

*Letter on original difference over
Ramsgate trouble, 1881.*

THE Ramsgate matter arose, as you are aware, out of the Ryde sorrow, respecting an attempt to start a new table at Ryde in connection with us all but *not* in fellowship with the one we owned in that place. In principle it was the attempt to make *two* bodies to *one* Head, and so attacking fundamental Church truth.

The question of dealing with that was for a time hotly contested in London. Those subsequently called Guildford Hall, at Ramsgate, felt it ought to be dealt with. Those subsequently called Abbott's Hill (Ramsgate), did not agree with that. They divided. The Guildford Hall party was hasty in action. That all admit. But their judgment was correct, as London shortly afterwards owned by dealing with it. The Ramsgate company, now divided into Guildford Hall and Abbott's Hill, the latter proceeded to shut out the former from fellowship without giving them any notice, or opportunity, or certainly any sufficient one, to reconsider their hasty act.

Brethren generally felt that Abbott's Hill's act in thus shutting the door was *sharp* practice, and waited for some months to see if she would own that, and a way be found for reconciliation. Had all supported Abbott's Hill in her course the Guildford Hall company must have been shut out for ever ; for the former required a condition to which she could not conscientiously and rightly submit.

In this state of things it became necessary for other companies to look into the matter. That was done. First by Hazleville (London), then by Park Street (London), and by others. And as it was commonly felt that Guildford Hall, though she had acted hastily, had sufficiently acknowledged that, and had desired, and had sought, reunion with those at Abbott's Hill in a right way, to which the latter refused compliance; brethren, I say, felt that they could not support Abbott's Hill in her course, which implied the shutting out *for ever* of the Guildford Hall company on an unrighteous ground. They, therefore, refused to own Abbott's Hill as the company at Ramsgate on true church ground, but saw no reason to refuse Guildford Hall. Those who fell in with this refused Abbott's Hill. Those who did not continued to support her. Now the Blackheath assembly supported her (Abbott's Hill), and therefore got out of fellowship with those who disowned her.

One more remark. I have omitted to state that whilst Abbott's Hill at the first refused the thought that the matter should be dealt with, as soon as London did, she turned round and accepted it, thus accepting what Guildford Hall had urged, but at the same time keeping the door shut on Guildford Hall. Conduct this was such as I need not characterise.

C. E. S. to W. B.