

"I was about to say that my expenses are paid by my society."

"Thank you, no more need be said. These people can judge for themselves."

"I am willing that they should judge, but I remind you that there is another Judge."

"Yes, sir," replied the Rector with portentous solemnity, "there is, before whom both you and I must stand."

"And now then," said the evangelist, taking up the Bible, "we may proceed with our meeting."

"No, sir," replied the Rector, stepping upon the platform. "I will not permit it."

"You have no right to—"

"I have every right to protect this community from heretical and disingenuous, not to say dishonest, persons."

"You call me dishonest?"

"I said disingenuous."

The evangelist turned toward the audience. "I protest against this intrusion upon this meeting. I appeal to the audience for British fair play."

Murmurs were heard from the audience and subdued signs of approval. The Rector glanced upon the people.

"Fair play," he cried, "you will get as will any man who appears properly accredited and properly qualified to proclaim the Gospel, but in the name of this Christian community, I will prevent the exploitation of an unwary and trusting people."

"Liberty of speech!" called a voice from a dark corner.

"Liberty of speech," roared the Rector. "Who of you wants liberty of speech? Let him stand forth."

There followed a strained and breathless silence. The champion of free speech retreated behind his discretion.

"Ah, I thought so," said the Rector in grim contempt.

But even as he spoke a quiet voice invaded the tense silence like a bell in a quiet night. It was Mrs. Gwynne, her slight girlish figure standing quietly erect, her face glowing as with an inner light, her eyes resting in calm fearlessness upon the Rector's heated countenance.

"Sir," she said, "my conscience will not permit me to sit in silence in the presence of what I feel to be an infringement of the rights of free people. I venture very