

THE BEST MAN

public honour? You'll have to answer that before you can get me to carry this letter."

The Governor did not blench under the attack.

"I think the letter will answer you," he said.

"The letter?"

"Yes. It's something more than a notification of Fleetwood's reappointment." Mornway paused and looked steadily at his friend. "You're afraid of an investigation—an impeachment? Well, the letter anticipates that."

"How, in heaven's name?"

"By a plain statement of facts. My wife has told me that she did borrow of Fleetwood. He speculated for her and made a considerable sum, out of which she repaid his loan. The 'Spy's' accusation is true. If it can be proved that my wife induced me to appoint Fleetwood, it may be argued that she sold him the appointment. But it can't be proved, and the 'Spy' won't waste its breath in trying to, because my statement will take the sting out of its insinuations. I propose to forestall its attack by setting forth the facts in its columns, and asking the public to decide between us. On one side is the private fact that my wife, without my knowledge, borrowed money from Fleetwood just before I appointed him to an important post; on the other side is his public record and mine. I want people to see both sides and judge between them, not in the red glare of a newspaper denunciation but in the plain daylight of common-sense. Charges against the private morality of