

had no right to place me in, and I cannot do your intelligence the injustice to suppose that you did not know it. You held back and concealed what, in your last letter, you acknowledge I had a right to know. You came to me asking the grounds of an assertion, but keeping back from me the knowledge whereby I might assure myself whether I had made the assertion or not. That imposed upon me what ought to have been an unnecessary task—that of asking fair dealing at your hands. In your last letter you acknowledge the soundness of my position on this point. But in making the acknowledgment you have recourse to a most unworthy device—you assumed most unwarrantably to judge me. You resorted to the expedient of doubting the truthfulness of what I wrote you, rather than admit by a frank and unqualified acknowledgment that you had not qualified yourself to make your first inquiry. And you force me to remind you that when you impeach my veracity and assume to speak of “reckless assertion,” your own words should be consistent and correct. Turn to your first letter. You there write, “I beg to enquire on what grounds you made the imputation respecting me which is conveyed in the extract I have quoted above.” In your last letter you write, “In my first letter I merely put before you your own language, and sought to know your grounds for the injurious imputation it conveyed.” Your intelligence ought to assure you that you did no such thing—the difference between the two writings being as great as that between light and darkness. I disputed your right to call upon me for the grounds upon which the assertion in the “extract” rested. You asked me on what grounds the imputation respecting you contained in certain language you quoted was based. You did not say in your first letter that the imputation was unjust. You did not say that you had unjustly suffered, or that any wrong had been done you. Had you been wronged, had the language in the extract been unjust toward you, and had you been seeking for a reparation of the wrong from which you believed that you were suffering, I could scarcely believe you would not have said so; but you did not. Not disputing the correctness of the language in the “extract,” and not saying that you had been injured, and not asking for any acknowledgment or amends of a wrong done you, the object of your enquiry would seem to be, to learn whether the writer had the right grounds for his assertion. Then I say further (and I care not that you call it a sign of ignorance) that it is a reasonable and most proper thing that you should deny the justness of the assertion before imposing upon any one the obligation of stating the grounds on which it rests. If the Editor of a paper published a statement injurious to me, and I should go to him, and demand his authority for it, he would inform me that compliance with such a request was not customary, until a denial of the justness of the statement was made by the person affected. But if it is true that you joined in a plot, and helped remove Mr. Rand, then I say the person who wrote thus of you to the Rev. G. D. Cox—a Baptist minister—did you no wrong, and not having done you any wrong, not having “imputed” what was not correct, it is hardly a proper or reasonable thing,