

I can only look on this as a crafty and most unworthy device for evading altogether the duty that rests on you—for I cannot give you credit for so great ignorance as to believe that you did not know that so insulting and unreasonable a demand would be treated with the contempt it merits. The offence you committed against me was of an aggravated character. It was done privately, and might never have come to my knowledge, and in fact it was a long time before it did so. It was done deliberately and with a purpose; and your assertion was absolute and unqualified: "it was a plot in which Judge Johnston joined." Such was your language. You spoke not of your belief or of report—it was a positive declaration, which imported actual knowledge, and which nothing could justify you in making but distinct and certain proof. If you had such proof, produce it now and vindicate yourself, if you had not—then were you a deliberate slanderer. The time to have made the inquiry, if ever you had a right to do so, was *before* you published the injurious assertion; *then* it would at least have had the legitimate object of saving me from the effect of a concealed calumny and you from the offence of circulating it. *Now* it is too late, when as regards me you have inflicted all the injury in your power and its only object can be if possible to afford you a mean escape. Your excuses and evasions but establish more strongly your offence and you stand at present as a malicious slanderer, seeking to escape from a responsibility you have yourself created, for it was your own act to drag my name into your letter and to give secret currency to the calumny; your own choice to reject the opportunity afforded you by the moderation of my previous notes of meeting my claim under the least embarrassment possible under the circumstances, and your own preference to adopt an uncandid and tortuous course, instead of making a frank admission of your letter and meeting my claim in a manly and honorable manner.

I am your obedient servant,

J. W. JOHNSTON.

To the Rev. E. M. SAUNDERS,
(Granville St. Baptist Church,) Halifax.

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HALIFAX, Jan. 11th, 1871.

SIR,—Upon the request in your second letter, I stated two reasons why, in my judgment, you had not entitled yourself to make the enquiry your first letter contained. Either of those reasons I consider valid and sufficient. One was that you had not furnished me with the means of testing the genuineness of the letter referred to by you; and I told you frankly that I was unable to say whether I had written the letter or not. From the character of your reply, I am obliged to make a few remarks on this point which ought not to have been required of me. To have answered the enquiry of your first letter would have been to prove the correctness of an assertion which I did not recollect having made; or failing my ability to do that, I should have had to apologize for language I might never have used, and did not remember having used. That was a position you