

# ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT RAWSTORNE STREET,

IN NOV. AND DEC. 1846,

WITH

*An Answer to the "Reasons" circulated in Justification of the  
Refusal of Mr. Newton to meet the Brethren.*

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IN THREE PARTS.

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## PART I.

If it be a sad thing to be engaged in such an affair as that which occupies the Saints at this moment, it is a matter of great comfort to be directed of God in it. It has been the conviction of the Saints in Rawstorne Street, that they could not enter into reasons for not clearing their own consciences in the matter of evil charged against a brother, who had refused to meet them on those charges; and that they must act on the fact of his refusal, when every means had been used to induce that brother to retract it, and meet them; the rather, as they understood, that these reasons, as is now evident, would force them into the whole question of what had passed at Plymouth, and the merits of the case, as it had occurred there. This they felt, under the circumstances, incompetent to enter into. Mr. Newton was not present, to reply for himself; witnesses as to the facts were not there. Had I made a statement, they could have only judged of its correctness *ex parte*. Moreover, it was not what they had to do. They had to act on the repeated refusal of Mr. Newton to satisfy their consciences; and on that ground, and that alone, they did act, having come to the conclusion, that if he refused to satisfy them, he could not come to communion with them till he did. That refusal was finally given; and they thereupon wrote a letter to inform him, that he could not communicate till there was a full investigation.

I think they were bound to act so, and that the Lord guided them. Still I felt, having acted as the discipline of the church of God required, it would be satisfactory if the "Reasons" alleged for refusing to meet them, came before the

Saints, and were fairly examined; and I thought of applying to those who had attached their signatures to them to print them, and then I could reply. This thought was in my mind only the morning after the meeting at which the final letter to Mr. N. was drawn up, when I found, on going out, that they were already widely circulated in print among the brethren in London, before the letter communicating the judgment of the brethren had been closed by those entrusted to sign and send it. This publication of the "Reasons" has given full opportunity for entering into them; and it is to me a source of unfeigned satisfaction, though, at the same time, of sorrow, that the whole thing has come out into the light.

I now give the facts and papers, as they occurred connected with what took place in Rawstorne Street.

It was no volunteer whatever on the part of those meeting there. They had been advised, at the time Lord Congleton, before them all, had charged Mr. Wigram with schism,\* not to take any steps *as to Plymouth*, till the Lord made it a matter for their own consciences, and brought it before them; and accordingly they had remained entirely tranquil in the matter. I came up to town, on my way to France, got my passport signed, and orders on the continent for money, ready to start. At this moment, Mr. Newton arrived in town, and held some private meetings at which he lectured. At the close of one of these meetings, held in the immediate neighbourhood of Rawstorne Street, at the house of three who usually attended there, at which our brother Gough was present, Mr. N. took Mr. Gough aside and said,† that one object he had in coming up to town was, to satisfy the minds of any brethren as to the charges made against him. Mr. Gough, hoping things were going to be cleared up, said he should soon see some of them, or words to that effect. Mr. Gough communicated this to Mr. Cronin. Mr. Cronin communicated it to the Saturday meeting, which is composed of brethren from dif-

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\* Lord Congleton, however, would not now break bread at Ebrington Street himself.

† The above is Mr. Gough's own statement, corrected from his lips.

ferent gatherings, whose communications, for mutual edification if there is no further service, tend to maintain unity of action in the gatherings which are numerous in and around London. At this meeting, cases of discipline, and of persons desiring to be received into communion, are named, that they may be known; and brethren can consult together in any matter that arises. Mr. Cronin, at the same time, communicated the judgment of Mr. R. Howard, who had been obliged to leave the meeting, that nothing would be satisfactory unless the parties concerned met and the matter were fully gone into. All concurred in the propriety of meeting the proposal of Mr. Newton. Mr. Cronin was asked to undertake this, together with Mr. R. Howard, and any others it might be deemed wise to associate with them. Ultimately, R. Howard, E. Cronin, and H. Dorman, communicated with Mr. Newton. Their efforts resulted in a failure of obtaining from Mr. Newton any satisfactory arrangement, for meeting the charges, or for satisfying brethren as proposed.

There is a meeting at Rawstorne Street, on Tuesday morning, at which any needed diaconal service is considered, if there be such, after a prayer-meeting of those who attend. At this meeting, Mr. Gough being there, the matter was mentioned, and concurrently with, though independently of, the steps taken by the three above-named,\* it was agreed that the ten then present, should write to Mr. N., and propose to him to meet the Saints. The following letter was accordingly written:—

“ *Rawstorne Street, 10th Nov. 1846.*

“ Dear Brother,

“ Having been informed at our meeting for prayer this morning, that some of our brethren† have in-

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\* The proposal of Mr. Newton was made after a lecture to Saints attending Rawstorne Street, at the house of those who attended there, and to one of those who always meet there. Of course, persons attending other gatherings besides Rawstorne Street may have been, and doubtless were there; though the house where the meeting was held is in that immediate neighbourhood.

† This refers to what is mentioned above, which resulted in the meeting at Mr. Cronin's house.

vited you to attend a meeting of the Saints (the importance and necessity of which for the Lord's honour we feel), for the purpose of considering before the Lord the unhappy circumstances that have arisen amongst us; and as it is understood, that you have expressed your readiness to meet the saints, and to answer any questions on the above subject, we earnestly request you to inform us when and where you will do so.

“ We are, dear brother, your's truly,

“ THOS. AMOS,  
 JOHN URELL,  
 JOSEPH BALFOUR,  
 HENRY GOUGH,  
 PORTER HAMMOND,  
 EDW. GRANVILLE,  
 GEORGE PILKINGTON,  
 CHAS. JAS. HAMPTON,  
 W. HOPCROFT,  
 JOHN E. WAKEFIELD.”

“ P.S.—Your answer may be addressed to J. Balfour, College Street, Islington, or to any one of the brethren who have signed this note.”

This was sent down the same evening to Mr. Cronin's, where the meeting of Mr. Newton with Messrs. H., C., and D. took place; and Mr. N. said, he would answer it the next day in writing. His answer follows:—

“ My dear Brother,

“ My time is now very limited, but I hope to be at our brother Gough's to-morrow afternoon, at three o'clock, when I should be happy to see any of the brethren who have signed the note to me, and to answer their enquiries as far as lies in my power.

“ Your's in Christian regard,

(Signed)

“ B. W. NEWTON.

“ Tuesday Eve.”

To this Mr. Balfour replied in the name of the brethren:—

“ College-street, 11th Nov.

“ Dear Brother,

“ The object of the note sent you from ten brethren yesterday morning, was not to request that you would meet those who signed it, as your note seemed to infer (which, by the bye, did not reach me till twenty minutes to ten this morning, a period much too late to summon brethren for three o'clock, as they were all scattered to their several occupations), but that you would state when and where you intended to meet the saints *publicly*, ‘ for the purpose of considering, before the Lord, the unhappy circumstances that have arisen amongst us,’ and to which they still request *a direct reply*.

“ Your’s truly,

“ Mr. B. W. Newton.

“ JOSEPH BALFOUR.”

Mr. Newton replied as follows :—

“ Nov. 11, 1846.

“ Dear Brethren,

“ There were, last year, certain charges of moral dishonesty brought against me by Mr. Darby, at Plymouth, in a public meeting, such charges having\* not first communicated to me. When I heard of these charges, I requested four brethren, of whom Lord Congleton was one, to wait on Mr. Darby, and request him to nominate other four to investigate the truth. This was declined. Besides this, I requested those brethren who are regarded at Plymouth as addicting themselves to the ministry of the saints there, to treat the matter as they would any other matter that might seem to require discipline. This was done, and a paper published, stating, that they had examined the case, and reporting thereon to the saints. This paper you may see. Besides this, I appeared twice before ten or twelve brethren from various places, such, for example, as Rhind, Congleton, Moseley, Campbell, Code, and others. They entered into an examination of the charges fully; and Lord Congleton will tell you, that all, with the exception of Mr. Wigram, declared that I was free from the charge of moral dishonesty that had been brought

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\* Read, “ not having been;” but, of course, I copy the original.

against me. A written defence was prepared by me, and laid before these brethren. Mr. Berger, of Hackney, has this defence, and can shew it to you. After all this, I feel that I cannot be properly asked to plead again. As regards other charges in the narrative of facts, the others affect the whole gathering of Plymouth as well as myself,\* and I hope to consider with them the desirable mode of satisfying our dear brethren that they are untrue. The personal charges against me will, I think, be sufficiently met by the papers in possession of Mr. Berger.

“ Your’s in Christian love,

(Signed)

“ B. W. NEWTON.”

Hereupon, the following paper was drawn up and signed :—

“ The under-signed ten brethren, after the meeting for prayer usually held by some brothers on Tuesday morning, felt it laid on their consciences to write to Mr. Newton, requesting him to state when and where he would attend a meeting of the saints publickly, for the purpose of considering, before the Lord, the unhappy circumstances which have arisen amongst us.

“ This Mr. Newton has refused to do.

“ Having thus acted in obedience to what they felt to be the Lord’s guidance in so solemn a matter, these brethren, in fellowship with others who have added their names hereto, now desire to leave it in testimony upon the consciences of the saints to act upon their responsibility to the Lord in so grave a matter.

“ HENRY GOUGH,

“ JOHN E. WAKEFIELD,

“ PORTER HAMMOND,

“ JOHN URELL,

“ GEORGE PILKINGTON,

“ JOSEPH BALFOUR,

“ THOS. AMOS,

“ EDWARD GRANVILLE,

“ CHAS. JAS. HAMPTON,

“ WILLIAM HOPCROFT.

“ We have full fellowship with the act of these brethren.

“ FREDERICK LEFFLER,

“ MATTHEW JAMES STARLING.”

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\* This is not in any way the case. Founded or unfounded, there are many charges which affect Mr. Newton alone.

Thursday evening is the weekly worship meeting at Rawstorne-street. There was a full attendance of the saints on the following Thursday, as it was understood the result arrived at would be communicated by Mr. Dorman. The ten brethren requested him to do this for them, as one who had long laboured in Rawstorne-street and enjoyed the confidence of all. He had also been associated with Messrs. Howard and Cronin in their meeting with Mr. Newton. Having enquired of Mr. Granville if the letters were there, he read the paper to the meeting. Mr. Scobell, who had never formally joined the brethren, but who constantly breaks bread in Rawstorne-street, urged that brethren should not deal unfairly and judge on a statement of the kind, and that Mr. N. ought not to be judged without being heard, that Mr. N.'s was not a direct negative, and that he gave his reasons, and the letters ought to be read.

Mr. Dorman replied, that Mr. Scobell had entirely mistaken the question; that they were not judging the matters at all; that, instead of not hearing Mr. Newton, what they complained of was, that he would not come and let them hear him; that, of course, he gave reasons, but that it *was* a direct refusal, though he gave reasons *for* that refusal; and that, at the meeting at Mr. Cronin's they had proposed every thing they could think of as a means of getting Mr. N. to meet the charges made satisfactorily, and that he would agree to nothing they could propose; that he (Dorman) had merely taken the office of communicator, and that his service was now ended. The letters were read, and Mr. Dorman closed with prayer.

Mr. Newton had said, on leaving the three brethren, after refusing the different plans they had suggested, that they might write and propose something, and they at Plymouth would consider it. Messrs. Howard and Cronin thought, that not having said "No" at the time, they were under some obligation to do it, and they pressed it on Mr. Dorman. He wrote accordingly the following note to Mr. N.:—

“ 40, *Southampton-street, Reading,*

“ *Nov. 20, 1846.*

“ Dear Brother :

“ I now write a line to you in connexion with the subject of our conference at our brother Cronin's last week. I did not myself think it needful to press the matter any further upon you, by letter, after the repeated negative you put, in that conference, upon every proposition to meet Mr. Darby, and others connected with this sad business, face to face. However, other brethren think that, in fairness, you ought to be allowed, even now, an opportunity to retract that refusal, if you are disposed; and I am sure, personally, no one would more rejoice that you should do so than myself, convinced as I am that nothing but meeting the question in a fair and open way, in the presence of all concerned, will have the effect of clearing yourself, or of satisfying the consciences of the saints. Let me ask you, therefore, to say whether you are prepared to meet Mr. Darby, and others concerned in this question, in the presence of the saints at Rawstorne-street, where your visit, and expressions of willingness to meet investigation, have brought it on. I beg to say, very distinctly, I do *not* write to brethren at Plymouth for any opinion as to the Scriptural mode of proceeding in this investigation; not because I despise their judgment, but because the only satisfactory course for me to pursue, if I am charged with evil, is openly and fairly to answer to those charges when I am required to do so by the Church, whose province it is to judge the evil, and not to be raising questions about the competency of the tribunal. I may also further say, that I write to you simply as to your personal course in this matter, because the charges are brought against yourself and not against others. Cronin wishes me to say, that an immediate answer is desirable, as Mr. Darby has been requested to stay in London until your reply is received, in order to give you the opportunity of meeting him and others, as required.

“ Your's affectionately in Christ,

“ W. H. D.”



To this Mr. Dorman received the following reply :—

“ 7, *Woodside*, Nov. 24th, 1846.

“ My dear Brother,

“ Newton having submitted to myself and other brethren your letter to him, we have requested him to allow us to answer it. This answer has been delayed by my own inability to write or to give due attention to the matter, owing to an inflammation in one of my eyes. Our letter is intended to assign our reasons for counselling our brother to decline your proposal to him.

“ Hoping to write to you with the least possible delay,

“ Believe me, yours affectionately in the Lord,

“ HENRY WM. SOLTAU.”

“ To W. H. D.”

Mr. Dorman declined waiting for any reasons, as the refusal to meet the saints was fully expressed in this note. Mr. Cronin wrote a separate note to Mr. Newton, making another proposal, namely, a meeting of brethren from different gatherings, to enter into it, with Mr. Darby present. Mr. Newton, in his reply, referred him to the above note of Mr. Soltau to Mr. Dorman.\*

\* The following is Mr. Dorman's reply to a note of Mr. Clulow's referring to the reasons for not meeting the saints. The note itself is given first.

“ *Plymouth*, 26th Nov., 1846.

“ Dear Brother in the Lord,

“ We hoped to be able to send the letter which we are now writing to you, with an accompanying paper, by this day's post, but we cannot get it done in time; so I write a line to say that we purpose forwarding it by an early coach to-morrow: and it will thus, we hope, reach Reading by the express train which leaves Exeter at 12 o'clock.

“ I remain, your affectionate brother in the Lord,

“ JOSEPH CLULOW.”

“ 40, *Southampton Street*, Reading,

“ Dear Brother:

Nov. 27, 1846.

“ On my return from London this evening, I found your letter of yesterday, and at the first moment after the lecture I sit down

Mr. Dorman met the saints at Rawstorne Street on the Thursday evening following, and communicated the refusal to them; adding that, without judging upon the charges, a person who refused to meet them must lie under them—

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to acknowledge the receipt of it. I need hardly say, as you are acquainted with the contents of my note to Mr. Newton, I was a good deal surprised to receive a letter in reply from Mr. Soltau, and afterwards one from yourself. Under other circumstances, of course, it would have afforded me nothing but pleasure to hear from either of you. I have not yet received the papers you speak of; but I suppose they may reach me to-morrow, however unavailable in my hands, for the purpose for which I suppose they are sent. Indeed, I have already acted on Mr. Soltau's note, as definitive, to my own mind, on the only point about which I communicated with Mr. Newton. He tells me that he and others have counselled Mr. Newton to *decline* my proposal; and this I communicated to the saints at Rawstorne Street (as I did his refusal to meet the request of ten brethren who had written to him on the preceding Thursday evening), expressing, at the same time, most fully, my thoughts and judgment about such a course. I now leave the saints there to act further in the matter as the Lord may give them wisdom and grace. In entering upon this matter, which I did at the request of dear Cronin, it was my determination, by the Lord's grace, to act simply if I could not act wisely: so that Mr. Newton may judge my surprise and disappointment at the way in which he has treated my letter. He might have remonstrated against it, if he had thought fit; but at least he should not have supposed I would express a purpose, as strongly as I knew how, to-day, and then act upon the very opposite to-morrow. All I can say, is, if he or the brethren thought fit to send reasons at all, it ought to have been evident to them that I was not the person to whose hands they should be committed. My letter was a sufficient warning as to that. I can quite understand the assigning of reasons against a person's being condemned unheard, or against partiality in judgment; but I see no place for reasons why a person who has been charged with guilt should not answer at all. At my declining, therefore, to read any reasons, that may come to me, to the saints at Rawstorne Street, you must not be grieved, as it is only declining in act what I had already done by letter. I might speak of the sorrow of my heart in this matter; but this is known to the Lord.

“Yours, affectionately, in Christ,

“To Mr. Clulow.”

“W. H. D.”

“P.S.—I add a line before posting this, to say the parcel has arrived. I cannot add more, if I would secure to-day's post.”

that he could not receive reasons for not meeting them ; that he pressed no judgment by the brethren ; they would act for themselves in it ; but that after what had passed, if Mr. Newton came to Reading or Oxford, where he was now labouring, he, as an individual, would not break bread with Mr. Newton. And having thus discharged his own conscience, he had done what he had to do in the matter, into which he had been introduced by the invitation of Messrs. Howard, Cronin, etc.

In all these proceedings, though I had stayed in London at the particular request of brethren, I had taken no part whatever, nor been present at any meetings on the subject, save these two Thursdays, when I was at the regular worship and stayed, but took no part, save that a brother having urged that I should meet the saints and give full information, I said that of course I was ready to give any explanation, but felt it would be neither right nor gracious to bring in new matter at any such meeting.

On the Sunday morning following, it was given out that a meeting of brothers\* would be held, to consider what ought to be done under the circumstances. They met on the Wednesday following, a very large body of brethren—several from other gatherings beside Rawstorne Street being present and taking part in suggesting what they thought might minister to charity and godliness. At this meeting, the great body were satisfied that all had been done that was needed ; and that they must come to the conclusion that till Mr. N. satisfied them he could not come to communion. A

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\* It was felt desirable not to connect the enquiry with the worship meetings again in this matter ; indeed, many sisters complained of being dragged into it after worship : and the brothers met to consider the matter, before mentioning it at the general meeting, as they had in other instances which presented difficulty, in which the consciences of all were concerned. It was not without, or against, the wish of those who labour among them ; but quite the contrary. In many cases, those who do so have felt able to present the matter at once to the body, as being very simple : in other cases, where it involved in a more anxious way the consciences of all, this previous communication to all has been made. The whole facts of this case had been communicated already to the congregation—brethren and sisters—at the two previous Thursday meetings, by Mr. Dorman.

few doubted whether they could be considered to have received a *direct* refusal, however right they might think the steps of the ten. A Kennington brother declared that Mr. N. had said to himself when calling on him, on these points, that the church was not a judicial assembly, and that he would not answer to it.

Mr. Gough also read thereon part of a letter of Mr. N. to Mr. Cronin,\* stating that he would meet him as an individual, but positively refusing to meet the saints in a formal manner. The brethren who had some difficulty were satisfied by this; and it was then proposed, that though they adopted the act of the ten brethren, an appeal had not been made by the body; and, however hopeless they might be about it, still charity would try. Mr. Dorman, who was present, proposed this formally. A brother from Kennington said that though he knew it did not apply in the letter, still the analogy of Matt. xviii. might be used, and that the last step therein mentioned had not been taken; if that was taken, he should feel nothing more could be done but to refuse to receive him. This proposal was deferred to, Mr. Gough thereon definitely presenting it to the meeting, and the following letter was written and agreed to. Mr. Blake very graciously said, that he did not personally

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\* The impression on Mr. Cronin's mind had been, that Mr. N. had expressed his readiness to meet the saints, individually or collectively; and, accordingly, he pressed his seeing brethren. The following is the letter in answer to Mr. Cronin:—

“ My dear Brother,

“ I have never proposed, but entirely declined, a formal meeting. If *you* wish to see me as a Christian brother, and would ask me any questions that would tend to elucidate facts, I should feel obliged; but I would consent to nothing further, nor would I see any brethren without first being acquainted with their names. I will endeavour to call on you to-morrow, at the time proposed; but it is only to see *you*, and to afford *you* an opportunity of satisfying your own mind as to facts, if *you* desire it. But I come to see you alone.

“ Yours, in Christian love,

“ B. W. NEWTON.”

This letter having been publicly read by Mr. Gough, it is given; as without it the account of the meeting would not be complete. The rest of the letters are in private hands.

concur in the alternative stated in it, as, supposing there was a refusal on the part of Mr. Newton, he did not feel that it would hinder his breaking bread with him. It was settled that the letter should be read on Sunday morning to the whole congregation, which was accordingly done by Mr. Gough, and it was despatched on Monday—no comment having been made on it on Sunday. I must say, nothing could exceed the grace and good order and deference for the feelings of the weakest, that characterised the meeting of Wednesday. Mr. Scobell, who, as I understood, avowed himself a member of another body of Christians, rebuked Mr. Dorman for saying, when declaring that he could not read the reasons, that they had not satisfied him. Mr. Dorman acquiesced in the justice of it. Mr. Wigram objected to the fitness of Mr. Scobell's taking a prominent part; but the brethren discountenanced the objection, and though silent till the close of the meeting, he spoke again the Friday week following. I should not mention these things, but that I would state nothing as to the character of the meeting without giving a general outline of all.

The note addressed by the meeting was as follows:—

*“ London, Dec. 7, 1846.*

“ Beloved Brother :

“ We beg to transmit to you the following communication from a meeting of brothers usually breaking bread at Rawstorne Street, with some brethren from other places present and concurring; and which was afterwards presented and concurred in by the saints met together in the name of the Lord, at Rawstorne Street, on Sunday morning last.

“ Having been fully informed of your refusal to meet the saints at Rawstorne Street, to satisfy their consciences as to the truth or falsehood of the charges brought against you, in the ‘ Narrative of Facts,’ in the presence of those concerned in the charges, we now make to you a last appeal as a body, in the hope that you may yet be moved to recall your expressed determination on this point, and that you will not force us to a formal expression of the only scriptural alternative left to us in such a case.

“ We request that you will kindly send your answer, addressed to Mr. Gough, 20, Trinidad Place, Liverpool Road, Islington, so as to reach him by the 11th inst., as it is the purpose of the brethren to meet on that day to receive it.

“ Signed on behalf of those named above.

“ Your’s in true Christian love,

“ H. GOUGH,

“ W. H. DORMAN.

“ To B. W. Newton.”

The brethren met on Friday. W. Aherne gave out a hymn, and Mr. Darby prayed.

Mr. Gough read the following reply :—

“ *Plymouth*, 9th Dec., 1846.

“ Beloved Brethren,

“ Knowing as you well do, our strong conviction so long, and in such various ways expressed, that the meeting you propose is entirely opposed to the directions of the word of God, you cannot be surprised that we should again meet it, with the most firm and decided negative.

“ If you had allowed us a few more days, we should have completed the answer to your letter which we are now preparing, and which we hope to forward with the shortest possible delay.

“ We can scarcely expect that you will attach much value to the expression of our judgment ; but we think it our duty simply to warn you against the course that you appear to be so precipitately pursuing.

“ We are, beloved brethren,

“ Your’s affectionately in the Lord,

(Signed)

“ B. W. NEWTON,

H. W. SOLTAU,

W. B. DYER,

J. CLULOW,

J. E. BATTEN.

“ To Messrs. W. H. Dorman and H. Gough.”

A letter from Mr. Tregelles accompanied it, warning the brethren they were all wrong, which it is hardly necessary to insert. Part of it was, however, read by Mr. Gough.

It will be seen, from the letter previously addressed to Mr. Newton, that the meeting on Friday, was to receive the answer and act on it if it was a refusal; and this was fully understood by the brethren. The brother who had urged Matt. xviii., and pressed the brethren so to act, as they accordingly did, put it on that ground, as indeed, the passage would make evident.

However, at Friday's meeting, some of Mr. Newton's personal friends came (none of them having been at the preceding ones, but Mr. Scobell)—Mr. Wiggins, who did not say much, but objected and left; Mr. W. Berger, Mr. Scobell, Mr. Woolston from Brixham in Devonshire, Mr. Aherne from Tottenham; Mr. Offord from St. Austell, Cornwall—and endeavoured to hinder the brethren from acting, declaring their incompetency to act, that Mr. Newton had never come\* among them at Rawstone Street at all, and therefore, they had no reason for acting; Mr. Woolston urging the reading a quantity of papers he had in his possession, to prove Mr. N. innocent. Mr. Dorman replied to this last, that they would be quite proper to be read, if they were trying Mr. Newton, but they were not, nor passing judgment on his guilt, but clearing their own consciences as a gathering, acting solely on his refusal to meet them. And another brother also said, that if they heard these papers and the reasons, Mr. Darby might reply, and Mr. Newton was not there to meet it, so that they could not enter on that ground. It was said, that they were as ready to judge Mr. Darby, if the charges were untrue, for then he was a calumniator, as Mr. N., but Mr. N. had made it impossible to enter on it. Mr. Berger said, Mr. N. had not refused to meet Mr. Darby under certain circumstances; that he had said, that if brethren declared it was absolutely necessary, he could not say whether he would refuse, but that it would be time enough to consider it when the case arose. Mr. Dorman replied to this, that Mr. N. had said

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\* Referring to his presenting himself at the table.

at the meeting at Mr. Cronin's, that if any brother would say solemnly before the Lord, that he felt it was necessary for the glory of God that he should meet Mr. Darby, he would do so, and that Mr. Cronin had replied, that he did say solemnly before the Lord, that it was necessary for the glory of God that he should, and Mr. N. replied then, that Mr. Cronin would not say so, if he knew all the circumstances.

Other brethren of Rawstone Street merely urged, that all this was not the question, that they had to act on the refusal to meet them and satisfy their consciences. Mr. Offord said, were they right in judging that Mr. Newton had refused; he had seen Mr. N. within a week, and he had told himself that he did not refuse to meet the church. It was replied, that Mr. Offord not having been at the meetings, was not aware of course of what had passed: that on Wednesday week preceding, a letter had been read from Mr. N. himself, declaring that he would not. And Mr. Gough was called on for the letter. A brother, however, said, "We all recollect it;" and nothing more was said on this point, and the brethren waited patiently till twelve o'clock, owing to the attempts of the above-named brethren to hinder their acting. One brother, Edmonds, stated, he felt difficulty on the ground of Mr. Berger's statement, but on the letter being read at the close, which it was proposed to send, he rose and said, as he had made a difficulty he felt called on to say he entirely assented to it. Mr. Frederick Prideaux protested against the competency of the brethren to act, and questioned if Mr. N. had refused. Another brother made a difficulty as to the course of procedure on this ground, that I ought indeed to have left Ebrington Street, but to have retired to a neighbouring gathering, and got them to judge the whole conduct of Ebrington Street gathering, for not having judged the evil, and therefore, I ought not to be listened to at all. Having graciously and quietly stated this, all in the gathering felt that this was a principle that could not be entertained a moment, just as they at this moment could not judge Ebrington Street. They judged unanimously, with the exception of this objection, and of Mr. Prideaux (for it was an appeal made to all, "Whether any had any



difficulty?" which had drawn out these objections), that a letter should be written to Mr. Newton, stating that they could not hold communion with him till he met the charges fully. The letter follows:—

“ London, Dec. 13, 1846.

“ Beloved Brother,

“ The saints at Rawstorne Street, with some other brethren present and concurring, having received your refusal to meet their request, now communicate to you, with the utmost sorrow and pain, that they feel precluded meeting you in fellowship at the table of the Lord, until the matters in question have been fairly and fully investigated. In this communication, the congregation at Rawstorne Street do not express any judgment on the *matter* charged; but simply on the *fact* of your refusal. They need not say, with what joy they would welcome any change in your disposition as to this matter.

“ Signed on behalf of the saints above named,

“ We remain, dear brother,

“ Affectionately your's in Christ,

“ W. H. DORMAN.

“ To B. W. Newton.

“ H. GOUGH.”

Mr. Wigram prayed, and the letter was read a second time and approved. It was again read at the table on the following Sunday, and then sent.

I mentioned, on Saturday morning, the statement of Mr. Berger at the meeting on Friday evening, and I allude here to what passed, because, as Mr. Berger's statement was made before a very large body of brethren, it is well that the explanation should be known. It did not affect the question before the saints at Rawstorne-street, because it referred to the interview of the three with Mr. N., whereas the brethren there acted on the refusal addressed to the ten brethren, confirmed by the letter of Mr. Soltau to Mr. Dorman, and on the final refusal of Mr. Newton

to the joint application of the saints, and other communications which confirmed it. Indeed, on one occasion, when allusion was made to the paper signed by Messrs. Cronin, Howard, and Dorman, knowing that Mr. Berger was invalidating the authority of that document, I dissuaded the brethren from referring to it without saying more, than that that meeting was not before them, that they had not been there, and it would be better to act on what had been addressed to themselves. And it was not referred to. When on Saturday morning the above letter, signed on Friday night, was communicated to the Saturday meeting, it, of course, introduced the subject; I said, that what had passed shewed the entire uselessness of these private meetings: here was one at which brethren we all honoured and respected took part; as the responsible persons, they draw up a report as the result of it, and it is left to act upon the consciences of the saints (though, happily, they had acted independently of it); and, at the end of three weeks, a person present at the meeting, and present and admitting its truth when the Report was drawn up, comes and seeks to hinder the saints acting, by a statement invalidating the Report. Mr. Berger was asked by Mr. Hammond, if the Report had not, when drawn up, been read to him, word by word and paragraph by paragraph, and that he had stated it was true: he assented that he had agreed to it as true, and added, that he said now it was true, that is, as far as it went; but that what he had said since was true too. Mr. R. Howard remarked, that Mr. Newton *had* said what Mr. Berger referred to (namely, that on Mr. Berger's pressing him to say, would he refuse to meet Mr. Darby if brethren insisted on it as necessary, Mr. N. replied, he could not say, that if the brethren insisted on it as necessary, he would, in all circumstances, refuse, but that it would be time enough to consider it when the case arose). Mr. R. H. added, that, perhaps, a better account than the one signed might be, that Mr. Newton had refused every actual proposition made to him,\* but made a

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\* Mr. R. H. had urged at the meeting, that Mr. N. could not reject the competency of the persons, for he had offered to meet and satisfy

reserve of hypothetical cases, which came to nothing. I said, that I did not understand how Mr. Berger could consistently assent to, as true (*fair* had also, at the time, been urged by Mr. Spencer, and admitted by Mr. Berger) an absolute statement, that Mr. Newton had refused, and then say, that he had not refused under all circumstances. Mr. Berger said both were true. I said, I could not doubt a moment of the effect produced on Dorman, Howard, and Cronin's consciences, before whom the interview took place, which effect never appeared, and which was nullified by an invalidated Report. Had it been before the saints themselves, their own consciences would have been under the impression. Mr. R. Howard said, that the best thing, perhaps, to say, was, that it was impossible to give a straight-forward report of what was not straight-forward. There the matter dropped.\* Having given all this comment on it, so that it may have its just value, I add the Report signed by these three brethren.

"In the meeting at E. Cronin's (10 Nov., 1846), it was urged upon Mr. Newton, that there was need of a full and open investigation. He was challenged by some present (in accordance with the object of the meeting) to meet J. N. D. and others face to face openly, and to say before them what he had said *privately*, which he refused, giving reasons against it: but, at the conclusion of the meeting, said, that if a proposition was made in writing, they at Plymouth would consider whether it was Scriptural.

"Signed by

"DORMAN,

"CRONIN,

"R. HOWARD."

saints, and that all they wanted was, that he should do so in the presence of those concerned. Mr. Tregelles pressed for some Scripture for accuser and accused meeting face to face.

\* Mr. Cronin confirmed the account given by Mr. Dorman, as above, of Mr. N.'s offer, Mr. Cronin's saying that he deemed it necessary, and Mr. Newton's answer turning it aside. Mr. Berger asked, had he pressed it again, after Mr. N.'s turning it aside: Mr. Cronin said, Yes, but he had got nothing by it.

I found, on going to this Saturday meeting, that the reasons for refusing to meet the saints, signed by Messrs. Soltau, Clulow, Batten, and Dyer, were circulated, in print, by post, together with Mr. N.'s defence, as widely as had been possible among the saints composing the congregation in Rawstorne-street, and provision made for their gratuitous distribution. To these documents I now turn.

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This Report of these proceedings has been submitted to Messrs. Dorman, I. Howard, and a considerable number of the saints who took part at Rawstorne-street, and has received their corrections. Mr. R. Howard has corrected what relates to the part he was engaged in. He was not at the *general* meetings of the brethren, of which an account is given above. Many brethren wishing to sign it, as well as the two named above, it was thought undesirable to select on the one hand, or to delay it on the other. It would have taken several days to attach these signatures, and this notice is substituted.

Besides the corrections made, some of the brethren doubted whether Mr. Scobell had not said, he *had been*, not *he was*, a member of another body of Christians. Mr. Wigram's objection to the fitness of his taking a prominent part in a case of discipline, was on the ground that he still *was*, though often coming to Rawstorne-street. His feeling was overruled, as stated.

# ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT RAWSTORNE STREET,

IN NOV. AND DEC. 1846,

WITH

*An Answer to the "Reasons" circulated in Justification of the  
Refusal of Mr. Newton to meet the Brethren.*

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IN THREE PARTS.

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## PART II.

*Being the Answer to the "Reasons."*

I AM exceedingly thankful for the publication of these papers. The saints have now Mr. Newton's "Defence," and his friends' "Reasons" for his not meeting the saints. In a word, they have the case before them. While the brethren in London were discussing the question of how to judge the case before them, I refrained from taking any part whatever. In the last two meetings, after Mr. Newton had refused to meet them at all, I felt free to take a part, because the merits of the case were not in question, but the competency of saints to clear their consciences of evil; but though provoked by multiplied assertions of proofs of innocence, and reasons, I refrained from all answer whatever to these, and refused to say a word on the merits of the case, or on the "Reasons" (though it was very trying to me), because it would not have been fair on my part. The printing and distribution of the "Reasons" and "Defence," have set me perfectly free as to this.

I shall consider, first, the "Reasons."

There are one or two general remarks which I would make. In the first place, these documents set up my narrative on the highest ground of fairness. For this reason,—three things are here alleged\* as clearing Mr. Newton,

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\* Nothing else indeed is alleged save the fact of *investigation* by the four signers of the "Reasons," who present themselves as being the persons who addicted themselves at Plymouth to the ministry of the saints. On this two questions arise. Are they the persons who stand, and stand alone in this place as the persons to whom the conscience of the Church is to be entrusted (they deny that the body itself can inquire)? Are they really those who exclusively could

namely, the acquittal by the brethren who went down, which he suppressed; the letter written by a certain number of them, here published; and the acquittal by the four who sign the "Reasons." Now I have stated all these things in the "Narrative." The letters of Mr. Rhind and Lord Congleton I could not give, because I had them not, but I have stated their existence. The alleged acquittal, suppressed by Mr. Newton himself as ruining him, so that he declared he would go to Canada if it came out, I felt to be the best thing for him which he had got, as he now feels it to be, and I stated that there was such a document, and its substance, although he had got it suppressed. I will discuss it further on. I allude to it now as a proof of the fairness of the "Narrative." I have stated also the acquittal by the four who sign the "Reasons."

I have now another remark to make which is of all importance. There is not the smallest attempt whatever made to meet *the "Narrative,"* but merely the charges enquired into at Plymouth a year ago. *Now the main charges in the "Narrative" were not before the brethren at all then.* They had never been made. They enquired into certain charges made in a public meeting in Ebrington-street in November, 1845, and none others. Now at that meeting I was called on by the saints to say why I had left Ebrington-street. In giving the account to them of the matter, I stated certain things (amongst many other facts) which had stopped me from ministering three months before I left. These particular things affected Mr. N., and these particular things alone were inquired into; but they are by no means the only ones, nor are they in my judgment by any means the gravest.

assume the place in which, without supposing a possibility of question by any, they set themselves up here? and, secondly, if they are, did they really make such inquiry as they pretend? This I shall examine further on; for the present I refer to the acquittals themselves, which Mr. Newton professes to have already received previously. I have stated these in the "Narrative" already. Whatever could be said in the "Narrative" in this way for Mr. N., all he has said here of acquittals given by others, I have stated there (see pp. 52, 53, and 57). Their value we will inquire into here. If any thing could place my "Narrative" above suspicion it is this defence. For all that is alleged here of testimony in Mr. Newton's favour, is found there already.

*There is not a pretence* that the others have been enquired into in any way whatever. The "Reasons" of 1846, as well as the "Defence" of 1845, confine themselves to the inquiry carried on at Plymouth in the year 1845, and leave the main allegations of the "Narrative" untouched, I would I could say, unobserved upon. They fix the reader's attention on the Plymouth inquiry, and take it off the "Narrative." But I must now draw the saints' attention to what they do say. After stating that the four who sign are implicated in the main bulk of the charges in the "Narrative," they continue: — "The only exception is in the case of the charges of personal untruthfulness. Of these specific charges our brother Newton is the only object. Now as to these: it might be quite sufficient for us to refer you to his own paper, entitled 'A Defence \* in Reply to the Personal Accusations of Mr. Darby,' a copy of which accompanies this letter." ... "Now we understand your letter to refer only to these last-mentioned charges." ... "These charges were"—and then they give their statement of the charges alleged to have been made at the meeting at Ebrington-street in November, 1845, and *never notice the charges in the "Narrative" at all.* God is my witness, brethren, that I wish I had never heard of them again, and that they were all proved untrue. I would bear the shame with joy, if it could be so; but that is not the question here. The plea here against meeting them is, that they have been inquired into, and the accused acquitted of them. Of what? Of the charges in the "Narrative"?

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\* You would suppose, reader, I dare say, that this "Defence" referred to the contents of the "Narrative." Not at all. It was written nearly a year before the "Narrative" came out, and alludes to only two of the charges contained in it. The word "these" in paragraph 3 of p. 1 of the "Reasons" refers to the charges in the "Narrative." But "these" in "Now as to *these*," in paragraph 4, which would be supposed to be the same, refers only to those alluded to in the meeting at Plymouth in 1845, and not to those in the "Narrative." The unsuspecting reader thinks that they are the same, and that he has in the "Defence" an answer to the charges in the "Narrative," whereas about a quarter of them only are referred to. The others had not then been made, the "Defence" having been written nearly a year before the charges in the "Narrative" came out. The reader must judge for himself of such a procedure.

No: but of the charges at Plymouth in 1845, which appear,\* indeed, in the "Narrative," but are by far the smallest part of the matter. And the reason why these only were mentioned then is evident. These particular matters were the reason for my *leaving*, and therefore I mentioned them alone at the meeting in Ebrington-street. I avoided anxiously every aggravation, and stated only what had led to my leaving, for that was what I was called upon to state. In my "Narrative" I stated the facts in general, avoiding private ones. In the "Reasons" these four go back to the Ebrington-street meeting, and declare that the charges *made there* were disposed of, and never make the smallest allusion to the charges in the "Narrative." These remain untouched; the most important of them were not alluded to in the meeting at Ebrington-street, nor in the inquiry which followed; and some of them happened after both 'the meeting' and 'the inquiry,' though, in the affairs connected with them. Mr. Newton took the same ground in his reply to the ten brethren. After urging his acquittal from the charges made in the meeting at Ebrington-street, he adds:—"As regards other charges in the 'Narrative of Facts,' the others affect the whole gathering of Plymouth as well as myself." The answer to this statement is, It is wholly untrue. Mr. N. must really draw largely on the credulity of his readers. He is charged with several cases of want of truthfulness, in which he alone (would he were not either) is concerned. For example, to cite only one: the imputing to myself and others a certain heretical doctrine in a tract written by himself alone,—when he, and he alone, had taught it in a worse

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\* Indeed *only two* of those found in the "Reasons" appear as charges in the "Narrative." Four are alleged to have been made in 1845. As to two of them (which I disown however as charges) so far from being acquitted, one of the reasons for which Mr. N. got the paper, now alleged to be an acquittal by the ten brethren, suppressed, was, that he was not cleared of these two. Of course these two do not appear as charges in the "Narrative," for I have never allowed them to be such. So that it is only two out of the charges mentioned in the "Reasons" which appear amongst those found in the "Narrative" from which Mr. N. is said to be acquitted.



shape, and that after explanation had on the subject; and then denying that he had charged us, though the charge was in print.

I repeat, twenty times were it needed, I would to God he could disprove it, were I put to utter shame; but believing not only that the Church of God, the saints beloved of Christ are concerned, but that Satan is seeking to ruin the blessing with which God had entrusted us, it cannot now be so passed over. I am ready (I have ever said and felt so) to confess my share as the first among those whose unfaithfulness and want of spirituality gave occasion to the inroad. Moreover, in general I stand as a poor sinner, with no hope at all but mercy myself; and I read, "he shall have judgment without mercy who showed no mercy." But I cannot, even though my failing may have helped to give occasion to the ruin coming in, acquiesce in it, when it is come in and is manifest. Nor do I think it mercy to leave the poor and simple saints exposed to it. Brethren may judge me as they think right; I cannot do so before God. I am reproached now with *not* bringing the first charges against Mr. Newton openly before the whole church. I did bring what was a practical point of clerical assumption, and the instrument of sectarianism, and pressed it on their consciences much before I left, and they would not stir. I avoided bringing the charges personally disgraceful to himself. My heart resisted it. I am now reproached with it. Perhaps I was wrong. I do not envy his friends who reproach me with it, and take it up as a ground why nothing can be done now. When the evil was sought to be spread afresh, so that I felt forced to come out with a statement of what passed, *that* is resisted. My answer is simple. God knows the end, and will bring it about to his own glory. But I resume.

The reader may here mark the difference of the two replies one has to deal with. Mr. Newton (in the letter to the ten) comes forward with a plain untruth, namely, that the other charges affect all at Plymouth. It will be answered, that the detection is so evident, that he could not mean to deceive. (Mr. Newton uses this same plea in his defence). But this is a mistake. Few carry the facts in their mind so

as to detect the falsehood. If Mr. Newton's plausible statement is accredited, he appears an injured and aggrieved man; the fairest words are used, the person gets under his influence; once there, no contradiction is listened to, no exposure read; a partizan is gained. The tact of the writer of the "Reasons" is more subtle. He states generally, "The only exception is, in the case of the charges of personal untruthfulness. Of these specific charges our brother Newton is the only object." That seems fair enough. Then in page 2, a history is given of my conduct and charges at *Plymouth* in 1845, as to prophecy, sectarianism, and, finally, Mr. Newton's veracity. And then it is said, "Now we understand your letter to refer only to *these last mentioned charges*. For of none others could it, in any way, be said that they are brought against our brother Newton only, and not against others. It is to satisfy the consciences of the saints as to *the things charged against his veracity*\* therefore, that we suppose you ask our brother Newton to appear before the saints in Rawstorne-street, etc. Now, we think it impossible that such a proposition could have been made by you, had you been aware of the way in which *these charges* have already been met and examined into in this place. . . *These charges* were," etc.; and then comes an elaborate account of what they allege to have been my charges in 1845 at Plymouth. Now, the reader will naturally suppose — he is left to suppose, that the charges in p. 2, thus entered on, are the same as those spoken of in p. 1, and that Rawstorne-street had specifically these, and these only before it. He would hardly suppose that "these specific charges" in p. 1, and "these charges were" in p. 2, are quite a different

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\* The words "veracity, etc." seem to carry on the connection with the first part; (through the phrase "last mentioned" which seems to distinguish them from questions on "ministry, etc."), but there has been quietly slipped in "March, 1845, etc., etc.;" so that "these charges" after this passage, only mean the charges made in 1845, not those in the "Narrative;" and "none others" now apply not to all those of the "Narrative," but confine the attention of the reader exclusively to the charges made in 1845 at Plymouth; whereas in the beginning of what I have quoted, the like expressions refer to the whole of the charges in the "Narrative," which the unsuspecting reader supposes, consequently, he is dealing with all through. See the "Reasons."

matter, two only of the latter being found amongst the former. Page 1\* refers to the charges in the "Narrative of Facts," which is thus subtilely attempted to be swamped in what passed at Plymouth in 1845, where, as I have said, I confined myself, when called upon to state what led to my leaving, entirely to what had led to that, not wishing to bring charges, though I already knew of many other things; but they had not led to my *leaving*, and I said nothing about them. The alleged charges of 1845 are thus quietly assumed to be "the things charged against his veracity," and that "of none others could it be said that they are brought against Mr. Newton only." But I turn to p. 1, and I say with it there are "specific charges" in the "Narrative of Facts;"—of which three (besides two of those found here) may be read in one page of the "Narrative," besides others in other parts of it. And in a following page of the "Narrative" it is distinctly urged that they regard Mr. Newton alone.

These first two pages, then, are a mere attempt† to merge the "Narrative" in what passed at Plymouth in 1845, and the charges then made; to which alone the alleged acquittal can be pretended to apply. As to *them*, it is attempted to shew there has been an acquittal (the force of which I shall just now examine), but this acquittal *does not in any way apply to the great body of charges in the narrative at all*. What shall we say to such a defence as this?

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\* Except the last "these," as explained in a previous note.

† From the effect this produces on my own mind, as to those who could concoct such a statement as that contained in these reasons, I feel bound to say, not for the purpose of charging one, but of clearing others, that I am satisfied that Messrs. Soltau and Clulow are incapable of it; are mere victims and instruments in this, and never would have done such a thing of themselves; and further, that there is but one who is really concerned in it as originating it, of all the four, and that is Mr. Dyer. This, of course, is merely my judgment. Every one will heed it or not as they please, but I felt bound to say that (sadly as they have been dragged in) I do not believe Mr. Soltau or Clulow would of themselves have been capable of it. Nor do I charge Mr. Batten with it. But as they have signed it, of course I must leave it here on their common responsibility.

Having now shewn that the "Reasons" do not really touch upon, or treat of, the great body of charges as to truthfulness contained in the "Narrative," the whole case is really disposed of (viewed as taken up by those to whom the paper has been addressed). The "Defence" does not even allude to these charges, having been written before the Narrative came out. But I will for the satisfaction of the saints, go through, as briefly as I can, the "Defence" of acquittal set up as to what *is* touched upon.

It is stated, p. 2, that my complaints were directed against certain writings on prophetic and kindred subjects, and the way they had been disseminated. As every one knows, I do not agree with these prophetic views; I think them in the most really important points wrong. I do object to the manner in which they are disseminated. But instead of beginning with this, *I positively refused to enter on it as a ground of complaint.* I said my ground was a moral ground. There can be no dispute as to this, because there is proof in writing. Here is Mr. Newton's account of the charge I made.

"The charge preferred against me in the meeting, was, *a systematic effort to form a sect, and discrediting and denouncing those who do not adopt the opinions which form its basis.*" This, though not the terms used at the meeting, is correct; it is taken from a previous note of mine to Mr. Newton. The first terms of the charge made, which, as well as this, was *privately* to Mr. Newton (I quote from his own note) were that he had "acted very badly towards many beloved brethren, and in the sight of God."\*

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\* This was not a volunteer charge; it was in reply to a note of Mr. Newton, admitting that "his manner had been marked with so much distance, when we first met." Mine certainly had not. Three brethren had come down to ask me subsequently, what I came to Plymouth for. Mr. Newton states on their report, that we should go on in separate paths, but uniting in all that we can in love. In answer to this, I stated my complaint to him, whereupon he withdrew, in his reply, all the kindness expressed in his first. My note had accepted and returned the kindness, and stated "with sorrow of heart" the complaint I had to make; declaring that "as to difference of interpretation on points of scripture," objections could be stated if needed, but that when the need did not exist, I felt "a measure of difference compara-

Secondly, my attention was called to the subject of Clericalism, by an expression in Mr. Newton's first note, and I took it up with him, whereupon he withdrew his kindly written one. It is perfectly true, that the way in which the scheme had ripened, I had at first no idea of. It is equally true, that it was "afterwards" I made the charges against his veracity: for the simplest reason; he had not made the statements on which they were founded till afterwards. I will here repeat, that though I did not go to Mr. Newton about them (he declined intercourse with me at that time, though I had called on him in order to renew it, and not finding him, told him so); I did speak of them to Mr. Harris and Soltau, who were intimate with him, and in whom I had confidence. Mr. Harris, as well as Mr. Naylor, did go to him, at any rate about one of these charges, before ever they were brought forward, and he persisted in the thing, in spite of remonstrance. The whole paragraph therefore is a mis-representation, save that I did not make the charges before they were called for. My purpose in going to Plymouth was any thing but making charges.

Next as to the charges. They are stated to be four. Now I deny absolutely that I ever made more than two at the meeting in Ebrington-street in 1845. The parading the two first is merely to make out a case. None of the four who sign were there. Mr. Naylor, who was, bore me out as to the terms I used in the meeting. The charge made behind my back was, that I accused Mr. Newton of altering the letters, after being told he had not. The charge made to myself by Mr. Newton was, that I had charged him with suppressing two out of five. This statement, as I shall show, is the only plausible one, even from his own account. Here is the charge *forwarded by him to me*:—  
 "1st, That, of five manuscript letters (which it is not needful more particularly to describe), Mr. Newton had suppressed some."

This is his written complaint sent to me by the four

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tively immaterial, and but an exercise of grace." I quote this now, merely as a proof that the way the matter is stated here, is entirely incorrect.

persons mentioned in p. 3 of the "Reasons." To aggravate and attach importance to this, the four, who *here* reproduce them, add "*secret*" suppression; and to make it square with the charge made behind my back of altering the letters, it is added, "or parts of them." In p. 16 of the "Defence," made in 1845, Mr. Newton, referring to a book now lying before me, says, "This book Mr. Darby appears to have seen, and to have inferred that the two last letters were suppressed," etc. This statement, then, in the "Reasons" is itself an entirely unjustifiable one on any ground. As to the second, I do not exactly see how the addition of an appendix constitutes, or can constitute, a charge of moral dishonesty. There may be a want of fairness in the manner of it. Whatever the charge is worth, the fact is so. An appendix was added, at the close of letter 3, with this title, "Appendix to Letter I. Some Difficulties suggested to the Interpretation in this Letter with Mr. Newton's answer."

Since the meeting at which this was alluded to, Miss Jeremie has declared she is answerable for this, and that she put it in; that she had asked (being employed, note, to copy and circulate these letters) Mr. Newton whether he had an answer to certain difficulties I had raised to his views\* expounded in these letters. Mr. Newton supplied

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\* These events were five years ago about, since which time these letters have been circulated. At that time I had, at the instance of brethren, remonstrated with Mr. Newton about them, but he persevered. As this matter is referred to in the "Defence," I shall state the circumstances, and give Miss Jeremie's account to me, which differs in its moral bearing from Mr. N.'s. I was invited to spend the evening at a married sister's of Miss J., which I accepted, as for common edification. When there, I found a large meeting, to my great surprise, exclusively of sisters. Brethren who came were sent away unknown to me. Miss Jeremie said to me, You will speak to us on such prophetic points (those contained in the MSS. letters). I was rather disgusted, and replied, Whatever the Lord may lead me to. Finding, however, their minds bent upon this, I thought well to let it go on, and presented the difficulties I had in receiving their views, ascertaining clearly myself that they had learned them from man, and not God. Miss Jeremie, in my interview with her, after the meeting in 1845, told me she had met Mr. N. in Frankfort-street after the meeting at her sister's, and told him there were difficulties raised

her with my letter to him (telling her what part she might copy and what part she might not), and with answers thereto from himself. Miss Jeremie declares, that, though authorised to copy it, she was not expressly authorised to put it in the letters. This was communicated to me *subsequently* to my statement at the meeting, and I published it, at their request, in the first tract I printed. I do so again now.

All I said at the meeting was this, that "the first thing that made me uncomfortable was the renewed circulation of these letters, two of them being wanting" (I cannot answer for the word "suppressed." I may have said in a copy in which two of them were "suppressed"), and in which an appendix was added as belonging to the first letter, which referred in a material part to one of the letters which was not in the book. My only words in pursuing the history of what led to my leaving were, "the first thing that made me uncomfortable." The facts are just exactly as I stated them. My charges *were quite distinct*. I shall go into them in a moment. It is possible this rested on Mr. N.'s mind with pain, as a charge, from Miss Hamblin's writing to him about it. I will touch on this when I come to it.

I shall now state, as to the details, how the question of the place of the Appendix came in. My grand objection was the circulation, in spite of remonstrance, of the letters denouncing the brethren's teaching. Miss Jeremie states, she left the two out to circulate them in another book, and thus among twice as many people. Now, in one of the two last, Mr. N. makes this statement, that before the tares are judged on the earth, the saints will be raised and stay on the earth for an interval (probably a brief one), and that their being seen in their changed bodies must be an awful and terrible sight to the ungodly, and that while

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she should like to be satisfied about. Could Mr. N. furnish her with answers to them? Mr. N. thereupon furnished her with my letter to him containing the different objections, and showed her how much she might copy, and gave her his answers. These objections and answers form the Appendix. Miss Jeremie's account of the copy-books, which I first suggested to her however did not satisfy me, but as I attached no importance to it, I left it as it was, and published it at the end of the next thing I printed.

they were there the tares would be separated from among them ; \* that at that time risen saints alone were the wheat, and that gathering the tares from among the wheat meant gathering sinners from among risen saints on earth. I had (no one I think will be surprised) objected to this statement, and I do think it a little unreasonable to declare, as Mr. N. does in these letters, that "the foundations of Christianity are gone," if people do not fall in with a system involving such absurdities as this. Mr. N. in the Appendix added by Miss Jeremie, as belonging to Letter I., denies some of my remarks being correct, as, for instance, that he had said the tares were *burned* while the risen saints were there. It is possible he had not said so ; but if I may judge from Mr. Newton's extract of my letter in the Appendix, I said no such thing, but gave the quotation *in terms* from his letter, though he seems to imply I did, by denying it. However this may be, I felt it objectionable to declare that the comment referred to Letter I., which did not contain all this, whilst my objection was based on Letter IV. or V. which was not there to be referred to ; this point being the first and leading one given. This objection, I dare say, may have been taken by Mrs. B—h, whose kindness and integrity no one will question, to be a charge of *altering* the letters. If she said so I am sure she thought so ; but it is evident it had nothing to say to it. I have given these details, as so much has been said about it. But the fact is, I entered into none of them at all at the meeting. I said nothing whatever, but that the circulation of these three letters, with the Appendix, without the other two was "the first thing that made me uncomfortable ;" and so it did.

Mr. N. had been remonstrated with about these letters at least four years before, and this was a kind of new edition ; and I referred to the matter in some such terms, stating merely the fact as to the other point, Mr. N.'s name not being even mentioned, though I do not doubt it was referred to him, though a vast body of the statement did not exclusively. I knew it was Miss Jeremie's hand. I had been asked, previously to the meeting, how I knew

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\* This has been publicly preached in the streets.



the Appendix was from Mr. Newton, and I showed its heading.

I made a long preface then as to the disastrousness of having to make charges against one accustomed to be looked up to, and then stated those found as the third and fourth in p. 3 of the "Reasons;" which, though not in the terms, amount to the matter of the charges. As Mr. N. refers to them in his "Defence," I will refer to them there; and will now take up the allegation of *their having been inquired into, and Mr. N. acquitted.*

First, as to the fact of the investigation by these four. They allege an investigation by the natural guides of Plymouth, and besides that by other brethren. There is a long statement contained in p. 3 to 8, to the effect that those co-operating in ministry (designated in the rest of the statement by the word "we," that is, the four who sign the "Reasons") felt that the charges "demanded a prompt and searching inquisition," and that this was gone into. It is then added in p. 8, "But investigation into this matter has not been confined to the saints living here. The presence here, in Dec. 1845, of many brethren from other places (who came indeed expressly to investigate what was transpiring here) afforded an opportunity for yet further inquisition into these personal charges; and these brethren did in a very patient protracted way go into the whole matter." So that there was a prompt and searching inquisition by the four ministering brethren at Plymouth,\* which proved the charges were so groundless they were not worth communicating to the church, but the result of which was at last communicated to them, and satisfied the church; and there was a yet further inquisition, in which other brethren did in a very patient and protracted way go into the whole matter. Now let us see on their own showing how it was done. And let us consider first, "the prompt and searching inquisition" by those who co-operated with

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\* Note here in passing the startling proposition, that an investigation by Messrs. Clulow, Batten, Soltau, and Dyer (who themselves in these or other documents declare too that they were accused with Mr. N.), to the exclusion of Mr. Harris and all else, was the solemn, final, and conclusive investigation of the church of God.

Nr. Newton in ministry, that is, the four who sign the "Reasons," before we touch on the yet further inquisition. Turn to p. 3. "The first step towards such an inquiry (that is by the four ministers) was, indeed, taken by our brother Newton himself, though with our full and entire concurrence. He proposed that he should name four brethren, and our brother Darby other four, and that these eight should investigate the case, and report the result of their investigation to the church.\* Our brother Newton accordingly nominated four—our brethren Moseley, Lord Congleton, Dr. Cookworthy and Walker; but our brother Darby declined to accede to this mode of investigation."

I confess I was astounded at this (not at the fact, which, corrected as in the note, is true, unless it be the concurrence of the four who sign the reasons, which I know nothing about; but) that the first step of the co-operating ministers to make a prompt and searching inquisition, was Mr. Newton's nominating four *other* persons to conduct it (a step taken by himself), and, with four to be named by me, to report it, when closed, to the church. That can hardly mean the enquiring ministers. But note yet another thing, how prompt it was. For I press attention (because there are loose words afterwards, in which this is sought to be wrapped up), I press attention, I say, to the words "the *first* step." Now who are the four named by Mr. Newton? Three of them are of the number of the brethren who came to carry on the "yet further inquisition" in the most patient and protracted way. That is, *not a single step whatever was taken before*

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\* This is not true: it was a proposal "to meet four nominated by him," and there is nothing said about the church; the words are, "and report on the charges." On Mr. N.'s principles it could not be to the church as thereon judging it. Indeed, as appears in a subsequent letter, there was *no thought of the church*. They say, "We also differ from you entirely in thinking this *a question of conscience* to be referred only to the church of God. We regard it as a matter of fact, a simple question of evidence to be best dealt with by a few competent persons." This was just what I felt was the object, and to which I could not agree. In the same letter also, they say, "a given number of persons, one half *to be named* by yourself, the other by him." It will be at once seen by the letters given further on, how this attempt to withdraw it from the church acted on my mind.

*the brethren had come from a distance to enquire into what had transpired. And then the first step of the enquiry of these co-operating ministers was taken by Mr. Newton himself nominating four other persons, three being the brethren from a distance. But then it may be alleged that it is said, "But before this proposition was declined, indeed, as soon as the charges became known to us, our brother Newton conversed with some of us," etc. "The propriety of this was felt by all," and then "we felt that we had nothing to lay before the saints." Now, still as to date, it is clear that this could not be before the first step was taken. That was taken by Mr. Newton; this he himself confirms. His letter to the ten brethren in Rawstorne-street who wrote to him, says: "When I heard of these charges, I requested four brethren, of whom Lord Congleton was one, to wait on Mr. Darby, and request him to nominate other four, to investigate the truth. This was declined. Besides this, I requested those brethren who are regarded at Plymouth as addicting themselves to the ministry of the saints there, to treat the matter as they would any other matter that might seem to require discipline," etc.*

"Before the proposition was declined, indeed, as soon as the charges became known to us," does not give thus one instant before the first step which put it into other hands. The reader may think that "before" includes some considerable period. But "the first step," when Mr. Newton heard of the charges, was Mr. Newton's speaking to Lord Congleton, etc., so that this "indeed as soon" is no time at all, though it may look like some preceding act. And how much was the lapse before Mr. Darby's declining the proposition to put it in other hands?—the brethren from a distance being then come to investigate, before which, as we have seen, nothing was done at all, the first step being taken with three of them. The proposition of Mr. Newton's nominees to me after hearing Mr. Newton's statement, is dated November 26, 1845. My answer declining it is November 27th, 1845; their final reply to me, November 28th, 1845, at which time the patient investigation of the other brethren was in hand. On the 14th December, Lord Congleton signs a paper acquitting Mr. Newton as the

result of it. And Mr. Soltau's letter of acquittal given in the "Reasons" is dated December 17, at which time, as every one knows, the enquiry of the brethren had closed, and several were already gone. So that we get the plain fact, that not one step was taken of the prompt and searching inquisition before the brethren came from afar, and that then it was put, with the concurrence of the four, into the hands of some of those who came, and who were to report to the Church; and that *then*, whatever it was worth, or however consistent, *Mr. Newton* put it into the hands of those four, as those who were regarded at Plymouth as addicting themselves to the ministry of the saints; who, before his putting it into their hands and telling them they might do it, never took a single step whatever. And at this time, it was under the investigation of the brethren from afar.

And now the question arises, why Mr. Newton spoke to "some of us," and who are the "all" by whom it was felt. Was Mr. Harris not co-operating in ministry at Plymouth? Where were Mr. Rowe and Mr. Saunders, who used to co-operate, or Mr. Hill, or others, who once "addicted themselves to ministry" there? Well, they were not co-operating, may be said by the four who sign this paper. Messrs. Rowe and Saunders were. They had joined in requesting Mr. Harris to say why he could not minister, if it was so. Mr. Hill had retired to Plymstock disgusted, it is true. Mr. Harris, indeed, was not: he had, *exactly at this time*, declared before seven hundred brethren in and around Plymouth, that he could not minister any more, because of the conduct of Mr. Newton and his friends; and he went to Mr. Newton as to one of the charges of untruth, to say he was sorry for Mr. N.'s credit and character, that he had made the statements, for if he was asked, he must say they were untrue. Is it not singular, that the names of these persons are not mentioned in connection with the saints at Plymouth, when this enquiry was to go on, nor such a fact as the statement of Mr. Harris (who *above all* was looked up to by the body of saints there) to the whole gathering, which statement happened just three days before I made the charges alluded to? This is not even mentioned. This is on the face of the document.

The fact is, and I feel free here to add, that there is not one at Plymouth but knows, that the four who sign this paper were the associates and instruments of Mr. Newton; and as to Mr. Clulow and Mr. Dyer (though every one will own dear Clulow as, in other circumstances, an amiable, and upright brother), had their names been previously mentioned as responsible for the consciences of the saints, it would have excited the smile or the indignation of nine-tenths of the congregation of Ebrington-street.\* Moreover, these four appear in a singularly unhappy position here, because they have, months ago, signed a joint paper with Mr. Newton, in which they declare that in all that has passed they have been accused together (viz. in the letter of the five to the four brethren in London, who invited them to the London meeting in April); and even in these very "Reasons" they say, that in the great bulk of the charges they are implicated as much as Mr. Newton, though not in these particular ones. And note here, that the investigation by the Church is confined to their investigation. "This the Church does, we believe through those of its members capacitated by God for such service," that is themselves; they being, as they confessed afterwards, the accused persons. Can they present themselves as independent elders charged with judging Mr. N.'s case for the church to-day, and complain along with him of lying under a common accusation of these same charges to-morrow? But, however, we have their own testimony that there was no enquiry by them till Mr. Newton had put it into the hands of four other persons who were to enquire and report to the church. Further, the statement in p. 5, "that they had had in company with them (the brethren from other places), the fullest opportunities of again and again sifting all that could be said on it," is wholly untrue. They had nothing of the kind. They appeared *with Mr. Newton* before them *when he answered*, and the brethren examined *them*, but they were never in company with them in other examinations.

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\* On a particular occasion related in the "Narrative," Mr. N. had mentioned those whom God had raised up to exercise authority in the Church; they were himself, Harris, Soltau and Batten. Dyer and Clulow were not mentioned.

Not at mine, not at Harris's. They had not such opportunity. I ask here, at whose examination were they in company with them? they were *in company with Mr. Newton* when *he* was examined. I shall now give the letters of these four, and my answers, in which I declined acceding. I thought this part of the case so very bad, that I did not do so in the "Narrative;" but as it has been thought proper to print the letters of acquittal, let all come out fairly. I sorrow to be obliged to do it, for brethren I count otherwise gracious and godly are implicated. It is no fault of mine if they have chosen to identify themselves with those who have brought them into such a position.

"Plymouth, 26 November, 1845.

"Dear Brother,

"We are desired by Mr. Newton to request that you will name four Brethren to meet an equal number nominated by him, to enquire into, and report on, the charges said to have been made by you on Monday the 17th instant,\* at a meeting in Ebrington-street, which appear very seriously to affect Mr. Newton's moral character.

"We understand you to have stated—

"1st. That of '*Five Manuscript Letters*' (which it is not needful more particularly to describe), Mr. Newton had suppressed some :

"2ndly. That Mr. Newton is the author† of an appendix which you have seen subjoined to one of them :

\* This shows that ten days had elapsed from my statement, and about a fortnight from Mr. Harris's explanation; during which, no step whatever was taken by those who "felt that such accusations must be instantly dealt with," and then, as we have seen, it was not they, but Mr. Newton took it up with other persons. As to Mr. Harris, steps *were* taken; that is, Saunders and Rowe having proposed to the assembly after Mr. Harris's statement, that they should meet to know what could be done to hinder Mr. Harris's ceasing to minister; every engine was set in motion to hinder brethren coming, and not one of those here named was there. This further shews, that Mr. Newton did not take his step when he heard of it: he had heard of it ten days before.

† He is the author of it. It consists of his answers to extracts of my letter which he gives.

“ 3rdly. That a tract recently printed, purporting to be a publication of the first of the above mentioned letters, “*with some omissions and alterations,*” is so changed by additions, that it no longer “*remains in substance the same :*” and—

“ 4thly. That a letter addressed to Mr. Clulow, professing to be the substance of what Mr. Newton had stated at a meeting held here in the beginning of the present year, is *not* the substance of what was spoken by him on that occasion.

“ Not doubting your ready acquiescence with our request, we will thank you to make your nomination known to us at your earliest convenience.

We remain, dear brother,

Yours with Christian regard,  
(signed) CONGLETON.

JOHN MOSELEY.

GEORGE I. WALKER.

J. C. COOKWORTHY.”

To Mr. J. N. Darby.

This letter distressed me, because it was an evident effort to take the matter really out of the hands of the Church, and even out of the hands of the brethren who were come down to enquire; and if I did not accede, give me the appearance of refusing investigation. But I trusted God. It spoke of reporting on the charges. It is said in the “Reasons,” “and report the result of the investigation to the Church.” Now there is not, we have seen, a word about the Church in the letter; and if one could have trusted that it meant this, it actually was taking the matter then away from the Church, where it really was. And four named by Mr. Newton, could easily, as they actually did, seek to swamp the matter, so as to hinder investigation. The four (though I supposed those who signed, might be the ones), were *not* nominated, as the choice was still left open. I thought the mode an objectionable one, and that the only possible result and meaning of it, was hushing the matter up. Subsequent events have proved how rightly I judged. Had I named four, it would have at once stamped them as my friends and partizans. It may be as well here to recall what brought the ten brethren down. Mr. Potter and

Mr. Hall had written to me urgently about the matter, the former pressing the assembling brethren from elsewhere: I said to him, "If you think so, you had better come." I communicated this to Campbell, Hall, and Lord Congleton. Mr. Newton and his friends thereon sent for those whose support they relied on; namely, Rhind, Moseley, Morris, Rickards and Walker. Of course I do not pretend to know in what terms they were written to.

My answer follows.

"Dear Brethren,

"I am perfectly ready to enter before brethren into the statements I made at the Monday meeting (and I can only add, I should rejoice more than I can say, to be proved entirely wrong), but, in a way which is righteous before God.

"None of you were at that meeting, and you cannot know what I stated; and no one could have made the statements which are contained in your letter, *from what he heard* at that meeting.

"I was called on by my brethren to say why I left communion in Ebrington-street, which I had laid upon three grounds, one of which was an accessory one only.

"It is true, that in stating one of these, I was obliged to state two things which did affect Mr. Newton's conduct. I did so with pain before God, and I did it before the Saints, whose consciences were concerned in it. I acted before God and them, in leaving them on grounds of which these two things formed a part. I did so in stating them. I stand before God, and owing it to His saints to render an account of what I stated. I am perfectly ready to do so, but I shall name no four persons, as if they were friends of mine, and it was a worldly question to be settled by arbitration. It is a matter of conscience before God. Let it be before Him. Are not the brethren interested in this? Have they not heard it? Let it be before them. It is spreading nothing, for that would not be charity; but the statement has been made; let it be proved where it was made. And were I to name four, it would be even useless. Where would be the twelve or fifteen brethren



who heard the statement in question? God's place of conscience is the Church of God. Let this, which is a question of conscience, be judged there. Where two or three are gathered together in His name, He will be. I know of no other tribunal but His, and His now in the Church. It seems to me that that which you propose, is a mere worldly tribunal. Of course the brethren who sign it, if as individual brethren they wish to enquire into it really as a matter of their conscience (not of curiosity), are free to do so, and if really of their conscience, in charity, I will tell them every thing; but I shall name none, nor take it out of the place where I believe God has set it—the judgment of the Church of God, under responsibility to Him as such, looking for His presence, and able to count upon it.

“There are many more than four cognisant of all the circumstances, and many more godly sober saints interested in it. Let the conscience of those concerned be informed in it. Besides, these are a part of a long train of facts which have been going on for years, and which form a most important part of the bearing of both the papers alluded to, and the statements I made about them.

“Let it not be supposed I seek any popular meeting as such. I have no such thought. I ask only that the consciences of those whom God has given an interest in these things, be informed and made clear about them. I desire all to be there. If the brethren at large are content that a more limited number be there, as more really conducive to their own satisfaction in the matter, it is to me all the same; but I shall act before the conscience of the Church of God. There I can own Him and look for His presence; but I shall name none as my friends as the world. If the four brethren who have signed this, think right to come to me together and investigate for themselves (trusting that they will come as before God), I am ready to state all I have to state.

“It is a matter of deep, deep sorrow; but I demand that it may be done openly and fully before God and those concerned, and where the consciences of those concerned can bear witness, or the contrary, to what is brought forward. Nor would, indeed, the investigation of the points named

solve in the least the questions in which the saints are concerned. I may be, and am ready, to go into these; but there is a long train of other facts and circumstances, which cannot be separated from them, must be inquired into, before the consciences of those who have a right to have them clear of all evil, could be righteously satisfied. These must be inquired into too. I desire to *produce* none (God forbid) which have not, in one way or other, acted already on the saints; but let all be fairly out before the consciences of the saints. I repeat it, before God's Church, as far as it is already concerned in it. Any thing that is really meant to bring it scripturally before them, I will gladly, though sorrowfully, acquiesce in.

"Your affectionate brother in Christ,

"J. N. DARBY."

"If Mr. Newton prefers to take it up as a personal wrong to him, let him act according to the scripture rule in such case. But this evidently is not my part to act in. I may just add, that the two points in which my statements did affect Mr. Newton, as alluded to, are as simple as possible. If the brethren who write to me desire to inform themselves, they have nothing to do but to go to the brethren who were present at the meeting,\* and inquire as to one of the matters; and, as to the other, to compare the documents only, informing themselves to what the statement alludes.

"I ask to bring no persons at all. I am accused of wronging Mr. Newton. I ask in this to bring no one. Let the four who signed the paper get those who were present together and inform themselves. Nothing can be easier to them. If they wish to satisfy the consciences of others, let the others be there to be satisfied. I am ready, of course, to state (before them and those who were then present) what my objection is.

"John Moseley,

"Mr. Clulow's, 1, Boon's-place.

"Nov. 27, 1845."

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\* This refers to the meeting of fifteen in April previous, the account of which I alleged to be incorrect.

The following is the answer to my letter:—

“ Plymouth, 28 Nov. 1845.

“ DEAR BROTHER,

“ We have received your letter in reply to our note of the 26th inst., and have given to it our prayerful and best attention.

We informed you, that you were reported to have made certain statements very derogatory to Mr. Newton's personal character, and that Mr. Newton was desirous to submit them to the scrutiny of a given number of Brethren, one half to be named by yourself, the other by him.

We did hope that you would either have denied having made the statements at all, or have withdrawn them as made in mistake, and have expressed regret at having been led into error; or that you would have been willing to have them investigated; but, although you acknowledge having stated ‘two things that did affect Mr. Newton's conduct,’ we infer, from the tenour of your letter, that you are not prepared to sustain them.

Had the wrong of which Mr. Newton complains been done to him *privately*, the course prescribed in the xviii<sup>th</sup> of Matthew (to which we suppose you refer when using the words ‘*scripture rule*’) might have been taken by him; but, after availing ourselves of such sources of information as lie open to us, we feel satisfied that charges against Mr. Newton's moral character were made by you at a meeting consisting (in the opinion of some) of scarcely less than three hundred persons. Under such circumstances, we think the plan proposed by Mr. Newton unobjectionable. You call it ‘*a mere worldly tribunal.*’ We see in it nothing unscriptural; and certain we are, that it is not according to ‘*scripture rule*’\* to publish charges against

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\* I had pressed them on Mr. Harris and Soltau privately months before. Mr. Harris had (and Mr. Naylor) spoken to Mr. N. as to one, and he went on with it. Mr. N. declined intercourse with me at the time. It is well to remark, that I had no more to do with these untruths then than any one else. My having made a stand afterwards, may now make me responsible for showing that I had reason to do so.

an individual without having *first* given him an opportunity of clearing himself from them.

“ We, also, differ from you entirely in thinking this is ‘ a question of conscience,’ to be referred only to ‘ the church of God.’ We regard it as a matter of fact,—a simple question of evidence, to be best dealt with by a few competent persons ; and we think a publick meeting the place of all others the least fitted for cool, dispassionate inquiry. It is true, you disclaim all idea of appealing to ‘ a popular meeting, as such,’ whilst the language of your letter is unintelligible, if you do not really seek a publick assembly, there to repeat the grievance.

“ We are, therefore, under the sad and painful necessity of saying, that we can only regard your letter as an evasion ; and we feel, that, as the matter now rests, the charges you have brought against Mr. Newton’s personal character are not entitled to credit, and ought not to detract from the esteem and respect in which he has always been held.

“ It is our intention to give to Mr. Newton a copy of this correspondence, leaving it with him to use it as he may think best.

“ We remain, Dear Brother, your’s faithfully,

(signed)

“ GEORGE I. WALKER,

“ CONGLETON,

“ JOHN MOSELEY,

“ J. C. COOKWORTHY.”

“ To Mr. J. N. DARBY.”

I beg the reader to read my previous letter. The four who sign this had never asked me a single question on the matter. Three of them I had not even seen, nor had they been near Mr. Harris, Hill, C. Pridham, Naylor, M<sup>r</sup>. Adam, who were all at Plymouth, and had been at the April meeting, the account of which was called in question as untrue ; the only others present in Plymouth who had been at that meeting being Mr. Newton’s personal friends, brought there by him.

The following was my answer :—

“Dear Brethren,

“On the whole, however painful, I am thankful for your letter. Still, it is with very deep sorrow as to the subject. You are brethren, and, some at least, known as well as beloved. I only sorrow over some things in the position you have put yourselves in; but it would be out of place for me to express it now, after the letter you have sent me. I might complain of some things. You were none of you here, or present in March or April, when that took place to which one of the charges refers, or aware of the circumstances to which the other alludes. You did not even ask me what the charges were which I made at the large meeting on Monday; and even Lord Congleton, who spoke about the grounds of my leaving, had no detail from me of what the charges were. But I shall not trouble you with these points. It was suggested to me to keep a copy of my last letter. I said that I was acting before God, and would trust Him, and not deal thus with brethren. I have now to beg you will send me the original of my letter that I may copy it; you shall, of course, have it again. The person you trust it to can stay till I return it to him. *I have* in one sense evaded this miserable subject, but it certainly was not in that letter (I happily read it to the brethren\* Harris and M’Adam before it went, to know if it was quite clear on the point). But it can now be evaded no longer; and my heart just sinks while I say it. As far as the saints go, it is made unavoidably a church matter. I only regret that names I much love should be mixed up with it, as your letter has done. I am, with however much sorrow,

still aff<sup>y</sup> y<sup>rs</sup> in the Lord,

J. N. D.”

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\* I had shewn the original proposal to Mr. Harris and Mr. M’Adam, with whom I happened to drink tea at Mr. Harris’s that day, who both thought, (as every other saint I met about it afterwards), that I ought not to act on it. They had been present, and Harris said, “What is the good of eight inquiring now for us, when we were at the meeting in question with eleven more (that is, at the April meeting, the account of which I said was untrue)? but,” Harris said, “take care you do not seem to avoid an investigation.” I shewed them therefore my answer, and they said there could be no mistake as to it.

The following note closed the correspondence.

“ Dear Brother, 30th November.  
 “ When you have taken a copy of the inclosed [my letter], will you be kind enough to return it to me at your convenience, either to-day or to-morrow.  
 “ Believe me, yours faithfully,  
 “ GEORGE J. WALKER.”

Mr. Walker was called away by the illness of his child, and saved the pretence of carrying on an investigation, after writing a letter saying my charges were not worthy of credit. Lord Congleton and Mr. Moseley pursued it, however, and they are two of the persons whose certificates of acquittal were given in December 14 and December 30, as having made up their minds subsequently to the inquiry. It is quite evident they need not have waited quite so long.\* Mr. Morris had written † long before to Mr. Newton, that he might count on him to stand by him in any way. Mr. Rickards' and Mr. Rhind's testimony remain: that the latter has sought to clear Mr. Newton all through, cannot be doubted. I will consider the value of his acquittal, which is on the same ground as the other alleged one by all the brethren, when I come to the defence of Mr. Newton. The inquiry by the ten went on, and they separated without any joint testimony of guilt or innocence. That is a clear fact, or a letter from Mr. R. answering for three others, and another from Lord Congleton, need not have been produced when the rest were all gone. But I will close as to the alleged inquisition of the four who sign the “Reasons,” as their last

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\* If it is miserable to read through such a course of things, I beg the reader to consider what it was to go through it. I do not charge the individuals here. I have been long convinced (and declared it) of a direct delusive influence of Satan at Plymouth.

† This letter was circulated everywhere, because it stated a vast number of dreadful errors into which Mr. Morris had been led by listening to brethren who differed from Mr. Newton's views. I understand Mr. Morris is changed a good deal in this respect, but I have no certain information. While at Plymouth, and for some time after, no one spoke so strongly as to Mr. Newton's tyranny in hindering people's ministry.

act comes in here. A paper of acquittal was put forth with their signature. Let it be remembered, that the first act of any inquiry, was Mr. Newton's putting it into the hands of three of the brethren from a distance, and one of Plymouth. The four Plymouth ministers had done nothing before this. This was the "first step." Their inquiry, if any, must have been while that of the brethren from a distance was going on. No one certainly ever heard of it then. Not only so, they were (so they state in the "Reasons,") examined themselves by the brethren who came,\* and the fact is, they always appeared with Mr. Newton as his associates when he was before the brethren from a distance.

And now, having stated these circumstances, let us turn to the document itself, and see what pretension it has to be a joint result of a common investigation carried on by ministers together in behalf of the church. It is in page 6, where you will find it an individual testimony of H. W. Soltau. "What I now state," is what he says; not a word about a prompt, solemn, or any inquisition of the elders at Plymouth. "He believes" Mr. N. "entirely innocent," etc., and adds, "Should any of you desire to know the grounds on which I have come to the conclusion stated above, I shall be happy," etc. The three others say they unite in the testimony, because they have come to the same conclusion, signing their names in a postscript. Mr. Soltau says he does it to allay agitation. Is this a joint report to the church of a solemn investigation carried on by elders? Its real effect on a vast number was just to prove that the brethren from a distance had not come to such conclusion; and further, these four were known to all as Mr. N.'s instruments in what had produced all the confusion, and it recoiled on their own heads, and that was all. It was felt by many as ruining Mr. N.'s cause and their own on these two grounds.

And now I may repeat circumstances connected with it here, which will lead us to another of the alleged acquittals, — the suppressed one,

Mr. Newton, as is admitted, nay asserted by himself, got the paper which had been drawn up by Sir Alexander Camp-

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\* They also state they investigated in company with them.

bell, and signed by others, suppressed. This having been done, this counter-signed letter of H. W. Soltau was produced, saying, as the brethren have given no conclusion on the charges, they had drawn one up themselves, and now sent it forth. And I think I may say, that the way in which the one was suppressed, under a threat to go to Canada, as ruinous to Mr. N.'s character, and, as soon as they had succeeded in this, producing and issuing their own entire acquittal, opened Mr. Potter's eyes, one of those who are said to have entirely acquitted him, more than anything else to the misconduct of the party. He is *reported* to have said, that he never saw such things among Christians in his life. *Now these two documents, one of which supplanted the other, are the two things which are said to be, one, the solemn acquittal of the church of God at Plymouth, and the other that of impartial brethren from elsewhere.* And now I will consider this last.\* First, it is a strange thing for Mr. Newton to allege now as an entire acquittal, a paper which he says himself he got suppressed then. He did get it suppressed; that is, the four who had added their names to Campbell's withdrew them, and the latter gave it up. And why suppress this entire acquittal? The fact was, he said *then* he should be ruined by it, and that if it came out he should go to Canada. Sir A. C.'s account of the matter to me was, that when it was shewn to Mr N., he was beside himself; that he declared that I had made four charges, whereas this paper applied only to two (all I really had made), and that he had given no occasion for the charges which the paper said he had.

What I believe † to have been the fact, as to the paper, is this:—Most of the brethren were satisfied as to the sectarianism, and thought it might be got rid of, but found the moral charges stood in the way—Mr. Newton would listen to nothing else. I do not say all the brethren. Morris and Rickards insisted, after this, on the clerical

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\* That is, the circumstances connected with it. The paper itself never came out, having been suppressed at the time.

† I pretend to give no more than my own judgment as to it, from all that passed then and since.



principle; and the latter openly deprecated the principles of brethren. But Lord Congleton says now, to all who will hear him, that he would not go to Ebrington-street, though he condemns my proceedings. He has declared to me, that he had not believed the sectarianism and clericalism charged till he went down, but then he did; and that he would not break bread there now. This being, more or less, felt by several, and the moral charges, "a dreadful incumbrance to the real question," several of the brethren having left, Sir A. C. thought he could bring it to an issue by going, as far as possible, in clearing Mr. Newton; and at the same time quieting me, by saying he had laid himself open to the charges; and insisting, besides, on a full investigation before the church, which he has stated he did, in a subsequently published tract, and, indeed, so informed me soon after the transaction, during which I was myself absent, the investigation being over. It was, in my judgment, an unadvised act, though with a godly intention, and God, in fact, set it aside altogether. I was not at Plymouth. I left it all to the Lord when not called to answer, which I seldom was—only once, by the whole number of brethren. Indeed, while many of these brethren I look up to and love most dearly, and value much for both godliness and a wisdom I should far prefer to my own in their service in the church in most cases,—in this matter my sober judgment is, that they came without the wisdom of God—remained without the strength of God with them—and departed without the honour of God upon them. How far my answer to Potter contributed to this I do not pretend to say. However, God interfered, as He overrules all, and though it went, no doubt, far beyond any other document in Mr. N.'s favour, he insisted on the suppression\* of this

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\* Let me notice a little here two things to the saint who reads this. First, what was going on. A verdict is drawn up (now alleged by Mr Newton to be an acquittal of him by all), and signed by some of those inquiring, and then *submitted to Mr. Newton for his judgment on it.*† He rejects it as not good enough for him, and it is withdrawn! I am not impugning the integrity of the persons concerned. I have no more doubt of it than of my own. But any one will feel that it must have been a tolerable trial to have seen what I

† I do not know that Sir A. C. joined in this.

paper. Sir A. C. withdrew it. A strange procedure, if it were a solemn act of acquittal by the ten brethren.

I will now see how far it is, as a matter of fact, true, that there was really an acquittal by all. Sir A. C. subsequently published a tract, in which he declares, in italics, "Any thing like an open investigation of his (i. e. my) statements, is positively denied." I know not what the four who have signed the "Reasons" judge of this statement coming from one of those who they say fully investigated it. Mr. Potter told me that he did not attach much weight to the charge as to the letter to Clulow, but he thought the other very grave. He, it is not denied, went to urge Mr. N. to confess it. I do not state what passed, though I have heard it. I cite it merely as to the notion of a full acquittal. Mr. Wigram refused to sign it at the time, whatever it was. Mr. M'Adam had gone away, on the ground that he was satisfied as to the evil existing, and would not have the appearance of staying to inquire as if he doubted. Mr. Naylor was gone; and he says to me (having gone through all the inquiry) as to the "Narrative of Facts," "so far as I am able to speak, I believe the pamphlet is what it professes to be, a statement of *facts* sad and humbling indeed (and who that has had any thing to do with the enacting of

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had been anxiously seeking to serve God in, get on this kind of ground. Did they ever think of submitting any thing to me? Never a moment, and they were quite right. I complain nothing of this. And now see, secondly, the good of trusting God. These brethren never troubled themselves about me in the matter. They were anxious to get rid of the charges of untruth, in order to deal with the sectarianism they met with; and prepared to swamp the other question as an incumbrance, and quiet me, without consulting me, by some general expressions. At the same time, Sir A. C. quieting his own conscience by demanding, as he has publicly stated he did, an open investigation. All this I knew nothing of, good or bad, till afterwards, nor indeed of any thing that passed. One would have thought it a fine opportunity for Mr. Newton to quash the charges and all inquiry. These brethren were anxious to get rid of them (indeed, they told me so twenty times, that they stood altogether in the way). God would not allow it, and employs Mr. Newton himself to suppress it. They would have gone as far as ever they could to clear him, in order to get rid of the question: God steps in and employs the very person they were going to clear, to set aside all their plan. How wonderful are His ways!

them, does not feel his own place that of self-judgment as well as of identification with the sin of his brother?), yet *facts*. My own judgment with respect to Ebrington-street, though other things have their weight, is mainly based on the way in which conscience has been blunted and enquiry stifled." Now I do not produce this, as proving that Mr. Naylor holds Mr. N. guilty, nor anything of the kind. It is not the question. I am not proving him so myself; but, I ask, Is this the language of a man who has pronounced a full acquittal of charges found in the "Narrative"? I speak only of the two inquired into in 1845. As to any others, there is no pretence of an acquittal. I have, then, as to this acquittal, the fact that it was suppressed by Mr. N. himself as ruinous to him. Further, the person who drew it up, declares in a subsequently published paper, that anything like an open investigation of my statements was positively denied; another refusing to sign it at the time; another gone because he was convinced of the evil; another declaring the "Narrative" true; another urging confession of one of the charges on Mr. N.

I may add, that when Mr. Chapman proposed giving a paper to Mr. N. clearing him, on Mr. N.'s complaint that he could not get one, Messrs. Potter and Code declined signing it. I do not pretend to say on what ground.

As to Lord Congleton, he had acquitted him before the enquiry began; so had Moseley and Walker (the last had nothing to say to this last matter); Morris, Rickards and Rhind remain. All three of whom were there as Mr. N.'s friends. We have their testimony, and what it was founded on, in the "Reasons;" and these form the third alleged acquittal, which will lead us, we shall see, to our closing matter.

Mr. Rhind in stating (p. 9 of "Reasons") that he, with Rickards, Moseley, and Morris,\* was perfectly satisfied that Mr. N. was entirely free from the charge of moral dishonesty, adds, that if Mr. N. "would lay before the saints an explan-

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\* It is well that the reader should be aware that these, as well as Mr. Walker, were brought down by Mr. Newton and his friends, to stand by him in this matter.

ation similar to that you have read to us, either by printing or otherwise; they will then see *for themselves the reasons of our* having arrived at the conclusion above stated." This Mr. N. has now done in printing the "Defence" then read, so that we can fully judge of the ground of any alleged acquittal as to these two points, for this paper was the avowed ground of it, and of any satisfaction afforded as to the charges, to these three, or, indeed, to any one else. We have only, therefore, to examine the defence. Whatever it is worth Mr. Rhind's acquittal is worth, and no more. This "Defence" we will now examine, before closing with the "Reasons." First, as to the suppression of letters and appendix. I have stated the real facts as to this. Miss Hamblin's letter, etc., only remain. First Mr. N. states (p. 14), to make out the charge heavy, that at Exeter *after the reading meeting*, I there repeated the charge. Miss H. replied, many persons being present, etc. You will think, doubtless, this is at the close of the meeting, a sort of public accusation. "Mr. and Mrs. M'Adam," Miss H. states, p. 17, "remained to dine at Mr. W——n's with Mr. Darby. *After dinner*, the conversation turned on Matthew xxiv." It was after the reading meeting to be sure; but what had it to do with it? The whole force of Mr. N.'s complaint is gone in Miss H.'s statement. It was a conversation among private friends. What was said there? I charged Mr. N. with altering the letters, p. 17. Mr. N., however, gives a different account, and, so far, a just one, in p. 16. "This book Mr. Darby appears to have seen, and to have inferred that the *two last letters were suppressed*." So that Mr. N. fully bears me out in my contradiction of Miss H.'s statement as to *altering* the letters. I refer to this, because an immense handle was made of this for months. We have seen that the four who sign the "Reasons," try, by inventing a new \* statement of my charge at the end of a year and three-quarters, to bring in both Mr. N.'s and Miss H.'s statements. I have already stated that I did not really make this charge in

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\* "Reasons," p. 2. "Secret suppression of certain MSS. letters," gives Mr. N.'s account, adding "secret." "Certain parts of them," gives Miss Hamblin's. Aware of the two accounts not tallying, they have inserted *both* with an "or."

Ebrington-street at all, though I alluded to the fact as above explained. Farther, *I* also have an account of Miss Hamblin's, as to this conversation, in which she endeavours to convince me of her accuracy. She has entirely convinced me of the contrary. I shall here say why. The proof she gives, is, that I stated that I supposed that the tract entitled "Signs of the Coming of the Lord, for whom are they given?" was Mr. Newton's, and that she informed me it was Mr. Dyer's. This was a most unhappy proof of her accuracy; Mr. Dyer's initials *are on the tract*. Further, I had written an answer to it, since published. Mr. Naylor urged me not to do so, as it would only puff him up more, and do him harm. Not only so: but it was in this Tract we were charged with subverting the first elements of Christianity. Mr. Dyer having said in the April meeting of fifteen, that I was putting my interpretation on the denunciations made against brethren, I replied, "Well, you shall have your own;" and pulled his tract out of my pocket. The reader may judge of how accurate Miss Hamblin's account must be, when her proof of it is, that I did not know whose tract this was. I regret sincerely that Miss Hamblin should thus have allowed herself to be dragged into publicity. Miss H. upsets Mr. Newton's attempt to aggravate whatever did pass by saying it was after the reading meeting; though his authority is the letter that upsets it. Mr. N. refutes Miss H.'s charge by his own account of the real state of the case; namely, that it was the absence of the last two letters which was in question, as, indeed, he did not venture\* to impute Miss H.'s account to me in the already-cited letters of his four nominees: and Miss Hamblin's proofs to me, that

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\* It was, however, in the tea-meetings, held on Monday evenings, and on other occasions, *after* this "Defence" was read, and the brethren gone, that the charge of altering the letters, after denial of having done so, was made. A curious reason was given to satisfy the minds of those who attended, as to the Irish brethren never coming to Plymouth. They were informed, that the enemies of Plymouth had told them that the saints at Plymouth were an idle newspaper-reading people, and it was no wonder, therefore, they had not come there.

her memory is accurate, prove to me how exceedingly inaccurate it must be; while I entirely deny, as Mr. Newton confirms me here in doing, though he charged me with it fiercely elsewhere, that I ever said a word about altering letters at all. As to the Appendix being a substitution for the letters, it is mere nonsense. I do not even understand what is meant by it. But all this is very immaterial: it served to distract from the real charges. These begin with the third; that is, that a letter, professing to remain in substance the same, did not remain the same. Mr. N. justifies his *omissions*. He has perfect right to do so. Nobody complained of them. He said, he had made omissions, and of course had a right to make any he liked. The *additions* are the thing in question. He states he added two paragraphs: he has added about five pages and a half to a tract of twenty-four pages. But the quantity is not the material point. It is the contents and manner of it. And first, note here; *the fact is not denied*.

What I charged is, as a fact, admitted. Now I do not enter into intention. The question is, Is it honest? I go further: had Mr. N. said at the end, "I take the opportunity of denying, etc.," though this matter had been added, no charge could have been grounded on it. Any body could have understood, that it was no part of the original tract. He has not done any thing of the kind. He has not, as he says he has in the defence, even negatived the two evil doctrines imputed, as he says, to them. He has interwoven with the most assiduous care into the subjects of the tract itself, statements which go to charge the things he was accused of rather on others, or at least to disburthen himself of them, in such a manner as would make it impossible for a reader of the tract to suppose that it was not a part of the letter written six years ago; so that he appeared as an indignant refuter six years ago (before he was conscious of such imputations) of the things he was charged with now. Surely, if I say it remains the same in substance, the substance of the published tract ought to coincide with the original. But here the substance of near a quarter of the tract is on topics agitated at the time, interwoven into the old matter, so that it required

very close examination to find it out ; and matter on the old subject, added in the new part, so as to make it look like an original part of the tract. It requires an actual examination to demonstrate this. I refer to passages to indicate it : p. 20, he had been speaking in the old part of the body gathered on the Abrahamic basis. Thus begins the new, "It would be happy if we could pursue the history of this new family of faith, and find that it preserved its likeness to Abraham its father." "The succeeding chapter the thirteenth of Matthew, etc." "The commencement of the history of the present professing Christian body by the personal ministry of the Lord, etc." "It would be strange if such a parable should belong to some other body, and not to the visible church at all . . . . . I may also observe, before I conclude, that the almost invariable effect of the Jewish principle of interpretation [the general topic is here continued of the tract], is to throw into such a state of perplexity, etc., into felt inability to divide the word, etc., or else induces the adoption of the dictum of some favourite teacher under the shelter of whose name, etc., and what is more to be deprecated than this? It would be, as if the Spirit of God resided only in the teachers, as if the saints could not for themselves prove all things, and hold fast that which is good. It would introduce one of the worst forms of Popish evil." The tract then goes on warning against upsetting universal consent ; thus gradually interweaving the original six-years-old subject and the present controversy, throwing back on others, as if he had done it six years ago, the charge of shutting out the Spirit ; and sustaining the doctrine of universal consent. Now, while spun out of the old, all this is new matter. I repeat again, I say nothing of intention, but is the thing honest at a moment of controversy on these points, in which he says he was charged with these very things? Others may think it honest ; I confess, I have not much respect for his judgment of honesty, who thinks it is. But the truth is, we have no need to speak of any judgment of honesty. Mr. N. first speaks largely of his charity in making the omissions which nobody said anything about, and then says, he added two paragraphs negating charges made.

Now any person accepting this answer could not (assuming him to be honest) have examined for himself the tract, *because there is nothing negatived at all.* The writer *continues* his discussion of the principles he is treating of in the tract, and his arguments against the principles of interpretation he is opposing, and as *illustrating* this, shews, that certain consequences follow in the mind which demonstrate the danger : which consequences (here of course to be taken as very evil) were the things he was charged, or says he was charged, with ; and it was left to be supposed that he could not hold doctrines which he here treated as serious evil consequences. But though it really *was* another subject, it is carefully linked into the matter of the tract as a whole. There is no negative of any thing ; and then the doctrine of universal consent as a rule of faith, which had been objected to as of Popish tendency, is not negatived, but set up upon its legs again in a more subtle covert way, it having damaged their position when previously openly avowed. Now that I have the "Defence" to read, and have re-read that which I charged with unfairness, I have only to say, that I think very much worse, and on deeper grounds, of the thing I so charged ; but I do see reason to credit what Mr. Dyer stated at the time, that it was he got Mr. Newton to add it ; for the closing paragraph is very subtly and covertly propping up Mr. Dyer's argument in favour of *universal consent* as a rule of faith.

And now a few words as to the charges negatived : Mr. Newton says, that I brought against him a false and most injurious charge, in order to destroy his character as a teacher. I print, he says, that charge. He replies by simply negativing the doctrines imputed. This is an entire mis-representation. We have seen what "simply negativing" means. Now, as to the charge. Popish principles were secretly spreading. I was urged by brethren to make a stand. This I did in an answer I wrote to a tract of *Mr. Dyer's*, because Mr. Dyer had *openly appealed* in his *to the doctrine of universal consent*, as a ground of receiving truth, and as a rule by which to judge. I then alluded to popish principles in general, inasmuch as this appeal to universal consent proved that we were not secure



on that side. The doctrine as to teachers may have been imperfectly stated; but it was the real substantial fact, deny it who may. Mr. Newton is not alluded to in the tract. I have said, on the contrary, "Let no one suppose I allude here to individuals. On the contrary, I am very anxious to draw attention to a system," etc. "The demon of popery is the active demon of the day. Its leading introductory principle is advanced in the passage on which I comment. I have noticed some of its other elements, because the introduction of this general one shews that the door has not been kept closed against it." This is at the close of the reply to Mr. Dyer. Is this printing a charge against Mr. Newton? I believe that these two have been the persons who introduced it. But I was thinking a great deal more about the system than about them. Saints will judge whether there was need of being on one's guard, when I repeat to them the fact, that, when, on urging the authority of teachers in one place, a brother replied: "But, after all, it is said, they were more noble, because they searched the Scriptures whether these things were so," it was answered, that that was Jews searching Jewish Scriptures; and that now that God had established gifts in the church, and raised up teachers, all that was changed. When the Plymouth system had reached this point, I judge it was high time to talk about Popery. The truth is, it had ripened out of Plymouth more than the cautious leaders in Plymouth would put forward there; and I put the brethren on guard against the system. My attention had really been drawn to facts *elsewhere*, and not to Mr. Newton, in this, as many brethren know. If Mr. Newton's conscience tells him that he was the guilty person, I shall not dispute it; for I believe, and have no doubt, he was the source of it, but not a single word is said about it in the tract which is in answer to Mr. Dyer, *but the contrary*; and that is the question here. Mr. Newton's statement in the "Defence" is not true. I printed no charge against him. I was really thinking of something else much more important than charging him—the safety of saints against an evil system which was ripening elsewhere. As to insinuations, I do not think any body will charge me with its

being my way. Mr. Newton's easy way of avoiding them would be to face the saints, and have it all out before himself. He has certainly thus far succeeded in putting one into a difficult position. One must let him go on, doing every kind of mischief, without taking notice of it, or speak of it behind his back; for, as to coming fairly forward, he cannot be got to do it. If he thinks, that when saints see infinite mischief doing, they are not to speak what they think about it, he is mistaken. Or if he thinks his denial of it will be of any avail, when they know that it has been going on, he is mistaken in that too. Hundreds of saints are not to be exposed to subtle evil, because the person implicated in it chooses to complain of its being charged upon him when he denies it. I admit the difficulty is greater; that it is harder to walk in the fear of God, and not to step out of a perfectly just path; when one is dealing with such a course, one has to watch oneself the more as to the means used in convicting the guilty of it. But faith, which will always feel our own unworthiness, and not dare to walk out of the covert of God, will find the way, because it trusts God, who will bring every secret work into judgment, whether in our own consciences or otherwise, and make manifest the counsels of the heart, and take care of His beloved people.

As to the fourth charge, that is, the second I really made. The statement of the fact will be sufficient.

Mr. Newton was charged with making a sect at Plymouth; of course extending it if he could. But everybody knows that Plymouth was the central scene of operations. His own statement (I give Mr. Rhind's account of it, which will not be suspected, my own was identical, save the form of the last few words) was this —

He said he *was* making a focus of Plymouth, and seeking to establish union in testimony against the teaching of brethren (i. e., those opposed to his views of course), and that wherever he could get influence in Devonshire, Somerset, and Cornwall, he should do the same thing. This, I need not say at once arrested attention. Mr. Harris said, it was difficult to work with him after this. Others demanded that brethren should declare whether they meant

to act on this. Mr. Young and A. Pridham, who had been to Newton, declared they need say nothing, as Mr. N. had avowed all which they had remonstrated with him about. Mr. Dyer tells him in private, going out, that he ought to explain himself, or his meaning would be mistaken. He refused saying, it was plain enough. Interviews are had, etc., etc., on these words. I stopped dead at them. I felt that God had acted, and brought the matter out to light; but I allowed myself to be over-persuaded by brethren, in particular by Mr. Rhind, who begged me, as so much good had been done, to wait and see, and not press it further, or it might make a rupture with Newton. I acquiesced. After some time, a report of the meeting comes out by Mr. Newton, "because an open and explicit statement is deeply important at such an hour as this." His "Defence" says of this report, "these words are stronger than those I am said to have used;" that there is no reason, in a word, to charge any want of truth on the statement. I now give the statement of the report.

"I desire to produce in the minds of the dear brethren every where, the same strong sense that pervades my own of the evil of this system: and this is one object of my labour every where; at the same time my hostility is against a system, not against individuals." Now this is sad and painful enough, I admit. But on the point of making a sect at Plymouth—He declares he will act in testimony against a certain system of doctrine every where. I should grieve at such a course. He would act so: he would desire that others should have the same sense of the evil as he had. Be it so. I ask any honest man in the world, is this the same thing when making a sect is spoken of, in judging the state of Plymouth, as saying that he was making a focus of Plymouth, and seeking to have union in testimony against the teaching of other brethren, which words were what arrested every body's attention and judgment at the time, even the only ones discussed, and which are wholly omitted? There is not a word about a focus at Plymouth. Not a word about *union* in testimony. He would work hard against a doctrine. I may regret, but cannot help it: but in coming forward to circulate an *open* and *explicit*

statement, is it fair to omit the whole statement which arrested every mind, and substitute another for it? Was it not really a covering up what had thus openly come out,\* and putting forward what was more convenient to put forward before the minds of others? It is urged that, I was told, I was free to urge my own views as much. What comfort is that to me? I do not ask to do it. But, supposing it were so, what has that to do with making a focus of Plymouth, and getting union in testimony against the teaching of other brethren?

There then it is. There is Mr. Newton's defence. There is what Mr. Rhind states, are the reasons of his, Rickards, Moseley, and Morris, arriving at the conclusion that they are perfectly satisfied, that Mr. N. was entirely free from every charge. If I know my own heart, I desire more earnestly than any of them he were. But that is not the question now. I desire to add no further grievance. I should never have touched the subject again, but that I found incessant subtle engines at work in influencing, and, I am satisfied, bringing under the enemy's influence, every weak-minded saint. I have, since then, repeated confirmation of it. And I therefore say, now that we have Mr. Rhind's "Reasons," and Mr. Newton's "Defence," on which they rest; you can *judge for yourselves as well as Mr. Rhind, or any one else*. God has taken care of that, in spite of all their efforts to keep things under a bushel; and taken care of it, I pray you to note, for it marks God's hand, by their own act in bringing it before you. I repeat my judgment, therefore, now that the means of judging are before you, that the two matters I charged at Plymouth, as one unfair, the other untrue, are such as I then thought them. The addition to the tract is not a fair thing, and the account of the April meeting is not a true account. It concealed and changed the whole important point, which God had brought to an avowal at that meeting. And note

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\* It was what he was seeking, and he thought he had arrived at his end, and hence, when I came down, his first act was to hold a meeting of the leaders in private to get them to sign a paper, denouncing me as a heretic. It was not this declaration which convinced me of it; but it was the avowal of it.

here, *the facts are not denied*. Every one can judge for himself of their honesty. Our judgments, beloved brethren, sometimes, nay always, prove our own state as much, and more than that of what we judge. They may be unjust. They may be sound. They may be righteous, and not charitable. They may be the true righteousness of God, and zeal for Him, in contrast with false appearances of charity. God will judge every one of us in all this. To Him we have to commend ourselves. The facts are now before you.

There yet remain but few points more that I am aware of, for I have refrained from any new matter, though, were it a mere matter of discipline, I should insist on other facts connected with it being considered. It is stated (p. 16), on the authority of Lord Congleton, "that many of the brethren engaged in this investigation came to the Lord's table at Ebrington-street, after their investigation was concluded, for the express object of shewing what their judgment was. You have, perhaps, observed that, in his 'Narrative of Facts,' our brother Darby affirms, or implies [which?], otherwise, but yet the fact is as we here state it." Now this is all dishonest mystification. I must be forgiven speaking plainly. Would it not have been well to have said where I have affirmed or implied it? This they take care not to do. The reader will "have, *perhaps*, observed" it; if not, he will have taken for granted, that these four tell the truth. Now I might have some difficulty in charging my memory with every thing in the "Narrative;" but I have some clue here, because Lord Congleton came to me and urged this point, which I suppose, therefore, must be the same. I say then, that, in what Lord Congleton has referred to (and I know of no other passage which touches on the subject, save one in page 56, to the same effect, incidentally), I have neither affirmed nor implied anything of the kind. I have stated, that M'Adam, Campbell, Potter, Code, Wigram, did not break bread any longer. I have positively excepted those who were partizans of Mr. Newton, and expressed uncertainty as to Mr. Naylor. I have no doubt that Messrs. Rhind, Morris, Rickards, Moseley, and Lord Congleton, might then, and would at

any time have done so, though the latter would not now, on the ground of sectarianism and clericalism. Mr. Rhind had agreed to stand up during the investigation, and declare he was satisfied. Another of the enquiring brethren said, if he did, he should stand up and say he was not; and Mr. Newton then got him not to do it. So that, instead of denying that many did, I have, in the way of excepting them from others, rather said they would. What they did, I know nothing about. I have given no reasons for those who would not, not doing so. It is in no way connected with the charges of untruth. I mention, at the starting point of my account of their enquiry into the whole matter, that, as a present fact, when the matter was over, none but Mr. Newton's partizans would break bread. And that is the fact. I shall add another startling one here. Not one of the original labourers at Plymouth but has been driven away by Mr. Newton. Not one of them would break bread there now; I mean Harris, Hall, Wigram, Campbell, and myself. I might add, as some of the earliest taking part, Rowe, Saunders, Lean, Hill.

The four who pretend to be guides and elders here are all new men. Mr. Clulow is of the longest standing; but, however amiable a brother, as he really is, no one ever dreamt of his being a guide till now. Soltau *was not converted* for years after we met. Batten and Dyer joined from a Baptist church years after we met at Plymouth. To return, then; the statement in the "Reasons" is untrue (see p. 47 of the "Narrative"). I will turn now to what is said in the "Narrative," and Lord Congleton's authority, and I shall relate his interview. He came to me, I thank God, with more friendliness than heretofore, though, of course, blaming me, and I was very glad to see him. He declared he had been distressed, but had got quite happy on taking up Matt. xviii., and meant to bring me before the church. Well, I had had a good dose of all these things; but, however, I said, of course he could do what he thought right. He called on me to retract certain things in the "Narrative." Two were mere misunderstandings—one a mere mis-stopping, and the other easily explained. The others I declined retracting, though willing

to explain anything, and not doubting additional circumstances could be added. He said, he should go, and bring others. He came with Mr. Gough. I told him then, his acting on Matthew could not be sustained, he was not the person wronged, and the real difference was obvious. If I refused to retract to Mr. N., who said he was wronged, and then to two or three more, Mr. N. must then go before the church, which was just what he would not do. Mr. Gough also told him it did not apply. He said he had given up doing it, they would not hear him before. I said, I was ready to answer them anything. In result, Mr. Gough told him, that he had confirmed all he had impugned, save the letter of one passage—that was, the words “any longer,” in page 47 of the “Narrative.” Lord Congleton *admitted that they ceased breaking bread before they left Plymouth*, but said, they had one Sunday after the investigation. I said, Mr. M’Adam certainly did not; Mr. Wigram certainly did not; Sir A. Campbell did break bread one Sunday, for I remembered he had said, he would not (I have his letter, which I looked at since), and then took one Sunday to consider before acting so decidedly; that Mr. Potter told me, before he left, he could not break bread in Ebrington-street any longer, and was not prepared to set up a new table, and so he should leave. And Mr. Code wrote to me to the same effect, and, in fact, would not. He happened to be laid up, but meant to go off. That, as to the words “any longer” being set aside by their taking a Sunday to consider, etc., he might, of course, make any use of it he pleased, as he confessed they ceased to do so before they left Plymouth. All his other objections resulted in confirming my statements.\*

Further, it is stated, that there were meetings of the saints to inform them respecting these painful charges; and this is held to be a judgment by the church. Well, reader, there were. Every Monday evening, for a length of time, there were tea-meetings by invitation, the object not being even avowed in instances where it was desired to have

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\* This interview with Lord C., it will be seen, meets the statement in page 10 of the “Reasons.”

people who might not have wished knowingly to come, while, being by invitation, of course those could not go who could have met the statements. Mr. Newton was questioned, these persons say ; and he answered, too, of course. And what then? Sir A. C.'s statements, being in print, could not be avoided, and they were boldly stated to be false.

I have now gone through the "Defence," as to the two charges of Nov. 1845 : and I recall to the saints, that the "Reasons" and "Defence" do not touch anything beyond, nor enter at all upon the body of the statements in the "Narrative." Others could enter much more largely, if they were willing to take the burthen, into the statements in these "Reasons."

I have been able to give enough, I suppose, to satisfy such as might be troubled by them, and to enable them to judge what their weight is.



# ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT RAWSTORNE STREET,

IN NOV. AND DEC. 1846,

WITH

*An Answer to the "Reasons" circulated in Justification of the  
Refusal of Mr. Newton to meet the Brethren.*

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IN THREE PARTS.

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## PART III.

### *The principles involved.*

AN important general principle yet remains. In p.12 of the "Reasons," we find the following:—"It is well known that we have always refused to acknowledge that the Scripture recognises the whole body of assembled saints, as invested with authority and capacity to examine witnesses and debate\* their verdict. This the church does, we believe, through those of its members, capacitated by God for such service. It is in the sense just defined, that we have always denied that the congregated church is a deliberative assembly. Thus we have always maintained a testimony against the principles of the dissenters. If, therefore, from the period of our first gathering together in this place until now, we have steadily and invariably acted on this principle, can it be expected that we should depart from it in this matter." It is evident this is of all importance.

And, first, let me recall the fact, already noticed, that these four persons (who are quietly telling us what they did from the beginning) were not *there* in the beginning. Mr. Soltau was not converted till years after; and Mr. Batten and Mr. Dyer joined years after; Mr. Clulow earlier, but a considerable time after, and he, for a very long time certainly, did not "addict himself to the ministry." That is quite a new thing. So that "*we*" may pass with those who know nothing of Plymouth; but with me, who was there before the beginning, and at it, and after it, their putting themselves in such a place, bears a very strange aspect. And there is another thing somewhat strange.

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\* The force of this word "debate" will be considered further on.

These four were the persons charged, not indeed with the particular points of untruth—but they were involved in all that which was connected with them, led to them, and followed them, and as to which these two charges of want of honesty were merely collateral. If the reader is not sure of this, I beg him to refer to p. 1 of the “Reasons;” “The main bulk of the charges.. affect us as much as they do him;” nay, as to the whole case, they say *more*: “We are, and we wish to be, closely identified with our brother in his present position.” They spoke too of the accusations, personal and others, as being made against them all, in their first letter to the four brethren who invited them to the London meeting, which was held in April last; alleging these accusations as a ground for not coming up and joining in it;—and the fact is, at the time in which in these “Reasons” they profess to *have been inquiring*—that is, as we have seen, while the brethren were down at Plymouth to do so—these four appeared before them as associated with Mr. N. If I am not misinformed, he did not and would not appear without them. This inquiry included the charges of untruth. Is it not a little singular that persons, as to the bulk of the things charged, implicated as much as Mr. N.,—and, as to all of them, then associated, and now closely identified with him, should be the persons who were solemnly to investigate these very charges, so as to bind the church of God that it could not even debate its verdict? And let the reader note who it was that asked them. They state, and Mr. N. confirms it in letters already given, that *he* did. Every body knows, that, with the exception of certain particular untruths, they were involved as accessories in the charges; nay, as to the letter on which one of the charges was made, one of them, Mr. Clulow, had got it written to himself, and got it printed (having been at the April meeting too, of which it gave an account); and Mr. Dyer declared that he got Mr. Newton to put the addition complained of in the charge as to the other printed letter; and that they had gone down to Mr. Rowe’s, and had it added while the letter was in the press.

Are not these strange persons to pronounce a verdict on the case, which the church cannot even debate? Would any worldly man recognise such a proceeding? What would an uprightworldly man say of those engaged in it? All I

can say is, I sorrow, to the heart's core, for some of them ; I trust as a Christian for all. Where was Mr. Harris ? Where were Rowe, Saunders, Hill, or other brethren needless to name, who had certainly as much competency as some of them, and even addicted themselves to the ministry ?

But now as to the principle. I deny unqualifiedly that such was the method from the beginning ; and I was conversant with it a long time before even Mr. Newton himself ; who, though there indeed in the vacation, and taking part, remained a fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, a considerable time ; I cannot be precise as to how long. It is quite true that verdicts were not always, nay, very seldom, debated,—never *debated* that I know of. There was most happy confidence in those labouring ; and the Spirit of God working in them and the body happily—their judgment commended itself habitually to the consciences of all ; and the cases of discipline were simple. But such a thought never was entertained (I cannot answer for Mr. N.) as imposing a verdict on the body, which it could not debate. And here I would, indeed, remark, that Mr. Newton avowed to me, both alone, and, as it has been recalled since to me, in the presence of Mr. Edward Wakefield, of Kendal, that his principles were entirely changed as to those very points of ministry, rule, and government.\* How then can those who now adopt his present ones, have had those of the body from the beginning ? But the fact is, the labouring brethren did habitually inquire, for to them the cases were constantly brought ; and they used to meet on Friday ; and all this seems very blameless and desirable. But they always communicated the result of their inquiries to the body, and their convictions, or the conclusion they came to ; but as to imposing it as an undebateable verdict, it is wholly false. I remember two cases of discipline. In one, a brother rose, and

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\* It has been stated to me that Mr. Soltau declared, that had the principles, on these points, been what they were at first, he would not have staid. I have referred in the "Narrative" to an intelligent member of Ebrington-street, who declared that, ten years ago, Mr. N. urged on him the principles which now I am urging and Mr. N. resisting ; but that he never received them, but joined Ebrington-street as a sect, and staid in it as such.

said he thought there had not been proper inquiry, and that there was a feeling against the person. The brother who communicated the case said, he thought the brother who rose could hardly be acquainted with the facts and say so. The latter at once felt himself alone in the meeting (as, indeed, the case was a dreadful one, and most patiently investigated), and he sat down at once. In another case, a godly grave brother said, there was want of clear information on one part of the case, or a deficiency of it, which could be supplied, and the case was suspended and nothing done. I repeat, the imposition of a verdict was never thought of. General acquiescence was true in fact; and it is happy when it is so. Indeed, most cases are known and simple, and have only to be communicated to the body, and there can be no question with any, if they believe the testimony of those who have taken it up. At Plymouth, those who laboured had confidence in the Lord and in the body, and acted towards it with confidence, and hence the body had confidence in them. That this may have been abused by Mr. N. to the assumption of unscriptural authority, when he had driven away the counterpoise of others, is very likely, and, to my mind, an undoubted fact.

Further, I recognise that guides, elders if you please in principle, can inform and clear up the consciences of a body of Christians. No doubt, if they have, by reason of use, their senses exercised to discern good and evil, and are deeply acquainted with God's ways in the Scriptures, and with the human heart, it is just their service in such case, and, I believe, God's order; and saints will be always thankful for it, as far as I have seen. One may have spiritual discernment to suggest what all may have spirituality enough to see is right when suggested, but never would themselves have thought of. An engineer makes a road of which every waggoner understands, as well as he, the goodness when it is made, though he could not have made it. But it is by no means necessarily a teacher that does this. I know brethren who never teach, whose spiritual judgment I would far rather have than that of any teachers I know. It used to be the effort, I well remember, to insist strongly against the absorption of all gift into the teacher and teaching, as may be seen in the "Christian Witness," a book Mr. N.

justly designated, for his purposes, the most mischievous book that ever was written. But to impose a verdict which cannot be debated, is the most monstrous thing that ever was heard of. It is pure unmasked popery—the clergy dictating to the conscience of the church, which can only register and give their weight to its decrees. Is the conscience of the church to be disposed of thus by others, be they ever so wise? A thing may be urged on the church, insisted on; let it be that rebuke be given; but it is always to *bring the conscience of the church up to the right level*. This St. Paul did with Corinth, where, note, elders never appear at all, but he never acts for them without it. “You have proved *yourselves clear* in this matter.” That is the principle the apostle goes on. No doubt he could guide and rebuke them too, and tell them he had judged the case already; but to impose a verdict on their consciences\* they could not debate, not an apostle even attempts. How could that be proving *themselves clear*? It is monstrous. No one who reads Scripture can question, however weak we may be now, that there were guides, leaders, who watched for souls as accountable to do it, men of reputation, and at that time appointed elders. But it is a very different thing to govern, or rule, or guide the church, which is Scriptural, and to govern instead of and for the church, which is popish (and that is the claim these principles very distinctly set up), and then call the scriptural principles democracy. And even so the apostle declares he was as a nursing mother with the saints. And the government of the church is not a setting of points right, but of souls right, and therefore nothing is done unless the conscience of the church is carried into the act. It is evident that the apostle did bring

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\* I shall here give an extract of a letter of Mr. N.'s intended for the perusal of others, and read publicly in a gathering of saints. “It may, however, be well to inform you of the outline of circumstances that followed on Mr. Darby's personal accusations of me. When I heard of their having been publicly made in the meeting at Ebrington-street, I felt that it was open to the brethren watching over the saints to interfere, if they pleased, in their church capacity. If there was a case of discipline against me, it was quite open to them, after investigation, to bring it before the church, and *require* that I should be withdrawn from or excommunicated.” The nicest casuist could not draw a line between this and the daily conduct of the popish priesthood in Ireland.

the whole church round to separate from evil which he had already judged himself. Had he not done it, the Corinthians would not have been set right at all, they would have remained associated with the incestuous person. Had their consciences not heeded his appeal, he might, in the exercise of apostolic authority, have used severer means, and come with a rod. But he is anxious to show, that whom *they forgave* he forgave; and if he forgave, it was for their sakes, so that they might act together, and Satan get no advantage over them by dividing them from him about a point of discipline.\*

And now as to the dissenters' principle. I do not doubt many dear conscientious saints, from whom we might learn much, are amongst them. But the principle here alluded to, I believe should be utterly and entirely rejected, for the same reason that I reject that here proposed, namely, that the presence of the Spirit in the body is not owned by it. Among the dissenters they vote, and though there may be happy unanimity, and the Lord guide them, as I doubt not he often may, yet they do vote on the questions, and a majority determines the matter. Now it is quite evident a minority *may* be the most spiritual. In the case of Corinth all, as far as appears in public, were gone wrong, and allowed, and were puffed up about evil. A majority, judging *as such*, cannot be said to have the Holy Ghost guiding them, because they are a majority.†

\* It may be said this is what failed of being done at Plymouth. I have noticed this further on.

† It is worthy of note that this *is* the ground taken in the "Reasons." These are their words, p. 7. "And the fact, that the great majority of those then in communion were fully satisfied, that the judgment their brethren had formed was a sound one; and have, from that hour to this, regarded our brother Newton with unaltered affection and confidence, is, it appears to us, *a public and sufficient expression of the judgment of the church on this question.*" The truth is, even unanimity is not in itself a proof of the mind of God's Spirit. At Corinth they were, till roused by the testimony of that Spirit by the apostle, unanimous in letting the incestuous person go on. Nor would two or three evidently carnal persons rightly hinder the body in acting in any given case. Were it so, two or three undetected accomplices in sin might hinder the bounden judgment of the church of God in the case of murder or incest. The apostle declares: having in readiness to avenge all disobedience when your obedience is accomplished; that is, when the

This is quite manifest. It is a mere human principle, such as the world is obliged to act on, because it has no other way of getting out of its difficulties. But the church of God has. It has the presence and guidance of the Holy Ghost. The dissenting principle (for I doubt not in practice they are often guided by the Spirit according to the grace of the Gospel), their *principle* I say denied this presence and guidance. They acted on another. The brethren believed this guidance of God could be reckoned upon. Hence they denied the necessity of the other human extreme — the popish one of a clergy settling the matter among themselves, and announcing it publicly, and the church having nothing to do but add its weight, by its acts, to a decision pronounced by the authority of others, which they were bound to receive implicitly, and as a conclusion arrived at for them, which could not be debated.

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full work of the Spirit had had its way, he would treat the others still resisting as disobedient to the Spirit: negating the doctrine of unanimity as well as of a majority, on which those who sign the "Reasons" profess here to have acted. The truth is, the body must answer to God for following the guidance of the Spirit in these cases. Those who do, God will justify. If the body do not, God will not sanction their act. We have not the apostle's power it is true, but we have the promise of God by his Spirit, to help and certainly guide us if we wait upon him. God must be ultimately the judge. In the case before us they had the most slender ground to go upon. All those who originally laboured at Plymouth decline to break bread at Ebrington-street; and some 150 or 200 left, unable to endure the state of things any longer. Four persons who came amongst them comparatively recently, declare that they, being supported by a "great majority," have in their own act a public and sufficient judgment of the church of God. I press the question of principle on these plain facts on brethren's consciences. It might seem inconsistent to base the judgment of the church on a majority; and yet maintain the principles of popery. But the fact is so, and very simple. They assert as a doctrine, that the elders in their church capacity are to debate the verdict, and that the church cannot. But as a fact, though in doing this, and by the means they used for it, they drove away all the original labourers still at Plymouth, and some 200 others; they did keep the majority, of whom many were thoroughly imbued with their principles or under their influence, and some did not know what to do: and then they as a fact claim the acquiescence of this majority as the judgment of the church. There is no consistency in evil. They seek much to distract the minds of brethren from their subversion of principle; but time will open the eyes of those whose eye is single towards God.

The brethren denied the necessity of this alternative. They affirmed that the presence of the Spirit of God was in the church, and that he would guide them in the faithful love of Christ to a right mind. That it might require, specially in the present state of things, patience, humble waiting upon God in the sense of weakness, a working out as in the *absence* of apostolic power, with fear and trembling; but they believed that that could be, because GOD worked in them to will and to do. They did not deny in the least that there were those among them, who, through greater spiritual wisdom and maturity, could help and guide them in this; it would have been quarrelling with their own mercies: nor would they refuse the help and godly assistance of any brother of spiritual attainments and wisdom from elsewhere; it would have been resisting the unity of the Spirit and body, and God's authority in the church, and the common comfort of the saints, the increase of God by what every joint supplied. They might not see clearly all at once, and they would have to wait in any given case; but they believed in the faithfulness of the Lord to guide them. Their being obliged to wait might shew them the failure of their own state of conscience in spiritual power and do them good. Now the principle of these Plymouth leaders denies all this. It declares positively and openly here, that this is the alternative, either the dissenting principle of debating, voting, and majorities, or a verdict imposed by the clergy without any debate at all. That is, *they entirely deny the guidance of the body by the Holy Ghost. His practical presence there* — the very point as to this, which the brethren were called out of God to bear witness to, alike against the dissenting and Popish principle.

It is in vain for them to say that they do not deny it. We have, not the honest confession of it in terms, it is true, but we have the thing itself, and in their own statement. The guides pass the verdict. The body are to register it without a debate. The judgment of their consciences is in the hands of a self-appointed clergy. I can well suppose this reply to this plain and evident truth as to the state of the case: "We do not deny the presence of the Spirit in the body. But, God having put this office into the hands of those who have addicted themselves to the ministry, the



proof of the Spirit being in the body is their submission\* to the judgment of those whom God has placed over them. And thus the verdict is the verdict of the body by the Spirit." This is what is claimed (p. 12). "This the church does: it debates its verdict, we believe, through those of its members capacitated by God for such service." Now this is exactly Popery. The verdict *there* is alleged to be the verdict of the church, and the body are called upon ["required"] to act, and do act, as a body upon it. But it is arrived at by the clergy. It is in vain to say that it is presented, on these new principles, to the body when arrived at, which the Roman clergy do not. Even admitting this; the body cannot debate it. In this particular case, in tea meetings in private,† they were allowed to question Mr. Newton. And this is called in to screen the flagrancy of the principle. The exclusive nature of the meetings is too bare-faced to

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\* I say *submission*, not *accordance*, because, if they cannot call it in question, it is idle to call it *accordance*. St. Paul leads the *body* to act, however decided *he* was, by *divine* light. "Do not *ye* judge them that are within?" And again, note, that there is no question of elders in 1 Cor. at all. Paul addresses himself to the body. I doubt not he did it of God, to guard this very point, and show the conscience of the body, the state of that conscience, to be the very point, the real matter in question. And here a very grave question arises. Is not every one in Ebrington-street answerable for whatever evil has been there which is not put away? I clearly judge they are. I pressed this on them in speaking to them before I left.

† I beg a particular comparison here of the above extract from p. 12 of the "Reasons," with the following, from p. 10:—"The church here, therefore, has not only *itself* searched into and judged of this matter, but," etc. And, "It has been gone into before the Lord, and by his church, both that portion of it meeting in Ebrington-street," etc. They declare positively the church has *itself* searched into it, when the leaders have announced their verdict. It is bound up in what it cannot question. Private meetings were held (public are refused), in which certain things were read for, and answers given by the accused party: but inquiry, or other testimony, is positively, on principle, refused. And then the church is declared to have *itself* searched. What were Mr. Rhind and Lord Congleton but witnesses on one side, if they were anything? Again, p. 5.:—"It soon became evident . . . . that it would be absolutely necessary to *inform* the saints of all *we knew and thought on the subject*." Now, this is given in (what is presented as the judgment of the guides on a full investigation, though it was really no such thing) a letter of Mr. Soltau, countersigned by the three others, set up as a definite verdict of acquittal by the guides, to be received by the body. Any one can see it was no such thing; but it is now given as such.

call it the action of the church. Were it so, the principle is *wholly abandoned*. The church *question and examine Mr. Newton*; and suppose some one had said, "Well, now we should like to hear the other side too; let us call Mr. Darby, Mr. Harris, and Mr. Rowe, and Mr. Saunders." "Oh no," is the answer, "the church cannot hear witnesses, and debate its verdict." Would not any honest man in the world be ashamed to be associated with such a transaction? Would not any spiritual one have revolted against calling such a thing the acting of the church of God, as an insult against God himself? I have been obliged to notice this, because, otherwise, it would have been alleged that it *was* brought before the saints in the right way. Now, either they were forced to hear one side only, and there was liberty only for that, or they would hear witnesses; and that is what is refused them. Besides, after all, they must not debate their verdict. They must take what is given them. For, supposing that they are dissatisfied with the verdict stated, what can they do? Debate it before they make it theirs? No, that is positively refused. Examine witnesses? No, that is denied them. What then? Submit, or leave.\* The answer will be, "But God is with his church; and he will guide the leaders into a right judgment, and they will only propose clear evident cases." That is, the clergy are not only to be guides, but infallible guides, for *they* have come to the conclusion, which is to be taken to be by the leading of God himself. If the verdict be undebateable, it certainly *ought* to be infallible.

Is debate† to be desired then? It is just this alternative which is denied. The conscience of the church must be satisfied for it to act for God and before God. If it is not, the conscience of the body is not clear. It may be gracious to do some act not yet done. It may be right, at the sug-

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\* In fact, many were so satisfied at these tea-meetings of false statements or evil principles, that not one took place but led to the secession of some half dozen persons; the most, taking all that was told them for truth, or quieted in some way, staid where they were.

† The word *debate* is just used as alarming a quiet godly conscientious mind—innocent in the hands of the leaders where it is assumed to be a godly spiritual weighing of the matter, and implying a discussion in the case of the assembly; but, guides or assembly, the godly weighing together before God what is His will where our conscience is concerned, is *debate* neither in one nor the other.

gestion of some, nay, one godly brother, to prosecute the inquiry further by the persons who originally inquired, as I have seen done at Plymouth. God is in the assembly without having any debate at all.\* The Holy Ghost may there suggest some step not yet thought of, the neglect of which would destroy the weight of the judgment, even if a right one. It is specially when speaking of discipline, and looking to the Lord for producing the unity of mind of two or three, that the Lord says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

The result was not produced when I was down at Plymouth. Assuming that the evil existed, the conscience of the body was not brought to judge it. This may have been from two causes, want of spiritual power in me in acting on the consciences of the saints,—or a denial of the principles on which their consciences could act. Now I do not pretend there was no want of spiritual power in me. I do not doubt there was. But while I concealed for months (till the saints demanded an account from me) the personal charges against Mr. Newton, I brought before the whole body, and pressed on their conscience, what involved the principles and the godly action of the whole body, and which was avowedly required. They would not stir. My having done so, was said to be a dissenting principle. I judged, therefore, that the principles of the gathering were gone and denied; and I left without saying a word of Mr. N.'s personal evil† (and this is now unworthily, I think, turned by some to my reproach). Sir A. C. has confirmed, in the plainest manner, the fact that they were denied. Others bore testimony of it then to me, whatever silence they may keep now. Lord Congleton fully admits it now; and it is, at last, put beyond all controversy by the printed avowal of the leaders themselves.

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\* As a fact, it may be well to notice, that there was a good deal of debate, on subjects involving a mixture of discipline and principle, recorded in the Acts of the Apostles; debates which St. Paul, for so God ordered it for larger purposes of His wisdom and grace, himself could not terminate.

† I stated generally there was evil and unrighteousness unconfessed and unjudged. This, while including Mr. N. without naming him, was by no means confined to him; nor was it, as to him, confined to charges of untruth.

Those who have been where I have been lately, may have seen, in a very trying case, a body of brethren, without any debate (and yet, when it was felt necessary that every conscience should have full exercise for itself) act in full patience and grace, and defer to the feelings of a very small minority who desired an act\* which (though the judgment of all the rest might have proved greater strength in the Spirit, if it had carried all with it, yet) was rightly deferred to as that feeling existed, and will never be regretted, I believe, by one. Under the circumstances, God's guidance was in it, and entire and happy unanimity preserved. They have seen, on a subsequent evening (when, as I undoubtedly judge,† Satan made a seemingly overpowering effort to upset all they were doing, and hinder, by distracting and speaking them down, their acting on what they had been led to), that the same brethren, after listening to all those who came thus to interrupt them from other places (proving they rejected none), could adhere, as led and guided of God, with firmness to that which they had been led to by him; and could prove, when thus put to the severest test, with little or nothing really to help them from with-

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\* Or rather act on the suggestion of a brother from another gathering, after the consciences of two or three who felt difficulty were satisfied, and the same act was proposed as an act of grace, and as giving scriptural weight to their dealings.

† Six brethren from different, and some very distant places, friends of Mr. Newton, or of his principles, came and kept the brethren till near twelve o'clock at night, with the avowed desire and object of hindering their acting on what they had *patiently* resolved on previously, but had waited ten days, hoping another appeal might have effect, if coming from the whole gathering. Only one of these six had been at any previous meeting § Now I do not believe these six had the least concerted among themselves their appearance that evening. Nobody suspected it. It was a hand behind moved the springs. First the enemy, I believe, to destroy; but, behind that, I believe, God, to approve and vindicate the cardinal principle—that the church must judge evil if it comes before it, or that it ceases to 'be the church before Him, must prove itself clear—and to show Himself with them in it however weak. This God has done in mercy in the midst of our weakness: a far *more important* thing than any individual case.

§ There was besides present, *at that meeting*, one brother from Plymouth, but now of the gathering, who objected. One who is of Moravian principles, though judging the evil at Plymouth, thought the mode wrong from the beginning, see part I.

out, that God's blessed presence in their weakness could give patience and grace, and deference to the weakest within, and resist the noisiest and most clamorous\* from without: nor was there the slightest idea of rejecting the help, and assistance, and spiritual wisdom, of those whose experience and faithfulness they trusted in, but the glad acceptance of it; as such as bore, more or less, that character, acted just in setting the matter before their conscience. I allude (that there may be no mistake) more particularly, though not exclusively, to Mr. Dorman here, who, though now at Reading, had laboured for years among them, and was now in London, brought up by another in reference to this.†

I have now, in three parts, recorded briefly the facts and correspondence which took place. I have shown that the "Reasons" and "Defence," which were sent up as proving an acquittal of the charges, so as to preclude further inquiry, do not touch at all, nor treat of, the body of those in the "Narrative" which were in question here:‡ the transactions at Plymouth, which they allege as conclusive, not having reference to the greater part of them. I have given, as to those which *were* investigated at Plymouth, an answer to the defence set up—a thing I could never do before, as it was never printed; and the rather, as the certificate of acquittal given by Mr. Rhind, in his own name, and

\* I do not speak of all as clamorous. As to several, there was nothing to object to in manner.

† Mr. Wigram, though there, from circumstances, took comparatively no active part in it.

‡ I press this point, because it is the tact of those who labour to discredit the saints in London, to make it appear, first, that Mr. N. was cited to London. He was not. He was in London. Even then the brethren took no step. He proposed to satisfy brethren. They said, when it was communicated to them by Mr. Cronin, "If we let this pass, it will be as if he was ready to clear himself, and we would not hear him;" and they *thereupon* took it up. Secondly, the "Reasons" seek to make it appear that the saints in London applied themselves to the charges in question at Plymouth in 1845; as to which Mr. N.'s friends think they can allege a previous examination. This is *wholly without foundation*—an unworthy attempt. The brethren referred to the whole case, "considering before the Lord the unhappy circumstances that have arisen among us." Mr. Newton brought it in his answer to the two charges at Plymouth. No one at London did.

that of Messrs. Rickards, Morris, and Moseley, is professedly based entirely on this "Defence", and desires its publication, that others may be satisfied by it, as "affording (they say) the reasons of our arriving at the conclusion above stated."

You have thus the grounds on which they came to it; and you can judge how far the "Defence" is of any force as to these, the two charges therein treated of.\* The acquittal by these brethren in letters given in the "Reasons," is merely their estimate of the validity of this "Defence," which you have. As to the other charges in the "Narrative," besides these two, no answer is attempted to be given whatever.

I have taken up, lastly, the great principle of church discipline, now avowed in a tangible shape. A vast body of facts as to the general course at Plymouth, are not entered on here. It would have been repeating the "Narrative." But you have an account, as far as was called for by the "Reasons," of what related to the alleged investigation and acquittal both by the church of God and the brethren from afar, and these are the other grounds alleged to preclude inquiry. It will still be remembered that these relate only to the two charges made and inquired into at Plymouth, and two alleged charges which I do not admit to be charges at all, and not to any others. I may, in so long a document, drawn up in two or three days, have omitted some point, but I do not think I have any material one. I must leave to those who read this, the judgment which it becomes them to give upon a document such as the "Reasons," when they have read this examination of it.

Charity demands that I should make this one remark. As regards the individuals (whatever may be demanded as to what I may call official relations), I repeat, I have no doubt that a proper, positive work of Satan has been going on, with far deeper principles and power than anything that has come out in public evidence even as to Sectarianism.† Under this, I doubt not, whoever the human instru-

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\* I say two, because it is only the two last which were really charges. Making the existence of the Appendix a charge is ridiculous; and, in fact, it does exist.

† I judge the sectarianism itself to have been *merely* a means resulting from the effort to get rid of every one who could have hindered the coming in of far deeper principles of evil in doctrine and walk, which were sought to be established.

ment, conscious or unconscious, may be, those, whom I believe to be beloved children of God, have fallen, and I do not attribute to them as individuals as deliberate acts of sin, what they have so done. This makes me more determined in the stand I make—I have no terms with what is going on—but more reluctant, and even to refuse, to attribute to them as properly a matter of evil conscience, what they have thus been led into.

God, I believe, has directed you, beloved brethren in London, in acting in clearing yourselves—in acting in the sphere in which you were responsible to Him. There you were bound in love to the saints to act, to make a barrier. It may require much spiritual competency to discern between those who are ensnared and those who are guilty in this matter. Many, even of the most active instruments, have already been delivered. Others may be, and shine out again as dear children, and, I trust, servants of God. We have to wait, and, while decided and faithful in our sphere, not to step beyond it; not in anything act beyond the light which God has given us for duty passive or active. There we have to be firm and earnest if called on. I believe people will be blessed according to their decision, and insecure in proportion to their hesitation; though we may hope the help of our God as to such, if it be in humbleness of heart and uprightness.

Further; let us not suppose, if there be such a power of the enemy, that we can cope with it out of the path of duty, and adventuring ourselves under its influence, when God does not call us there. In His ways we have all security against it; it cannot touch us: out of them, we are sure to fall into the temptation, as Peter did. Honesty of intention is no security here. I have seen this in Irvingism. I have seen it, I judge, in this case. I distrust the constant desire to get people to Plymouth. I have known scarce one who *inquired* beyond the first half-hour, or who inquired beyond one side, who had volunteered to do it; though God kept a few little ones brought there unwittingly. If the judgment I have formed of these "Reasons" is just, they must be wicked people, or blinded people. Now I do *not* believe as to several of them (I speak generally of those more or less active in it), that they are wicked people. I feel certain, then, that there is a

direct influence of the enemy; and I warn solemnly the saints against it. I think I can discern, in many cases, how and why several have fallen under it. It might seem presumptuous in me to state it, and I refrain, though free to do it when charity calls for it, if permitted for their good. I am sure if I (and you, reader) have been spared this, or perhaps worse, it is sovereign grace alone which has kept us; and, perhaps our carelessness has helped on the evil; but God is good and faithful. I am thankful for having the conviction I have stated above; because it enables me to maintain in my heart unhindered love towards several persons whom, otherwise, I really should not know what to think of; and to hope for others too. But it should evidently make one firmer as to the stand one makes, and one's determination in it. We have all to be thankful for being kept, for very abundant mercy in this matter, and to humble ourselves, and myself above all, for little power in being able to keep out the evil, or to deliver others from it. While *men* slept the enemy came and sowed tares. Let us look to our God, and He will help us to the end of the sorrow, and restore the fellowship of many who are separated by it. I am sure my feeling is, well may I say it, that He has been most good to us in it.

I have only to add (while repeating that I dare say inaccuracies of detail may be discovered, as would be to be expected in a narrative reaching over near a year and a half of anxious work), that, after the sifting given by recent circumstances, the "Reasons," the "Defence," and all the rest, I have nothing at all, that I know of, to retract. The only definite attempt to impugn has resulted in distinct confirmation. The "Reasons" would add serious, very serious ground for additional charges; but these I refrain from making. I think them considerably the worst thing that has yet come out. The reader can, on several points, judge of the matter himself, when he has examined the answer to the "Reasons;" but there are many, if they spoke out, who could answer the detail far more fully than myself.



# ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS AT RAWSTORNE STREET,

IN NOV. AND DEC. 1846.

## SUPPLEMENT.

### *Notes on the "Correspondence" and "Remonstrance."*

THE detail of facts already given is the best answer to the "Remonstrance." I do not, therefore, go into it at large here. A very few remarks will be needed. The total absence of conscience is so marked in the following passage, that I note it as helping to judge the whole paper: "You consider his refusal to meet a request of yours a sin sufficient to warrant excommunication." Passion alone can be alleged as any answer to a charge of want of conscience in such a passage as this. They call the letter of the 20th of November "Your first letter of summons." They must be perfectly aware, for Mr. Newton had answered them both, that (*besides* Mr. Cronin's correspondence) two letters had been addressed to Mr. Newton, asking him to meet the saints in Rawstorne-street before this. This, called the first, resulted from the interview *at Mr. C.'s, and was not from Rawstorne Street.* What is called the second here, was, consequent on their repeated refusals — a final act of the whole body.

A few words as to the general contents of these documents will enable the reader to form an estimate of their character. It purports to be a correspondence relating to a refusal to meet certain citations which are presented as summoning Mr. N. from Plymouth up to London, and a certain letter as the first of them. Now, what are the facts? It is true to the letter, that this is the correspondence relating to the *refusal.* And this was the first letter written *to Plymouth.* But was this the beginning of correspondence? What about the proposal refused? Mr. Newton had been in London, and offered to satisfy brethren. A long correspondence, nay two, with two different parties, had taken place in consequence. *All this is entirely suppressed.* The first letter here alludes to an interview,

indeed, and therefore seems very fair ; but *correspondences* had taken place about the proposal refused, and about meeting to consider it. And how came this letter to be written to Plymouth which is produced now, as citing Mr. N. from thence to London ? *At his own suggestion on leaving London, that they at Plymouth might consider it ;* and hence the reference in Mr. Dorman's letter, who thought it useless, but deferred to Messrs. H. and C., who judged that, not having had the presence of mind to reject the proposal of Mr. N. at the time, as they ought to have done, it might seem unfair not to act upon it afterwards. And this letter, written at his suggestion after the conclusion of what passed in London, is treated as the first, and as a citation from Plymouth up to London. But further : another letter, making a different proposal from Mr. Dorman's, was written by Mr. Cronin, in consequence of the same suggestion. This also is suppressed, though the answer referred to the reply to Mr. Dorman's.

Further : under colour of its arriving only when they were finishing theirs, a letter of December 13\* is placed in the correspondence after theirs of December 15, as if it closed the correspondence : it did not, however. There was an answer : that answer I shall here give.

“ *London, December 22, 1846.*

“ Dear Brethren,

“ We write to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated December 15 ; and we beg to say, that many of its statements are so entirely untrue, and its perversions regarding the course of action in question so very sad, that, for ourselves, we do not think it would be the path of godly wisdom to read it to the saints at Rawstorne-street. We have also submitted it to the brethren here who are watching and caring for the saints ; and they, for the same reasons we have assigned, have counselled us to decline reading it. In addition to your letter, a communication has been received from Mr. Tregelles by the same post, in which also we are jointly concerned ; and we may add, that our remarks above,

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\* The date of this is omitted in the Table of Contents, where it would attract attention : *it is the only one that is.*

relative to the document received from yourselves, apply in a much stronger degree to his communication. We feel persuaded, that if he had been better informed on the facts about which he has written, such statements and allegations as his letter contains could never have *been* written.

“ We remain, dear brethren,

“ Yours in Christian regard,

“ WILLIAM HENRY DORMAN.

“ HENRY GOUGH.

“ To Messrs. Clulow, Newton, Soltau, Batten, and Dyer.”

It may be well to add, that the printed correspondence did not arrive in town for a fortnight after the date of this letter, so that there was ample time for its insertion. The real truth was, that the conduct of the five above named had produced entire distrust ; and hence the briefness of the reply. But the “ Correspondence ” and “ Remonstrance ” were so very bad as to draw forth from Messrs. Dorman and Gough a letter, which I have since seen, of a very different character ; that is, couched in terms of severity quite unusual with either, and declining, from their estimate of the proceedings of these five, any further correspondence. This, from its date, could not have found a place in the Plymouth publication.\* The one just read belonged to it, and hence I have added it here.

There are two or three points in the “ Reasons ” it may be advisable not to leave unnoticed.

To say that silence (p. 4) was the ordinary mode of acting in ordinary cases of unfounded accusation, is surely monstrous : I mean, the pretence that they acted on this ground ; when there had been repeated meetings of fifteen brethren about matters out of which this arose ; Mr. Harris had refused ministering ; I had left communion ; Messrs. Harris and Naylor had gone and told Mr. N. his account was untrue ; ten brethren were there from a distance for investigation ; some two hundred or so, though not having formally separated, had ceased going to the Lord’s table ;

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\* The brethren Dorman and Gough thinking it desirable that all should appear, it is printed at the close of this.

and these four, who, if you will believe them, ought to govern the consciences of the congregation without a debate, feel, after a public statement to three hundred impugning Mr. N.'s moral character, that they had nothing to do. The pretension, indeed, of these four to be in this position, is quite sufficient to make any statement after it possible.

Next, it is said, Mr. Newton had in such things the confidence of the whole body. As to those without, I say nothing. People must ask those without. But this I affirm, he had not, in such things, the confidence of the whole body. The fact was this: very many took all he said in statement or doctrine.\* The majority exercised no conscience at all. But there were intelligent, godly, independent minds, who were long and thoroughly dissatisfied "in such things:"—and that the signers of these "Reasons" know as well as I do.

(P. 7.) "The fact, that the *great majority* of those in communion were fully satisfied . . . is, it appears to us, a *public and sufficient expression of the judgment of the church* in this question."

"Remonstrance" (p. 5). "4. It must be the universal act of the whole church, so that no question could arise in the conscience of any godly saint, as to the propriety and necessity of the sentence."

"If valid at all, this act is the result of the Holy Spirit's presence in the body, preserving holiness in its midst. It is because God refuses to have a defiled temple—it is at His command—it is through His power that the evil person is put away. *Where His Spirit acts, there must be unanimity.*" Is it not singular, that a majority appears to them to be a public and sufficient expression of the judgment of the Church in the "Reasons"? And that "where the Spirit acts, there must be unanimity" in the "Remonstrance"? Or, is there any real principle at all, when one principle is taken to clear themselves, and another to condemn Raw-

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\* It was said by a most active sister, that if Mr. N. taught what she could not find in the Bible, she should believe it on this ground—that he being a teacher raised up of God, she should suppose he had found it, though she had not.

storne-street? At Ebrington-street, all who originally laboured (and some two hundred more) have left; but there a majority suffices. Here, where there really was extraordinary unanimity, it must be absolute for the Spirit to have acted. Both their principles are wrong; but he who professes two for his convenience, has none. But to do this in so solemn a matter as God's presence, is trifling with such a subject, as, if not judged, will be judged of the Lord in those who do not.

(P. 12.) The impartiality of the tribunal at Ebrington-street, I pass over. It was there the accused themselves.

(P. 18.) Mr. N. says, in the MS. letter referred to, after urging very strongly the ruinous character of certain teaching, and stating that, if it was once admitted, "the foundations of Christianity were gone," says, "that with respect to such passages, we have a right to expect a clear unhesitating answer, from all who teach in the Church." He now declares: "I had no conception, that it ever would or could be interpreted to mean, that I wished none to be received as teachers who held the system of interpretation therein objected to." And what did he mean? Did he mean, that he did wish that teaching which subverted the foundations of Christianity should continue, and that the teachers of the doctrine should be received? Were the saints to get a clear unhesitating answer that a person was teaching what subverted the foundations of Christianity, and after having got it, to receive such as teachers? Is there any sense in that? It has been attempted to be said, that these letters, universally circulated in MS., were not so bad; that they merely stated that those doctrines led to these results when pushed to their legitimate consequences, etc. This is not the case. The statement is, "if it be once admitted (i. e. the interpretation of Matt. xxiv. contrary to Mr. N.'s), the foundations of Christianity are gone." Why, in his account of severe expressions, has he omitted this from the same passage? Why another, that we deny all the Gospels? "And thus this passage, and with it the whole Gospel, and all the Gospels, are swept away, as not properly belonging to the Church." That we denied the Gospels was carefully instilled into the poor, and persons of

the Established Church. Tracts were sold at the tract shop, declaring it might be easily shewn we subverted the first elements of Christianity.

But it was easy to settle things with most of the brethren who went down. I was not allowed to be present. Such an investigation as that, I do not doubt will always be desired, let it have been decided by the Church publicly, as alleged, twenty times. If some one, having the facts in his mind, be not there to check the statements, any may be made, denied, explained, and gone, before their character is sifted.

Lastly, it must not be supposed that this "Remonstrance" was really addressed to Rawstorne street. A very few days after it arrived there, and before any answer was sent, it was on sale at the tract shop in London.

I would now add a few words as to a general principle, or point of practice, of some importance, in the actual path of the gathered saints.

One would have thought, that if a person were seriously and credibly charged with evil, and *refused*, when called on, to satisfy the conscience of the church of God, it would have been sufficiently simple to the mind of every one, that he could not come to the table till it was cleared up. Such a course was certainly plainly understood and acted upon, till prejudice as to persons interfered with moral understanding. The truth is, the person has himself practically refused to hear the church. Put the contrary case: A person is credibly charged with thieving, or with murder, or with drunkenness, and instances are alleged. The church take it up, feeling that it must be investigated. This is refused. It is alleged, that the party's conscience is to be respected, and that it is against his conscience to be judged by the church. If every one could say this, it is very clear there is an end of all discipline. A person has only to plead conscience, as to any mode of investigation, and every kind of sinner can maintain his place at the Lord's table, in spite of the church of God. Such a principle is monstrous upon the face of it. There may be cases so clear—as, for example, a person caught in the fact of sin—that no enquiry is called for, unless to discriminate as to the circumstances, how far they are to

be dealt with in compassion, or with fear; or the church may be satisfied of the guilt of the party without his appearing, or in spite of his denial of it, and act on that guilt.\* But, further, if the case be not so clear, or be denied, the church of God is entitled, *nay bound*, to use every means, not in themselves unrighteous, so that it may have a just and holy conscience in acting. No doubt it has to act in grace, and with consideration, in this; but it is bound to act for God in truth. It may be able to judge without parties and witnesses meeting: if not, it is bound to have them. The refusal of the party accused is really of no weight at all, save against himself. The offer of the party accused to give his own account of the matter, and the plea that this should satisfy the church of God, is too great an outrage on common decency of dealing between man and man (not to speak of the holier judgment of the church of God), to be listened to. But, further, it may become impossible to excommunicate such a person for his guilt. The church, by a just feeling, may refuse, in given circumstances, to conclude absolutely that he is guilty, without hearing him; but he refuses to come.

It cannot, therefore, receive him, till he either comes before them, or the matter is fully investigated, or cleared up. The act, in such a case, amounts to this: "You must come, if at all, *through an investigation*, to the table." Now this is what has been done. The church is bound to be satisfied where such charges lie. They have said: "Satisfy us." It is replied: "No." Now it is clear that if the party were proved innocent in any other way, to the satisfaction of the conscience of the body so acting, the barrier is gone.† And this is what has been said: "they feel precluded meeting you at the table of the Lord, till the matters in question have been fairly and fully investigated." This, as has been shewn, they never have been: the greatest part of them were in no way whatever inquired into.

Take, in the case before us, what is declared in the

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\* Innocence would not be a reason for not satisfying the conscience of the church.

† Though reproof might be called for, and just humiliation, for so refusing.

“Remonstrance” to be necessary for excommunication. “The sin must have been palpably and distinctly proved against the individual.” A person, by refusing to appear, makes it not possible, in many cases, to do this in a satisfactory way. The church does not therefore excommunicate the party as proved to be guilty. But it maintains, as it is bound to do, in God’s name, its title, its obligation, to judge sin and the sinner, when the case is brought before it; otherwise it is partaker in it; and declares he can come on no other terms than that which it is bound to, viz., the maintenance of the holiness of the Lord’s table, in the Lord’s name.

This, then, is what has been done. There has not been an excommunication upon proved guilt; but there has been, when the occasion arose, the maintenance of that judgment of evil by the church, without which it ceases to exist as the church of God at all. And I now solemnly declare — though I never did, while it might have looked like a threat, or like pressing the point, or using personal influence, which I should account a sin — that had Rawstorne-street not done so, I should have left Rawstorne-street as I left Ebrington-street. They acted — and I bless God for it — happily, freely, and under the Lord’s guidance: but the question had come evidently to a solemn point, in which God would direct the state of things one way or another; and my mind was made up. Most thankful I am that the very opposite of such a step was called for. Poor and feeble as the brethren may have been, God was with them: and He whose strength is made perfect in weakness, has vindicated his own ways.

In saying this, I have no wish to wrong Ebrington-street, where I know there are many dear saints, nor to flatter Rawstorne-street. Every individual there might have gone wrong as an individual, had they had to act: I only speak of their public position. God has guided them as a body: for this they are debtors, not to be exalted in themselves.

There is not a doubt, in the case before us, that a very large body had such convictions as to Mr. N., as would have precluded them from breaking bread with him on much fuller grounds than the one on which they acted as a body. The



eyes of many were opened by what they had themselves witnessed in London : but they would not step beyond what they had—of God—before them, as a body of saints ; and it has, and will have its weight. Already it has. For a length of time, those at Plymouth could not be got to print any thing, though they circulated it in private. They alleged this was grace. What has become of this grace ? God is with the church, with his poor saints, when they act humbly and faithfully before him. He has contrasted the path of Ebrington-street and that of Rawstorne-street. The latter has patiently, peacefully, cleared itself from partaking in evil. And what is the condition of Ebrington-street ? It has for its exclusive guides five persons, whose communications have really lost them, at any rate for the moment, the moral respect of spiritual, informed and unprejudiced brethren elsewhere, whatever affection or compassion they may feel for the individuals, or however they may think some of them to be merely misled, and not misleading. And these five persons avowedly claim, in print, the right of judging every case that arises, without the saints, whatever they may think, being at liberty to debate the verdict which may have been announced to them. The applicability of that passage —“ Ye suffer if a man beat you, if a man take of you, if a man bring you into bondage,” has constantly struck me, in this case.

I pressed this matter on their consciences as a body at Ebrington-street. No one stirred: it was treated as a dissenting movement on my part. The Church, consequently, has now been openly declared not to be a judicial assembly ; and the verdict passed by four persons, Messrs. Clulow, Soltau, Batten, and Dyer, concludes the whole assembly, without the possibility of calling it in question. This is now avowed by them. Whether the body at Ebrington-street acquiesce in it, I know not. One thing is certain ; if they leave it where it is, they are bound by this principle. It has been published plainly enough. Be their conscience ever so troubled, they are not capacitated of God to inquire more into the matter. Sorry I should be to have my conscience so bound by any men. Nor are those who assume such a place here, such as would commend such a

principle to me. The principles we have been discussing, at the opening of these remarks, apply directly to Mr. Newton's case. He was accused, to state it in few words, of clericalism, sectarianism, and untruth. Of the two first, and consequently of subverting the very principles on which brethren met, even some of his best friends declare he is guilty; of the latter, many godly persons also. He refuses to satisfy the saints. They are bound not to receive him till he clears it up. As to a poor saint, no one would have hesitated an instant. Let it be said that he is an Elder: more than two or three grave persons think that he is guilty.

I do not think Sectarianism the main point, though an important one: and by Sectarianism is here meant having actually made a sect of Plymouth, that is, of Ebrington-street. Not to speak of deeper principles evidently involved,—the broad fact, that the claim is now openly put forth, that four persons who think proper to claim the ministry among themselves, can form a judgment among themselves of every case, and can impose this on the Church as binding and conclusive judgment, is of yet greater moral importance, and involves much deeper consequences. In letters not published, not to speak of well-known teachings, the same thing is fully claimed as to ministry, even for a single minister. I have seen one with a long and subtle preface, condemning all the early course at Plymouth, as if it were modest self-condemnation, and seeming to own the Holy Ghost in gift, but assuming the regulation into a single minister's hands, so that not a hymn should be given out, nor a chapter read, nor any one pray, till parties had the minister's allowance on his ascertaining their qualifications.

This then is the state of Ebrington-street. The two things which drove from the Establishment on one side, and from Dissent on the other, are unitedly established there: one of them avowedly, and the other recognised by every impartial mind. How brethren can expect a person of any principle to remain there, is very strange. Why should they have left systems where a thousand ties kept them, because one of these principles was found, and remain where both are established in the face of clearer light—and this,

where it has been done, not openly and honestly, but by means which would establish unity at the expense of straightforwardness, and make the establishment of authority sanction every evil, if it be a means to it? And such is the brief picture of genuine clericalism in every place. A man who keeps another's conscience by authority, will soon be found to have very little of his own. We have all to watch against it. An attempt to establish it will never find me as an associate in the work. And now, my brethren, one word more. The case, under God's wonderful hand, has been sufficiently brought forward, to put it on the conscience of the brethren at large, through the quiet conduct, followed as a matter of duty, of some brethren in London. I have not acted myself in the matter, save as needed for my own conscience, in leaving, or as bound by circumstances. I have remained here in London, as subject to the brethren's judgment, when called upon to do so. I have acted as the servant of the brethren involved in quiet faithfulness in the case, so far as to make it plain as far as the published documents required it: I mean in this publication. I now retire again to take my own position in respect of it. There is, I judge, quite sufficient before brethren, to have their conscience clear as to the path they are to walk in. In respect to the matter itself, my path would be a decided one. In my judgment of myself, an humble one becomes me. Both lead me to the same way before the Lord. Brethren, I believe, have to get clear of a snare of Satan. I am not aware that I have any more service to perform in this respect which the Lord would have me to do. If there be, I should not, I trust, shrink from it. Had I been more spiritual and faithful, perhaps there might: actually I do not think there is. As regards my conscience, I shall always treat it as a work of Satan: doubtless demanding patience as regards those unawares caught, but *not allowing an instant's compromise with even the slightest acquiescence in it.* I leave in the Lord's hands the path of the brethren concerning it, happy to walk with them where it is open to me to do so, and they allow me: the Spirit having its just power, and I holding fast the principles which I have avowed to them here.

For my own part, while conscious in this affair of no fault nor want of charity, I do not say no want of power, I have ever found that dealing with the sin of others awakens my conscience to all my own before God; and while, through mercy, enjoying that mercy unclouded, the very thought of want of power itself, and the whole course of the matter, has served most healthfully to sift my own soul, and to cause it to repass before God all that may have contributed to it, and discover to me all my own failures. Here I have found abundant cause for humiliation, though yet more for admiring and owning and adoring the faithfulness and grace of God. As between me and the brethren who judge my path in this particular matter, I can appeal, without a shade of distrust in my heart, to the judgment of One above us both. I shall not accuse them in it. I await the grace and work of God.

The sifting we have all received, will, if we are spared, bring us together again in spiritual energy and power, according as we bow to it, and let it have its perfect work in ourselves. If we balance the unjustifiable charges of others with what God has forgiven us, we shall soon find our own repose in peace, as to anything which may be even unjustly charged upon us.

As completing this account, I add, at the desire of the brethren, the final answer to the last communication from Plymouth:—

*“ London, January 4th, 1847.*

“ Dear Brethren,

“ It is only right and courteous to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of December to the saints at Rawstorne-street, though brethren labouring there have decided not to read it publicly, on the ground (amongst other reasons) of its not being a truthful statement of the matters on which it treats, and which are now before the saints.

“ We can assure you, it is a very painful and humbling thing to be constrained to communicate such an expression of the minds of brethren in the Lord, and much more so, to be obliged to express our own conviction that this last letter (to say nothing of former ones that had passed through

our hands), has not been written in good faith, much less in Christian simplicity.

“In the first place, you *know* that Mr. Newton has not been excommunicated by the brethren in Rawstorne-street; and therefore what you have said professedly in so solemn a manner about excommunication, could not have had weight with your own minds any more than with ours.

“But, if Mr. N. was serious in what he wrote, he was excommunicated as long since as March 20th, 1846, before anything was thought of at Rawstorne-street; for he thus wrote:—‘*We have been excommunicated by certain brethren;*’ and consequently all the effects of excommunication on which you dilate so largely, were in action then, without any reference whatever to what has since transpired.

“But beside this, it is well known to you, that Mr. Newton gave, as a reason for declining to meet Mr. Darby after he had retired from Ebrington-street, that he was an excommunicated person; and therefore all his relations to him as a Christian brother had ceased. Now, you will pardon us, dear brethren, if, in the face of these things, we express our belief that Mr. Newton did *not* think that he, and others with him, were excommunicated as long back as the 20th of March, although he *said so*; and that he did not *think* at an earlier period, Mr. Darby was excommunicated, though he *said so*; and that *you do not think* that Mr. Newton has been excommunicated by the saints at Rawstorne-street, though you have *said so*. Under such an impression, you will not wonder at our saying we do not desire a continuance of the present correspondence. It is too painful a thing to continue it in its present form. It is on the ground above stated, that we have forborne to touch on other things which called for remark in your letter. If we have unduly identified you with Mr. Newton, it is because you have made us feel, that what *he* thinks *you* think, and so of his acts. With unfeigned sorrow of heart, we remain,

“Yours in Christian regard,

(signed)

“W. H. DORMAN.

“HENRY GOUGH.

“To Messrs. Soltau, Batten, Dyer, and Clulow.

P.S. “This letter has been delayed a day or two accidentally since it was written.”

A letter, consequent on this, has been written by a considerable number of brethren, including those to whom letters recommending persons as in communion are habitually communicated, declining any longer receiving such letters from Messrs. Clulow, Soltau, Batten, and Dyer : but expressing, at the same time, their anxious desire that it should be understood that it would be their joy to receive, in any way, any Christian known as such, from thence as from elsewhere. I have not been able to get an *exact* copy of the letter ; and hence I merely give its substance.

While these pages were in my possession for correcting the press, the letter of Mr. Tregelles was put into my hands in print. I do not think it necessary to answer so violent an attack on the whole body of the saints at Rawstorne-street. The letter itself will be its best answer to every well-judging mind. I have only to remind the reader, that it is to *this* document, that the letter of Messrs. Dorman and Gough (suppressed in the Plymouth correspondence, but given above), refers, where it says, that the declaration of being “ in many of its statements entirely untrue, and its perversions as to the course of action very sad,” applies to Mr. Tregelles’ letter more strongly than to the answer of the four which it accompanied. This statement of Messrs. D. and G. has been fully adopted by a considerable number of brethren present, in the letter declining to receive testimonials from Messrs. Clulow, Soltau, Batten, and Dyer : and to this, of whatever weight it may be, I beg to add my most unequivocal testimony.

There is a renewed attempt to get rid of the “ Narrative of Facts,” as in question at Rawstorne-street, where every one knows it was what occupied the saints. But this, though having the advantage of preceding documents, is doubly lame, from being so late in the business ; because, in the “ Reasons ” published by the Plymouth leaders themselves, the charges in the “ Narrative of Facts ” are stated in the first page to be the subject in question. The statement of Appendix A. will, I suppose, be answered by Messrs. Howard and Cronin, as that which they know to be wholly untrue.

I have only here to add, on Mr. Gough's part, that the statement that "the former of these meetings originated in a request on Mr. Gough's part, that Mr. Newton would meet Mr. Cronin," is entirely false.

As to Appendix B., the charges were not mentioned, because the brethren acted on Mr. Newton's refusal to go into them. They did not go into the charges against Mr. Newton, nor did they hear reasons for refusing to answer them; but the "Narrative" was repeatedly referred to as the subject in question. The fact is, it had been pressed, some time before, on the conscience of the whole body, to the regret of many, by a brother one Sunday morning after worship was over, when neither Mr. Wigram nor myself was there, and done without communication with any, that no appearance of influence might exist. I have already answered the attempt renewed here, to mislead as to the charges. The "Reasons" themselves refer to the charges in the "Narrative." As to Appendix C., Mr. T. has undertaken to give a minute account of what passed at meetings at which he was not present. That account, I affirm, in most respects, to be *totally false*; for instance:—Sir A. C.'s suppressed letter was neither offered nor refused. This I state, not only on my own authority, but I am confirmed by every person present at the meeting whom I have met; unless, indeed, it were included under the general expression of "Papers proving Mr. N.'s innocence," offered by Mr. Woolston, as already stated in the published account of what passed. But that is a separate item in Mr. Tregelles' account. On recurring to Appendix C., I perceive that one would be led to suppose, that Mr. T. meant that his brother-in-law, Mr. F. Prideaux, offered it. Mr. Prideaux asked me, had I not agreed to submit to the judgment of the ten who went down; which I positively denied. But he most certainly proffered no paper nor any letter from Mr. Newton. Whether he had directions from Plymouth to do so, which he thought it no use to follow when I denied an agreement to submit, I cannot tell. I do not think he will accuse me of any want of courtesy in my reply to him, for I had no notion but that he was acting with kindly feeling, very natural towards a friend and relative; and I so expressed

myself. Nor will I suppose that he has made this statement to Mr. Tregelles. If he has done either, I am sorry for him. As far as I was concerned, his conduct at the meeting (though painful as to position for so young a man) only made me feel for him. All the three who have been led to put themselves forward here, will find their names fully given in the authentic account as objecting to what took place. Mr. Blake was away from London at the final meeting. It is a happy feeling, when attacks on statements in a painful matter corroborate and confirm them all. It may be well to notice one other circumstance on the part of the brethren at Rawstorne-street. They were fully informed of the refusal, as stated in their letter, of Mr. Newton to meet them, to satisfy their consciences. They do not speak of being fully informed of the reasons for refusing. But, further, the brethren were most fully informed of the existence of the "Reasons," which was communicated to the brethren, and the propriety of reading them considered. But they declined doing so. One ground is evident: the going into the whole matter at Plymouth, in the absence of Mr. Newton and the witnesses of the facts. Moreover, I hold very plainly, that, if a thing was wrong to be done, no reasons ought to be listened to for doing it.

It will be observed that the three who sign the preface to Mr. Tregelles' letter, do not, in the smallest degree, verify the truth of the statements contained in it. I have the best possible reason for saying this.

The reader may remark that the acquittal *insisted on* in *London* is now "a defective paper, which could not be called a formal verdict" . . . "it was so inaccurately worded" !

Finally, the body of Mr. T.'s statements are so very bad, that I can only hope that they are the result of the blinding of passion, and not want of principle. I decline, therefore, entering into further detail.