

By Telegraph.

AMERICAN

NEW YORK, 13.—The following is Moulton's statement:

"Gentlemen of the Committee:

"When I was last before you I stated that I would, at your request, produce such documents as I had, and make such a statement of facts as had come to my knowledge on the subject of your inquiry. I had fully decided to do so, and have prepared my statement of facts as sustained by documents, and made from an exhibition of all the papers that have come in any way into my possession bearing on the controversy between the parties. That statement, of course, must bear with more or less force upon one or the other of them. On mature reflection, aided by the advice of my most valued friends, I have reconsidered that determination, and am obliged to say to you that I feel compelled, from a sense of duty to the parties, to my relations to their controversy, and to myself, neither to make the statement nor to produce the documents. When I first became a party to the unhappy controversy between Beecher and Tilton I had no personal knowledge, nor any document in my possession, which could affect either; everything that I knew of fact, or have received of papers, has come to me in the most sacred confidence, to be used for the purpose of composing and settling all difficulties between them, and of preventing, so far as possible, any knowledge of their private affairs being brought to the public notice. For this purpose all their matters have been entrusted to me, and for none other. If I should do now as I then proposed, it would be, not for the purpose of peace and reconciliation, but to voluntarily take part in a controversy which they have seen fit to renew between themselves. How faithfully, earnestly and honestly I have labored to do my duty to the parties for peace they both know. The question for me to settle now for myself, and no other, is, ought I to do anything against either party in the renewed controversy by the use of that which I received and have used only to promote harmony? On my honor and conscience I think I ought and, at the risk of whatever of misconstruction and vituperation may come upon me, I must adhere to the dictates of my own judgment and preserve, at least, my own self-respect. I call attention again to the fact that yours is a mere voluntary tribunal, and that whatever I do here is done by a voluntary and not compelled witness. Whether before any tribunal having the power to compel the production of the testimony and statement of facts I shall ever produce these papers, or give any of these confidential statements, I reserve to myself to judge of the emergency, which I hope may never come against my wish, as I never have been in sympathy with a renewal of this conflict. A part of these documents have been given to the public, and in so far confidence in regard to them has ceased; it is but just, therefore, and due to the parties that the whole of these documents, portions of which only have been given, should be put into your hands. In response to the thrice-renewed request of the committee I have therefore copies of them, which I produce here and place in the hands of the committee, with the hope or request that after they have been examined by them, they may be returned to me. If any controversy shall arise as to the authenticity of the copies or of the documents, on that point I shall hold myself open to speak, with this exception, except in defence of my own honor and the uprightness of my course in all this unfortunate, unhappy business, the purity and candor of which I appeal to the conscience of both parties to sustain. I do not propose, and hope I may never be called upon hereafter, to speak either as to the facts or to produce any paper that I have received from either of the parties involved therein. (Signed)

FRANCIS D. MOULTON."

In cross-examination Mr. Winslow expressed regret at the decision of Moulton, on whom the committee had relied for much information and explanation, but he added that this being a voluntary tribunal, such testimony could not

be compelled. Moulton should have laid before the committee the original letters, with what he knew of the circumstances under which they were written. Moulton said he would produce the originals if his word was called in question, and the committee should see them but not have possession.

On motion of Mr. Cleveland it was voted that Mr. Winslow be authorized to go with Mr. Moulton and examine and verify the documents.

The following is a synopsis of Beecher's statement—

"New York, 13.

"Gentlemen of the Committee, in a statement addressed to the public on the 22d of July last, I gave an explicit, comprehensive and solemn denial to the charges made by Theodore Tilton against me; that denial I now repeat and affirm. I also stated in that communication that I should appear before your committee with a more detailed statement and explanation of the facts in the case.

"Four years ago Theodore Tilton fell from one of the most prominent editorial positions in America, when he represented the cause of Religion, Humanity and Patriotism, and in a few months became the associate and representative of Victoria Woodhull, and a friend of her strange cause. By his follies he was bankrupt in reputation, in occupation and in resources. The interior history of which I am now to give a brief outline is a history of his attempts to so employ himself as to reinstate him in business, to restore his reputation, and place him again upon the eminence from which he had fallen. It is a sad history, to the full meaning of which I have but recently awakened.

"To that promise, his self-confessed failure has made clear to me, what for a long time I did not suspect—the real motive of Tilton. My narration does not represent a single standpoint, only as regards my opinion of Tilton. It begins at my cordial intimacy with him in his earliest career, shows my lamentation and sorrowful, but hopeful, affection for him during the period of his initial wanderings from truth and virtue; it describes my repentance over evils befalling him, of which I was made to believe myself the cause; my persevering and friendly but despairing efforts to save him and his family by any sacrifice of myself not absolutely dishonorable, and my growing conviction that his perpetual follies and blunders rendered his recovery impossible. I now see that he is and has been, from the beginning of this difficulty, a selfish and reckless schemer pursuing a plan of mingled good and hatred, and weaving about me a network of suspicious misunderstandings, plots and lies, to which my own innocent words and acts, nay, even my thoughts of kindness, towards him, have been made to contribute.

"That my course has been blind so long as to the real motive of the intrigues going on around me was due to my overwhelming public duties and to my surrender of this affair to the hands of Moulton, who was intensely confident of being able to manage it successfully. Moulton reported in a general way Tilton's confidence. His comment on the situation seemed at the time complete. Immersed as I am in incessant cares and duties, and only too glad to be relieved from considering the details of a wretched complication, the origin and fact of which remain in spite of all friendly intervention a perpetual burden to my soul, I would not read in the papers about it, I would not talk about it. I made Moulton for a long period my confident, and my only channel of information. From time to time suspicions were aroused in me by indications that Tilton was acting the part of an enemy, but these suspicions were rapidly allayed by his own behavior towards me. It is plain to me that until Tilton fell into disgrace and lost his salary, he never thought it necessary to assail me with charges he pretended to have had in his mind for six months. The alleged domestic offense was quickly and easily put aside, but yet it was to keep my feelings stirred up that I might, through my friends, be used to extract from Mr. Bowen seven thousand dollars, the amount claimed in their dispute. The check for that sum, in the hands of Mr. Tilton, which signed the agreement of peace and concord, was not drawn

by me, but accepted by me as sincere. The *Golden Age* had been started; he had capital to carry it on for a while; he was to head a great social revolution with returning prosperity. He had apparently no griefs which could not be covered by his signature to the articles of peace, yet changes in the covenant were made by him before signing, and represented to me as necessary merely to relieve him from the imputation of having originated it. He circulated certain old slanders about me, but when he thought he was on the road to success his conduct toward me was friendly, and I could afford to laugh at his assumption of superiority, since I retained the profound impression made upon me as explained in the following narrative. At almost every step I fell into new complications and difficulties. Tilton ever tried to coerce my honor and conscience for procuring his extrication at my expense. Tilton knew me well enough to work on the sympathetic side of my nature, to which he addressed himself for four years, using unscrupulously my attachment to friends and to his household and to himself. Not blind to his faults, but resolved to look on him as favorably and hopefully as possible, and ignorant of his deeper malice, I labored earnestly, even desperately, for his salvation. For four years I have been trying to feed his insatiable egotism and to make the man as great as he conceived himself to be. I besought him to separate from his disreputable associates, and ascribed to my own agency the ruin he constantly was bringing on himself, and which I was endeavoring to avert. At a later stage he created difficulties apparently but to drive me to fresh exertions. I discountenanced his evil associates, only speaking well of his good qualities and abilities. I still believed him possessed, I could not believe him bad as my friends did, and trusted to the germs of good which I still believed were in him.

"Moulton came, first as a schoolmate and friend of Tilton, who would serve him without wronging him. He said he saw clearly how this was to be done, so as to restore peace and harmony to Tilton's home, and happily end all misunderstandings. I never doubted his friendship for me. What ever he wished me to do I did, unless it seemed wrong. My confidence in him was my only security in this confusion of tormenting perplexities. During this troublous time I felt that secret machinations were going on around me, and knew that the vilest slanders concerning me were in circulation when some one of my dear relatives were set against me, and the tattle of a crowd of malicious women, hostile to me on other grounds, was borne to my ears. When I had lost the last remnant of faith in Theodore and hope for him; when I heard with unspeakable remorse that everything I had done had made matters worse; when all attempts to avert his public trial only brought scandal on me; his unhappy wife was under his dictation, signing papers and recantations, and the destruction from which I had tried to save his family was poured on other families. The church and the community believed me buried under heaps of rubbish from which only my professed friends could extricate me. Believing that he would do so I maintained the silence he enjoined until Tilton attempted, through Frank Carpenter, to raise money from my friends by openly assailing me in letters to Dr. Bacon. Thereupon I called for an investigation. For the delay in publishing the details I am not responsible. All the harm I so long dreaded and have striven to avoid has come to pass. The time has, however, arrived when I can speak in vindication of myself. I labor under the disadvantage of a poor memory on dates and details, and these past four years of my life have been filled with a multiplicity of labors and duties which fall upon a clergyman more than on any other public man. This is my position.

"I know my innocence without being able to prove it with detailed explanations. I am one upon whom trouble works inwardly, making me outwardly silent, but reverberating in the chambers of my soul, and when at length I do speak it is a pent up flood and pours without measure or moderation. I inherit a tendency to sadness, the remains of positive hypochondria in my father and grandfather, and in certain moods of

reaction the world becomes black, I see very despairingly. If I were, in such a mood, to speak as I feel, I should give false colors and exaggerated proportions to everything. This manifestation is in such contrast to the hopefulness and courage which I experience in ordinary times, that none but those intimate with me would suspect me, so full of overflowing spirit and eager gladness, to have within me care and gloom. Some of my letters to Mr. Moulton reflect this morbid feeling. He understood and, at times, earnestly reproved me for indulging it. With this preliminary review I proceed to the narration.

I first knew Tilton as reporter of my sermons. He was then a youth, working on the *Observer*. Thence he passed to the *Independent*, and became a favorite with Bowen. In '64 I became editor of the *Independent*, one inducement held out to me being that Tilton would assist me, and relieve me from routine work. In this way I became much attached to him, and we became the most confidential of friends. While my family enjoyed their vacations my duties kept me in the city. I took my meals in the families of friends, and became so familiar with their children and houses that I went in and out daily, almost as if at home. Tilton often urged me to make his house a home, mentioning, in extravagant terms, his wife's esteem and affection for me. Finally I began to visit his house, which he sought to make attractive. He urged me to bring my books and papers there, and do my writing in his study. In '63, during my absence in England, he became the responsible editor of the *Independent*, and later editor in chief.

"In '66, on account of my Cleveland letter, he made violent assaults on me through the *Independent*, and my connection with the paper was severed, and though we remained friendly, yet there was a coolness between us in matters of politics. While sitting for a portrait with Page, at his request, I first met Moulton. During this time I never received the slightest hint from Tilton or any member of his family that there was dissatisfaction with my familiar relations with his household. Tilton never complained of my visits until he began to fear that the *Independent* would be taken from him, nor did he break out into violence until on the eve of dispossession from both papers, the *Independent* and *Brooklyn Union*, owned by Bowen.

"During these years of intimacy in Tilton's family, I was treated as a father or elder brother. Children were born. Children died. They learned to love me and frolic with me as if I was one of themselves. I loved them, and had for Mrs. Tilton a true and honest regard. She seemed to me an affectionate mother and a devoted wife, looking up to her husband as one far above the common race of men, and turning to me with artless familiarity and with entire confidence. With a childish appearance, she was naturally childlike in nature. I would as soon have misconceived the confidence of the little girls as the unstudied affection which she showed me. Delicate in health, with a cheerful air, she was boundless in sympathy for those in trouble, and labored beyond her strength for the poor. She had charge once of a married women's class at the Bethel Mission School, and they perfectly worshipped her. I gave Mrs. Tilton copies of my books when published, and I sometimes sent down from my farm flowers to be distributed among the dozen or more families, and she occasionally shared them. The only present of value I ever gave her was on my return from Europe in 1863, when I distributed souvenirs of my journey to some fifty or more persons, and to her I gave a simple brooch of little intrinsic value.

"So far from supposing that my presence and influence were alienating Mrs. Tilton from her family relations, I thought, on the contrary, that they were giving them strength and encouraging her to hold fast upon a man evidently gliding into dangerous associations, and liable to be immersed by unusual self-conceit. I regarded Mr. Tilton as in a very critical period of his life, and used to think him fortunate in his home influences. Mrs. Tilton often deplored the laxity of her husband's moral and religious doctrines. She implied to me that he denied the divinity of

Christ and the articles of the orthodox faith, and his views of the sanctity of marriage were constantly changing in the direction of free love.

"My last visit before the trouble was in July, 1870, when Mrs. Tilton was sick. She was much depressed, and I cheered her as best I could, and prayed with her. It is sufficient to say, that at no interview which ever took place between Mrs. Tilton and myself did anything occur which might not have occurred with perfect propriety between a brother and sister, between father and child, between a man of honor and the wife of his dearest friend, nor did anything ever happen which she or I sought to conceal from Mr. Tilton.

"When Tilton wrote editorially for the *Independent*, of which I was supposed to be editor, his views called out denunciations upon me. I disclaimed the articles and the views expressed therein. My brother Edward, in Illinois, remonstrated so strongly that Bowen decided to remove Tilton, or to suppress his peculiar views. Tilton, however, seemed firmer in his loose notions of marriage and divorce, and this led to starting the *Advance* in Chicago, to supersede the *Independent*. Bowen felt that Tilton's influence was injuring the business, and Tilton appears to have credited this feeling to my influence on Bowen.

"In December '70, a young girl, whom Mrs. Tilton had educated, came to me with a request to visit Mrs. Tilton at her mother's; she said Mrs. Tilton had gone to her mother's in consequence of ill-treatment from her husband, and told with downcast looks how Mr. Tilton had entered her chamber and besought her consent to his wishes. Mrs. Tilton gave accounts of her husband's despotism and questioned whether she should return or separate from him. I asked my wife to see and advise her, and she declared that no consideration would induce her to return to such a man, but she reserved her advice till next day, when, being detained at home, she wrote that her advice was to separate and settle the matter of support.

"In December '70, Mr. Bowen left at my house a letter from Tilton, of which the following is the substance:

"Henry Ward Beecher—

"For reasons which you explicitly know, and which I forbear to state, I demand that you withdraw from the pulpit and quit Brooklyn as a residence."

"I read the letter twice, unable to comprehend its meaning, and handed it to Bowen, and a conversation ensued, when the reasons for reducing Tilton to a subordinate position on the *Independent* on account of his loose private life came pouring forth, and Bowen weighed the consistency of retaining him even as a contributor.

"I spoke under this great provocation and the previous revelation concerning his domestic life. Bowen ridiculed the letter he brought, and said I might rely on him if trouble came of it. I have no doubt my influence decided his final overthrow, and thinking thus I became very unhappy over Tilton's misfortune. It appears that Mr. Tilton, hearing that my influence brought about his discredit with Bowen, exerted from his wife, then, the document criminating me, and prepared an elaborate attack on me.

"In December '70, Moulton came to my house, in an excited manner asked me to see Tilton at once, and believing that I might obtain information concerning his letter to me I complied. Moulton accompanied me to the house, but refused to enter the chamber where Tilton was. Tilton received me coldly, and began to upbraid me for seeking his downfall. He said that I had spread injurious rumors about him, had advised Bowen to dismiss him, that I had injured him in his family relations and alienated his wife's affection, leading her to love me more than himself; that I had corrupted her moral nature, and had made wicked proposals to her, and finally he produced a certified statement of a previous confession made by his wife, to that effect, six months previous, and asked me to go to his house where Elizabeth was waiting for me, and learn from her the truth of his stories.

We went at once to Mrs. Tilton's room. She lay as one in a trance, and gave no sign of recognition. I said 'Elizabeth, Theodore has been making serious charges, and sends me to you for confirmation.' She