

larger than any on the Clyde; his efforts and those of others who are following his example will soon make the Delaware the Clyde of America. The building of this ship has a higher significance, however, than the fact of our capability to build such ships, it is to solve the question of our supremacy in the contest for the commerce of 450,000,000 of people in the eastern seas.

Congressman Kellogg, of Conn., announced that he voted for the first subsidy ever given to the Pacific Mail Company, and he was proud of it, and hoped that in a short time there would be half a score of such ships as the *City of Peking* on the Pacific, and that in a short time American ships would take the place of German and English steamers on the Atlantic.

Hon. Erastus Brooks said his heart responded to the sympathy which brought the head of the government, with some members of the cabinet, and some thousands of people, here to see this ship. He was glad that, though costing nearly \$1,100,000, she was built without a dollar of government money, because it shows that ships can be built by skilled men in our country without such contribution. The ship could not be equalled for a like sum on the Clyde or anywhere in the world, and the builder had, to the speaker's knowledge, offered to place as good a ship in every respect as the White Star line *Britannic* in the Liverpool docks for a like sum as that of the *Britannic's* cost. Alluding to the question of subsidy, he expressed the belief that in the great contest for the supremacy of sea and land, the nation should not allow its commerce to suffer for any aid that it can give.

NEW YORK, 27.—Henry C. Bowen, to-day, instituted a libel suit, claiming damages of \$100,000, the offense being an alleged interview between an *Eagle* reporter and Bowen, which the latter claims never occurred, and the writing of editorial comments thereon; he also instituted a civil suit against the reporter, claiming damages of \$50,000. D. Barnes, proprietor of the *Argus*, was arrested to-day at the instance of Bowen and his sons, for the publication of an alleged interview with Henry M. Smith; Barnes was released on his own recognizance to appear to-morrow to make arrangements for bail.

The Plymouth Church Investigating Committee met in secret session this afternoon. This was their final meeting, and at its conclusion they announced that their labors were finished, so far as their report was concerned, and it was ready to be submitted at the church meeting to-morrow evening.

NEW YORK, 28.—The Silk Association report says the imports of manufactured silk to this port, in August, were 3000 packages, valued at \$2,517,715; the raw silk received during the four weeks ending August 27, 19 bales, China pierced cocoons 133 bales.

The Plymouth Church Investigating Committee submitted their report to the church meeting to-night. The report begins with copies of Beecher's letter to the examining committee asking an investigation, and nominating the members of the committee whom he desired appointed. The committee first express regret that uncontrollable circumstances made the public discussion of the unhappy scandal necessary, but state that they accepted the situation as they found it, as a solemn trust, and that they were profoundly impressed with the grave importance of the work before them. The committee refer to the letter of Tilton to Dr. Bacon, making the charges against Beecher, and to the rumors and insinuations against Beecher's character which were afloat, all of which he wished to be inquired into. They say they have faithfully endeavored to make the investigation thorough and impartial, and to obtain such facts as are relevant to the inquiry from all attainable sources of evidence.

For this purpose they summoned or requested the attendance of the following persons to testify before the committee: Mrs. Elizabeth R. Tilton, Mrs. H. W. Beecher, Samuel Wilkeson, John R. Howard, Theo. Tilton, Samuel E. Belcher, Mrs. N. B. Morse, Oliver Johnson, Rev. R. S. Storrs, D.D., Dwight Johnson, Isaac H. Bailey, Mrs. Putnam, John W. Mason, Rev. W. W. Patton, Marv C. Ames, Richard P. Buck, Francis P. Carpenter, Albert F. Norton, Thomas M. Vail, E. M. Holmes, Hon. N. B. Morse, Mrs. Mary B. Bradshaw, Joseph Richards, Miss Elizabeth A. Turner,

Frances A. Stiles, M. D., Charles Corez, M. D., Dr. Menton, Miss Oakley, Mrs. Elizabeth H. Ovington, Mrs. Wallace, S. B. Halliday, Thos. G. Shearman, Benjamin F. Tracy, Francis D. Moulton, Franklin Woodruff, John W. Harman, and the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. Most of the persons named attended, as requested, before the committee. One notable exception is Francis B. Carpenter. Francis D. Moulton promised to testify fully, but failed to do so; he has submitted three short statements in writing to the committee, consisting chiefly of the reason why he declined to testify, and of promises to testify at the call of the committee. The committee have called him three times with the results stated.

The committee call attention to the fact that the letter of Tilton, on which the investigation was based, charged no definite offense, but only made vague allusion to an offense of some sort, said to have been committed by Mr. Beecher against Mr. Tilton, and for which he had apologized; therefore the question before the committee was, What offense, if any, Beecher had committed against Tilton?

The committee then reiterate the fact of Tilton appearing before them and definitely stating the charge, alluded to in the Dr. Bacon letter, as that of adultery with Mrs. Tilton, at various times and places during 1868 to 1870. They call attention to the fact that the offense, as first alleged by Tilton, was improper solicitation by Beecher to Mrs. Tilton, but as time passed and purposes matured, this charge passed and matured into another form and substance.

The committee then recite the facts deduced from the evidence before them of Beecher and Tilton's intimacy, of their friendship while they were together editing the *Independent*, showing that the former was urged by the latter to visit his house and to do his editorial work there, and that in every way he understood and approved of the friendly relations existing between Beecher and Mrs. Tilton.

They find that the friendly relations between Tilton and Beecher continued until December '70, when Tilton's conduct on the *Independent* having injured the paper, especially in the west, he having come to deny the inspiration of the Scriptures and the divinity of Christ, and his social views having about this time also undergone a radical change in the direction of free love. This change in her husband's character affected Mrs. Tilton deeply, and being a very religious woman, she naturally sought her pastor for counsel and sympathy, and she set forth in strong terms, the suffering that her husband's course was causing her.

It now appears that during these years, Mrs. Tilton became strongly attached to Mr. Beecher, and, in July, 1870, confessed to her husband an overshadowing affection for her pastor.

On or about Dec., '70, Mrs. Tilton left her husband, going with her children to her mother's house. She sent for Mr. Beecher and told him of the suffering and trouble her husband had subjected her to, which greatly shocked Beecher, and he, by Mrs. Tilton's permission, sent his wife to her, as he considered her judgment in such matters better than his own. Subsequently he agreed with his wife in advising Mrs. Tilton to leave her husband. Tilton, however, forced her to return to his house, by sending for and obtaining possession of the youngest child, who was sick with the croup. During Mrs. Tilton's temporary absence from her mother's house she suffered a miscarriage, the day after her return, on the 24th, which resulted in a serious illness, continuing until after the 1st of January.

The committee then state that early in December, Bowen gave Tilton notice of his discharge from the editorship of the *Independent*; that on or about the 20th of December, Bowen made a contract with Tilton, by which he was to be editor of the Brooklyn *Union*, and chief contributor to the *Independent* for five years, but Bowen afterwards heard such stories of Tilton's immoralities as alarmed him, and led to an interview between himself, Tilton and Oliver Johnson, at Bowen's house.

At this interview Tilton sought to retain his place and Bowen's good will, by offering to join Bowen in an attack on Beecher. The interview resulted in a letter, which Tilton wrote and signed on the 27th of December, demanding that

Beecher leave the Plymouth pulpit and Brooklyn. The report says that Bowen delivered this note, and that Beecher expressed astonishment at its contents. Bowen denied it, and told Beecher why he had reduced Tilton from the editorship of the *Independent*, and said he doubted whether he ought to retain him as editor of the *Union*. Beecher thought he ought not, and spoke strongly in regard to the threatening letter of Tilton's. Bowen declared that if trouble came of it he would stand by Beecher.

This conversation Bowen carried to Tilton, who thereupon extorted from his sick wife charges against Beecher, of having made her improper propositions. The committee then give a report, the substance of which has already been published, of Beecher's interview with Tilton at Moulton's solicitation and at his house, and of the charges brought by Tilton against Beecher, and the production of the confession of Mrs. T.; the amazement of Beecher at finding the woman, whom he had thought to be a type of moral goodness, subscribing to such an atrocious story; the night visit to Mrs. Tilton's bedside, the written retraction given to Beecher by her, and the subsequent procuring of this document from Beecher by Moulton's specious arguments and the displaying of a pistol, though he made no distinct threat. The committee here express great regret that, at this juncture Moulton was not handed over to the police, and thus saved much subsequent trouble. The committee say that Beecher's distress at the situation was boundless. He saw the peril of being even falsely accused; he blamed himself for much that had occurred, he could not tell how much of impending trouble could be attributed to Mrs. Tilton's undue affection for him, which, as it was his duty, he repressed.

While in the morbid condition of mind produced by these distressing difficulties Moulton again called on him. His manner was kind and conciliatory; he professed, however, to believe that Beecher had been the cause of Tilton's downfall, that he had leagued with Bowen against him, and by his advice come near destroying Tilton's family. Beecher expressed many strong regrets at the misfortunes of that family. Moulton caught up some of these expressions, and wrote them down, saying that if Tilton could see them there would be no trouble in procuring a reconciliation. This paper, which is dated January 1st, 1871, was intrusted by Mr. Beecher to Moulton's keeping without reading it, nor was it read to him. This paper, sometimes called the apology, and sometimes the confession, is in no proper sense Mr. Beecher's production, or a correct report of what he said. For instance, no man will believe that Beecher said—"I humble myself before him, Tilton, as I do before my God." The sentence—"Her forgiveness I have," Mr. Beecher declares was not used nor the semblance of it. Pruning here, a very important question arises in this connection, viz., to what does the apology refer? It declares Mrs. Tilton guiltless, and yet Tilton says it refers to adultery, which Beecher denies.

The committee then proceed to take up the evidence to show that the original charge was improper advances, and that as time passed and the conspiracy deepened, it was enlarged into adultery. The importance of this is, they say, apparent, because if the charge has been so changed then both Tilton and Moulton are conspirators, and convicted of a vile fraud, which necessarily ends their influence in this controversy. The committee proceed to argue, at length, from the evidence already published, that this is a fact, and declare that the retraction and all subsequent conversations, acts and letters of the various persons directly concerned in dealing with the scandal are consistent with this view and with no other. The committee cite the true story written by Tilton, as containing the facts of the alleged offense of Beecher, and which they say he was in the habit of reading to newspaper men and others, as making no charge except that of improper or impure proposals by Beecher to Mrs. Tilton, and they quote the testimony of Beecher, Harmon and others to prove this statement. Beecher testifies that Tilton read this "true story" to him on a ferry boat one day, and that afterwards he went to Tilton's house and a conversation was had, which lasted

till midnight, and during all this time not a word was said or hinted at by Tilton that he believed Beecher had committed adultery, but on the contrary he asserted his unshaken confidence in his wife's purity, and complained only of the improper solicitations. The committee say it is believed that no case of adultery on record can be produced where an injured husband, upon learning of his wife's infidelity, kept the fact to himself for six months, and then, after a private complaint to the offending party, received and accepted an apology for the offence, and declared it forgiven, and this followed by a restoration of the courtesies of friendship. The committee also argue that Moulton had in his mind no other offense than improper overtures by Beecher, and he did not believe or understand that it was adultery. They quote the expression in his letter to Beecher—"You can stand if the whole case were published to-morrow," and they deride the idea that he could write thus knowing that there was adultery in the case, and they conclude this branch of the case by branding the performance as a fraud, which ought to end all controversy as to the innocence of Mr. Beecher.

The committee then go on to speak of Moulton's connection with the affair in the character of a mutual friend, and admit that he obtained a strong hold upon Beecher's mind by his plausible manner, and his apparently sincere desire to serve him. Beecher knew that the accusation, though false, would, if it became public, cause a great scandal, and having an immense deal of labor on his hands, he entrusted to Moulton the task of keeping this false accusation from the public. The strong language and tenor of Beecher's letters to Moulton in reference to the matter, are freely admitted by the committee, but they say it must be remembered that using strong words and emotional expressions is characteristic of Beecher; but they say there is not a word or an act of his, however ill-judged, through these four years of anxiety and grief, that cannot be accounted for upon the plain theory that he was fighting to suppress an outrageous scandal, which consisted of a false accusation against him made by a reputable woman; and further, that he was endeavoring to help a man whom he felt he had unduly injured in business matters, upon a representation of which he was afterwards made to believe, chiefly by Moulton, were not well founded.

The committee here advert to the possibility that Mrs. Tilton had come to regard Beecher with such affection as, under the circumstances, tended to alienate her from her husband, and a fear that this was so, as it was alleged by both Moulton and Tilton, may have added to Beecher's responsibilities. The committee here express regret at two errors into which Beecher fell, one was, that in his trouble he did not seek counsel from Christian men of his own brotherhood rather than rely upon the counsel of a man of whom he knew so little, and whose character, as the sequel proved, he so sadly misjudged; the other was that he did not guard, more closely, his relations with the family of Tilton, that there could be no possibility for fear, in his own mind even, of an undue affection by Mrs. Tilton for him through any thoughtless friendship or agency of his. Then, if this were a question of error of judgment on the part of Mr. Beecher, it would be easy to criticize, especially in the light of recent events; and in such criticism even, the extent of regret and censure was such that no man would join more sincerely therein than Mr. Beecher himself.

The committee say—"We find nothing whatever in the evidence that should impair the perfect confidence of Plymouth church or the world in the Christian character and integrity of Henry Ward Beecher, and now let the peace of God, that passeth all understanding, rest and abide with Plymouth church and its beloved and eminent pastor, so much and so long afflicted."

The Committee then took up the question as to the harmony and happiness which Tilton alleges ruled in his home until this trouble came upon him, and show by the testimony of Mrs. Tilton and Mrs. Turner that exactly the reverse was the case, and that Tilton was constantly guilty of great cruelty to his wife. The committee then quote from legal authorities to

show the nature of evidence necessary to prove the charge of adultery, and show that not a particle of evidence such as the law requires has been produced by the accuser of Mr. Beecher, and that no suspicious circumstances even were proved. They conclude their review of the testimony by comparing the life and character of the accuser and of the accused, and conclude by saying:

First—"We find from the evidence that the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher did not commit adultery with Mrs. Tilton, either at the time or times, or at the place or places set forth in the 3rd or 4th subdivisions of Mr. Tilton's statement, nor at any other time or place whatever."

Second—"We find from the evidence that Mr. Beecher has never committed an unchaste or improper act with Mrs. Tilton, nor made any unchaste or improper remark, proffer or solicitation to her of any kind or description whatever."

In reference to Mrs. Tilton's course, the committee say it is not for them to discredit her conduct, but that on any theory of human responsibility it is indefensible. They, however, show that she was greatly under the influence of her husband, to such extent indeed as to make her hardly responsible at all times for what she did.

The committee then refer to the charges that Beecher paid two thousand dollars to get the girl Besie Turner out of the way, and declare it too absurd for belief, as there were too many people to whom Tilton had published the story of his wife's alleged criminality with Beecher to make it possible for the latter to get rid of all of them. The case therefore rests upon mere words and assertions, supported by no circumstances whatever that are the usual indications of adultery. Mrs. Tilton denies the truth of the charge, and asserts that the confession of improper overtures was extorted from her. Mrs. Morse, her mother, absolutely denies that Mrs. Tilton ever confessed to her; and finally Beecher declares solemnly his innocence of any and all the improprieties charged.

The report is signed by all of the committee. The church was densely packed, probably over three thousand persons being present, and many were unable to obtain admittance.

After the reading of the report it was adopted with a unanimous shout, and a scene of the greatest enthusiasm followed. Moulton was present, and during a speech of Mr. Raymond, who was called upon, and who spoke of Moulton as having tried to poison the minds of men against Mr. Beecher, the mutual friend rose to his feet and shouted excitedly, "You're a liar, sir." Great excitement followed, and there were loud cries of, "Put him out! Put him out!" "For shame," etc. Mr. Moulton rose to his feet and shouted, "I dare any of you to put me out!"

The following resolutions were also unanimously adopted:

"Resolved that the evidence before the examining committee not only does not afford any foundation for putting the pastor of this church, the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, upon trial, but on the contrary establishes, to the perfect satisfaction of this church, his entire innocence and absolute personal purity with respect to all charges now or hereafter made against him by Theodore Tilton."

"Resolved that our confidence and love for our pastor, far from being diminished, are heightened and deepened by the unmerited sufferings which he has so long borne, and that we welcome him with sympathy more tender and trust more unbounded, than we ever felt before, to his public labors among us, to our church, our families, our homes and our hearts."

At the close of the meeting the doxology was sung and the people began to disperse. Moulton, who occupied a seat at the reporter's table, was hustled considerably on his way out, and there were indications that had he not been protected by the police violence would have been offered him. On reaching the door he was hurried to a carriage and, with a policeman on each side of the step, was driven rapidly away, and the people dispersed.

NEW BEDFORD, 28.—There was a grand pyrotechnical display and other ceremonies in honor of Pres. Grant last night; to-day the President visits Hyana, Nantucket and Provincetown.