

THE READING QUESTION;

WITH

INTRODUCTORY NOTE AND APPENDIX.

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THIRD EDITION.

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HAMILTON, N.B.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

IN going to press a *third* time, we would add that none amongst us are called upon to receive the teachings of Mr Grant in "Life in Christ and Sealing with the Spirit," or, of Mr Stuart in "Christian Standing and Condition." A considerable number of beloved saints fully accept the teachings of both pamphlets and gladly own their indebtedness to the Lord, and to his precious gifts—the devoted and scholarly writers.

But the question pressed here and on the other side of the Atlantic is not the acceptance of or rejection by individual saints and Assemblies of Mr Grant and of Mr Stuart as ministers of the word; separation from them as saints at the Lord's Table and from all who adhere to them, is the point insisted upon. Well, we accept while we deplore the issue raised. Now, we press with increasing earnestness: Let our separating brethren shew wherein the pamphlets are **FUNDAMENTALLY ERRONEOUS**—not where they really or seemingly contradict beloved J. N. D.; but where they overthrow "the faith once delivered to the saints." Nor will it satisfy a soul subject to the authority of the Word of God to show that the pamphlets in question in certain points seem to conflict with, or add to, "the recovered testimony." Was the revived testimony complete under Luther (Rev. iii. 2)? Was the additional and recovered testimony under Darby perfect and complete? Thank God for its revival under both!

Do not let pride and lordly assumption so rule amongst us that further light, perhaps, vouchsafed to us through the Lord's rich mercy, is rejected. Whether babes, young men, or fathers in the family of God, we have all much to learn, and it is surely a becoming thing to own it.

We wish our brethren would only devote some time to the examination of the doctrines contained in the tracts by Lord Cecil and J. B. S. The former replied to Mr Grant; the latter to Mr Stuart. We are certain they would find in these replies matter enough for ecclesiastical action. We say no more.

THE READING QUESTION,

WITH APPENDIX.

ONCE more the voice of God to the gathered brethren. Our pride, our worldliness, our arrogance are being dealt with by the Living God, who loves us too well to allow the general and individual state of His beloved saints to pass unchecked. As we emerge out of the fiery trial now upon us, may *brokenness* of spirit and deeper yearning after Christ characterise us all. We have needed a humbling, and He Who is *Love* has allowed the storm to test us. May God Himself give grace to each, so that His purpose in all this may be known by us, and a time of *real* blessing granted and *that* blessing continued till the Lord come.

There are two grounds alleged why we should separate from the Assembly in QUEEN'S ROAD, READING, and these are generally spoken of as, (1) "the moral question;" (2) "the doctrinal question." The two counts in the indictment against the Reading Assembly are *unrighteousness* and *bad doctrine*.

Before, however, looking at those very serious charges, we would call attention to the following singular position occupied by our separating, yet beloved brethren. There are three parties amongst them; first, those who separate on the two grounds already named; second, those who break with the Reading Assembly on the moral question alone; third, those who consider that London was unscriptural in importing the moral question into the case against Reading, and who consider the doctrinal matter as sufficient ground for withholding fellowship from C. E. S. and the Assembly with which he is locally connected. The writer has personally met with many in London and elsewhere who deplore the want of unanimity in this solemn case of excision. Where is God in all this? Yet certain leaders in London proclaim in the provinces the unanimity of London in separating from Reading on the two counts alleged. It is a fact within the writer's personal knowledge that *hundreds* of saints in London object in *toto* to the rejection of Reading Assembly. Many well-known and godly brothers on the spot can vouch for the truth of this statement. London, whatever that means, is *not* unanimous in cutting off or withdrawing from Reading Assembly. Has it been accomplished in the power of the Holy Ghost? The unanimity is only in appearance; so many in *heart* object to it

But now let us examine the two reasons advanced why we are called upon to reject this Assembly. First, "the moral question," so called. Now the main facts are simply these: Miss Higgins and Mr Stuart, both in fellowship in the Reading Assembly, had certain personal differences. Alas! a common enough thing amongst saints of God. Who was right or wrong—whether one or both—is a matter of no consequence. It was pressed upon the Assembly by the friends and sympathisers of Miss H. that the "leaven of malice" was in the Reading Assembly, and 1 Cor. v. was read or referred to as shewing the serious character of the evil alleged. The brethren in Reading who were conversant with the circumstances objected to the Assembly as such, being troubled with a merely personal matter between two; but brothers not locally connected with the Assembly, but who had been called into the case in the interests of Miss H., insisted upon an Assembly-investigation. Accordingly this was granted. On the evenings of March 12th and 13th, 1884, two Assembly meetings were held. The parties, witnesses, correspondence on both sides, and all the facts were thoroughly sifted, and a thorough examination gone into; and, at the close of an exhaustive enquiry, the following questions were put to the Assembly, and answered as follows:—

I.—Having heard Mr S.'s explanation last night, and the whole of the correspondence, and Mr H.'s statement to-night, do you think that Mr S.'s judgment of Miss H.'s letter of June 10th, as expressed in his letter of September 15th 1883, was justified?

Those who would answer in the negative were invited to give expression to their judgment. Dr J. answered in the negative. Mr L. was understood to say that he was not satisfied that Mr S.'s letter was justified, but he should not like to say that it was wrong.

II.—In view of the alternative put before you, do you think that Miss H. when she wrote her letter to Mr W. believed that there had been untruth on the part of Mr W. so as not to constitute her a wicked person within the meaning of 1 Corinthians v?

This was affirmed without dissent.

III.—Ought not Miss H. to withdraw her letter to Mr W. of June 10th, and accept Mr S.'s explanation?

Dr J. only dissented from the affirmation in this instance. Mr L. said something which was not heard distinctly.

IV.—Is this such a matter as ought ever to have been allowed to disturb the peace of this assembly?

"No! No! Never!" All through the meeting.

The truth of the foregoing is vouched for in a printed circular signed by 26 brothers of the Reading Assembly.

Here then, beloved brethren, we have the moral question settled by *those* and in the *place* where only it could be settled. Now comes the crucial question: Was Reading Assembly competent, and had she divine title to deal with this matter? Was Christ in the Assembly, for it is His presence alone which gives authority to "bind" or "loose?" (Matt. xviii. 15-20.) Was not the Spirit of God in the Assembly to guide the gathered saints to

righteous judgment? (Eph. ii. 22.) Was not the power of the Lord Jesus Christ present to give effect to their decision? (1 Cor. v. 4.) There can be but one answer to these important questions. Why did the friends of Miss H. appeal to the Assembly for judgment? Did they not by that *very appeal* maintain the title and competency of the Assembly to judge in the fear of God? Most undoubtedly.

But now we are called to witness a *new* and sorrowful departure from the truth of God, and one which if not thoroughly judged and the evil course into which it has led many retraced, "brethren" will in a very short time be broken into fragments. Miss H. and her friends were not satisfied with the decision arrived at by the Assembly, and refused to bow to the judgment of those to whom they had referred their case, and who, in point of numbers, in moral and spiritual capacity, and divine title, were surely well able to judge. Accordingly, they left the Assembly, thus in *principle* declaring that it had forfeited its claim to be regarded as an Assembly of God. In July, 1884, J. B. S. wrote as follows to Dr Jones:—"I feel that as a servant of the Lord you have lost a great opportunity of standing for Him, and have done an act which marks cowardice or spleen rather than of the boldness of faith and deep concern for the Lord in His Assembly." But we have worse still to mourn over. Ultimately, the case reached London. Now what was the bounden duty of the Assembly in London? What had been the Scriptural practice hitherto? What for 50 years had been the principle acted upon by brethren—a truth so clearly taught by beloved J. N. D. and others, and its adoption insisted upon as vital in the endeavour "to keep the *unity* of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Was it not to accept simply the judgment of the Reading Assembly? and, further, hold Miss H. and her friends who had left that Assembly as *divisionists*, and accord them the treatment of Rom. xvi. 17—"Avoid them?" Who with the Word of God in their hands and with even a meagre knowledge of divine principles of church-action could say otherwise?

But London, so termed, took up the matter. Would you credit it beloved brethren?—London had not the parties face to face; had no representative from the Reading Assembly to state its case; but proceeded to investigate! Can we call it—truthfully term it—an honest investigation? Could an honest trial be accorded the parties under such conditions? Every principle of justice has been trampled upon in this painful case. Was London, *without* the parties personally present, more fit to judge than Reading who had the parties and all the facts to hand present in their midst? With W. R. in his able paper on this subject we exclaim, "Is not this without a parallel in the history of the Church of God?"

But what a sacrifice of truth we are called upon to make by London's *fiat*. The very principle upon which our corporate existence depends is lost, if this action on the part of London is endorsed by brethren. Are we

in the provinces to follow the multitude to do evil? On what principle of truth, or even fairness, are we to receive the judgment of London instead of that by Reading. To which of these Assemblies had *God* given title to judge? Clearly the latter, Miss H., Dr J., &c., being witness, for to it they submitted their case. That question being answered settles the whole matter, and, since we in the country cannot go into all the facts, nor are we scripturally required to do so, so as to form a judgment, we must accept the judgment of those who had the case in hand. Was that London or Reading?

Again, have we sunk below the morality of the world, who would scorn to do what London has done—re-judging a case *without* the presence of, or hearing the parties immediately concerned, and *without* witnesses—and, as if that were not bad enough, shamefully press its unrighteous decision upon all gathered to the name of the Lord, the penalty for non-compliance being “cutting off from fellowship.”

We have before us another sad instance of flagrant departure from the truth, and by those too who speak much of their endeavour “to keep the unity of the Spirit.” In the Assemblies in these parts (North), there are two *contrary* judgments abroad amongst the gatherings; the first by the Assembly in U., the second by the Assembly in G.,—the latter in flat contradiction to the former. Is not discipline a holy mockery in these circumstances? Which of the two opposing judgments is of the Lord? Which, if either, is bound in heaven according to Matt. xviii. 18? This loud talk about “unity,” and then the sad spectacle presented before all of conduct and ways *exactly the reverse*, is most sorrowful. We do not pen these lines in anger; nay, we share in the sin and take part in the sorrow.

We would now direct attention to “the doctrinal question.” Mr C. E. Stuart of Reading published a pamphlet entitled “*Christian Standing and Condition*,” in which it is alleged grave doctrinal error is found. Now, before examining the doctrines and teachings of the pamphlet we would earnestly entreat our beloved brethren—one and all—to read the pamphlet with care, with unprejudiced minds*, and in much prayer, testing every statement by the alone source and ground of authority—the word of God. We ask this in the name of the Lord, under whose eye and authority Mr S. should write and we should read. Numbers have judged Mr S. to be a heretic on the unproved statements of J.B.S. and C.H.M. Reader, peruse the tract with Bible in hand, and if you do not on any point understand the author communicate with himself direct and ask for explanations. Take Mr S.’s teaching not from garbled quotations by opponents, but direct from his own pen in either or both of his books: “*Christian Standing and Condition*” and “*Is it the Truth of the Gospel?*”

* When I first read the tract, while holding firmly that it afforded no just cause for division, yet in common with many I condemned it as one that should not have been penned. More careful reading and study has led me to regard it as a valuable contribution to divine truth.—W.S.

Further, many when challenged to point out the alleged heresy, frankly own their inability to do so, but sharing in the general prejudice against Mr S. tell us they have an "inward impression" that the books are wrong, that their spiritual instincts reject the teaching of Mr S.; the bad doctrine is not to be found on the surface, and more of a like nature. Do these brethren know Mr S.? We appeal to those who know the author, and confidently ask them: Has not Mr S. more nobility of character than condescend to such a low moral level as to disguise his *real* sentiments? Besides, what object could he possibly have in so doing? The love that "*thinketh* no evil" would not suggest a *hidden* meaning, but frankly accept what is written as the expression of the author's mind. In passing, altho' that is a matter of but little importance, we would say that hitherto Mr S. has been regarded as an accurate writer and thinker. His words have been considered until now as exactly meaning what he says. We may also remark that "inward impressions" are most unsafe, and as for spiritual instincts which assuredly have their place, they are not confined to some. The spiritual instincts of many known to the writer are in accord with the doctrines unfolded by Mr S., but that too is of small account.

But an objection may here be noticed. It is frequently said: "Why does not Mr S. withdraw his pamphlet, even if the doctrine be true, seeing that it has created such disturbance amongst the Saints and Assemblies? We answer, why did not Mr J. N. Darby withdraw his tract upon the Sufferings of Christ which was regarded by many at the time, as distinctly heretical? Yet we venture to say that that book of Mr Darby's is one of the most precious and helpful ever written: that is the *present* judgment of many who regarded the book *when* published as dangerous to souls.

Truth has always to fight its way, and we believe the teachings of C. E. S. on "Standing" and "State" which are in *accord* with the teachings of J. N. D. (see Appendix) will yet be accepted by those who will only impartially examine them and who desire to grow in accurate acquaintance with the teachings of the Holy Ghost on these subjects. But who has created the present difficulty? Has Mr S. pressed his views anywhere? Has he gone to Assemblies and insisted upon teaching them? No! He has published his pamphlet, that is all. Why insist upon its withdrawal? It has proved and will continue to prove helpful to many. Let those, therefore, who do not care for it let it alone. No one is forcing these views anywhere for their adoption by saints. But we ask our readers to weigh in the Lord's own presence, where only one can see things in *His light*: Would it be right in Mr S. to withdraw his pamphlet from circulation in the face of such grave and absolutely untrue charges as are advanced by J. B. S. and C. H. M.? "Subversive of Christianity" is the judgment of the former; as for the latter he makes the most reckless and cruel charges without one particle of proof to substantiate them. Were the author of

"Christian Standing and Condition" to recall his pamphlet it would be a tantamount acknowledgment that these charges are true—the only answer that can be given is "Read the book and judge." Withdraw it from circulation and your answer is gone. But, why not press J.B.S. and C.H.M. and others which we could name to substantiate, or, if they cannot, to withdraw their false accusations?

Beloved brethren, you have in the past contended for the faith once delivered to the saints. Many have suffered much for it. Now, who is leading in this attack upon Mr S.? The writer of the book upon "*Discipline*" (one of the most valuable works we know of and which will make us debtor for ever to J. B. S.) In his monthly periodical, "Voice to the Faithful," Sept., 1834, page 271-2, he thus writes: "It was not possible for them (Old Testament Saints) to reckon themselves dead to sin, because the old man was not as yet crucified. Therefore the flesh was alive and active; nay, *it was right to use it, and we constantly find that its use was sanctioned, EVEN WHEN MORALLY DEGRADED.* Abraham was to slay his son; Rahab, to sacrifice her country; Jael, to serve God's people by being a deceiver, and so on." [Italics and capitals are ours.] It was with a feeling of shame and sorrow that we read these lines but a few days ago. Brethren, where are we? Where have we drifted to when we can allow such teaching to pass unchallenged? The *general* tendency of the whole article is bad. Is J. B. S. sound as to the person of Christ? Read the first half of page 276, "Voice," Sept., 1834. Has Park Street Assembly yet called Mr Stoney to account for publicly teaching that it was right to use morally degraded flesh? Yea, constantly it was sanctioned! Our astonishment was not lessened at the examples he quotes in proof of his statement, "Abraham was to slay his son, &c." Did Mr J. B. S. when he penned the foregoing paragraph forget that Heb. xi. 17 flatly contradicted his statement "By *faith* Abraham when he was tried offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son." Is not "*faith*" God's gift (Eph. ii. 8; Phil. i. 29)? It is perfectly evident that J. B. S. is teaching false doctrine, and that the mass of brethren are either ignorant of it, or indifferent to it. Is there not solid ground for enquiry whether or not J. B. S. is clear on the doctrine of Christ? Again, we say, read the article referred to and "judge ye." The leaven is spreading. The same writer in "A Letter to the Brethren in the Lord Meeting at Queen's Road, Reading, reviewing 'Christian Standing and Condition'" maintains that it is "a false conclusion that the new man is implied in Romans." What then is the clear and unmistakable teaching of Mr J. B. S. whether it be that as to *Old Testament Saints*, or of *New Testament Saints*—what? but that fruit for God is of the flesh! Christian life, service, and devotedness as developed in the epistle to the Romans are produced by those who have not the "New Man!" while flesh even when "morally degraded" is SANCTIONED in its use by Old Testament believers!

The Saints gathered to the Lord's name who continue in fellowship with a teacher promulgating such doctrines as these without calling him to account, are themselves "partakers of his evil deeds," share in his sin, dishonour the Lord, and forfeit their title to be regarded as an assembly of God. We are not aware of a trace of unkind feeling in our heart to the gifted J. B. S.; his printed ministry in the past, much of it at least, has been so valuable and helpful to souls. But we tremble as we survey the precipice to which he is leading, unconsciously of course, the beloved people of God.

Mr C. H. M.—"whose praise is in all the churches"—has published "A Letter to a Friend on the New York and Reading Pamphlets." We will call attention to a few paragraphs in that letter in the fond hope that C.H.M. will yet in "tender consideration for the beloved flock of Christ"—a most touching motive—recall his letter which in the opinion of many of his brethren ought never to have been written.

On page 5 he quotes from "Christian Standing and Condition" (page 12.) "Being in Christ forms no part of Scripture teaching as to the believers' perfect standing or justification before the throne." and then we have Mr C.H.M.'s comment: "Only think of such words dropping from the pen of one who for years has occupied the position of a teacher in the Church of God."

Now, we are perfectly satisfied that the root of the present doctrinal difficulty lies here: Have brethren hitherto been clear on the fundamental truth of justification? We may be wrong, but we frankly state our conviction that the well-known prejudice (a prejudice shared by the writer for some time—the views at *first* seemed so novel) against Mr C. E. S. and which has operated against the reception of clearer teaching on this subject from his pen, may be traced to our pride. It is humbling to have to confess that during all these years we have in much printed and oral ministry taught imperfectly on the fundamental truth of Justification, confounding it with New Creation; and then to be corrected by one who has not been regarded by some as teaching the *heavenly* side of things (!).

The question then between Mr C. E. S. and Mr C. H. M. is this: Are the ungodly justified *in* Christ or *by* Christ, or is it both? Now in the incriminated pamphlet the answer has been furnished again and again. In that portion of the Word of God which specially treats of justification (Romans iii. 20—v. 11), there is not a word about our being in Christ. Is this not so? Justification applies to what I have *done*. "In Christ" does not, cannot meet that. I *was* in Adam, I *am* in Christ; both states are taken up and taught in the second part of the Romans v. 12—viii. God justifies the ungodly (iv. 5) the *person*; by His grace (iii. 24) the *spring*; by Christ's blood (v. 9) the *ground*; by Christ's resurrection (iv. 25) the *divine* and *public acknowledgment*. Our being in Christ is blessed beyond all telling, but is not, could not be in the nature of things an integral part of our justification, as some say it is. The man in Christ is what? In Christ

in order to be justified! Nay, an ungodly one cannot, as such, be in Christ, and it is he whom God justifies. As justified by God, on the ground of Christ's work, he is in Christ a "new creation" (2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15), while as to the body, he is linked with the present scene of suffering (Romans viii. 23). Scripture does not speak of a "New Creation"—moral or physical—into which we are brought, and of which Christ is head; but in Christ there is "New Creation." Eph. i. 10 refers to the millennial glory of *this* creation. Scripture nowhere intimates that God is to create *again*, nor does it contrast two physically created worlds—old and new. Justification by the *work*, which gives a *standing* before God, and new creation in the *person*, which is your *state* "in Christ," are distinct truths, however closely related. Both, however, are enjoyed in the soul at the same time, "are concurrent blessings."

Our marvel is that such an important and Scriptural distinction as justification by Christ's work and new creation in Christ has hitherto escaped the notice of such men as the able C. H. M., "who for years has occupied the position of a teacher in the Church of God." Continuing his remarks, Mr Macintosh hurls the following most awful charge against Mr Stuart. It is not, of course, directly stated, but it is most distinctly implied:—"Think of our having anything—standing, position, calling, hope, privilege, pardon, justification *apart from or independent of Christ!* Thank God it is not so." (Page 5 of "Letter," italics ours). This statement we must, in the interests of truth, characterise as *absolutely false*. When and where has C. E. S. ever taught that anyone of the blessings of our glorious Christianity can be had "apart from or independent of Christ?" According to this, C. E. S. is off the ground of Christianity—he is without a Saviour, and outside the pale of salvation! But has this truly awful statement a *particle* of truth in it? Let C. E. S. answer from his pamphlet: "Now our standing before God's throne rests solely on that which the Lord endured for us, and its abiding efficacy is assured to us, if we believe on Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification (Romans iv. 24, 25). To that which has been done for us nothing can be added to increase its efficacy or to enhance its value. For by one offering He hath perfected for ever, or in perpetuity, them that are sanctified'" (Heb. x. 14.)

Mr C. H. M. says "I have for many years loved and esteemed the writer of the Reading pamphlet." The Lord will yet have a serious word to say to the conscience of the one who could so recklessly and untruthfully wound the feelings and pierce the heart of a "loved and esteemed" friend of many years. But that is not all. Another edition of the "Letter" was issued, altho' not marked as such, in which the sentence "apart from or independent of Christ" is altered to "apart from our being in Christ." Surely Christian courtesy demanded an explanation or apology for such a cruel wrong? Surely, too, a friend-ship of many years

claimed an ample and straightforward acknowledgment on the part of C. H. M. ? But not one word of sorrow expressed to Mr S. or to the thousands thus unjustly prejudiced against his teaching. The sentence was altered without any notice or intention of doing so or apology tendered. Now, a third edition is issued with a "Note" of acknowledgment of error of "verbal inaccuracy in the quotations given in the MS and earlier printed copies of my 'Letter on the New York and Reading Pamphlets.' As God is my witness it was not intentional, neither have I misrepresented the *substance* of the statements." We are quite certain that C. H. M. would not intentionally misrepresent C. E. S. that we could not conceive *him* capable of doing. But it seems that C. H. M. only acknowledges "verbal inaccuracy in the quotations given." Now the words on which we have been commenting are not marked as quotations at all either in the first, second, or third editions. In fact, he reiterates his charge even in his apologetic note, for he says: "Neither have I misrepresented the *substance* of the statements." What are we to make of all this? Is C. H. M. morally fitted to correct C. E. S., and can the saints have confidence in those who condescend to such *unchristian* practices? Is this "simplicity and godly sincerity" which one would expect from so beloved a servant of God as C. H. M.? Paul had the testimony of his conscience, of God, and of the saints in his words and ways towards the Corinthians (1 Cor. i., ii.) We are surprised in face of all this that C. H. M. could write "that if there were an atom of true humility or tender consideration for the beloved flock of Christ, those New York and Reading Pamphlets would long since have been recalled and committed to the flames." Should the Leamington "Letter" or the Reading "Pamphlet" be recalled and committed to the flames; which?

In the third edition of the "Letter" (page 6), C. H. M. asks "Are all the high and precious privileges of the Church of God, the body and bride of Christ, to be given up? Are all to be merged in the fact of our justification?" Then on page 8 he continues in the same strain, giving us a number of sweeping assertions eloquently expressed, as he does everything he puts his pen to, but as another has said consisting only of "big, powerless words." Now, Mr S. neither gives up our "high and precious privileges," nor does he merge them "in the fact of our justification," and if Mr C. H. M. is ignorant of the fact, he is *culpably* so, for he tells us more than once that he has perused the pamphlet. One quotation from Mr S. will shew that he neither gives up nor merges our blessings in that of justification. "Many of course are the blessings which we possess through grace *besides* that of justification by faith. We are God's children, His sons too, His heirs likewise, and joint heirs with Christ. God's purpose too, is, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (page 8.) A brother writes thus:—"That paper of C. H. M.'s will do good: *honourable* men will not have it." One can only characterise it as a mass of unintentional misrepresentation.

Mr Stuart's accurate and Scriptural distinction between "Standing" and "State," or justification as distinguished from our being in Christ have proved helpful to many. Mr S. does not give up one truth of Christianity, nay, he maintains every truth so graciously recovered for us through the late beloved Mr Darby, Mr Wigram, and others. It is true if you accept the way Mr S. puts things, certain long and highly cherished phrases in current use amongst us will have to be given up, but that we can easily afford to do, as in return we will hold and enjoy *more clearly*, and in *greater fulness* every distinctive truth we have hitherto held. It would be foolish on the other hand to endorse every word and form of expression contained in the pamphlet, necessary characteristic of the imperfect human vessel. For our own part we are thankful to be corrected in the use of such unscriptural expressions as "standing in Christ." We stand *on* the work, and are *in* Christ. Did Mr S. not insist upon our abiding state "in Christ" we would at once commit to the flames his pamphlet. "Stand" in a person! How unsuitable the word.

The gist of Mr S.'s teaching, is this: That the standing of all believers from times' commencement to its close, is the precious blood of Christ. The blood of the bullock (for Christians) and that of the goat (for Israel) were both sprinkled *on* and *before* the mercy seat, Jehovah's throne in midst of Israel (Lev. xvi, 14-15.) Thus a common standing before God provided for us and Israel. So, too, the blood of both animals was put upon the horns of the brazen altar—the place of *individual* approach to God: "Shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat and put *it* upon the horns of the altar round about" (v. 18.) Thus we have taught in type that the precious blood of Christ is God's standing before Himself and throne, for the Church and Israel, as also for every individual soul: study in same connection Romans iii. 25 for *past* times, and verse 26 for *present* times. Our standing is not in Christ, but on what He has done; and this standing as we have seen is one common to all saints. But while all occupy one common ground before God, all are not equally endowed with blessing. (*Is it the Truth of the Gospel?* pages 16, 17.) Our portion as distinct from that enjoyed by saints *before*, or of those who will come in *after*, is one only measured by the heart of God and by His thoughts of Christ. "God having provided some *better* thing for us" (Heb. xi. 40). Our blessing and portion as associated with Christ in place, love, and glory (John xvii.), as sons and heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ (Romans viii.), as "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" (Eph.), inheritors, too, of a vast and magnificent fortune (Eph. i. 3; 1 Cor. iii. 21-23), as having conferred on us also rank and title (Rev. i. 6), are in brief the special portion of the saint of this church—age. (Read, *Christian Standing and Condition*. pages 8, 9, 16, 24.)

But further, Mr S. teaches that those standing before the throne justified by faith are also "in Christ," which latter he terms *state* or *condition*, as does J. N. D. repeatedly; but he insists upon it that "these are *concurrent* blessings, and not dependent the one on the other," and, he adds, "hence the being in Christ adds nothing to a man's *justification*. It is a distinct line of teaching and, a different character of blessing." Both truths are held and clearly taught, but are regarded as distinct in character, yet, "concurrent" as to time. Mr S., while terming being "in Christ"—state or condition—yet holds that it is a *fixed* state and not at all dependent upon our experience. (Pages 11, 12, 13, 19-26, *Christian Standing and Condition*.) Mr S. in certain printed letters, accessible to all, as also in—*Is it the Truth of the Gospel?* pages 18, 21, 22, &c.; and *Christian Standing and Condition*, pages 11, 19, 29 teaches most plainly the utter ruin of man. Here are his own words in answer to a question put to him on the subject:—

"Ephesians ii. is to me the strongest Scripture to prove the ruin of man, both root and branch being utterly bad, spiritually dead—the necessity of new creation and life forcibly shows this. There is nothing in man that God can work upon to produce fruit apart from being created in Christ unto good works. Genesis viii, 21—Is God's estimate of man after the flood; Psalm xiv., Israel in the days of David; Romans iii. 10, &c., man after the cross; 2 Timothy iii. 1-5, man after the presence of Christianity, the close of this dispensation; Rev. xi. 18, when the Lord comes to reign, man is angry; Rev. xx. 8, after the thousand years of blessedness man is in nature unaltered, hatred to God, and all that is of God still characterises him."

Mr S. in Scriptural expression insists strongly upon God's judicial judgment of the old man. "It has been judicially dealt with in the cross of Christ; but if allowed to act, it is as rampant as ever." Again, "He crucified our old man with Christ." Contrast the confusion of thought and unscriptural expressions employed by J. B. S. in his *letter*, p. 1, 3, 6, with the teaching of C. E. S. on p. 6, 8, 33, 36, 37, of "*Is it the Truth, &c.*"

What truth of Scripture then is denied or set aside in the incriminated pamphlets? and wherein do they furnish ground for division? Let our separating brethren boldly grapple with the doctrines taught, show wherein they are unscriptural, and seek to carry us with them.

Has J. B. S. made it plain to you that the teachings of the pamphlet are really subversive of Christianity? Has C. H. M. also made good his charges? If not, why separate? London's action, if not possessing the authority of Scripture, is not binding on your conscience. Do you say London has acted in separating from the Assembly in Reading and received the schismatic party *there*, and hence I MUST bow. Well, but other Assemblies have judged and see nothing calling for separation from the old established meeting in Reading and who refuse the schismatic party *there*. The truth is, it is to God alone you must bow, to His word you must submit, and neither to London nor Reading. If London can show us solid Scriptural reason for cutting off the Reading Assembly, let it be done. But do not trample upon conscience and usurp the paramount claims of the Lord in His House by saying that London has judged and

that is enough. Has Reading Assembly been disowned of the Lord? Can He who is *holy* and *true* yet attach His blessed name to it as a whole? Is Reading worse than Corinth? Are moral and doctrinal evils more numerous and grave than existed in Corinth found in the Reading Assembly? It is foolishly said, what would have been the consequence if Corinth had not acted upon Paul's letter? Would not Corinth have been rejected as on the ground of God's Assembly? We cannot speak of what *might* have been. We find the fact that Corinth was *not* rejected as God's Assembly, but was addressed and appealed to as such, in that character (1 Cor. i. 2), and that while Paul could not personally visit them in their *then* state, yet he advised Apollos to go. (1 Cor. xvi, 12). It must also be remembered that our brethren who have been dealing with the Assembly in Reading are not Apostles, nor has there been anything like Apostolic dealing towards the supposed guilty Assembly. The letter of J. B. S. to the *brethren* (not "Assembly," mark you), meeting at Queen's Road, Reading, is as great a contrast to Apostolic doctrine and dealing as you could well suppose. Yet, in June, 1884, J. B. S. wrote as follows:—"Paul's great desire was to set the Assembly right that our care for you in the sight of God might appear UNTO YOU. This was not the case at Reading, but rather to crush the Assembly to satisfy individual conscience—a very dangerous precedent." What then and since has led Mr Stoney right off the lines of divine action? Separation from such evil as Scripture refers to is imperative upon every saint of God, and is demanded by the holiness of God's House and by the nature of Him who is *light*. The "foundation" and "seal" of the House ever remain—(2 Tim. ii. 19)—presenting their claims and comfort too. But is Corinth and Reading at all parallel cases? We trust, while we dare not boast, that we are as fully alive to the interests of God, His Church, and Truth as our beloved brethren who have separated from Reading on unproved charges. But we repeat the question: Is Reading as bad as Corinth? Till that is conclusively proved we dare not and will not, as respecting the Lord's authority in the Assembly, separate. Even were it clearly established that evil of a grave character were in Reading Assembly, that would not in itself warrant *immediate* withdrawal from it. There must be Scriptural dealing with an Assembly in such circumstances. How patient! how faithful! how lovingly Paul dealt with and corrected the evils in Corinth.

We do trust those Saints and Assemblies remaining on the *old* ground will seek to walk in lowliness and grace towards our erring, yet beloved separating brethren, while firmly maintaining fidelity to Christ. If through exercise of soul the truth becomes more precious to us; personal devotedness to Christ increased; more intense longing after the perishing; more open and liberal in thought and action towards all who love Christ; and are drawn closer together—heart to heart—the gain will be immense.

APPENDIX.

MR DARBY.

STATE.

Here I must make a remark as to Dr W.'s use of Romans:—He only uses the second part, which does not treat of our guilt by our sins, but of our STATE by Adam's sin. The division is between the 11th and 12th verses of chapter fifth. The first treats of our *sins* and *guilt*; the second of our sin and STATE before God; and though the cross be the remedy for both, yet the difference of its use is very marked. "Christ died for our sins" is what avails in the first part. Believers have died with Christ in the second; they are no longer before God in the flesh. They are "in Christ," in the Spirit." They pass out of Adam into Christ. Again, he (Dr W.) turns to the STATE of those in Christ in contrast with Adam.—*Bible Witness and Review*, vol. ii. p. 18, 20.

Chap. v. 1-11 (Romans).—The whole question of our actual guilt has been settled; but our STATE has not been touched.—*Writings*, vol. xxiii. p. 517.

In chap. viii.—The man is *in Christ*, no condemnation is therefore possible; he is in the place where Christ's perfect work has brought him, in that STATE in Him.—*Writings*, vol. xxiii. p. 521.

Dead and risen with Christ, and we in Christ, and Christ in us is the CHRISTIAN STATE.—*Writings*, vol. xxiii. p. 349.

MR DARBY.

THE THRONE.

On the mercy-seat. God Himself was met. In fact, that made it a mercy-seat, for it was a THRONE of judgment but for that. NOW, it is a THRONE of government *for*, instead of a THRONE of judgment against.—*Writings*, vol. xix. p. 363.

Sins were atoned for according to the requirement of the majesty of the THRONE of God Himself, so that the full satisfaction made to His majesty rendered the THRONE of justice favourable.—*Writings*, vol. xix. p. 371.

God is approached at a mercy-seat; that is blood-shedding on the THRONE of judgment, according to the holiness and righteousness of God.—*Writings*, vol. xxiii. p. 515.

But the perfect death of Jesus—His blood put on the THRONE of God—has established and brought into evidence all that God is.—*Synopsis*, vol. i. p. 180.

MR STUART.

STATE.

Where then the action of the throne is mentioned as in Rom. iii. v. 11, standing is spoken of . . . where the saint's condition or STATE as in Christ before God is the theme, his standing is not the subject of divine teaching.—*Christian Standing and Condition*, p. 7.

There are two lights in which the sinner is viewed.—In the one he is seen as a responsible, guilty creature, who needs a standing before the throne, but has it not; in the other, he is seen as one dead in sins who needs quickening. Rom. i. v. 11 treats of the former; Eph. ii. 1-7 of the latter. Now, where being dead in sins and quickening are treated of, condition or STATE . . . is the theme, and the truth of "in Christ" is then made prominent.—*Christian Standing and Condition*, p. 13.

It is a condition of saints through grace that they are in Christ and Christ in them. . . . Condition, then, or STATE, is the thought implied by being in Christ.—*Christian Standing and Condition*, p. 18.

By STATE or condition is meant what the person is or the circumstances in which he is.—*Christian Standing and Condition*, p. 27.

MR STUART.

THE THRONE.

But if the teaching of Levit. xvi., distinctly referred to in Heb. ix., x. is to instruct us, the standing for all saints before God's THRONE rests solely on the sacrifice of Christ.—*Is it the Truth, &c.?* p. 17.

At all events, then, Mr Stoney himself being witness (referring to his "Letter," p. 4), the believer does stand before the THRONE of God. It does not cease, he teaches us, to be the THRONE, but it becomes a THRONE of grace. With all this outcry, then, against the word THRONE, it is admitted that the term is scripturally correct. Is not the THRONE of grace the THRONE of God? Whose THRONE else can it be? Has God, as God, two different THRONES—one of judgment and another of grace? Would not the mercy-seat have been to Aaron a THRONE of judgment in a most solemn way had he approached it in an unauthorised way? Now, the mercy-seat in the Tabernacle typified the THRONE of God in the highest heaven—the holiest of all.—*Is it the Truth, &c.?* p. 24.

We frequently read of the "throne" as in Heb. iv., which is *present*, and Rev. v. which is *future*.

Are we prepared to sacrifice verses 1 and 5 of hymn No. 102; verses 2, 3, 4 of hymn No. 107; verse 4 of No. 136; verse 2 of No. 195, and many others?

MR DARBY.

HIGHEST BLESSING OF THE SAINT.

The bullock, whose blood was employed as one of them (referring to the goat's) is lost and set aside by Dr W., and the bringing us to God in the holiest (not merely clearing the world) dropped—the HIGHEST AND ESPECIAL blessing of the saint; and this done, not by forgiving His people, but by presentation of the blood to God, by whom the excellency of this sacrifice in which He has been glorified in respect, yea, through the very means, of sin, is justly estimated.—*Bible Witness and Review*, vol. ii. p. 22.

MR STUART.

NO HIGHER POSITION.

If nothing can be added to make our standing more perfect, nothing can be added to give us any HIGHER POSITION as saints before God. Nothing is higher in the universe than the throne of the majesty in the heavens. This the place of the mercy-seat at the extreme end of the holiest shadowed forth, and Heb. xii. 23 and Rev. iv. plainly teach. NO HIGHER POSITION can the saint have than a standing before that throne . . . which is ours now in consequence of the death and resurrection of His son.—*Christian Standing and Condition*, p. 8-9.

In a printed letter Mr S. writes as follows:—

"I take it misconception has arisen from not seeing that I was writing of *saints*, not of us as *children*, or *members of Christ*, when I said—'no higher position can a *man* have,' etc. Of course all are true of every believer now. But they are blessings of different orders.

If I speak of relationship by birth, I should, if thinking correctly, speak of *nearness*. Relationship by birth is the nearest thing to God that I know.

Higher is not a term that seems to me in character in that connection. *High* relationship seems incongruous; *nearness* is to me more correct.

If any call it higher, I should not controvert it, not wishing on such a matter to make a man an offender for a word, and because I should understand, I conclude what he meant. But I could not use that term in that way.

To be God's child is the *closest* thing to Him that I know."

P.S.—Some have objected to the foregoing quotations from J. N. D., as other citations from the works of that truly eminent writer and teacher can be adduced in opposition to various statements advanced by C.E.S. We are fully aware of the fact, and further that in Mr Darby's earlier writings especially, there are confused and imperfect statements. Need we be surprised at this? It would have been surprising had it been otherwise, considering the quantity of printed and valuable matter professedly from his pen, but as is well known "notes" of lectures, readings, and sermons were taken by hearers, printed and not *always* revised by Mr D. Our object, however, was not to shew whercin J.N.D. differed either from himself or from Mr Stuart, but where he agreed in words at least with Mr S.