, are still unconsciously dragging out a miserable social existence of domestic wretchedness, a common lot of the homes of the people, derived from the same bad brood of pernicious causes.

Repulsions, discontent and mutual torment, haunt the household, everywhere. Brothels and social hells crowd the streets and avenues; passionate starvation, enforced by law and a fanatical public opinion on the one hand, and sickly and weary wives, and even husbands, on the other hand, overwrought, disgusted, and literally maimed, in their utter incompetency to meet the legitimate demands of healthy natures; coupled with them, ten thousand forms of domestic damnation cropping and bursting out in ten thousand ways, through all the avenues of life; and everybody crying, "Peace! peace! when there is no peace;" and the few who dare to speak of these evils and to call for a remedy, hounded to the death by the same old persecuting spirit, which, from the earliest ages, has met and martyred every new and straggling reformatory idea.

But there is, nevertheless, a brighter side to the picture. The dawn of the better day is already shining over the hilltops of the gorgeous orient. Sexual freedom, the last to be claimed for man, in the long struggle for universal emancipation—the least understood and the most feared of all the freedoms, but destined to be the most beneficial of any—will burst upon the world, through a short and sharp encounter with the forces of evil. We who are assembled in this very hall to-night, will, many of us meet in a few months or years, to celebrate the glorious incoming of the age of a rounded-out and completed Human Freedom. The passions, instead of being regarded as we have been taught to regard them, as merely satanic or malign forces to be repressed or enslaved, will be recognized for what they are; as the voice of God to the soul, as the promptings of our best nature; as the holy premonitions of a divine harmony in society, so soon as they shall be understood and adjusted under the beneficent influences of the world.

Rising up out of our false notions of propriety and purity; coming to know that everything is proper which enhances happiness and injures no one; and that everything, whatsoever, is pure that is healthful and natural; we shall greet each other on that joyous occasion with smiles of a benign joy, while looking back with a touch of sadness through the past hours of the long night of social bondage; and shall rejoice, from that day, for the perfect and pure blessedness of the coming millennium of the absolute liberty of the Human Heart.

## THE "GAG" IN BOSTON.

By the disposition ~~evinced~~ toward her by the Boston Board of Aldermen, Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull becomes entitled to a place on the same muster-roll with some of the ~~most~~ ~~greatest~~ names in our annals. The ~~comparative~~ ~~ship~~ of men even more reverend than the pastor of Plymouth Church, may now be here. Let us recall some of these. Without dwelling on ~~Rosa Williams~~, whom Massachusetts banished for his advocacy of freedom in thought and speech; or on Mrs. Ann Hutchinson and others, who suffered for a similar cause in the colonial era, we have had martyrs to free speech in Boston in our own age. There was Garrison—great and illustrious name—who had one of his anti-slavery meetings broken up by a mob, composed, as the *Alderman* said, of "gentlemen of property and standing," and who was himself dragged through the streets of Boston by the said mob, with a halter around his neck, and finally lodged, for protection from further violence, in the Lowell street jail.

Who that has listened to the "silver tongue" of Wendell Phillips does not remember the occasion when that silver voice was first heard in old Faneuil Hall? It was at a meeting called to express sympathy for the murder of the anti-slavery martyr, Lovjoy. Then it was that the sandy Channing caught his first glimpse of the capacity for cruelty of "the rascal rabble." Then it was, as he sat paralyzed with terror upon the platform, that he began to feel that, after all, the Calvinistic doctrine of total depravity might be true. The man that applied the "gag" at that meeting was led by the Attorney General, Mr. Austin, who but a few months since, descended to the tomb.

At a later day, General Caleb Cushing, returning home from the war with Mexico, with his laurels nobly won in that war, fresh and thick upon him, was assailed by a mob, and for over two hours was unable to get a hearing. And a still later day a greater than General Cushing—Daniel Webster—had the mortification of seeing the doors of Faneuil Hall closed to him, by the Boston Board of Aldermen. And all closed to him, by the Boston Board of Aldermen. And only within a few weeks preceding his death were the doors of that historic edifice again opened to him, "on golden hinges turning." Will any one who heard Mr. Webster's last speech in that old hall ever forget that single emphatic word with which the great "Expositor" rebuked the parochial narrowness of Moses Kimball and his clique? "And, gentlemen, let us not forget who we are, and where we are. This is Faneuil Hall!"

That hall has also been closed to the Anti-Slavery people, and Mayors have "broken the pregnant hinges of the knee" to mobs, and interfered to prevent the exercise of free speech on several memorable occasions. In Huntington Hall, Lowell, in 1869, General B. P. Butler suffered and was silenced. Judge Charles Cowley, Mrs. Woodhull's Boston counsel, about the same time, was assailed by a mob in the same hall, and for nearly an hour prevented from getting a hearing.

Lastly, on the same day in which Mrs. Woodhull demanded the use of Music Hall, in Boston, Massachusetts, disowned her noblest son, her Legislature passing a resolution of censure on Charles Sumner. Thus speech,

## "FOR CHRIST'S SAKE."

Still again, in connection with the Boston disgrace, did the New York Comstock put in an appearance; and if anything were lacking to demonstrate beyond the possibility of a doubt, what his motives were in first prosecuting us to obscurity, it is had in this. Immediately it was known that we were going to Boston to speak, a new movement was set on foot, so that we might be prevented from leaving the city. Three affidavits were obtained, setting forth certain things, and as we are informed, an order of arrest grappled upon them. But we left the city before the "Job" was completed. Nothing daunted, however, by not being able to stop us here, the request to have the arrest made there was telegraphed to Boston. The stool pigeon of the Young Men's Christian Association saw us in the office where *The Truth* *Time* was kept, and undoubtedly construed our presence there, on the eve of departing to Boston, to mean that we carried some of that "contraband" with us. Whether we did or no, we shall not at present state; but the lynx-eyed searchers for obscurity in Boston did not make any sufficient discovery upon which to base our arrest. We are told that the warrants referred to are held for use at another and future time—perhaps to prevent us from speaking in this city on the evening of the 9th inst.—but we warn these people that they had better desist before taking the one step too many. They may hoodwink the people for a while, by the idea that they are following us for Christ's sake, but a step too far will leave them exposed in their hypocrisy before the whole people. Hypocrites! If you do not think you have got rope enough yet, please take more.

## HORACE GREELEY ON "THE ROCHESTER RAPPINGS."

The following testimony to the good character of the ladies in Rochester, who have been favored as the medium through which manifestations believed to be truthful and good from the spirit-world, appeared in the New-York  *Tribune* of August 4, 1850. Mr. Greeley has done what is just in this matter, and what we expected from our knowledge of his character. Our readers (some of them) know

that the character of these ladies had not only been most wantonly assailed in other papers, but a writer had implicated their honesty in numerous articles published in the  *Tribune*, the ostensible object of which was to show that what was called "The Spiritual Rappings" was produced by fraud and collusion. Now, hear what Mr. Greeley says upon this subject:

## THE MYSTERIOUS RAPPINGS.

"Mrs. Fox and her three daughters left our city yesterday, on their return to Rochester, after a stay here of some weeks, during which they have freely subjected the mysterious influence by which they seem to be accompanied to every reasonable test, and the keen and critical scrutiny of the hundreds who have chosen to visit them, or whom they have been invited to visit. The rooms which they occupied at the hotel have been repeatedly searched and scrutinized; they have been taken without an hour's notice into houses they had never entered; they have been all unconsciously placed on a glass surface concealed under the carpet, in order to interrupt electric vibrations; they have been disrobed by a committee of ladies appointed without notice, and insisting that neither of them should leave the room until the investigation had been made, etc., etc., yet we believe no one to this moment pretends that he has detected either of them in producing or causing the rappings, nor do we think any of their contemporaries have invented a plausible theory to account for the production of those sounds, nor the singular intelligence which continually at times he seemed to be manifested through them. Some ten or twelve days since, they gave up their rooms at the hotel, and devoted the remainder of their sojourn here to visiting several families to which they had been invited by persons interested in the subject, and subjecting the singular influence to a closer and calmer examination than could be given to it at a hotel and before casual companies of strangers, drawn together by vague curiosity, mere rational interest, or predetermined and invincible hostility. Our own dwelling was among those they thus visited, not merely submitting to, but contending the fullest, keenest inquiry with regard to the alleged 'manifestations' from the spirit-world, by which they were attended. We devoted what time we could spare from our duties out of three days to this subject, and it would be the basest cowardice not to say that we are convinced beyond a doubt of *their perfect integrity and good faith* in the premises. Whatever may be the origin or cause of the 'rapping,' the ladies in whose presence they occur *do not make them*. We tested this thoroughly and to our entire satisfaction. Their conduct and bearing is as unlike that of deceivers as possible; and we find no one acquainted with them could believe them at all capable of engaging in so daring, impudent and shameful a juggle as this would be if they caused the sound. And it is not possible that such a puzzle could have been so long perpetrated in public view as to detection. A juggler performs one feat quickly and leaves on to another; he does not devote whole weeks after weeks to doing the same thing over and over deliberately, in full view of hundreds who sit beside or confronting him in broad daylight, not to enjoy but to detect his trick. A deceiver naturally avoids conversation on the subject of his knavery; but these ladies converse freely and fully with regard to the origin of these 'rappings' in their dwelling years ago; the various sensations they caused, the neighborhood excitement created, the progress of the developments—what they have seen, heard and experienced from first to last. If all were false, they could not fail to have involved themselves, are they in a labyrinth of blasting contradictions, as each separately gives account of the most astounding occurrences at this, or that time. Persons foolish enough so to commit themselves, without reserve or caution could not have deferred a thorough self-exposure for a single week. Of course, naturally he formed of so strange a master would naturally be tormented by the various persons who have visited them, and we presume those who have merely run into their room for an hour or so and listened among a bundle of strangers to a medley of questions—not all admitting of very profitable answers, put to certain invisible intelligences, and answered by 'rappings' or singular noises on the floor, table, etc., as the alphabet was called over or otherwise, would naturally go away, perhaps puzzled, probably disgusted, rarely convinced. It is hardly possible that a master ostensibly so grave could be presented under circumstances less favorable to conviction. But of those who have enjoyed proper opportunities for a full investigation, we believe that fully three fourths are convinced, as we are, that these singular sounds and seeming manifestations are not produced by Mrs. Fox and her daughters, nor by any human being connected with them. How they are caused, and whence they proceed, are questions which open a much wider field of inquiry, with whose way-marks we do not profess to be familiar. He must be well acquainted with the arena of the universe, who shall presume dogmatically to decide that these manifestations are natural or supernatural. The ladies say that they are informed that this is but the beginning of a new era or economy, in which spirits clothed in flesh to be more closely and palpably connected with those which have put on immortality—that the manifestations have already appeared in many other families, and are destined to be diffused and rendered clearer until all who will may communicate freely and beneficially with their friends who have shuffled off this mortal coil." Of all this we know nothing, and shall guess nothing. But if we were simply to print (which we shall not) the questions we asked and the answers we received during a two hours' uninter-

rupted conference with the rappers, we should at once be accused of having done so expressly to sustain the theory which regards these manifestations as the utterances of departed spirits. We believe it is the intention of the ladies to confine henceforth all publicity or notoriety, so far as possible. They do not expect or wish to make gain of the rappings; they have desired to vindicate their own characters from the gross imputations so freely cast upon them; believing that effect, they hope to be permitted hereafter to live in that seclusion which befits their sex, their station and their wishes. We trust they may be permitted to do so." H. G.

## RESOLUTIONS.

SPRINGFIELD, Mass.  
At a meeting held in Union Hall, Springfield, Mass., Sunday, November 10, with Mr. E. W. Dickenson, President, the following preamble and resolutions were drawn up and submitted to the Spiritualists, by C. Fannie Allyn, and after slight discussion were passed unanimously:

Winged, In the march of human events that is attendant upon the present transition life of Church and State, it has been deemed necessary to place under arrest and trial, Mrs. Victoria C. Woodhull (President of American Spiritualist Association), Fannie C. Claffin, Colonel Blood, and [redacted] connected with them, on the charge of issuing or [redacted] publications, and also for alleged libel, we have, therefore, in solemn earnestness, passed the following resolution:

Resolved, As believers in the Golden Rule, we do hereby tender to these friends of humanity our heartfelt regrets and sincere sympathy in their present situation.

Resolved, That we honestly think if the law suppresses their paper on the charge of obscenity, it should deal in like manner with sundry other publications now extant; also with some of the books in the New Testament, as many of these are universally acknowledged to be teeming with language no parents with modesty can read to their children.

Resolved, That we believe their motives were commendable, and should be so regarded by all who profess to love God and humanity, as they seemingly were for the purpose of carrying out principles of equal treatment to all, to awaken public thought to the necessity of *being* instead of *seeming*, and to favor the interests of Truth *versus* Hypocrisy.

Resolved, That the law that can acquit a McFarland, with [redacted], should fully free Woodhull, Claffin, Blood, and others, with Justice.

Resolved, That as Beecher's church members and friends are determined to stand by their brother in distress, whether he be guilty or guiltless; that unless the charity of Spiritualism is a sham, its philosophy a lie, and its beautiful teaching less potent than old theology, we, and all friends of progress, should act in like manner toward these sufferers, leaving those without guilt to cast stones, it being our duty to give them wise counsel and aid those friends who have stood by the idealism in the past and present.

Resolved, That in this matter we adopt for our standard E. H. Britton's Third and Ninth Commandments, and all and 7th Laws of Right, that read as follows:

"Thou shall search by every attainable means for the laws that underlie life and being; thou shall strive to comprehend these laws, live in harmony with them, and make them the laws of thine own life, thy rule and guide in all things; act in accordance with them." "Thou shall be obedient to the laws of thine own land in which thou dost reside. In all things which doest in accordance with the highest sense of right." "Charity in thought, striving to excuse the failings of others; charity in deed, wherever, whenever and to whomsoever the opportunity offers." "Self-sacrifice, whereby the interests of others are to be benefited by our endurance."

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be forwarded to the sisters in Ludlow-street jail, and to Colonel Blood, in Jefferson-market jail; also to the *Banner of Light*, for publication.

Voted by the same audience that C. F. A. should copy and send the resolutions; agreeable to which vote I forward this:

C. FANNIE ALYN.

## THE NAKED TRUTH.

BY WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

Beautiful Truth, once in the days of yore,  
Put on the brave array  
Which then the goddesses of Hellas wore;

And issued to the day.

Rob'd in such sort, with graces so divine;

That men, adoring, built her to a shrine;

The gods, indignant at the sight,

Rose in defense of their invaded right;

"Horror and infamy," they cried,

And prophanation! and they came and went,

Pacing th' amorous courts from side to side,

Till a wild tumult filled the firmament.

Jove, to avenge their fury, left the skies,

And quickly stood before

The shrine of Truth, determined to chastise

The sacrilegs; he tore

From her the regal mantle which she wore,

And stripped the robe away;

And flung to falsehood's hand.

Manto and robe to serve for her array,

And gave to truth this terrible command:

"BE THOU FOR EVER NAKED FROM THIS DAY."

And therefore, reader, let not Truth be blamed,

If, evermore, since then,

She hides in corners, humbled and ashamed,

AND RARELY SEEN OF MEN.

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