

The Guard

SUPPLEMENT.

BOTH SIDES.

In order that the public may have a fair understanding of the Spanswick-Kerns affair which has caused so much commotion in our midst, and may have both sides from which to draw their conclusions, we republish the statement which appeared in the newspapers of Eugene City, bearing date of March 1st, 1879, and our answer to the same:

A Statement.

We, the undersigned pastors of Eugene City, respectfully submit the following statement to the intelligent public concerning the recent ostensible assault upon the person and character of the Rev. T. W. Spanswick:

We recognize the fact that we and not Mr. Spanswick are assailed. We began a series of religious meetings, with the consent and co-operation of our several churches and congregations, without any thought of having Mr. Spanswick with us. These meetings had continued more than a week before his coming was suggested. He did not come until the 12th day of the meeting. He came in response to our united invitation. We invited him because we had heard of the remarkable religious awakening at Brownsville under his labors, and because we considered that his standing as a minister was sufficiently guaranteed, in which opinion we are still hearty and unanimous.

Under his labors and leadership our work was greatly blessed in the awakening of a remarkable and general religious interest and the conversion of scores of persons. We were pursuing our work in the most quiet and orderly manner, except as our good order was disturbed by thoughtless or malicious persons, when Mr. Spanswick was assaulted on the street while quietly attending to his own business—an assault for which there is evidently no justification.

During the same afternoon a pretended affidavit was prepared, alleging that Mr. Spanswick had been guilty of larceny, was unchurched, expelled from the ministry and compelled to leave the community in disgrace. This affidavit (?) which, upon unquestioned information, we do not hesitate to pronounce untrue, appears as that of a man who is unknown and without character or standing in the community, was printed and a boy was employed to take a great number of copies into our meeting and distribute them. By an evidently preconcerted plan, this was done just at the close of the sermon, and just as a crowd of the roughest class in the community filed into the aisles and ante-room, some of them armed and lading the atmosphere with the odors of whisky.

The evident purpose of the whole procedure was to break up the meetings, and kill the religious interest that is now stirring the community. That this was not the result is not because the plan was not well laid and executed.

If Mr. Spanswick were an imposter, no one in the community could be more interested in his exposure than ourselves, and if these parties had in their possession reliable information against him, and wished to expose one whom they believed to be an imposter, the only honorable course for them to have pursued would have been to lodge their information with us. The fact being shown, or a reasonable doubt of his good standing being raised, we would have been compelled, in our own defense, to dispense with his services and become parties to a thorough investigation. The circumstances attending the proceeding strongly indicate that it was meant to destroy our religious work and bring the strongest possible odium upon us and the christian community; and Mr. Spanswick was assailed under the supposition that he was a total stranger and hence presented the vulnerable point which invited successful attack.

We deem it just, however, to the people of Eugene City, to state that the persons who procured the publication of this affidavit belong to a class neither numerous nor influential in this community.

J. H. CORNWALL,
S. C. PRICE,
A. ATWOOD,
ED. R. GEARY.

To the above undersigned and others who have taken such a deep interest

and active part in defending the character, conduct and standing of the Rev. (1) T. W. Spanswick, we would respectfully submit the following, and let the public judge whether there has been an "ostensible assault" on the person and character of Rev. T. W. Spanswick without any cause or reason. We deem it, however, but just to the Revs. E. R. Geary, A. Atwood and J. H. Cornwall, to say that we recognize the fact that it was through the representations of others that you signed the above statement, but as your names are appended to the same, we cannot do otherwise than address you.

In your statement you assert as follows: "We recognize the fact that we and not Mr. Spanswick are assailed." From what evidences or circumstances you have drawn such distorted and foreign conclusions, is beyond the comprehension, we believe, of the intelligent public whom you have addressed. The public will, we apprehend, fail to discern how an accusation of larceny against Mr. Spanswick implicates yourselves, and if Mr. Spanswick is an imposter, and not to be exposed and punished for the reason that he associates with you and is your guest, you could indeed, gentlemen, become an engine of power in the State by affording an asylum of refuge for criminals as well as saints; and if you adhere to the doctrine that the person and character of a minister of the gospel is sacred and hallowed, and not to be called in question, you adhere to something that would forever destroy the safeguards of society, and set the laws at naught; you would annihilate the morals of mankind, and bring on an age of anarchy and absolutism as great as that of the "Dark Ages." All thinking and reading men are well aware, from their own observations and the records of the past history, that no rank of men, be they high or low, are the chief and only perpetrators of crime. We read of it by the crowned head, we know and read of it in the lowest peasant, and alas, and how too often, do we know and read of it by those who are clothed in sacerdotal robes, and claim to be the disciples and followers of Him whose ways and thoughts knew no guile. And can any one name a crime so dark and damnable but what it has found within the pale of the church its perpetrator? And can you, as christian gentlemen, say that from the earliest history of the world, from the first incipient stages of christianity, to the present time, but what from the highest in office of the church to the lowest lay member in the body, have been dragged forth and exposed to public condemnation, the most execrable fiends in human shape, and that the mere profession of christianity and good standing in the church are not guarantees of a good character, or prevents the commission of crime? Then is it to be supposed that Mr. Spanswick is infallible and unassailable because he sets himself up as a teacher of morals and a preacher? And does it follow as a logical sequence that assailing Mr. Spanswick is assailing all those who labor with him? The same reasoning followed to its legitimate conclusions would hang every preacher in christendom, and the intelligent public and this community must see that it is unfair and uncharitable for you to assume that you were the parties assailed and not Mr. Spanswick.

But you say that "Mr. Spanswick came here by your united invitation," which may be very true, but we fail to see how your inviting him here clears him from the charge of larceny with which he stands accused, and when adjudicated, we believe will be clearly proven.

Again you assert that "Mr. Spanswick was assaulted on the street, an assault for which there was evidently no justification." From what source you drew your evidence we are not aware, but if from a true and reliable source, we can but say your ideas of what constitutes a justification for an assault are entirely different from that of most of men. To a great many it will be difficult to explain how an itinerant and comparatively unknown person under the guise of a minister of the gospel can use offensive and ungentlemanly language to respectable young ladies in a public congregation in a public house, without meriting a severe and condign punishment; and we are perfectly willing to let it rest with the public and this community to say whether Mr. Spanswick received his just deserts or not.

Again in your statement (we shall not be so uncharitable as to call it a misstatement) you say a "pretended affidavit was prepared." What idea you aimed to convey to the public by the word "pretended," is beyond our conception, and we presume that you are too honest to claim it as a forgery with all the facts so easy of access and so well known to every one in this community. Mr. Kerns, the man who made the affidavit, has not denied making it, and has given bonds in the amount of \$500, to appear and substantiate the material allegation contained in it. He made this affidavit of his own free will and accord, without pay or the hope of reward. And when you assert that Mr. Kerns is "without standing or character," you assert that, which we opine, you cannot prove, and to the worldly, it will seem that that assertion was not dictated by a spirit of christian forgiveness, but rather emanated from a heat oppressed brain where revenge was the only thing sought after. We should remember that many an honest heart beats beneath old clothes; that poverty is no crime; that an honest laborer is as much to be respected as a clergyman with his unsoiled hands. Outward appearances are often illusory and should not be the guide for reasonable men to follow. Yet it appears that this has been the ground upon which you have based your assertion. While we are not the champions of Mr. Kerns, we can assert that during his sojourn among us, his deportment has been unexceptional. Can you assert as much for Mr. Spanswick? Are you still "hearty and unanimous in the opinion that his standing, as a minister, is sufficiently guaranteed?" And have you that "unquestioned (?) information" that led you to pronounce the affidavit of Mr. Kerns as untrue? Or do you believe there is a dark shadow over Mr. Spanswick's character that you did not unfold in your statement, but rather obscured? We are willing to let the public draw their own conclusions.

But you say the "evident purpose of the whole procedure was to break up the meetings, and that this was not the result was not because the plan was not well laid and executed." In this you have stultified, or at least blinded your reason with passion. If this were so, why was not some attack made before

Mr. Spanswick came, as upon your own statement, the meetings had continued more than a week. But the last part of the assertion, to a reasonable mind, kills the first part, for every one of common intelligence knows that if the affidavit was false in regard to Mr. Spanswick, it would only redound to your own credit and spur you up to greater exertion. But you say "that the plan was well laid and executed," which implies that no mean intelligence was at the laboring oar, and that a master mind was at the foundation of the plan, and this, virtually, destroys the assertion, for no one with a master mind or a good intelligence would lay a plan to destroy anything, which, when carried into execution, would have the opposite effect from that intended, instead of destroying would only build up and strengthen, for that this would be the result if the affidavit was not true, any one of a common mind could see and needs not an experienced and master mind to discern.

If any one else came there "armed and lading the atmosphere with whisky to destroy your meetings," let them answer for it. We are not here to defend them, but to refute the base designs that some are wont to attribute to us; to deny that we aimed, in any way, to destroy the religious feeling that was being awakened in this community, or in any way to cast any reflections upon the pastors of the several churches in this city. We feel confident that most of them are above reproach or suspicion, and their standing and characters cannot be called in question; that intellectually and morally they are the peers of any other ministers in the State. But this does not do away with the fact that they may be imposed upon, and such, gentlemen, we believe to be the case.

And as to your last assertion in your "statement," we believe you have overstepped the bounds of propriety, and will simply say, if you had the undersigned before your minds when you wrote the same, that it would be better for the public to judge whether we have any influence or not, and that you should not take the matter in your own hands and judge for that public, for it is well written, "Judge not that ye be not judged."

And again it appears to us unjust that you should calumniate one part of this community to defend one, who appears from the evidence, which you and the public are invited to examine, to be an imposter and a thief, to say the least. From the telegrams, letters and ex parte affidavits received, we believe, as reasonable men, you will come to the same conclusion. We would also add, according to the strict rules of law, that when a person makes a statement declaring something to be true, when he only surmises it is true, he is just as reprehensible in the eyes of the law as if he had made a misstatement knowing whereof he was speaking. Upon the receipt of the affidavit of Mr. Kerns accusing Mr. Spanswick of larceny, etc., there was an individual—perhaps from his intemperate zeal—who read the same and denounced it as a willful perjury; that Mr. Spanswick was an honorable minister with a good name and a character untarnished. And this same individual, no doubt, believing he was entirely right and well informed, introduced a resolution at the close of the meetings at this place, thanking Mr. Spanswick for his labors, (labors that were abundantly paid for) and recognizing the fact that Mr.

(OVER.)