

0. HUMILIATION of ELIZABETH PACKARD - Story
Preface

1. ELIZABETH and THEOPHILUS PACKARD -
BACKGROUND

2. CENSORSHIP INVADES PACKARD'S LIFE

3. AN UNJUST LAW IMPACTS MARRIED WOMEN

4. HUMILIATION of ELIZABETH PACKARD

5. ELIZABETH PACKARD and the LAW

6. ELIZABETH PACKARD and MENTAL HOSPITALS

7. TRIAL of ELIZABETH PACKARD

8. PACKARD CASE - AFTER the VERDICT

One way to end the issue of his wife's free-thinking ways was to have Elizabeth leave town. It was early June, in 1860, and Theophilus Packard proposed that his wife visit her brother, in Batavia, for three months.

Surprised, at first, by her husband's suggestion, Elizabeth wondered who would care for their children? Who would make their summer clothes, if she were away for so long?

Theophilus assured his wife those issues would be properly managed. And ... agreeing that Elizabeth could take two of their flu-recovering children with her ... Packard sensed the details were becoming acceptable to both of them. Then ... Mrs. Packard asked for money.

It wasn't much, her request for funds. Ten dollars is what she thought reasonable for three months away. Her husband, however, refused to give her any money at all.

One can only imagine the scene which thereafter erupted in the Packard home. Let's listen-in to their conversation (which Elizabeth reported, years later, in *The Hidden Prisoners' Life*):

Well, husband, if I can't be trusted with ten dollars of my own money under these circumstances, I should not think I was capable of being trusted with two sick children three months away from home, wholly dependent on a poor brother's charities. Indeed I had rather stay at home and not go at all, than go under such circumstances.

Elizabeth was not prepared for what happened next:

You shall not go at all...You shall go into an Asylum! ... You have lost your last chance. You shall go into an Asylum!

Could such a thing really happen?

Worried about what could happen to her, Elizabeth sought the advice of her neighbor, a lawyer. Mr. Comstock assured her that she could not be tossed-into an asylum without due process. She would first be entitled to a jury trial. Mr. Comstock was also sure about something else:

... I can assure you there is no jury in the country who would pronounce you to be an insane person, for you give every evidence of intelligence that any person can give.

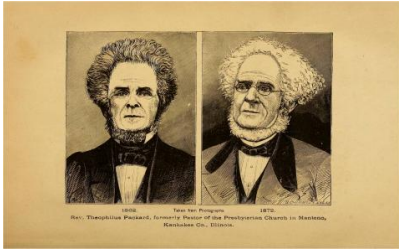
Lawyer Comstock, however, was ignorant of the law.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/HUMILIATION-of-ELIZABETH-PACKARD-Packard-Elizabeth-Civil-Rights-Advocate>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/HUMILIATION-of-ELIZABETH-PACKARD-Packard-Elizabeth-Civil-Rights-Advocate>



Theophilus Packard

Illustrations from the frontispiece of *Modern Persecution*, Vol 2, by Elizabeth Packard (1873).

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Elizabeth Packard Home

Illustration of the Packard home from the frontispiece of *Modern Persecution*, Vol 2, by Elizabeth Packard (published in 1873).

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Batavia - Train Depot

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