The Sentinel.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 25.

The Harding Tragedy.

It is needless to call attention to the mournful story told in the columns of this morning's Sentinel. No occurrence has so thrilled the community for years, and certainly no more painful duty has ever devolved upon the journalists of Indianapolis than the task of recording the death of Flora Harding and the revenge taken by her father for her ruin. In the few words of editorial comment which it will be necessary to make on this tragedy, no particular description of the actors in the drama is necessary. George Harding is well known throughout the West as one of the most brilliant members of the editorial profession, and yet a man who has never accomplished a tithe of what lay within the scope of his abilities—personally a peculiar and powerful man, partial and persistent in his friendships, inveterate in his hatreds—professionally a reckless cynic. His daughter was just the kind of a girl that such a father is apt to idolize—beautiful in person, remarkable for accomplishments, and possessing a full share of hereditary talent. Moritz is somewhat notorious as a convivial young fellow of easy morals, devoted as much to pleasure as to business, with a wife whom all other men admire and with a proponsity for admiring all other men's wives. The intimacy between him and Harding was natural enough. He probably courted the notoriety which belonged to a contributor to the Sunday Herald and to the companion of its editor. While Harding found Moritz an agreeable companion, too pliable and subservient to be perfectly trustworthy, and yet a very convenient kind of every-day friend. It is not so easy to understand how Miss Harding, a young lady occupying a responsible position and endowed with great independence of character, could have been led to the folly of permitting the addresses of a married man, or indeed dishonorable addresses of any kind. The account given of her seduction and the subsequent endeavors of the seducer to conceal his own responsibility by degrading the unfortunate girl into the position of mistress for his companions, tells of one of the most devilish pieces of evil ingenuity ever practiced. It seems more like the dream of some diseased imagination than a reality. For the credit of humanity one could wish that the protestations of innocence made by Moritz were true. The confession of his victim, however, must be esteemed as final in the case. In considering the action of her father, at least, it must be remembered that no doubt of the villainy of Moritz could have crossed his mind, since he had the accusation against him from the lips of his daughter, when, after her confession, he exchanged forgiveness with her on Wednesday evening. That confession must have gone home to his heart like a knife. There is, perhaps, no relation in life so delicate, so peculiar, so sacred, as that between father and daughter. There is a tenderness and a sympathy in such a bond that do not exist even in the love for wife or son; and when a man sees the girl who has for years been his pet—who has grown up to womanhood almost, imperceptibly under his eyes—ruined by the temptations of a false friend, his sorrow comes near to utter despair in supreme justice and disgust with all human frailty. Even under such circumstances there is only one thing for a father to do, and that is reinstate his child in her place in his affections, and that very act implies the condemnation of her seducer. So far as the evidence goes it would seem that George Harding had formed no purpose of revenge after learning of his daughter's ruin. Neither did he, after becoming aware that she had poisoned herself, unwilling to survive her disgrace, set out to seek her betrayer. He appears to have borne himself coolly and considerately all through yesterday morning, and proceeded down town to his office when he supposed her out of danger. It was only after his recall to find her dying, that, while seeking for a physician, he came face to face with the man who had brought such dishonor upon him. It was a situation to rouse the latent devil in any man's nature, and the cynical literateur who had made a jest of all serious aspects of life year after year, who had sneered at man's faith and laughed at woman's virtue, let the cloak fall from him and stepped forth in savage and determined manhood. The careless salutation with which he was greeted touched him to the quick and with a sudden impulse he transgressed both divine and human law and took vengeance into his own hands. That he has done wrong, all thoughtful men must acknowledge, but it must be confessed that his provocation was terrible. He has put his life in jeopardy and is doubtless willing to abide by the cast of the die. With the precedents established by the Sickles, Cole, and McFarland cases, and with the public sentiment of the community setting in sympathy with the father, as it did yesterday, it is probable that he will suffer no punishment for his crime in any event. However, men with an innate reverence for law may regret this state of things, they cannot now hope to effect a change. The American mind seems inclined in these cases to accept that species of wild justice called revenge, in lieu of justice itself.

The lesson of this sad business may be briefly stated in this phrase, that the wages of sin is death. A more particular moral to be drawn from the tragedy is the strange fact that nearly all great crimes against virtue—the seductions and adulteries that blast innocent lives and ruin families—seem to be traceable to married men. There is a peculiar meaning in this circumstance that should be taken into serious consideration.

The Monroe Doctrine.

The reported scheme of the German Empire to get a foothold in America, by securing the cession of the island of Porto Rico from Spain in return for assistance to be rendered in suppressing the Cuban and Carlist insurrections, is calling forth considerable comment. The general opinion seems to be that the proposed action of Germany will be in direct contravention of the Monroe doctrine, and that it will be the duty of the United States to prevent the establishment of another European power on this continent at all hazards. Although the story told by the Freeman's Journal lacks confirmation, it may be well enough to give a condensed history of what is known as the Monroe doctrine, based on the authority of President Woolsey. The phrase is frequently used but not, perhaps, universally understood.

The Monroe doctrine may be briefly defined, as the assertion of republicanism as the system of government for the new world, in opposition to the declaration of the kings of Europe, made at the beginning of the present century, that despotism should be the future form of rule in the old world.

The Holy Alliance, so famous in history, was formed Aug. 25, 1815, after the downfall of the great Napoleon, by the emperors of Russia and Austria, and the king of Prussia. The king of France was afterward admitted into the pious companionship. The Alliance may be described as a league of despotism against the rights and freedom of the world, although its purposes were veiled under such ambiguous phrases as "exercising power according to the principles of religion, justice, and humanity," "affording one another on all occasions aid and help," "treating their subjects and soldiers with parental feeling," and "regarding their people as members of a great Christian family, whose guidance was entrusted to them by God." At the congress of Aix-la-Chapelle September 29, 1818, the five great powers of Europe constituted themselves into an Alliance, to carry out, under equally ambiguous terms, their by no means doubtful design of supervising European affairs and interfering to prevent all dangerous revolutions, especially such as proceeded from popular movements. The Alliance was soon called upon to perform its dangerous duty. In the year 1820 revolutions broke out in Spain, Naples, and Sardinia. A congress was called at Troppau in Silesia in October 1820, and later in the year was removed to Laybach in Styria. The five great powers and several of the smaller ones were represented. The British government alone protested against interfering to put down revolutions, and Austria marched an army into Italy and suppressed the rebellions. The circular dispatch of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, declared "that there existed a vast conspiracy against all established power, and against all the rights consecrated by that social order under which Europe had enjoyed so many centuries of glory and happiness." The rulers of these nations asserted and justified their purpose of interfering to suppress this fanaticism of innovation whenever it broke out. The British government, on the other hand, while acknowledging the right to interfere where the immediate security or essential interests of one state are endangered by the commotions in another, still maintain that this right could not be indiscriminately extended to all revolutionary governments. Interference was the exception and not the rule and "could not without the utmost danger be incorporated into the ordinary diplomacy of states, or into the institutes of the law of nations." The congress at Laybach broke up after arranging for the holding of another at Verona. This assembled in October, 1822, and at once took up the consideration of the internal affairs of Spain. France was deputed to do the will of the potentates of Europe, on behalf of absolutism and a French army penetrated as far as Cadiz and overthrew the constitution of Cadiz, to which the king had been forced to give his consent. The Duke of Wellington,

> Oh, good grey head whom all men knew,
> And iron nerve to true occasion true,"

refused in behalf of Great Britain to sanction the proceedings of the congress.

From the proceedings at Verona the Monroe doctrine arose indirectly. In that congress the great powers discussed whether, in their high and mighty zeal for the order and good government of the world, it did not devolve upon them to bring back the Spanish colonies in America to subjection to the mother country. Great Britain communicated this fact to the United States in 1823, and President Monroe in his annual message declared: "That we should consider any attempt on the part of the allied powers to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." He further declared "that we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing governments on this side of the Atlantic, whose independence we had acknowledged, or controlling in any manner their destiny by any European power, in any other light than as a manifestation of an unfriendly disposition towards the United States." A resolution embodying the president's doctrine died still-born in congress, but, Great Britain sympathizing heartily with the declarations of Monroe, the threatened intervention was given up. In the same message the president, speaking of the boundary between the United States and Russia on the Pacific, said: "The occasion has been judged proper for asserting as a principle, in which the rights and interests of the United States are involved, that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintained, are henceforth not to be considered as subject for future colonization by any European power." Two years later President Adams said, in a special message referring to a congress at Panama: "An agreement between all the parties represented at the meeting, that each will guard by its own means against the establishment of any future European colony within its borders, may be found desirable. This was, more than two years ago, announced by my predecessor to the world as a principle resulting from the emancipation of both the American continents." Congress repudiated the recommendation. In 1848 President Polk suggested that measures be taken to prevent Yucatan from becoming a colony of Great Britain or Spain, as it had offered dominion to both these countries. Calhoun maintained that we had no right to interfere in such a case. Since that time the most startling piece of foreign aggression was that attempted by France in setting up the Empire of Mexico, and that would never have been permitted had this country been in a condition to thwart it. The prompt action taken in the matter, after the suppression of the rebellion, is a sufficient exemplification of the popular policy of the day on this matter.

From these facts it would seem that the tendency of public opinion in earlier times was unfavorable to what is known as the Monroe doctrine. The general sentiment seemed to be that we had no right to interfere with legitimate European growth on this continent but ought to take action to stop European aggression. Such a conception of the Monroe Doctrine, however, would make it merely a truism. The best exemplification of the American policy of this age is, perhaps, the course of Seward in regard to French interference in Mexico. The determination to keep this continent for the development of American civilization seems to have strengthened year by year.

Moulton's Statement.

The first and most natural criticism of Moulton's statement is, that it does not come up to public expectation. There was too much of a flourish of trumpets before the entrance of the king, and his appearance has scarcely corresponded with the anticipations of the spectators. The only really valuable piece of evidence produced is Moulton's own express declaration, that Mr. Beecher has repeatedly confessed to him the adultery with Mrs. Tilton. As far as the various letters from the different people who took part in the scandal are concerned, it may be said that they are not inconsistent with the theory of innocence while the explanation already submitted by Mr. Beecher in regard to his peculiar conduct and strange utterances during the past four years, will apply to his later epistles even better than to those first published. If his celebrated statement be considered satisfactory with reference to the documents in Tilton's accusation, it may be said to anticipate all new matter of like character. The key that unlocked one mystery will solve the others. To sum the matter up briefly: Those who believed the pastor of Plymouth Church innocent before Frank Moulton spoke out will not lose faith in him now, and those who considered him guilty will still hold firmly to their conviction.

As rebutting testimony in his own defense, the statement of Moulton has a powerful effect. It must establish his character for honest intentions and fair dealing among all men except those who hold that his opinion of Mr. Beecher's guilt can only be explained on the theory of his inveterate malice. A brief statement of the condition of things at his appearance on the scene will go far to explain his course. Mrs. Tilton, if guilty of adultery, was naturally anxious for concealment, and, if innocent, would be no less eager to suppress all scandalous rumors affecting her good name. Tilton had no doubt of his wife's criminality, for it is now pretty clear in all directions, that she was in love with Mr. Beecher and confessed to Tilton and others illicit intercourse. She might have been lying, but it was natural that her husband should credit the story of her dishonor from her own lips, as liars do not usually invent that kind of matter. Once that Tilton chose to forego revenge there was nothing left for him but secrecy, for the sake of his family. As for Mr. Beecher, if guilty, he had the choice between a confession and concealment. If innocent, he was no less anxious for silence, as he dreaded the accusation of adultery, backed by the confession of Mrs. Tilton; for a minister's reputation is like a fine mirror, the slightest breath soils it. It was this dread which, according to his own statement, led him into all his troubles. It is clear, therefore, that all the parties to the scandal were extremely anxious to keep it secret, and that Moulton was the originator of the policy of silence, and exercised his personal influence persistently to maintain secrecy. It is absurd to attribute to him any sinister design in such a course. As far as a disinterested spectator can discern, he had nothing to gain by meddling in the affair, and undertook the task of mediator with a thorough good will towards all parties. Such a task was never before undertaken by mortal man and so nearly accomplished. Think of strangling such a scandal for four years. The feat of Hercules in slaughtering the Hydra was child's play to such an accomplishment. The wonder is not that he was foiled in the end, but that he succeeded for so long a time. In the face of the communications from Mr. Beecher, published in this statement, it is useless to represent Moulton as the betrayer of the latter in leading him into the devious ways of secrecy. Mr. Beecher is perpetually planning for silence, perpetually asking for assistance in maintaining reserve, and ever dreading exposure. Whether he be considered a timid and innocent man or a plotting and wicked one, it is plain that Moulton was serving him faithfully according to his wishes. In his relations with Tilton, not less than with Beecher, Moulton's peculiar personal power is manifest. Tilton was in misfortune, and consequently sensative to the slurs that he had to bear from day to day. He considered himself foully wronged by Beecher, and it galled him to the quick to have the latter's friends continually dragging his reputation in the dust before the feet of their idol. He had lost his popularity, which had been the breath of his nostrils. He had lost his household happiness, which he seems to have enjoyed thoroughly, and he had lost his means of livelihood, while the one to whom he attributed his misfortunes went on prospering and to prosper. Tilton had, in a word, undertaken the role of a martyr, and found it to be an extremely dirty and disagreeable part to play, in this rough modern world. The hair shirt and spiked girdle he found less suited to his nature than purple and fine linen. He belonged to that dangerous class of men described by a modern French novelist, who are noble enough to undertake great sacrifices and too weak to carry them out. In managing him, Moulton exercised a wonderful amount of discretion and achieved great success. If gentlemen of the description of Drs. Storrs, Buddington and Bacon had kept themselves out of the business, Moulton would have held the dangerous scandal under water for another year or two at least, perhaps for ever. But with those gentlemen, he could do nothing; for they moved according to principle and with a beautiful disregard of what damage might be done to other people. He could bully Bowen, the Uriah Heep of religious journalism, and stay the tongue of the loquacious Carpenter, but the little sources of annoyance outside his sphere he could not control. The final outbreak of the scandal may be attributed directly to Tilton's irritation at attacks from persons whom he considered under the influence of Mr. Beecher, and indirectly to the fact that he had grown tired of his martyrdom, and become possessed of a determination to show the world that he who had fallen so low was at least capable of pulling down the pillars of a great temple along with him.

As before said, Mr. Moulton's statement brings but little strength to the chain of evidence binding Mr. Beecher, but it serves as a complete vindication of its author and Mr. Tilton. And now, in conclusion, it may be well to add that the conviction at which each one arrives is not by any means likely to depend upon the amount of evidence produced by either party in the case. Opinions are formed in some minds from trivial circumstances which are put aside with contempt by others. To many people the word of Mr. Beecher is a warrant for his virtue beyond which they do not care to go. They set at naught the confession of Mrs. Tilton, who has once and again contradicted herself, vacillating like a reed shaken in the wind. They repel with contempt the assertion of Tilton, that the pastor of Plymouth made to him confessions of adultery. They pay no attention to Moulton's declaration to the same effect. The sin charged is one that admits of no direct proof, and it is doubtful if even direct proof would shake their conviction. There are others, and among them the Sentinel may be classed, who would not weigh for a moment the word of Moulton or Tilton, or a dozen of the same tribe against that of Mr. Beecher, but to them conviction comes rather through circumstantial evidence than through the testimony of witnesses. There is a sort of consistency in the character of men and their course of action for a series of years—a harmony between human motives and human conduct—that can not be violated. It is natural for such people to say: "Under such circumstances a guilty man would have followed such a line of conduct, an innocent man the opposite. Tried by certain exigencies such a one would have spoken in such a way." In the eyes of men of this class the course of Mr. Beecher for the past four years, adopting the theory of his innocence, is a series of inconsistencies and his letters seem not to be such as he would have written if guiltless. Herein lies the main source of doubt and suspicion. Once engendered, of course, doubt and suspicion grow on such little circumstances as the unwise and partial action of the investigating committee, and the corroborative accusing testimony offered. Without, therefore, belonging to that great class which is quick to think evil and has condemned Mr. Beecher with indecent haste, the Sentinel confesses once more that his vindication is unsatisfactory, and we remain, like Othello, "perplexed in the extreme."

PERSONAL.

A. T. Stewart's advertising bill aggregates about $500,000 a year.

A Danish paper, called the Hejindal, has been started in Chicago.

Mr. Meredith Reade, U. S. Minister to Greece, is soon expected home.

Bierstadt proposes to paint another large picture of California scenery.

Bishop Joseph C. Talbot, of Indiana, is residing at the Albermarle Hotel.—N. Y. World.

Buford Wilson, Solicitor of the Treasury department, has returned to Washington from the West.

Mr. Bancroft Davis, the newly appointed minister to Germany has arrived in Paris on his way to Berlin.

Israel Washburn's father, of the noted family, is still alive at Livermore, Maine, although totally blind.

Boston Corbett, the estimable patriot who snapped his cap at Wilkes Booth, is now dealing in hats in Philadelphia.

Mr. Douglas is compiling a catalogue of the Chinese books in the British Museum, which number several thousands.

Prof. Silvestri, who has made a special study of the phenomena of Mount Etna, announces that an eruption may be expected shortly.

Assistant Bishop Cheney, of the Reformed Episcopal Church, preached to large congregations Sunday morning and evening at Ottawa, Can.

E. A. Hoyt, of New York, has been appointed a member of the Board of Indian Commissioners to fill one of the existing vacancies.

The Rev. John Cotton Smith, D. D., rector of the Church of the Ascension, New York, is already suggested as a fit person to fill the vacant bishopric of Illinois.

An ex-confederate colonel has raised 850 bushels of peanuts this year, and this is greater than slaying 10,000 men in the way Ben Hill does it.—Detroit Free Press.

A man once called on President Lincoln. He had shaken hands with him, observing: "Don't be scared, Mr. Lincoln; I don't want an office." "Is that so?" asked the president, "then give us another shake."

Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, one of the Irish revolutionary leaders in 1848, and editor of The Dublin Nation, has revisited Ireland after several years' absence in Victoria, Australia, where he has been premier.

Jacob Rupp, of West Earl township, Lancaster county, Pa., is fattening two steers for the Centennial Exposition. Their estimated weight by measurement is 3,800 pounds each, and both promise to increase both in size and weight.

Ray's "temperance statistics" make out that the drinking saloons in 69 counties in Indiana pay out for labor, rent, fuel and liquor the sum of $1,169,600 a year. Twenty-three counties are omitted in the showing.—Exchange.

BEECHER AND TILTON.

[Concluded from First page.]

and communicated to my husband's enemy, Mrs. H. W. Beecher, and by her communicated to Mr. Bowen. I feel outraged by the whole proceeding, and am now suffering in consequence more than I am able to bear.

I am yours very truly,

(Signed,) ELIZABETH R. TILTON.

As bearing upon this topic of her husband's infidelity and her desire for separation, the letter from Mrs. Tilton, dated 13th, 1871, is published. The pertinent part of the letter is as follows: My husband has suffered much with me in a cruel conspiracy made by my poor suffering mother, who, with an energy worthy of a better cause, sought to divorce us by saying that I was seeking it because of his odious infidelity, making her feelings mine. These slanders have beenown broadcast, and I am quoted everywhere as the author of them. Coming in this form and way to Mr. Bowen, they caused his dismissal from both the Independent and Union, suffering thus both of us so unjustly. I know nothing of these plans. Anxiety night and day brought on my miscarriage and a disappointment which I have never before known. I loved the babe. It prompted me. You know I have had sorrow almost beyond human capacity. Dear——, it is my mother that will explain volumes to your filial heart. Theodore has many secret enemies, I find, beside my mother, but with a faithfulness renewed and strengthened by experience we will by silence, time and patience be victorious over them all. My faith and hope are very bright, now that I am off the sick bed, and dear Frank Moulton is a friend indeed. His managing the case with Mr. Bowen has enabled us to wea her the storm, and I believe without harm to our boat. I had, as a necessary precaution to the peace of the family and of parties interested, interdicted all parties from having communication with each other, except husband and wife, unless that communication was known to me, and the letters sent through me, or shown to me. Mr. T. and Mr. B. both faithfully complied with their promise in that regard so far as I know. I was away sick in the spring of 1871, as before stated, and went to Florida. Soon after my return, Mr. B placed in my hands an unsigned letter from Mrs. T. in her handwriting, undated but marked in his handwriting, "Received, March 8, 1871." I here produce it, marked "T. T."

WEDNESDAY.

MY DEAR FRIEND—Does your heart bound toward all, as it used? So does mine. I am myself again. I did not dare to tell you till I was sure, but the bird has sung in my heart these four weeks, and he has covenanted with me never again to leave. Spring has come. * * Because I thought it would gladden you to know this, and not to trouble nor embarrass you in any way, I now write. Of course, I should like to share with you my joy, but can wait for the beyond. When dear Frank says I may once again go to old Plymouth I will thank the dear Father.

Such a communication from Mrs. Tilton to her pastor, under the circumstances, seemed to me to be a breach of good faith; but desirous to have the peace kept, and hoping, if unanswered, it might not be repeated, I did not show it to Tilton or inform him of its existence. On Friday, April 21, 1871, Beecher received another letter of that date (unsigned) from Mrs. Tilton, which he gave to me. It is as follows:

MRS. TILTON TO BEECHER.

FRIDAY, April 21, 1871.

MR. BEECHER: As Mr. Moulton has returned, will you use your influence to have the papers in his possession destroyed? My heart bleeds night and day at the injustice of their existence.

I could not comply with this request. I did not show this letter to Mr. Tilton, nor did I call Mrs. Tilton's attention to it.

On the 3d of May Mr. Beecher handed me still another letter, unsigned, but in Mrs. Tilton's handwriting of that date.

MRS. TILTON TO MR. BEECHER.

BROOKLYN, ——, 3, 1871.

MR. BEECHER: My future, either for life or death, would be happier could I but feel that you forgave while you forget me. In all the sad complications of the past year, my endeavor was to entirely keep from you all suffering; to bear myself alone, leaving you forever ignorant of it. My weapons were love, a large, untiring generosity and "nest hiding." That I failed utterly, we both know, but now I ask forgiveness.

The contents of this letter were so remarkable that I queried within my own mind whether I ought not to show it to T., but as I was assured by Beecher, and surely believed, and now believe, that they were unanswered by him, I thought it best to retain them in my possession, as I have done until now. But from the hour of its inception what remained of faith in Mrs. T.'s character for truth or propriety of conduct was wholly lost, and from that time forth I had no teought or care for her reputation, only so far as it affected that of her children. After this I do not know that anything occurred between myself and Mrs. Tilton of pertinence to this inquiry, or more than the ordinary courtesies or civilities when I called at her house, and I received no other communication from her until shortly before the question of the arbitration of the business between Bowen and Beecher was determined on. I had learned that Mrs. T. had been making declarations which were sullying the reputation of her husband, and giving it to be understood that her home was not a happy one, because of the want of religious sympathy between herself and husband, and because he did not accompany her to church as regularly and as often as she thought he ought to do, and she thought it would be well for the children to do; and sometime in speaking of her unhappiness, without defining specially the cause, thus leaving for the busybodies and intermeddlers to infer the causes of unhappiness which she did not state, I thought it my duty to the parties to caution her in that regard, and I said to her that I thought she ought not in the presence of others to upbraid her husband with their differences in religious feeling or opinions, and that it was not well for her to make any statement which should show her home unhappy, or that she was unhappy in it, because it might lead to such inquiries as might break it up, as well as the settlement which she was so desirous to maintain, for the sake of both families—Mrs. Beecher's and her own. This conversation drew from Mrs. Tilton a letter to Moulton, dated Sunday morning, February 11, 1872, in which she says:

"It was given to you to reveal to me the last Sabbath evening two things, for which God bless abundantly with His peace—first, the truth that until then I had never seen nor felt; namely, whenever I remembered myself in conversing with others to the shadowing of Theodore, I became his enemy, and the second truth was that I hindered the reconstruction more than any one else. I have not been equal to the great work of the past year. All I have done is to cause the utter misery of those I love best, my mother, husband, Mr. B., and my dear children."

After the signing of the "tripartite covenant," Mr. Tilton desired I should return him the paper containing his wife's confession, as he said, to relieve her anxiety as to its possibly falling into wrong hands, and she was very desirous that this paper should be destroyed. As I held it solely for her protection, and under a pledge to him, I gave it to him, and he told me afterward that she destroyed it. She also confirmed this statement. Some time after that I learned from Beecher that Mrs. Tilton had told him that when she made her confession to her husband of her infidelity with him (Beecher), her husband had made a like confession to her of his own infidelities with several other women. This being an entirely new statement of the fact to me and never having heard Mrs. Tilton, in all my conversations with her, although she had admitted freely her own

SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH BEECHER,

make any claims that her husband had confessed his infidelity, or that he had been unfaithful to her, I brought it to the attention of Tilton in the form of a very strong criticism of his course towards me, which might have made a great difference as to the course that ought to be taken. Tilton promptly and with much feeling denied that he had ever made any such confession, or that his wife ever claimed that he had. He desired me to see Mrs. Tilton and satisfy myself on that point, and he went immediately with me to his house. On arriving at his house I asked Mrs. Tilton to step into the front parlor. When we two were alone I then put the question to her: "Elizabeth, did you tell Mr. Beecher that when you made your confession to your husband of your infidelity with Beecher, your husband at the same time made a confession to you of his own infidelity with other women?" I said: "I want to know if this is true for my own satisfaction." She answered, "Yes." I then stepped with her into the back part, where her husband was awaiting, and I said to him: "Your wife says she did tell Beecher that you confessed your infidelity with other women at the time she made her confession to you." Elizabeth immediately said: "Why, no, I didn't tell you so. I could not have understood your question, because it isn't true that Theodore ever made any such confession, and I didn't state it to Beecher, because it is not true." I was very much shocked and surprised at the denial, but of course could say nothing more and did say nothing more on that subject, and left and went home. The next morning I received the following letter from Mrs. Tilton, without date, but it was after the tripartite covenant:

MRS. TILTON TO MOULTON.

"DEAR FRANCIS: I did tell you two falsehoods at your last visit. At first I entirely misunderstood your question, thinking you had reference to the interviews at your house the day before, but when I intelligently replied, I replied falsely. I will now put myself on record truthfully. I told Mr. B. that at the time I made my confession T. had made similar confessions to one of himself, but no developments as to persons. When you then asked, for your satisfaction, was it so? I told my second lie. After you had left, I said to T., You know I was obliged to lie to Frank, and know say, rather than make others suffer as I now do, I must lie, for it is a physical impossibility for me to tell the truth. I do think, Francis, had not T.'s angry, troubled face been before me, I would have told you the truth. I am a perfect coward in his presence, not from any fault of his, perhaps, but from long years of timidity. I implore you, as this is a side issue, to be careful not to lead me into further temptation. You may show this to T. or Mr. B., or any one. An effort made for truth wretchedly, ELIZABETH.

This letter was wholly unsatisfactory to me because nothing had occurred the day previous to which she could possibly have referred. After the publication, on the 2d of November, 1872, in Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly, of the story of Tilton and Beecher's conduct in relation to Mrs. Tilton, as my name was mentioned in the article as one possessing peculiar knowledge upon the whole subject, I was continually asked by my acquaintances, and even by strangers, upon their ascertaining who I was, whether the publication was true; and I found great difficulty in making an answer. In some cases I doubt not that inquirers supposed that I in fact denied their truth, but upon that point I was very studious not directly to commit myself. Finding that my long silence was working injury to the cause of suppression of the scandal, I told Tilton I wished to be authorized by his wife to deny it. Soon after I received a paper without date from Mrs. Tilton, in which she said, "For my husband's sake, and my children's, I hereby testify, with all my woman's soul, that I am innocent of the crime of impure conduct alleged against me. I have been to my husband a true wife. In his love I wish to live and die. My early affection for him still burns with its maiden flame. All the more for what he has borne for my sake—both private and public wrongs. Having had power to strike others, he has forborne to use it, and allowed himself to be injured instead. I bless him every day for his faith in me, which swerves not, and for standing my champion against all my accusers."

Upon the strength of that I thereafterward said that Mrs. Tilton denied the story. About the 16th of December, 1872, Mr. Carpenter and Dr. Storrs undertook to look up the reports, with the intention, as I understood, of advising some public statement, or as being concerned in some investigation of the matter, and Mrs. Tilton wrote for them a paper bearing that date.

MRS. TILTON'S STATEMENT.

"DECEMBER 16, 1872.

In July, 1870, prompted by my duty, I informed my husband that Mr. H. W. Beecher, my friend and pastor, had solicited me to be a wife to him, together with all that this implied. Six months afterward, my husband felt impelled by the circumstances of a conspiracy against him, in which Mrs. Beecher had taken part, to seek an interview with Mr. Beecher. In order that Mr. B. might know exactly what I had said to my husband, I wrote a brief statement, I have forgotten in what form, which my husband showed to Mr. Beecher. Late the same evening Mr. B. came to me, lying very sick at the time, and filled me with distress by saying I had ruined him, and wanting to know if I meant to appear against him. This I certainly did not mean to do, and the thought was agonizing to me. I then signed a paper which he wrote to clear him in case of a trial. In this instance, as in most others, when absorbed by one great interest or feeling, the harmony of my mind is entirely disturbed. I found on reflection that this paper was so drawn as to place me most unjustly against my husband, and on the side of Mr. Beecher. So, in order to repair so cruel a blow to my long suffering husband, I wrote an explanation of the first paper and my signature. Mr. Moulton procured from Mr. B. the statement which I gave to him in my agitation and excitement, and now holds it. This ends my connection with the case. ELIZABETH R. TILTON.

P. S. This statement is made at the request of Mr. Carpenter, that it may be shown confidentially to Mr. Storrs and other friends, with whom my husband and I are consulting.

This paper was delivered to me, and the theory of the confession then was that Mr. and Mrs. Tilton should submit no more "than the solicitation." This endeavor to make an explanation of the business fell through, and after it was shown to those interested, as I was told, the paper remained with me. I received no further communication from Mrs. Tilton until the 25th of June of this year (1874), and that communication came to me in this wise: When Tilton showed me his Dr. Bacon letter I most strongly and earnestly advised against its publication, and said to him, in substance, that while I admitted the wrong and injustice of Dr. Bacon's charges, that he (Mr. T.) had lived by the magnanimity of Beecher, and that he was a dog and a knave, when I believed he had acted a proper and manly part in endeavoring to shield his family, yet that its publication would so stir the public mind that an investigation would be forced upon him and Beecher, in some manner which I could not then foresee, and that the truth would in all probability have to come out, or so much of it, that Mrs. Tilton and Beecher would be dishonored and destroyed, and he himself be subjected to the severest criticism. Notwithstanding my advice, he was so wrought up with the continued assaults upon him by friends of Beecher, that he determined on the publication of a letter. The only modification that I was able to get of the Bacon letter, was this: It originally read that Beecher had committed against him and his family "a revolting crime." I insisted that that should be changed into "an offense committed against me," which was done, and the letter was published in that form. The reasons which actuated me to require this change by Tilton in his letter were in the hope that reconciliation and peace might still be possible, as the letter as amended would state an offense only, and also that an apology sufficient in the mind of Tilton had been made for that offense. If Beecher, in reply to the Bacon letter, should come out and state that it was true that he had committed an offense against Tilton for which he had made the most ample apology, which had been accepted by Tilton as satisfactory, and as the matter was nobody's business but that of the parties interested, he would never become a party to any investigation of the subject, and that Tilton had acted not unjustly or unfairly toward him in what he had done; that in such case the affair might possibly have been quieted and peace maintained; but if the words "revolting crime" remained in the letter, all hope of reconciliation or escaping the fullest investigation would be impossible. After the publication of that letter I so advised Mr. Beecher, his friends and counsel, but that advice was unheeded, and I also gave Mr. Beecher the same advice at a consultation with him, for which he asked in a letter, which will hereafter in proper place be produced. Some days subsequent to this advice of mine to Tilton I received the following letter, of date June 25, 1874, from Mrs. Tilton, which is the last communication I have had with or from her on the subject:

MRS. TILTON TO MOULTON.

"JUNE 25, 1874.

MR. MOULTON: It is fitting I should make quick endeavor to undo my injustice toward you. I learned from Theodore last night that you greatly opposed the publication of his statement to Dr. Bacon. I had coupled you with Mr. Carpenter as advising it. Forgive me, and accept my gratitude.

ELIZABETH R. TILTON.

Having now placed before the committee my statement of facts concerning Mrs. Tilton, and documentary evidence I have to support them, and as the statements practically opposed to nearly all that Mrs. Tilton appears to declare in her published statement, I deem it my duty to myself and my position in this terrible business to say, that during this affair Mrs. Tilton has more than once admitted to me and to another person to my knowledge, whom I do not care to bring into this controversy, the fact of her sexual relations with Beecher, and she never has once denied them other than in written papers prepared for a purpose, which I have already exhibited; but, on the contrary, the fact of such criminal intercourse being well understood by Beecher, Tilton and Mrs. Tilton to have taken place, my whole action in the matter was based upon the existence of that fact, and was an endeavor faithfully carried out by me in every way possible to protect the families of both parties from the consequences of public disclosure of Mrs. Tilton's admitted infidelities of her husband. I now return to the documentary evidence and necessary explanations thereof which I have of the condition of the affair as regard Mr. Beecher himself, after the fall of 1871, as disconnected with the affairs of Bowen. At about this time, I received a letter sent by Mrs. Woodhull to Beecher. She says to him: "For reasons in which you are deeply interested, as well as myself and the cause of truth, I desire to have an interview with you, without fail, at some hour to-morrow. Two of your sisters have gone out of their way to assail my character and purposes, and by the means of the public press and by numerous private letters, written to various persons, with whom they seek to injure me, and thus to defeat the political ends at which I aim. You doubtless know that it is in my power to strike back, and in ways more disastrous than anything that can come to me. I repeat