

RECENT DISRUPTIONS.

THE DISCIPLINE.

CONNECTED WITH C. E. S. AND F. W. G.

My first paper on the "Montreal" and "Reading" Questions, was sent out as a protest, and intended to lead to enquiry and godly exercise. With sorrow and amazement, instead of enquiry and humiliation, I find in certain quarters fresh attacks upon the witness and additional charges of falsehood. Other brethren, however, request and urge the printing of the evidence for my conclusions as given in the first paper. The larger pamphlet, as written, is withheld. A part of it bearing on "The Doctrines of C. E. S. and F. W. G." is now printed. In what follows it is proposed to give some documents and information as to the THE DISCIPLINE which has been exercised.

The Reading assembly may be permitted to answer for itself by its own circular.

READING ASSEMBLY CIRCULAR.

25, Queen's Road, Reading,
March 2nd, 1885.

DEAR BRETHREN,

A question has been raised as to a judgment delivered on March 13th, 1884, in a matter brought before the assembly here, and unrighteousness in what was then done has been freely imputed to it.

Now to this no Christian elsewhere who understands, and would act on true church as well as scriptural principles, could for one moment be indifferent; for as members one of another, the action of saints on the ground of the assembly in one place necessarily concerns all elsewhere, and as children of light, "the fruit of the light, which is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth," should be displayed.

But surely, before condemning an assembly or an individual, it becomes the saints of God to learn what is the true state of the case, and to ask, if need be, the accused to answer for themselves. The law of God, Nicodemus declared, did not judge any man before it heard him, and knew what he did; the righteous Lord, too, we read, loveth righteousness; a Roman governor put it on record that it was not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man before he had licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him.

Now, has not the first principle of justice, to which no saint should be indifferent, been too much forgotten in this case? Surely the right course for those elsewhere, if troubled, is first to inquire of the assembly what was done and why, ere forming a judgment at all. The answer that could be given would, we believe, satisfy any honest inquirer. For the question of the assembly's righteousness or unrighteousness lies within a very small compass. It was pressed on it by those who are its bitterest opponents to-day, that malice and wickedness were in its midst, and must be purged out: Ignorant of

any such state of things among them, and no one being DIRECTLY charged before them as guilty of it, they held an inquiry to see where it was.

Mr. S. had brought no charge against Miss H. before the assembly. Mr. H. affirmed he refused to be regarded as Mr. S.'s accuser; but his friends pressed on the assembly, that the only scripture which would meet the case was that of 1 Corinthians v., having persistently refused any other. Now it was patent to those present, that had the assembly refused to take up the case in the way pressed upon it, it would have been denounced far and wide, as wholly indifferent to what concerns the Lord's glory and the holiness of God's house. An inquiry therefore took place on the evenings of March 12th and 13th, 1884; on the former, Mr. S. was asked to explain his conduct in connection with a letter written by him to Miss H. on September 15th, 1883, which had been read out to the assembly by Mr. H. the previous week, in proof of the existence of malice and wickedness in our midst. Many details had to be gone into, and much correspondence had necessarily to be read; then, on the following evening, the assembly heard all that Mr. H. had to say, and decided they could discover no proof of malice in what Mr. S. had done, nor did they find any proof of malice in Miss H.

To tell a person in a private letter of something that you think that one has done wrong, is not necessarily a malicious act; and if the writer disavows all malice, and points out it was the PURPORT or BEARING of her letter that he was concerned with, and not her MOTIVE in writing it, where is the wickedness? And since the assembly could discover no proof of malice in either Mr. S. or Miss H., but cleared them both of any such imputation, where is the proof of unrighteousness? as alleged, on the ground that the first and second clauses of the judgment are contradictory. But having Miss H.'s letter of June 19th, 1883 before it, after hearing Mr. S.'s explanation that the words objected to in his letter of September 15th 1883, "Endeavoured to fix," were meant to be governed by the sentence in parenthesis "for that was evidently the purport of your letter to him," and after listening to the correspondence that had been read, it was felt that Mr. S. had not misjudged the purport of that letter. Hence Miss H. was asked to withdraw it. Had she done that, Mr. S.'s letter, which was based on it, would have necessarily dropped, and the matter have come to an end. These are the simple elements of the case. We cannot but think if the above facts were clearly understood, the groundlessness of the outcry against the assembly of unrighteousness would be apparent.

Does not scripture maintain the competency of a local assembly to investigate and adjudicate on questions concerning individuals in its midst? And the local assembly being viewed as "Christ's body" in the place (1 Corinthians xii. 27), the decision of those gathered on that ground (having competency to act) unless proved to be unrighteous, must, according to true church principles, be accepted by the other assemblies, or independency on the part of others must be the result.

"Now, dear brethren, we have simply put before you what we have done, and the reason of it. We had the parties before us, and all the details of the case, as stated by Mr. S. on the one hand, and Mr. H. on the other. How can those who have not had that opportunity be better able to judge the case on one-sided evidence, and the statements of interested persons and partizans? And until a case for inquiry into the conduct of a local assembly has been

established, it is not surely for others elsewhere to go into the details of the matter that was brought before it, and certainly not behind the backs of the accused. Any information or explanation we have always expressed our readiness, as far as possible, to furnish to those who inquired. We have courted the fullest investigation, have nothing to conceal, have cloaked up no unrighteousness in our midst that we are aware of, have condemned no one unjustly, have searched, but could find no malice."

To one other matter we desire to call your attention. There seems a practice in places amongst us of refusing letters of commendation from an assembly of saints still owned as enjoying the rights and privileges of the Lord's Table. Now, to refuse to any saint his place at the Table, when duly commended from an assembly which has not been disowned, is a very grave matter indeed. Is not this, dear brethren, unscriptural? Not a word of scripture, we fearlessly assert, can be brought forward in support of it. Is it not also sectarian? Because those who act thus, thereby avow that their terms of communion are narrower than those laid down for us in the word of God. They exclude from their company at the Table, some to whom they own the Lord has not forbidden the privilege of sitting down at His Table. Is scripture, we ask, still to guide us, or is human expediency to have sway in the church of God?

Now, dear brethren, allow us in conclusion to remind you of two important portions of the word of God: "He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him" (Pro. xviii. 17); and the words of the Master Himself: "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." (John vii. 24.)

We are, dear brethren,
Sincerely yours in Christ,

Signed, by twenty-six Brothers.

FORM OF QUESTIONS PUT TO THE MEETING, WITH ITS ANSWERS, BY WHICH ITS MIND WAS ARRIVED AT MARCH 13th, 1884.

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 19th, 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 19th, and accept Mr. S.'s explanation?

D. 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 two following notices were drawn up with a view to meet the difficulties some had as to the way the judgment was expressed:—

Having heard that the wording of the assembly judgment arrived at on March 13th last has been misapprehended, we desire to state that we can only repeat what we desired then to express, that, after hearing Mr. S.'s explanations of his letter of September 15th, 1883, we accepted them absolutely, and therefore he was justified by the assembly in his JUDGMENT contained in that letter. But on the wording of that letter the assembly did not intend to pronounce any judgment. He was also justified from the charge of malice, which was in effect the point pressed against him on the ground of 1. Corinthians v., those who brought the question before the assembly insisting that it should be taken up on the ground of that scripture.

Signed on behalf of the assembly,

H. S. ALDIS,

THOS. HUNTLEY,

CHAS. BOOMFIELD,

W. R. HOWARD.

Reading, April 14th, 1884.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE READING ASSEMBLY,
MARCH 13th, 1884.

It has been with deep regret that we have heard from time to time that our judgment of March 13th last, of a purely local matter, has been the occasion, through misapprehension we believe, of trouble to the hearts and consciences of some of our brethren elsewhere. It was shortly after the date of our judgment pointed out to us that the construction of the first clause of it involved the justification of the words of Mr. S.'s letter to Miss H. of September 15th, 1883. And by a memorandum (as above) dated 14th April last, we explained that we did not intend to pronounce any judgment on the wording of that letter. But it has lately been suggested to us that we should have withdrawn the words which conveyed the false impression.

The false clause put to the meeting in the form of a question was as follows: "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 19th, as expressed in his letter of September 15th was justified?" Now, though we think our brethren should have accepted our explanation, we have thought it due to the Lord and to them to take into our earnest consideration the suggestion made to us, and while we cannot alter the substance of our judgment, we now believe that the first clause would have been more correctly expressed by the following: "Having heard the statement of Mr. S. and of Mr. H. on behalf of Miss H., and the whole of the correspondence, we unreservedly accept Mr. S.'s explanation, and fully exonerate him from the imputation of malice, as we believe that his judgment of the purport of Miss H.'s letter was correct."

We desire to express our regret that we should by anything on our part, however unwittingly, have been the occasion of trouble and anxiety to our brethren, but we would reckon on the grace of Christ in them to accept this expression of our regret, and to join their prayers with ours that the gracious Lord may overrule this trouble to His own glory, and the blessing of His people.

Signed on behalf of the assembly,

THOS. HUNTLEY,

JAS. CRAFT,

W. R. HOWARD,

L. A. PIKE.

December 22nd, 1884.

This document was not seen by me till February 1886. This was a good while after my sixteen questions were written, and the "charges of want of honesty and truthfulness" had been made against myself in November, and December, 1885. This straightforward answer of Reading, after the clamour of twelve months against that assembly, had more weight with me in the Reading case than any other document.

It shows when, why, and how, Reading judged its own moral case, and is the first assembly judgment. On the principle of the one body, until substantial reasons can be given for setting aside this judgment, other assemblies should bow to Reading. We ought to hear and weigh, however, what is urged against bowing to Reading, and why we should bow to London, which reversed Reading's judgment. (Questions page 2). But the strange thing is that other Assembly judgments those of Bath and Tunbridge Wells, took place between the time of Reading's judgment, March 13, 1884, and the judgment of London on March 15, 1885, and London bows to none, but JUDGES FOR ITSELF. I have not been able to get a copy of the judgment of Tunbridge Wells. Here is that of Bath which took place on December 22, 1884. It was sent to Reading Assembly.

THE BATH JUDGMENT.

12, Bath Street, Bath :

DEAR BRETHREN,

22nd December, 1884.

Your letter of the 12th inst. deeply grieves us; we had hoped that opportunity being afforded for reconsidering your judgment, there might have been recovery from the course you have adopted which has distressed and burdened so many consciences.

Your assertion that "no charge of sin brought against a sister by a brother among you, has been before the Assembly" does not accord with the facts before us. The brother wrote to the sister, that she had endeavoured to fix a charge of untruthfulness upon one amongst you, and had dropped it when she could not substantiate it. Do you not consider this alleged action on her part to be sin? If not, it seems useless to discuss the matter with you. To us it would appear sin of a very determined nature.

Your Assembly meeting was held in March last, and it is clear that a majority formed and forced its opinion, notwithstanding the consciences of several godly persons among you. You did not wait for the deliverance of their consciences, nor did you consider what affected their consciences, and what might possibly have acted upon your own.

You forced your judgment upon them, thus compelling them to stand apart from the breaking of bread, for to break bread would have been to make an outward profession of unity, and consent to a judgment they felt was contrary to God—an act, than which little could be more abhorrent to Him.

Your judgment is manifestly unrighteous:—

- I. You justify the brother in accusing the sister as stated above;
- II. You clear the sister in writing the letter he calls "An endeavour to fix a charge of untruthfulness without foundation;"
- III. You call upon the sister to withdraw this letter, and
- IV. You carry "by acclamation" that the matter never ought to have been brought before the Assembly.

The use of such a term; "by acclamation," alone speaks for itself.

A judgment that is of God will carry the consciences of all; your judgment you carry and force in spite of many. Grace, brotherly love, and tenderness towards those members of the One Body, who could not accept your judgment, you have wholly failed to show. If they are mere partizan objectors they should have been declared outside; this you have not done.

*Further—a company that hands over its responsibility, as you have done, to a number of brothers, who decide what shall and what shall not come before it, and who, in so doing, deliberately refuse to lay before it a communication from an Assembly gathered elsewhere in the Lord's name, does not commend itself to us as an Assembly of God in any sense.

We thus cannot own you to be more than a majority, of what was once the Assembly of God in Reading, and we can neither receive from nor commend to you.

In conclusion we would urge upon you to desist from the breaking of bread, and in company with those who have been driven to stand apart, to seek by humiliation, self-judgment, and confession, to learn His mind, and what will lead to the removal of the dishonour done to His name, and to the restoration of fellowship and the confidence of your brethren.

Signed on behalf of the Assembly, by eight Brothers.

BATH JUDGMENT REFUTED.

Here are the proofs that this Bath judgment was founded upon and contained falsehood, as Bath circular owns to the Assembly having relied upon D. L. H.'s "Narrative."

Reading, 2nd April, 1884.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

You ask how it is that if Reading Brethren call in question the truth of D. L. H.'s so-called "narrative of facts" they have not put forth a counter statement that might counteract the alleged mis-statements of D. L. H.

That is a very natural inquiry; but I think a little thoughtful consideration of the character of D. L. H.'s narrative will shew that it was impossible either for the Assembly or Brethren to furnish such a statement.

It is true there is scarcely a page in D. L. H.'s narrative that does not contain a statement or statements challenged by Mr. and Mrs. S., or Mr. and Mrs. W.; but it will be at once seen that neither the Assembly as the Assembly nor Brethren can put forth a statement as to these. I pointed out to Brethren before the Assembly Meetings that it was really a question of accepting the statements of Mr. and Mrs. S., and Mr. and Mrs. W. on the one hand, or those of Miss H. alone on the other. But if neither the Assembly nor Brethren can—for the reason I have shown—meet the statements of D. L. H. their credibility may be easily put to the test in another way. Thus, though I cannot decide as to statements challenged by Mr. and Mrs. S., and Mr. and Mrs. W., I can judge as to those in which I am personally concerned; and if I find them wholly unworthy of credit, I can have no doubt on which side the truth lies in the case of other statements that are challenged.

Now with this introduction I will refer to D. L. H.'s so-called "Abridged Narrative."

I have now before me a printed letter purporting to be addressed by P. A. H. to W. R. H., in which P. A. H. begs the brother addressed to look at the "Abridged Narrative" in the light of His presence." And the writer proceeds to make capital out of what I shall presently show to be a wholly untrue statement.* Now let us see how far this "Abridged Narrative" will bear the light. And I will confine myself to what concerns me personally, and of which therefore I can speak with certainty. And first as to what D. L. H. at the close of his long quotation, which forms the last paragraph but one, solemnly declares; I say that is wholly untrue. The truth as to that is simply stated in my letters of 31st October and 5th February last.

But I refer especially to the concluding paragraph. Mr. D. L. H. writes "It now transpires from the testimony of the "brethren, Aldis and Palmer, who were there on the occasion, that "the Assembly Judgment was arranged at a preliminary meeting "of leading brethren at Mr. Bloomfield's, &c." Now when I read that sentence I could not help doubting whether those brethren—of whose truthfulness I could have no doubt—had said anything to warrant such a statement.

The next morning's post brought a copy of a letter written by one of those brothers to Dr. Jones as the result of his reading of the same statement. That letter is as follows:—

Donnington Road,
Reading, 26th March, 1885.

DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD,

I have just seen a paper of D. L. H.'s in which there are the same grave mistakes you stated in a letter to me, and which I contradicted in a letter to you by return. You have allowed this sad misrepresentation to go on and so disregarded my word. Brother this is very sad: and I now solemnly call upon you for the sake of truth and righteousness to withdraw this error before it spreads further. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE TO DO SO.

I admit you appeared to anticipate a reply in the affirmative when you suggested this point to us: but surely, brother, on reflection you will remember how cautiously I denied any foundation for your question so far as my knowledge of such an act was concerned. I ask you again, dear brother, in all love and faithfulness to get right with God about this sad matter, and hope to hear you have already corrected this statement.

Yours faithfully in Christ,

J. PALMER.

To Dr. Jones.

I need make no comment on that: but one thing appears clearly that D. J. had "SUGGESTED" to these brethren what D. L. H. attributes to them: that Dr. J. puts his own interpretation on their reply, and that notwithstanding the remonstrance of one of these brothers the false statement was adhered to, and printed and circulated. It shows clearly the value to be attached to Mr. D. L. H.'s FACTS.

The judgments from two Assemblies have reached me—and as they have relied on untruths as the ground of their judgment, so have they by their judgments committed themselves and the Lord's name to untruth. First of these comes Bath, with not only a false

* There is not one iota of truth in the statements contained in this letter.

statement as to the judgment, but a false accusation? For it is wholly untrue that the Assembly here had handed over its responsibility to a number of brothers. I challenge Mr. P. A. H. to produce me a single proof for his statement. He has none!

Then we have Park Street: Not only taking up a case on *EX PARTE* evidence, and judging a matter in the absence of the parties concerned—a thing wholly without warrant in Scripture and opposed to any righteous principle—but pronouncing upon our motives, thus impiously usurping the prerogative of God; and in doing so committing the name of the Lord to—well one hesitates about speaking so plainly—to a lie.

Then you feel a difficulty on another point.

To me it is very evident that the turning point of the whole case is: What was the effect, purport, or tendency of Miss H.'s letter of June 19. Now admitting that it is couched in the softest language, and supposing the statements in it were correct as to what Mr. S. had said in contrast with what Mr. W. said, what could the effect of bringing these two brothers together be but to find out which of them had lied? To talk of a "clear demonstration that there had been nothing wrong" was idle, if Miss H. was right. But was that a thing for a young sister to do? Miss H., too, had clearly made up her mind that there could be no such demonstration that there was nothing wrong. That is clear from her letter to Mr. S., of September 17, set out in D. L. H.'s statement. She says: "I had the pain of believing that he (Mr. W.) could only be cleared at the cost of leaving you open to the charge of intentional malice, of which I did not think you capable." (And that from a young sister to an elder in the Assembly!)

But then some will say at once: but if you are right in thus judging of Miss H.'s letter, how could you acquit her of malice? I see no difficulty at all in that. There is one word that I believe explains it all (and explains too much that is said and done just now)—Prejudice. And there is proof enough in the correspondence that the prejudice in Miss H.'s mind, arising from what had passed between her and Mr. and Mrs. W. and Mr. S., was very strong.

There is one other matter to which I must call your attention—rather late, I own. Much has been made of the visit of seven Brethren to Reading on the 19th November last. Now at the meeting at Albion Hall—what passed at that visit, was wholly misrepresented. Those Brethren led us to understand most distinctly that they agreed with our judgment in the main.

Col. B. said: "There is no question as to the standing of Reading. We want to take away a handle from those who want a handle, and we think you have given them a handle in the first clause of your judgment." And he then referred to the words "As expressed, &c." A Reading brother said we had, by our memorandum of 14th April, explained this.

We were then told that did not go far enough: but that we ought to have withdrawn those words and expressed our regret. That commended itself to me and to some others; and we felt that we would thankfully do anything we could, without the sacrifice of principle, to meet our brethren elsewhere.

That our judgment involved unrighteousness was not that I remember so much as suggested by anyone; and certainly, if it had been pressed, I should have refused to have entertained the question.

What then is the secret of all this question? These Brethren have "got off the rails." They have set aside every right principle, Divine or human, in attempting to rejudge a purely local matter on an *EX PARTE* statement, the truthfulness of which had been challenged by those who could but judge of it and in the absence of the parties; a course that no Court of Justice in the world, that is not wholly corrupt, would adopt. Alas, to what a level have they sunk! These last remarks, I, of course, limit to Bath and Park Street and their followers.

I am,

Yours faithfully in Christ,
C. BLOOMFIELD.

LETTER BY READING BROTHERN.

DEAR BROTHERN,

As a statement has gone forth, "that the assembly judgment was arranged at a preliminary meeting of leading brethren at Mr. Bloomfield's," we deem it needful to say that such statement is *not true*; we and others met together for prayer, and to consult as to the best way of putting the matter before the assembly to ascertain its judgment, and whatever was done at Mr. B's house had no effect whatever upon that judgment.

The utmost we did was to consider what questions were raised by the correspondence, and which would therefore have to be submitted to the assembly.

It was expressly stated at our last meeting, that whatever our individual judgments might be, we could not say what the judgment of the assembly would be; and, as a matter of fact, the questions by which the judgment of the assembly was arrived at were not exactly those that were suggested at the last meeting.

It must, we think, be apparent to every thoughtful person, that the fact of the judgment having been ascertained by means of questions put to the assembly, in itself refutes the suggestion that it was pre-arranged.

It has also been widely circulated that some amongst us had agreed to clear Mr. C. E. S. at all costs, this is *wholly untrue*, and we are at a loss to understand how such a report could have been raised.

Yours faithfully in Christ,

CHAS. BLOOMFIELD,
W. R. HOWARD,
THOS. HUNTLY.

Reading, March 16th, 1885.

The Reading Question was taken up by London brethren in Battersea Meeting, and also in Park Street, and a large meeting of London brethren also took place in Albion Hall.

The Battersea Statement, sent to Timaru, N.Z., from Battersea, has the following foot-note as to Battersea's judgment:—"The judgment arrived at was February 9, 1885; the proposal to London, as you will see, March 15. This judgment (February 9) was prior to any other London judgment."

BATTERSEA JUDGMENTS.

"Having had before us the facts relative to the judgment of the Assembly at Reading, on March 13th, 1884, and the modification of their judgment, December 22nd, 1884; and also Mr. Stuart's tract 'Christian Standing and Condition,' we consider that their judgment is leavened with unrighteousness, to which they have bound the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. And that the system of doctrine

taught in Mr. Stewart's tract (with which the meeting is identified) is contrary to the truth as taught in Scripture, and undermines the fundamental truths of Christianity. On these grounds our path is clear in simple obedience to the word to separate from evil; we cannot therefore own the meeting at Queen's Road, Reading, by either receiving from or commending to it."

The last paragraph of the above notice was a subsequent alteration; the terms of the previous decision were as follows:—

"On these grounds our judgment is that the meeting at Queen's Road, Reading, cannot be owned as on the ground of ~~the~~ Assembly of God."

This language—"our judgment is"—explicitly proves, on Battersea's own showing, that London did *rejudge* the Reading moral case. (See "Questions," p. 3, No. I.) Further, the same was virtually done again by Park Street, as it had been done before by Bath. Park Street thought that Battersea went too far in declaring "Reading cannot be owned as on the ground of the Assembly of God." A report of Park Street meeting, which readers are forbidden to copy, and other testimonies here given, confirm this statement. Park Street therefore, gave its own judgment on February 23, 1885.

PARK STREET JUDGMENT.

W.R.H. writes as follows to Dr. H. :—

Highbridge, Somerset, February 28th, 1885.

Would you kindly inform me if the following is the correct wording of the decision recently arrived at by Park Street in regard to Reading?

"As the Assembly at Queen's Road, Reading, in spite of all remonstrance, persists in an unrighteous judgment in order to screen and support a teacher whose teachings are set forth in a published pamphlet, entitled 'Christian Standing and Condition,' which pamphlet is not only erroneous, but in its system undermines the Gospel, we feel before the Lord that we cannot receive from or commend to that meeting."

I can scarcely believe Park Street would go beyond any scriptural warrant in thus attributing a grave, ungodly *motive* to Reading for "persisting in an unrighteous judgment," namely, "*in order to screen and support,*" &c.

I do not believe any proof could be provided either ~~from~~ Scripture or the circumstances of the case to warrant such a solemn statement.

However much questions as to doctrine may have been the primary cause of dissension at Reading, the Assembly judgment itself had nothing whatever to do with doctrine: not one iota.

There is no proof, that I can see, in the adduced evidence for such a statement as that said to be made by Park Street, and certainly no ground to dive beneath it for *motives* ! No evidence to lead to such a decision was forthcoming at the Albion Hall meeting, which appeared to be mainly invective, minus proof. It was, I believe, a sad mistake, basing the proceedings of the latter upon the Bath document and D. L. H.'s pamphlet. Anyone knowing the circumstances in which the Bath decision was arrived at, would count it as worse than worthless, whilst the one-sided character of Mr. Higgings' paper is too apparent to render it of any weight or service to the people of God.

With love in the Lord,

Affectionately yours,

W. R. H.

33, Highbury New Park, March 12th, 1885.

Dr. H. replies:—The judgment you have written is a correct copy. At Park Street we considered the doctrine the most serious question. It is not for me to defend the course of proceedings at Albion Hall, or to defend the Bath judgment. At Park Street neither the one nor the other was alluded to.—J. H. H.

The Bath judgment was not seen by me till March, 1886. It and its refutation, along with Reading circular, show that London, in judging after and independently of both Bath and Reading, put itself off the ground of the one body. (See "Questions," p. 3, No. 3.) On the principle of the one body, the action of Bath ought to have settled matters if Reading really was wrong. On the same principle, Battersea action, on February 9, 1885, ought to have been decisive. Park Street, another part of the one assembly of London, did not think so on the 23rd of that month. Battersea had virtually to judge again, or amend its judgment, on March 15, and thus the Reading case was rejudged, one might say, for the *fourth* time, and this last action is pressed as the judgment of London. It is surely apparent that the Lord was not with those who thus sought to cut off Reading. Confusion is manifestly written upon the judgments of Bath, Park Street, and Battersea, in their actions toward the Reading assembly.

HOW DID BATTERSEA JUDGE ?

The following and other testimonies to be given show that Battersea's was far from righteous judgment. Three brethren, formerly of Battersea, who now refuse its judgment, "state that the matter was never put before the brethren at Battersea in such a manner as to enable anyone to form a righteous judgment. The only information given being that there had been lying by certain parties in the Reading meeting and that both parties had been exonerated, which could not be of God; and Mr. Stuart in a pamphlet, 'Christian Standing and Condition,' taught that which undermined the fundamental truths of Christianity, the pamphlet never having been gone into and compared with the Word of God."

In his pamphlet, W. R. H. also testifies:—

Battersea in her notice speaks of "facts," and a leader of that Assembly says in a letter to another they "were sent to us for the Assembly?" *Sent by whom?* On a brother enquiring for these facts he received an answer from another leader of the Battersea Assembly to the following effect—"After due consideration and consulting other brethren, we think it unadvisable to send a list of the documents (facts) on which the judgment of the Assembly at Battersea was based to individuals." *This* too from an Assembly which seeks to force its judgment on the whole of the Assemblies of God! When another brother enquired similarly, a leader on his "own responsibility" sent the "documents" (which he appeared to think synonymous with "facts"!) by which they arrived at their decision at Battersea. From a perusal of this list of documents (which were the usual letters of C. E. S.; Miss H.; and J. B. S., &c.), and from a perusal of the judgment, it is evident the Battersea meeting intended to *rejudge the case*. They accordingly did so—in their own way; and this self-constituted Court of Appeal, which now claims submission on the part of all Assemblies and consciences, *rejudged* it, without the presence of a single witness from the spot where the trouble broke out: without allowing the Assembly they presumed to judge a word of personal defence, and without even

sending to that Assembly for a single "fact" or making there from a single enquiry! Unheard, undefended, an Assembly of God of nearly 150 saints (which had come to a decision, in answer to an appeal respecting a matter of purely local trouble) was excommunicated; a beloved servant of God, a teacher and elder in their midst, was denounced; and yet the Battersea Assembly which had been guilty of this daring act of independency, actually put upon record that the Reading Meeting "had departed from the ground of the Assembly of God," and then in doubt and fear called a *special meeting* subsequently to withdraw those very words, tho' at the same ~~time~~ refusing to commend to or receive from that meeting.

W. R. H.

Further on in the letter from Battersea to Timaru, N.Z., the same unsatisfactory account of Battersea's action will be observed.

CHARGES AGAINST READING.

Some further charges against Reading may now be given with the answers. Mr. E. E. Whitfield thus replied to Mr. W. J. Lowe:—

"In spite of every action, entreaty, warning, correspondence, the gathering persists in sheltering him; persists in its unrighteous course in covering up evil, in order to screen the teacher. God has made the whole plain." Here I am entirely at issue with you. The Lord has shown me the exact contrary. Month after month has that Assembly been harassed from outside, never knowing what was desired of it that would satisfy the several complainants in the interests of UNITY AS BETWEEN THE LATTER THEMSELVES. God is not the author of confusion (1 Cor. xiv. 33). The Reading Assembly has kept Christ's word—has not denied His name.

Repeatedly and invariably have brethren meeting at Queen's Road returned answer that they held themselves responsible to judge whatever evil could be shown to be in, or be fostered by, Mr. Stuart's pamphlet.

You further say--"If you own the Lord's presence in the midst of two or three, all is simple. I do not examine a gathering to see if He is there." Apply this to Reading, dear brother. Unless you wish me to treat the matter arithmetically: why am I to suppose the *twenty-five* London meetings are collectively nearer infallibility than the ONE at Reading?

"It appears that in the Assembly meeting at Reading, Mr. Withers actually acknowledged his having communicated to Mr. S. his impression that Miss H. had mis-stated things," which really settled the whole question in her favour." On the same day upon which she (Miss H.) wrote the memorable letter to Mr. W. she lets out something more than the working of mind or exercise of heart, for the post carried to her brother the remarkable words, "It is such untruthfulness." This letter is set out in D. L. H.'s statement. I see God's hand in not allowing these words to be pruned out. To complete the links of evidence before the Assembly was a letter she wrote to Mr. S. on September 17, 1883 (being the reply to his now memorable note) where occur the equally extraordinary words, "I had the pain of believing that he could only be cleared at the cost of leaving you open to the charge of intentional malice, of which I did not believe you capable." Here we get her reason for writing the letter to Mr. W. of the 19th June. How good the Lord has been in bringing all this to the surface! Why did she seek the further interview with BOTH, save to prove one or other to be a liar? If not, then it was utter folly."

E. E. W.

EXTRACT FROM LETTER BY F. G. PATTERSON.

Writing to myself on December 18th 1885, Mr. Patterson says, "I very much doubt the wisdom, as well as the principles traversed by those who have thought it right while walking in the truth to seek to judge for themselves as assemblies or individuals apart from and sundered far from those in the midst of whom these troubles have arisen. It betrays an ignorance of the very simplest principles of the Church of God. Were we to canvass and discuss and revise every judgment at which brethren in the colonies have come to, as some of you seem to think you should do ours—good-bye to all divine principles. You will say, Why then did Battersea and Forest Hill revise and refuse the judgment of Reading &c., and not bow to it? and the question is a fair one. (This will also apply to the American troubles.) I reply, Because that an eating gangrene was working (as well known) in Reading for long enough, and evil doctrine was suspected as being there for long (as known to some of us for fifteen years or so), and doctrine which was held in quiet for so long by a teaching brother C. E. S., and brought out in defiance of his brethren, as well as in defiance of every godly effort that wise and godly brethren had used for a year and a half or so to get it withdrawn by him or ignored by his meeting. I do not go into details in this, though I might show you these efforts in a way that would astonish you by their patience and their grace, as they have done myself; and when the gangrene was then at work, and godly souls forced out, and the doctrines forced upon the church at large not merely in a first, but in a second and a third pamphlet, and now eventuating in gathering a party around a heretic, it was forced upon brethren to refuse those who came from such a quarter, and Battersea did so and its action has been endorsed by all except the party who have gone with C. E. S. . . . I have no doubt that C. E. S. and F. W. G. felt that there was no mind or pen in the Church to be of sufficient weight and force to expose their teachings, but I thank my God that they have found (I trust)—for I have in common with thousands—that God Himself was in the Church and gave a judgment clear and distinct that their teachings were error, and to be refused by every godly soul."

The comparison of *ordinary* decisions in the Colonies with the *extraordinary* decisions of London in regard to Reading is contrary to facts. The cases are very different. Neglect, if not "ignorance of the very simplest principles," was betrayed by those in London "judging for themselves," "apart from" Reading. Apply the principle referred to by F. G. P. first to the judgment of Reading, instead of London, and as Reading's was the first Assembly judgment, London, in judging for itself "apart from" Reading, said "good-bye to all divine principles." The impossibility of getting over the Reading judgment is evidently felt. But the well-known advice of the astute lawyer is accepted, namely, "no case abuse the plaintiff's Attorney." As those with London have no case against Reading they proceed to abuse Reading and those who own it.

Assertions as to "gangrene," "evil doctrine," "defiance of his brethren," "defiance of every godly effort" and "the doctrines forced," are not proofs. What has been and will be quoted answers these charges. As to "God Himself . . . gave a judgment clear and distinct" the proofs are before us that the fourfold effort by Bath, Battersea, Part Street and Battersea again, was the *opposite* of a "clear and distinct" judgment, and leaves us in doubt as to God

being the author of such confusion. As to London's principles applying also to the American troubles, we may see further on that in that connection London contradicts itself. Its principles and practices as applied to Reading are distinctly reversed in connection with accepting Montreal and rejecting Plainfield.

Similar statements to those already quoted were made in Wellington, and by Mr. Powley in Christchurch and other places. He was asked by letter from Timaru for scripture for refusing the judgment of an assembly in its own local matters. He replied that there was none, but that did not apply to Reading because Reading was so and so, &c. Mr. Powley's charges were then sent to Reading. The following is the answer from Reading, dated January 21st 1886.

LETTER BY W. R. HOWARD, READING.

The extract you give me from the letter of the brother (Mr. Powley) in New Zealand is full of erroneous statements. "Reading has been a doubtful place for years because of the clerisy, &c." What "&c." may mean I do not know, but I do know this, that of the many meetings I have been in since 1862 I know none more free from the charge of clerisy, six or eight brethren in a meeting of something like 150 saints, all of them taking part in the Gospel and ministry of the Word, and about as many as twelve often taking part in worship meetings &c. does not look like clerisy, and no one amongst us more thankful when for the first time a brother's mouth is opened in prayer or praise than C. E. S. I know B.'s letter of Forest Hill, has reached Australia, where he gives a statement of poor C.'s, which is simply false and makes a comment on it. The interpretation of this is (B.'s interpretation, who has never been once to our meetings) that clerisy was rampart, and it was C. E. S.'s chapel and the sheep were fed by C. E. S.'s ministry, &c. These are not B.'s actual words, but the substance of them, and I wrote and told him they were false.

Mr. A. H., friend of W. Powley's, well known to me and I to him, told me that for years he had noticed, when C. E. S.'s name was mentioned, a shrug of the shoulders and a peculiar expression on the face of various persons. But if "doubtful place for years," how then is it that we have had Dr. A. Burton, G. Cutting, Corrin, of Forest Hill, J. B. Stoney, W. T. Turpin, McAdam and others coming to labor here? and J. B. S. and W. T. T. spoke of enjoying themselves immensely, the latter to myself personally. "I very much enjoyed the private readings in C. E. S.'s house, he is an original man and I don't believe anything like so bad as *they make him* out to be."

To give you a little idea of how things are repeated, Mr. T. said to me after some time, "What do you really think of C. E. S.'s teaching yourself?" "Well," I replied, "of course I know he differs from brethren generally on some points." Some time after this Miss Elwood, Mr. Stoney's sister-in-law, asked me—"Did you ever say that Mr. Stuart differed from brethren generally on *fundamental* points?" "Never, Miss Elwood," I said. She looked at her companion and said, "There." Turpin came up at the moment, and on hearing me repeat what she said, he said, "I suppose I am responsible for that;" "but" I said, "I never used the word *fundamental*."—"But you know," he said, "Miss Elwood is deaf." She is perfectly deaf, never hears a sound, but watches the lips, unless some one tells her on the hands what was said. And again, Mr. Stuart was lecturing in Scotland some years since on Col. iii. and said amongst other things "We are never told we ought to be

heavenly, we are exhorted to walk as Christ walked; the latter gives me a standard, the former does not, for you may have your idea of what is heavenly and I may have mine, but if we walk as He walked we shall walk heavenly." A sister who heard it told Turpin, who then went to various places and said "C. E. S. would not have *heavenly truth*." These are only a few samples of the way minds have been influenced by some leaders against C. E. S., which has at last culminated in the present division.

Dr. A. Burton writes November 7 1884 to Mr. D. Souter, N. Scotland Bank, Aberdeen: "There has been a party formed against C. E. S. for long, the chief agent in its formation being young sisters; this I know from personal experience, my vote having been solicited against him some years ago. But I have no sympathy with the movement. . . . I do not think it is of God that sisters should be the leaders of an attack against a brother like C. E. S. If they have been wrongly accused let them forgive 70 times 7, assured that He is near who justifies. But this they have not done, and have began a line of agitation that tends to utterly break up brethren." And again he writes April 7 1885: "Some four years ago I was working in the Gospel at Reading, and was amazed to hear Miss Higgins speaking in a disparaging manner about Mr. Stuart's ministry, saying that he had place, was in the vii. of Romans, knew nothing of death and resurrection, &c., &c. I expressed to her my astonishment that she should speak in such a manner about one held in such esteem, and said I thought it was very out of place for a sister, or something to that effect. It was the first hint I had that anything was amiss. Since then, a number of sisters, personal friends of the Misses H., have made, in my judgment, Mr. S. and his ministry, matter for a great deal too much speaking and writing."

And again, "brethren in London," the extract you sent me says, "were especially troubled, and remonstrated with Queen's Road in various ways because of their holding to an unrighteous judgment and harboring a heretic or sect-maker." Now this is wholly untrue. Seven brothers came down in November, and I give you copy of a letter from one of them which will explain to you better than I can the object of their mission. (27/7/85), Dear brother, "I went to Reading (in November 1884) in company with the following: Mr. Hewer, Mr. Monteath, Mr. Bradstock, Col. Binny, Dr. C. Carter.

By appointment we met some forty brethren, Bradstock opening the meeting with prayer. Col. Binny followed, stating we were there in the full recognition of their position as an Assembly of God, but as some had difficulties with their judgment we had come down to see whether brethren at Queen's Road could remove the apparent handle they had given those who were dissatisfied in the appearance of partiality. The meeting lasted an hour and a half. They said they were thankful for the godly interest shown by brethren, promised to give the matter their prayerful consideration, and, as you know, ultimately wrote a most touching letter (which was asked for at Albion Hall and again at Cheapside more than once, but never read out to the saints in London *to this day*) in which letter they state, they have well considered what brethren set before them but saw no godly reasons for altering it, and this was said, not in a defiant but in a most gracious manner. I must tell you many walked to the station with us that night and complained bitterly of the line of action adopted by such as Maynard, Oliphant, Humphrey, D. Higgins, and the like partizans at the meeting.—J. W. CARTER, 1 Alpha Place, Regents Place, London.

However troubled London brethren may have been, this was the only remonstrance Queen's Road had from them, and not one word uttered by them about harboring a sect-maker or holding to an unrighteous judgment; in fact, this last statement, adding, "in order to screen and support, &c.," was J. B. S.'s for Park Street, which London would not endorse, but adopted Battersea's judgment instead.

"Finally after two companies had left and were meeting apart," this is all wrong. A. and P., the second seceders, never broke bread together. A. did a little time with J. and company, but now he and P. have returned to Queen's Road.

"A letter of commendation came from Queen's Road to Battersea." This is not true; no brother here gave a letter of commendation to Battersea.

"All was done that could be done," (Mr. Powley also says). Well, I should have thought that at the least Reading brethren might have been admitted to the Albion Hall conference, held before all London decided. But not only were they most carefully excluded, but any who ventured to speak for Reading were at once silenced; for instance, N., a London brother, said, Why were not Reading brethren present? B. replied, "We have the facts in black and white, and we don't want the twistings of the human tongue." "The facts," so called were D. L. H.'s "narrative."

We had no enquiry from Park Street, or from Battersea, and the brethren from the latter place, now meeting with Reading at 289 Park Road, Battersea, say that the matter was never really brought before the brothers even, simply settled by two or three leaders, and then given out to the Assembly.

As to Mr. H., of Bath, the author of the wicked anonymous letter signed "Adelphos," which J. B. S. said ought to have been signed Diabolus, and which Captain Cross said ought to have had at the bottom of it, i. John iv. 20., who some years ago in conjunction with Mr. R. E. cut off the Poole Assembly, which C. E. S. resisted, he (Mr. H.) came uninvited to a local brothers meeting with D. L. H. and we respectfully asked them if they would withdraw, and Mr. H. replied, "if you shut out other members of the blessed body you are off the ground of the Church of God, and then may God help you." No one at that meeting used the words "mind your own business." He was present at the Assembly meeting March 12th and 13th, and no one said any such thing then. I expect it means the same thing as "they tried to turn the key on me" which he told a brother at Edinburgh, both statements literally untrue.

Mr. Rickards has replied to J. S. Oliphant's shocking paper. I send you copy of his letter. "Two companies left," &c. (says Mr. Powley). First Dr. Jones and Miss H.'s party, and then some months later A., P., C. and their wives. C. has gone with London after condemning it, and J. S. O. more than anyone, in the strongest language, and A. and P. have returned to Queen's Road, and are very happy indeed. I have just returned after eleven weeks' absence. Have visited some 15 or 20 places in Scotland and Ireland where there are saints heartily and happily with us.

Mr. Flintoff, formerly at Reading, now with Mr. Clements, Melbourne, was told in March 1883 before an Assembly meeting, that the existence of the Reading Assembly depended on our dealing with C. E. S. as D. L. H. wished us. Mr. J. Fort was in Australia in June 1884, and saw a letter there in the hands of a "laboring brother."

from England, where it was stated that it was intended to take up C. E. S., of Reading, either for doctrine or for something which two sisters had against him—these are not the exact words Mr. Fort used to me.

Dr. Jones in November 1883 said, "We shall have another division soon." It was all settled before hand to get rid of C. E. S.

Dr. L. H., too, hinted to Mr. Wills, of Bristol Christmas 1883, something of the same character. I am ashamed to write such things of my brethren, but I only do so to show you the character of the movement.

Yours affectionately in Christ,

W. R. HOWARD.

J. W. CARTER'S LETTER.

J. W. Carter, London, writes to Mr. Fowsend, Timaru, New Zealand:— Without going into details one might just sum up all by saying that a party of extremists have been having it all their own way here for some years past, and have stood at nothing. I *could* tell of how the judgment of a united (so called) London was obtained at the expense of consciences of numbers of saints in meeting, who had not the moral courage to resist, fearing the pains of excommunication; but what would it avail to tell of the assumption and arrogance, which put London into the position of an apostolic centre for the settlement of disputes far away. . . . There are in 120 or more places those who. . . . remain breaking bread in fellowship with Reading. . . . What has been obtained by all this forced action and bowing? A unity which is not the unity of the spirit, but a reign of terrorism so that the saints are forced against their own consciences to accept the action of their leaders. Humphreys, of Bath, referred to a visit he had paid to a meeting to help them (?). "I frightened the sheep and made them jump the hurdles!" . . . I was one of the seven who went down to see the brethren at Reading at the time, and I came away with the conviction that they had rightly judged, and that if they failed it was in allowing the H. v. S. moral question to be *forced* upon them, yet the pressure was great (by) McAdam, Maynard, Oliphant, Humphreys, D. Higgins.—Yours, &c.—J. W. C.

TIMARU, N.Z., LETTER TO BATTERSEA.

DEAR BRETHREN,

The Assembly here after prayer and deliberation have thought it best to write to you for information on the "Reading Question." Taking into account the many conflicting statements that are made, we trust you will recognise in this our earnest desire not only to be on the side of the truth, but to be so intelligently. We have been informed that Bath and Park Street delivered their judgments prior to yours, but we address you because it appears to us that it is your judgment that is spoken of as that of London.

Hitherto the judgment of an Assembly of the saints gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ has been received and accepted by all other Assemblies so gathered. It now appears that in what is called the Reading Question the decision of that assembly has not been thus received by all others. We are unwilling to assume that you should depart from a recognised principle of truth and act independently; nor can we assume on the other hand in the absence of proof that another Assembly with which we are in fellowship has departed from the divine ground of the Church of God.

We therefore ask,—On what ground did you feel called upon to take up the local matter settled by Reading and how did you arrive

at a judgment contrary to theirs? We have read the statement sent out by Reading and would ask your attention to that paper.

It is also alleged that in your re-investigation of the Reading matter you did not inquire what the brethren there had to say. Would you kindly notice this and other points which you consider would help us to form a right judgment. We are anxious to have the matter settled, and hope therefore to hear from you soon.

We remain affectionately,

Yours in our Lord Jesus Christ,

Signed on behalf of the Assembly.

M. TOWNSEND.

G. W. GARDNER.

Timaru, 12th December 1885.

BATTERSEA LETTER TO TIMARU.

DEAR BRETHREN,

Your letter dated December 12th, 1885, has duly reached us asking for information respecting the "Reading Question." We trust, dear brethren, you will not think us lacking in respect when we say that we believe the information you seek is in your midst. It has come to our knowledge that several meetings in New Zealand have come to a judgment on this question, viz., Christchurch, Auckland, Nelson, and others, and that our brother Mr. Powley, who has the confidence of the saints and is fully cognisant of all the facts is on the spot, and could give the needed information should any difficulty present itself in your being unable to act in concert with the local gatherings in New Zealand.

At the same time we would say, in answer to your letter, that we hold, and maintain as a principle not to be departed from, that the judgment of an Assembly *with the Lord in the midst* is to be received by all other Assemblies so gathered. But the whole question as to Queen's Road, Reading, hinges on this one point. *Was the Lord in the midst of the majority* at that meeting when they arrived at their judgment—a judgment in itself both contradictory and unrighteous.

In the history of the question it has been clearly demonstrated, that *doctrine* was the evil root from which the moral question arose, and where the doctrine came out in a public form in the pamphlet *Christian Standing and Condition*, a pamphlet which substantially denies that the Christian Standing is in Christ, and weakens other important truths, after all the attention that was called to this pamphlet they ought to have testified against it. For there can be no testimony for God except where the truth is maintained,—"for the Church of God is the pillar and ground of the truth."

There was thus moral and doctrinal evil, which the company at Queen's Road refused to judge and purge out. The question then was what instruction have we from the word to guide us in respect to such a company.

In the Epistle to 2nd Timothy we have laid down unmistakable lines of instruction to guide us in every condition of the Church. Two things are very prominent: 1st, Separation from evil under all circumstances, and 2nd, Association with the faithful of God's people (2nd Tim. ii.). As to what you (hear of) being alleged against us by the brethren at Queen's Road, has really no foundation in fact. Seven brethren from London went to Reading and had an interview with the leaders in that meeting which resulted in a certain modification of their judgment of March 13, 1884, but which in reality left the matter where it was before.

We believe that where division has ensued on the sorrowful question has been through treating it as a mere *local* question not seeing that it was of far graver import, affecting the whole Church of God—a question of holiness becoming His House a question also of the faith once delivered to the saints.

In conclusion, dear brethren, there is an important word to govern our consciences and which must ever be the test of all true judgment, ever found in all its perfection in the dependent and obedient man, the perfect servant and written for our instruction and guidance. John v. 30. "I can do nothing of myself; as I hear I judge, and my judgment is just *because I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.*" May you have divine wisdom given you so as to arrive at a just judgment on this grave question in the endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace—a unity which can only be maintained on the ground of truth and righteousness.

Affectionately yours in Christ,

WILLIAM H. LICKLEY.

P.S. "This letter is not written from the Assembly, but I have the fellowship of the brethren in what I have written." W. H. L.

Timaru weighed this and other evidence, and remains in fellowship with Reading.

One cannot help feeling that this letter from Battersea is very unsatisfactory, if not actually lacking in uprightness. The visit of the seven brethren to Reading is put so as to imply that they went to point out that Reading judgment was unrighteous. The proofs, both from Reading and one of the seven, are given, and show that no such thought, but the very reverse was expressed by them, and the standing of Reading as an assembly, was thus owned seven months after it judged the moral case. Timaru wrote as an Assembly and was entitled to an Assembly reply. This was not given. So here in New Zealand we have further proofs that Battersea does not wish to answer enquiries. In contrast to this, Reading and C. E. S. court and even request, as the Reading circular shows, the fullest enquiry. "He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest; that they are wrought of God." The words are quoted from Battersea, "as I hear I judge." This seems to have been true, but what was heard was not the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Stress is also laid upon the words "I seek not mine own will," but the evidence goes far to prove that Battersea, indeed London leaders, did seek their own will, and that this is the root of bitterness from which the bitter fruits of the whole division have sprung. Further they avoid the light lest their deeds should be discovered (John iii. 20). The gatherings in New Zealand, mentioned in Battersea's letter, or Mr. Powley, whom the letter commends, could not give the information Timaru required. Yea more, shortly after my sixteen questions were written, they were received by Mr. Powley about November 1885, with the request for information. He did not even acknowledge their reception. Though recently asked in a letter by myself, and orally by another, he did not own to having received the questions. But both by himself and Mr. C. E. Capper, who wrote that Mr. Powley showed them to him, the questions were made the ground of the grave accusations against me. Thus neither Battersea nor its nominee in New Zealand answer satisfactorily, or really give any answer to a direct appeal for information by an Assembly and an individual.

As the correspondence will show we have been treated very differently by Reading brethren and F. W. Grant and those with him in America, but I have not even had an acknowledgement of my sixteen questions sent to London to the brother who corresponds with labourers abroad. The letter and questions were sent to him about eight months ago. His letter, then received by me, to which mine was the answer, was the first and only communication I have received from London, though, through others the work I was doing had been reported in printed letters, from London for about four years. It now appears that the detracting misrepresentations of some who are recognised have had something to do with this treatment.

EXTRACTS FROM DR. BURTON'S LETTERS.

Much has been made of private correspondence. Everything favorable to London's action has been diligently handed round. This pamphlet is intended for the same circle, so I have felt free to use letters already quoted, and now also give extracts from Dr. Burton's letters to myself. Except for other extracts from his letters having been printed and otherwise handed round giving a one-sided impression of his mind, and reports having been much used, which are not true, I would not even now have given the following extracts. As to the doctrines of C. E. S. and F. W. G., Dr. Burton is opposed to them, but candidly says, "I cannot refute them, but I refuse them." As to the discipline and party action, he says, "Where I feel a great mistake has been made in principle is by London undertaking to *rejudge* a purely local discipline in a matter of personal trespass. It seems to me a denial of all principles of the truth of the Church of God. . . . Those who have been leaders in the opposition (to C. E. S. at any rate) have displayed such a manifestly party spirit, that real fellowship has received such a shock that unless the Lord comes in and leads all to confession, confidence will I fear never be restored." "The way in which matters have been pressed on both sides of the Atlantic has been ruinous, and unless checked and confessed will lead to a complete break up."

It was diligently circulated that Dr. Burton had changed his mind, and many, within my own knowledge, were influenced by the assertions. I wrote to him about January of this year asking if this was true. He replies from France, on March 2nd 1886, "I think what has been disastrous in England and America, and I dare say just as much in the colonies, has been the forcing of decisions and the issuing of declarations—the idea that we must do something, instead of quietly waiting upon God in the confidence that He can do far better for us than we can do for ourselves. . . . I feel God only can set right all that is so wrong, though I may say I deplore as much as ever I did the action that has led to an uncalled for division, uncalled for at any rate at the time at which it took place, whatever it might have developed into later on. The results, at any rate, are apparent to all those who do not deliberately close their eyes to facts, namely, "Brethren" as such have been from whatever cause, rightly or wrongly, smashed up. The sooner we recognize it the better, and the sooner we bow under God's chastening hand and own it the better. The refusal so to do must end in greater discomfiture still. We need to walk softly to the end, and especially to beware of the spirit that would say, "I only am left." . . . Had those who have joined them (C. E. S. and F. W. G.) remained with us it would far more probably have led to a revision of the discipline and an owning of what was wrong on both sides.

What I have earnestly prayed for is that you may be preserved from resenting any harsh treatment towards yourself. We may well be patient knowing that He is near that justifies. Do not allow yourself to be pushed off by anyone, for I still feel that in spite of all that has been done *the truth* still remains with brethren, which I cannot say as to Grant and Stuart.

I am sure many souls who have no question as to salvation, acceptance, forgiveness, Sonship, &c., and who I suppose are sealed, nevertheless afterwards pass through experience similar in character to Rom. vii.—but is it properly speaking the same thing?

Again it seems a great mistake to make Rom. vii. continuous upon Rom. v. They are two distinct treatises upon two different subjects. In some cases Rom. v. precedes Rom. vii., in others not. In my own case I had to learn Rom. vii. long after I had learned and enjoyed Rom. v., though I believe Rom. v. became more valued and better known after I had learned Rom. vii., but I tremble to say I have *learnt* Rom. vii., or *know* anything, for we know nothing as we ought, could, would or should.

What we are suffering from in England is the domination of a party which must sooner or later find its own level. London was merely overawed and forced into action by them, very many resisting, and still opposed to what has been done. But all this will get manifested if we but patiently wait upon God.”

A. H. B.

CONCLUSION AS TO READING.

One owns the candour and the grace shown by Dr. Burton in contrast to many following London, and one feels the rench of separation from a brother beloved. The same was felt as to many one left in the denominations. But when the principles of the Church of God are given up and brethren take to defining not merely what we are to believe, but *what views of doctrine we are not to believe*, there is nothing for it but to cling to God and His Word and go right on. To be silent too, in such circumstances, would not only be an unfaithful, but a well nigh criminal, course of procedure.

Being alone in my position as a labourer in Australasia, and through having been the means of bringing many into fellowship, I dare not remain silent any longer in such a crisis.

We are told by Battersea in the letter to Timaru, that this is simply a question of consistency, righteousness, and having the Lord in the midst. Well, the criticism and loud clamour of so many, the world over, for twenty-four months leave the Reading judgment like a lighthouse shaft which defies the storm. In about one month, by a mere local breeze, the other three judgments are overthrown, or ignored, and the amended judgment of Battersea is pressed as the judgment of London. Let there be honest enquiry, a single eye, and let consistency, righteousness, and the Lord in the midst be the tests, and if these things are not found in Reading, they will be looked for in vain in her self-constituted adversaries. The thought that about one hundred and fifty saints would *knowingly and wilfully pass and maintain an unrighteous judgment to screen a favourite is perfectly monstrous*, yet this is what was thought and recorded in London.

It is clear from the evidence given that it is London which goes out, or off the ground, rather than Reading. Those in Reading remain where they were on divine ground, and those who go on with Reading do not judge for themselves, or act independently like London, but “enquire, make search, and ask diligently” and, on the principles of

the one body, bow to Reading as having given the first Assembly judgment and refuse to make views of doctrine, which have not been proved to touch the Person or work of Christ, a ground for casting saints out of the Assembly or cutting off whole gatherings. As before noticed about 120 gatherings in Britain, and about 190 in America. refuse London's action towards Reading.

The following will show how assemblies and individuals have expressed themselves on the case. The paper by Mr. D. D. Chrystal, a brother well-known to brothers Miller and Pollock, in Wellington, and in whose judgment they have the utmost confidence, is in itself a calm summing up of the case, and a complete answer to the assumption of London.

DECLARATION OF BRISTOL.

Bristol, April 23rd 1885.

To the Saints gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, at (—)

BELOVED BRETHREN,

The question of the alleged unrighteousness of the judgment come to by the Assembly of God's Saints meeting at Queen's Road, Reading, on March 13, 1884, having been raised amongst us, we feel bound to say in the fear of God, that after careful consideration and enquiry, we believe the charge has not been proved; we therefore see no reason why we should not continue as heretofore in fellowship with that Assembly, believing that in so doing we are maintaining the principles of the Church of God, and are endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (Eph. iv. 1-3.)

We also say that we cannot see any Scriptural ground for refusing fellowship to our brother Mr. Stuart on account of the teaching contained in his pamphlet, entitled "Christian Standing and Condition," at the same time we do not commit ourselves to the acceptance or maintenance of his teaching, nor indeed that of any other teacher among us, except in so far as it may be in accordance with the Word of God. (Acts xvii. 11.)

We are constrained to add, that we feel truly grieved and also humbled before God on account of the action of many of our brethren both here and elsewhere, who have separated from us; it being our firm conviction that underlying the whole movement against the Reading Assembly there are principles at work, which tend to the establishment of a mere Ecclesiastical Unity on a narrower basis than 'the Unity of the Spirit,' governed by human authority, none the less real though undefined, and placing restrictions on the Spirit of God in ministry and service. (1 Thess. v. 19-21.)

Signed (by twenty-seven brothers) on behalf of the Saints gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, meeting at Hampton Road Room, Redland, and Frazer Street Room, Bedminster, including many who formerly met at Clifton, Orchard Street, and Stapleton Road.

DECLARATION OF HIGHBRIDGE, SOMERSET.

Highbridge, Somerset, May 1st, 1885.

At an Assembly Meeting called to consider what is termed "the Reading Question" we came to the following unanimous conclusion:—

1st.—Considering the attachment which *the Lord* showed towards a local Assembly even where failure was present (2 Cor. xi. 2), an affection shared in by the Apostle to the Gentiles and saints generally in the early Church (1 Cor. xvi. 19-21).

2ndly.—As there is the same Holy Ghost in the midst of the saints gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus in Reading as there is in Highbridge (1 Cor. iii. 16).

3rdly.—As God views each Assembly according to one standard, namely: “of” or “in Christ” (Rom. xvi. 16., Gal. i. 22.), yea, even as “Christ’s body” (1 Cor. xii. 27), and as we are therefore in no way superior or of higher authority than the Assembly at Queen’s Road, Reading.

4thly.—As we have not the opportunity of knowing circumstances, obtaining personal evidence, or hearing witnesses face to face as they had—an important principle of righteous judgment owned by the *Gentile* (Acts xxv. 16) and recognised by the *Jew* (John vii. 51), but set aside, alas, by the *Church of God* in so many Assemblies to-day.

We should be acting in rightful, holy subjection to God’s permitted authority (1 Cor. v. 12); to Assembly truth (Matth. xviii. 18); to Divine principles (Eph. iv. 1-6); to the name and presence of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matth. xviii. 20); and to the presence and power of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. iii. 16-17); by accepting the judgment of the Reading Assembly concerning a purely local matter. Moreover, as we are told to be “in subjection to one another in the fear of God” (Eph. v. 21., 1 Peter v. 5.) we would desire to give our Brethren at Reading, in the absence of any proof to the contrary, full credit for as much sense of righteousness and desire for His holiness and the integrity and order of His house as we should expect for ourselves.

As to the Doctrinal Question we refuse to judge for similar reasons. We have been given to understand by our brethren at Reading, that whatever charges (many of which were false) have been laid at the door of the Assembly concerning the teaching of one in their midst, those charges have been referred to the teacher in question, and his answers have fully satisfied their consciences that in no way has anything been taught or held—which, when tested by the alone standard of the Word of God (Acts xvii. 11), could be found in any way derogatory to the *person* or the *work* of our Lord Jesus Christ; and as liberty of ministry is fully taught and allowed in the Word of God (1 Cor. xii; xiv.), we refuse to make differences of interpretation or modes of expression or illustration, questions of *Assembly discipline*; for we know of no scriptural warrant for so doing, but rather the reverse (Isaiah xxix. 20-21).

The only way we know of “endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. iv. 3) is by maintaining in *practice* those Divine principles we profess to hold so sacred, and we cannot but grieve for those persons and Assemblies, which are not only forsaking this Divine ground, but are so *lightly* repudiating an Assembly of God, with which the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost have connected their presence and their name.

Signed on behalf of the Assembly by fifteen brothers.

DECLARATION OF ABERDEEN.

Aberdeen, 31st May, 1885.

We feel it incumbent upon us, as a gathering to the same Blessed Name as yourselves, to state as shortly as we can how we stand regarding this sorrowful and humbling division that Bath, London and other Meetings have caused, through seceding from Queen’s Road Meeting, Reading.

We have professed with many others to have found in Scripture that the Church, the Body of Christ, is one, and energized by one Spirit; we have found also that there is a blessed resource for days of ruin in Matthew xviii. 20.

Consequently, as the company of Saints at Queen's Road, Reading, was owned as a gathering in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ when appealed to by Dr. Jones and his party on 12th March, 1884, for a settlement of their difficulties; and also owned as such for many months after that date; and as nothing has been presented by those who refuse that gathering to warrant our denying to it in the name of the Master of assemblies, its privileges and responsibilities to deal fully with local matters; we cannot be a party to a revisal and reversal of its judgment, dated 13th March 1884. We maintain that we have no divinely given competency for such action, and we thus abide, as heretofore, in fellowship with the company now assembling in Queen's Road, and we decline all fellowship with those in London or elsewhere, who, by their action in refusing to receive from or commend to that Meeting, have abandoned all Divine principle for rule in the House of God.

We are not indifferent by any means to the cry that there is bad doctrine in the pamphlet written by Mr Stuart, entitled "Christian Standing and Condition"; but we have not discovered, either by our own perusal of the paper, or from the reviews of it that have been published, that it contains anything contrary to Scripture; at the same time, we desire to go on day by day testing all that comes before us by the unerring Word of God, thankful for the competency to do so that is given to the babes in 1 John ii. 27.

Signed on behalf of the Saints gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ at Crimon Place Hall, Aberdeen, (by forty-three brothers).

MONTREAL AND LIVERPOOL.

Montreal, July 28, 1885.

To the Saints who remain gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ at Liverpool.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

We were glad to receive your letter of the 4th July. It is with thankfulness to God for His preserving grace that we are able to write you in reply, to say, that after looking carefully into the Reading Question, we see nothing whatever to hinder the continuance of fellowship with that gathering; there being nothing in either the "moral" question or in the teaching of Mr. C. E. Stuart, to justify the solemn act of cutting off which is now so generally being resorted to. It is to our mind, and we would say it humbly, a sad proof of degeneracy and departure from God and first principles; and as we understand the beloved brethren in fellowship with Reading refuse the dictation of Natural History Hall with regard to our brother F. W. Grant, we are thankful to be in happy fellowship one with another on both points, allowing liberty of conscience to all to act upon the Scripture "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

With much love in the Lord.

Yours on behalf of the Saints gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, formerly meeting at Craig Street; now at 49 Cathedral Street, Montreal,

Signed by three brothers.

STATEMENT BY E. R. WILLS.

36 Triangle, Bristol,

April 25th, 1885.

The agitation against the Reading Meeting seems to be in favor of some who withdrew from the Assembly there, as dissatisfied with the judgment come to, in reference to a matter which one of themselves, Dr. J., had pressed on the Assembly for examination and judgment. To my mind those who had left had clearly no claim to be listened to while outside. They were bound to rectify their error and confess their sin for leaving the Assembly, while they still acknowledged it to be such, and the table to be the Lord's. Clearly where the Lord is, the saint should not refuse to be. It is time to leave when He does, not before. Now, to side with those who went out (whatever the fault attaching to the Assembly may be), is to abandon divine principles in favor of schismatics, and shows that in a crisis there is nothing to guide but what is expedient under the circumstances.

The Assembly at Reading came to a judgment with all the facts and correspondence and Mr. Stuart's statement and also Mr. Higgins', before them. The facilities afforded them for forming their judgment were such as we cannot have, their title and competency cannot be questioned. Now if this judgment is to be set aside it must surely be by competent authority, and the case be tried with as good an opportunity afforded as was possessed by the Reading Assembly. Until this takes place, I for one refuse to bow to any judgment arrived at by any one or any Assembly anywhere. A decision founded on a one-sided statement without the parties implicated being brought face to face, carries unrighteousness on the face of it, is opposed to the teaching of Scripture, and therefore ungodly.

There is hardly a statement made that, if you inquire of Reading, is not either entirely denied or explained away. How then decide in so serious a matter without a proper trial? . . . Surely the Holy Ghost, who is the Spirit of truth, is quite competent to make all plain, and to raise a decided testimony against this teaching, if it be so bad as it is said by some to be. Until this takes place, I must remain in fellowship with Mr. Stuart and with the Assembly at Reading, until, by a proper trial, their judgment is proved to be unrighteous.

STATEMENT BY D. D. CHRYSTAL.

The following Statement of the writer's own position in reference to the Reading question was read to the Assembly, meeting in Hampton Road Room, Redland, on April 8, 1885.

It is with no slight feeling of pain and responsibility that I am compelled to object to the proposed action towards the Assembly at Queen's Road, Reading. In doing so it seems needful at the outset to say that I still hold as strongly as ever I did to the principle of separation from evil—I am not aware of any change in my thoughts or desires as to this. In the next place, I must remind you that this Assembly has been, and still is, in fellowship with the Assembly at Queen's Road, Reading: and I have to add that, whatever others may do, I mean to stand still on the ground we at present occupy in fellowship with that Assembly, until evil is proved to exist there unjudged, calling for separation from it according to Scripture. Lastly, those who may decide to adopt a different course, whether they may break bread in this room or in some other room, must necessarily begin another Table, and it will be for each saint to judge whether that fresh Table is the Lord's Table or not.

As the doctrinal question has latterly occupied a good deal of attention, I will refer to that first. Remembering, however, that it is the Assembly's judgment which has been called in question by the seceders, I cannot approve of the way the doctrinal question has afterwards been imported into the case. Still, when a charge of evil doctrine is made, every saint must feel that it demands careful attention. Now, in taking up such a charge, surely the first thing to do is to ascertain whether the accused really holds the views attributed to him. Has this been done? We have gone through the tract, "Christian Standing and Condition" in a superficial way, and some have fixed upon certain statements in it, which are thought to indicate something defective or wrong. I ask, What teacher among us would survive, if we were to analyse his writings in a similar way? But in addition a number of most serious charges have been made among us, several of which, if true, would be sufficient of themselves to ensure the condemnation of C. E. S. Every one of such charges, however (so far as they have yet been investigated), have been found to be wholly without foundation. What then are we to think of the people who made them? Again, we are not only asked to condemn the teaching of C. E. S. before the exact evil of it (if indeed there be evil in it) has been ascertained or proved, but we are to excommunicate him for it. Is this righteous? Has the Scripture for doing so ever been produced?

Now, be it distinctly understood, I am not defending the teaching of C. E. S.; I only say, let it be clearly proved that he holds bad doctrine, next let the Assembly, who are primarily responsible to deal with it, be called upon to do so, and then, should they fail to do so, we may take action, but not before.

I will now state briefly some of my reasons for refusing at present to separate from the Assembly at Reading:—

(i.) The matter in dispute being a purely local one, the local Assembly has competent authority to deal with it, and its judgment, unless shewn to be wilfully and flagrantly wicked and perverse, must be maintained, if we are to continue to act on the truth of One Body and One Spirit. None insisted more strongly on this than J. N. D. . . .

(See "Questions" pp. 3, 4. No. 3.)

(ii.) It is contrary to the practice hitherto upheld amongst us. I have myself over and over again refused to entertain the complaints of aggrieved parties against an Assembly judgment, even when unable to fully agree with the judgment in question. We have had a notable instance of how strongly this principle was affirmed in the case of the recent Ramsgate troubles. I will quote from what C. H. M. wrote on that occasion—

"As regards 'the Ramsgate Question' we cannot but own the mercy of God in allowing it to be settled by an Assembly of His people gathered at———; so that we have only to accept their decision. Some may enquire, 'What business had——— to meddle with the matter?' We reply, They did not meddle with it; it was forced upon them, and they were obliged to go into it. The same thing might have happened at any other meeting in London or elsewhere, and we should have accepted their decision. It is a mistake to suppose that———assumed anything like a Metropolitan position or influence in this case. They were simply called upon to decide, and they did so in a solemn assembly convened for the purpose, in which brethren from——— and———

had an opportunity of stating their case. Now, why need we go beyond the decision of such an Assembly? Are we not warranted to believe that our Lord Jesus Christ would graciously fulfil His promise (Matt. xviii, 19) in the case of an Assembly so gathered? Why should we doubt it? And why should we seek to re-open the case? Is every Assembly all over the world called to discuss 'the Ramsgate Question'? Has God called them to do so? Assuredly not. If He had, He would have furnished them with proper materials for coming to a decision; but He has not, and therefore all we have to do is thankfully to accept the judgment of our Brethren gathered at———. If that judgment be wrong, God in His own time and way will make it manifest; but for Assemblies elsewhere to re-open the question, is simply to give up the ground on which Brethren have gathered for the last 50 years, and to resolve ourselves into fragmentary independent meetings, each having no connection with the other. This I trust, by the grace of God, we shall not do. We must never abandon the divine ground of gathering set forth in those precious words, 'There is one body and one Spirit.'"

(iii.) The opposite course being now urged upon us is independency, and can only lead to utter confusion—in proof of which we need but point to the different judgments and conclusions already declared by those Assemblies who have acted in this present case. Moreover it opens the door for continual agitation among the saints on the part of aggrieved or designing persons. I believe that most godly persons among us will agree, that we have had too much of this kind of thing in recent years, and that it is high time to make a stand against it.

(iv.) The next reason I have for refusing to separate from the Reading Assembly is that no sufficient ground for doing so has yet been shewn. I do not deny that an Assembly may have to be disowned, but I believe that such an extreme course can only be justified when the evidence of wickedness is of the clearest character. If the act of putting out an individual wicked person is the last resource of the saints, how much more should this be the case when the subject of such dealing is an Assembly? Forgetfulness of this in the past has, I fear, driven out from us many saints, who should have been in fellowship to-day, and we are in danger of repeating the same mistake again. That there are insufficient grounds for disowning the Reading Assembly is self-evident—

1. From the difficulty which so many brethren of intelligence and capacity have confessedly experienced in ascertaining what the evil really is.

2. From the different conclusions different brethren and even Assemblies have arrived at, some finding evil where others have found none; so that there is not common agreement as to what the evil is that is to be judged.

3. In order to judge of the alleged evil, one is compelled to read and digest a mass of printed matter, and analyse sentences and even words, with the view of arriving at thoughts and motives. Who will dare to say that God has imposed such a task on the saints? I find very simple tests in the Word of God as to the kind of evil we are to separate from, but nowhere do I find any warrant for putting a pamphlet such as D. L. H. has written into the hands of the saints. Yet; if division is forced upon us, every saint who goes with those

who set aside the Reading judgment must study that pamphlet before he can give an intelligent reason for his ecclesiastical position. That consideration alone is sufficient to convince me that the ground is unscriptural and false, and I should be ashamed to ask any simple-minded saint to do any such thing.

(v.) I turn now to view the position from another standpoint, and that is, what I should be in association with, if I were to go with you in the rejection of Reading. This may not be the place, and I have no wish to pain you with the details of what is going on amongst us. The facts are public enough for all to judge who care to do so, and I will therefore only say that, when I consider the sacrifice of Divine principles involved, also the grievous departure from fairness and righteousness which has marked most, if not all, the leaders who have been prominent in this attack on Reading and the teaching of C. E. S.; and finally, when I see Assemblies convicting themselves by condemning the accused without a hearing, and giving judgments which are inconsistent with each other and manifestly wrong—(witness Bath, and Park Street, and others.)—I ask, Is this the guidance of the Spirit or the mind of Christ? No, brethren, whatever may be the ultimate course of action as regards Reading, I could not go with you in your present action on any consideration whatever. For a unity of meetings obtained as the result of such conduct, I could not for a moment believe to be in the unity of the Spirit; and if not the unity of the Spirit what is it?

And now, brethren, as this will probably be the last opportunity I may have of addressing some of you, I wish to leave a word with you in parting as to what has long been a matter of deep exercise with me. I am not surprised that so many of note amongst us are acting as they are doing at present. It is some years since I was awakened to see the rise of a spirit of Highmindedness and Ecclesiastical Pretension among us, both in teaching and practice, and I have felt assured that if there was not humbling and repentance, the time would come when God would give us up as a vessel of testimony. So long as the ground of gathering remained I could not leave it. I have not sought division nor lifted a finger to cause it, and I charge the responsibility and sin of division upon those who have pressed this case. On the other hand I believe in doing so, they have given up the principles of the Church of God, and that God's time has come for separation from evils which have been gradually leavening the saints and producing barrenness and deadness in our midst. I view the apparent break-up with calmness, feeling assured that God remains, and the truth remains, and blessing remains, for those who are found following the Lord, in brokenness and humility of mind and true fidelity to Him. With all such I seek to be found in fellowship.

THE "MONTREAL" DISRUPTION.

On the ground of being a heretic, on December 17, 1884, Mr. Grant was "finally" rejected by those who assumed to be the assembly at Montreal, and the action was announced at the meeting on Lord's Day, January 4, 1885. Those who went with this action numbered about forty-five, while about forty saints refused, after repeated remonstrances, to support those who urged on the division. The latter, after humiliation, prayer, confession, and conference, came together in Craig Street Room and broke bread next Lord's Day. Mr. Grant was not with them; having gone to Plainfield, the assembly with

which he is usually identified. He was not received as in fellowship with Craig Street, nor did Plainfield own that meeting till having heard and considered the charges against Mr. Grant from Montreal, and having had the decision of Montreal before them. These having been duly weighed by Plainfield, and all the circumstances which led up to, and culminated in, the Montreal decision having been considered, Plainfield judged that the Montreal action was not an assembly action, but that of a party, and that there were no grounds for putting Mr. Grant away as a heretic. Plainfield's judgment is therefore the first assembly judgment in the case, and we have to say whether we bow to this judgment or that of Montreal.

THE MONTREAL JUDGMENT.

Beloved Brethren,

A meeting of the Assembly in Montreal, 17th December, 1884, was called for the purpose of ascertaining Mr. Grant's reply to their admonition of the 10th inst., and to consider how they should act in consequence. The letter was as follows:—

Montreal, 10th December, 1884.

It being now manifest that the Protest of Brethren of the 29th November, against the doctrines of Mr. F. W. Grant as brought out in his late publication, "Life in Christ and Sealing with the Spirit," has failed to produce any retraction, but that on the contrary Mr. Grant is still maintaining the attitude he assumed when the protest was read, *i.e.*, that he would hold to every word he had therein written; and, as this admonition had failed to check the determined course of schism, he is still adopting, the Assembly gathered to the name of the Lord in Montreal believe the time has come when the only course left is to obey the command of the Apostle given in Titus iii. 10: "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject."

Before, however, finally rejecting him, and remembering the long-suffering and grace of our Lord, and his patience towards us, thinking, too, of the solemn effect everywhere, an act of discipline would cause to the Saints, the Assembly gathered to the name of the Lord in Montreal do here give him this last admonition, in which he is exhorted to think of the glory of the Lord, and of His love to His people, as the good and great Shepherd, who are now so divided on account of this unhappy tract, spread in their midst: he is earnestly exhorted, therefore, and admonished to withdraw this tract, and to cease spreading the evil views mentioned in the protest.

The Assembly also do most solemnly admonish Mr. F. W.—Grant together with Mr. John James, Dr. E. Trenholme, Mr. Henry Hammond, Mr. Lyman, and Mr. Crain, for disorderly conduct, in turning their backs upon the Lord and His Assembly, gathered to His name for prayer and exhortation, on Wednesday evening, the 3rd December, in leaving the room when the word of God was being spoken upon. 1 Cor. xiv. 40. 1 Thess. v. 14. Signed on behalf of the Assembly.

W. C. BAYNES.
J. O. ROBINSON.
G. SMITH.

(Several of Mr. Grant's supporters dissented.)

This was taken to Ottawa, where Mr. Grant was on the 12th December, and given to him by Brethren J. O. Robinson and George

Smith, accompanied by our Brother Alfred Mace, and the following is their report:—

OTTAWA, 12th December, 1884.

At the close of the Assembly meeting held in Montreal on the 10th instant, it was suggested that two Brethren should wait upon Mr. F. W. Grant, and submit to him the foregoing admonition.

Accordingly Brothers Robinson and Smith proceeded to Ottawa, accompanied by Brother Mace, and waited upon our Brother Grant, at the house of Mr. Duffett. Several others being present, we suggested seeing Mr. Grant alone. Mr Grant declined, and asked what our errand was. Mr. Mace replied, Our Brother (referring to J. O. R.) has a letter for you from the Assembly at Montreal, which was then delivered to Mr. Grant. Mr. Grant enquired if certain Brethren were included in it? Mr. Mace said they were present at the meeting, but that unanimity did not constitute Assembly action. Mr. Grant replied it was the act of a faction, and threw the letter on the settee. We submitted it as an act of the Assembly, and Mr. Mace said it was a solemn thing to treat it with contempt. Mr. Grant replied, "I do treat it with utter contempt."

After a pause we rose and left the house.

(Signed,)

J. O. ROBINSON.
GEORGE SMITH.

This is the manner in which this solemn act of the Assembly was treated, and the Assembly indeed railed at, clearly proving that Mr. Grant is beyond all entreaty from his Brethren, and that he is now fully bent on the sad course he is pursuing, of causing divisions in the Assemblies gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus.

We have, therefore, nothing left us than to follow the plain direction of Scripture, to the godly in Christ Jesus, Titus iii. 10, "A Heretic" (that is, one who sets up his own opinions, and by that means forms parties in the church), "after the first and second admonition, reject." And we do now reject F. W. Grant, in the name and authority of the Lord Jesus in our midst, and declare him no longer in fellowship with the saints gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus in Montreal.

(Signed on behalf of the Assembly,)

W. C. BAYNES.
J. O. ROBINSON.

Mr. Grant's followers dissented.

After the Assembly act on the 17th December, it was held to be due to the gathering at Plainfield, where Mr. F. W. Grant was locally connected, to write the following letter, and enclose the above decision

To the Saints gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus at Plainfield.

Beloved Brethren,

I am requested by Brethren of the Assembly in Montreal, to forward the decision that was determined upon at their meeting on Wednesday, 17th December, before declaring it at our meeting on the Lord's Day next, as it is felt that Mr. F. W. Grant being especially associated with the Gathering at Plainfield, it would be proper and according to the Word, to ask your consideration of the position in which we have been placed, and seek your fellowship in our action.

The Assembly here has been sadly broken up by the course Mr. Grant has taken in the publication of his tracts and dissemination of

his doctrines. It has assumed the distinctive marks the Scripture has defined as "causing divisions," contrary to the doctrines you have received—and also as drawing away disciples after him, and thus as one who is termed in Titus a Heretic, or one who sets up his own opinions, and by that means forms parties in the Church, that such should be rejected.

We are deeply impressed with the solemnity of the act we are called upon to take for the truth's sake, and are constrained to send you the judgment of the Assembly, which has only followed the two distinct admonitions we were instructed by the Word to give him, and which as you will see by the paper enclosed have been not only refused but treated with contempt.

Desiring to hear from you before declaring it at the Lord's Table and praying that the Lord may lead you to a righteous judgment in this matter,

I am, your Brother in Christ Jesus,

On behalf of the Assembly,

W. C. BAYNES.

On the 21st December at the Lord's Table this was announced,—

That the judgment of the Assembly, in reference to Brother Grant has been communicated to the Assembly at Plainfield where Mr. Grant resides, to seek their fellowship in the action, and after hearing from them it will be generally announced.

After waiting a fortnight—and this will account for the delay in notifying other assemblies—the reply from Plainfield, respecting our judgment, was received (two dissenting). The plea in their letter is "that freedom of conscience must be allowed," that "the doctrines of Mr. G.'s Tract in nowise touch foundation truths," and "no brother is to be silenced unless the person or work of our Lord Jesus Christ is in question," with the exhortation among others "to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Now the stipulated ground of Mr. G.'s rejection was that of a "heretic," which we believe him to be; others have long since announced their belief that his teaching did "touch foundation truths" as to the subjective side of Christianity, and their writings are abroad. As to "freedom of conscience," what of the consciences of hundreds of God's saints outraged by the dissemination of these doctrines? and where is this "freedom" to stop? The exhortation of Ephs. iv. 3, "to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" we believe has been carried out by the Montreal Assembly in acting in concert with the Spirit who wrote Titus iii. 10, but thoroughly set at nought by that of Plainfield in refusing their decision, and so acting in independency. It was felt after the reading of their letter on Lord's Day, Jan. 4th, that what was decided on December 17th was with the Lord's approval and could not therefore be revoked (no solid reason being given by the Plainfield Assembly for doing so); accordingly Mr. Grant and the seceders in Craig St. were announced as no longer in fellowship.

An Assembly Meeting was called on Lord's Day, December 28th, for Wednesday 31st, to consider the act of the dissentients in setting up an independent table on December 21st, and that too, according to one of themselves, under the advice of F. W. Grant, who stated "*that if only two had faith—to do it.*" It was then decided that the following persons were no longer in fellowship, all of whom by a circular,

dated December 19th, had identified themselves with this schismatic table.—*Twenty-two Brothers and the Sisters with them.*

As the narrative of facts, which will follow as soon as ready, fully answers Mr. Grant's circular attached to the letter of the seceders, and exposes the perverted and misrepresented teachings of J. N. D. and others, we would only add that there are other doctrines of F. W. G.'s which are troubling and causing divisions amongst the saints, which have not come up at Montreal, such as the question of "Local Unity," at this present moment being an occasion of sorrow at Toronto.

We request also that gatherings require letters of commendation from persons professing to come from this Assembly.

Earnestly praying that saints everywhere may be led to a practical maintenance of the Spirit's unity in accepting the judgment of the Assembly in Montreal.

We are, on behalf of the Gathering, beloved Brethren,
Affectionately yours in Christ,

W. C. BAYNES,
J. O. ROBINSON,
F. HART.

PLAINFIELD JUDGMENT.

PLAINFIELD, N. J., Dec. 30, 1884.

To Mr. W. C. Baynes and the brethren with him at Montreal, Canada.

Beloved brethren in Christ,

With deep grief we have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter under date of December 19th, inclosing two printed circulars—one dated November 29th, signed by thirty-eight brethren, rejecting our brother F. W. Grant as a teacher, and calling upon others to do likewise; the other, dated December 17th, purporting to be the action of the assembly at Montreal in excluding him from communion on the ground of false doctrine and a determined course of schism.

Your letter asks for our fellowship in this act, but with sorrow we note that it is an act already definitely accomplished, thus leaving no room for brotherly counsel.

These several communications were read before the assembly after the breaking of break on Lord's-day last (the 28th inst.), and a special meeting was appointed for the evening of the same day for their further consideration. At this meeting, gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the papers were carefully considered in His presence, and the following judgment, which we solemnly believe was given from Himself, unanimously arrived at* :—

First, *that we can have no fellowship with your act*; inasmuch as the doctrines in question, when fairly taken from our brother Grant's tract, in no wise touch foundation truths, and therefore patience with one another should be exercised, and *freedom of conscience must be allowed*. For this, we have directions from the Word of God,—“With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. iv. 2, 3); and again, “Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be

*One brother and his wife retiring before this conclusion was reached, having previously expressed dissent.

otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing" (Phil. iii. 15, 16); and this, beloved, is the way in which brethren hitherto "have walked in the comfort and joy of the Holy Spirit."

Second, as to the grave charge that brother Grant is bent on a course of causing divisions in the assemblies gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus; we believe it was due to him, and to yourselves, to furnish some other and more definite proof of such a serious accusation than that he refused to withdraw his pamphlet. For surely no brother should be silenced with regard to that which he believes God has committed to his responsibility, when, as has been clearly shown in this case, the Person or Work of our blessed Lord are not in question. As to pressing these views on any, and thus seeking to bring in division, a careful inquiry into the facts shows that, instead of this, it has been the endeavor of our brother Grant to avert it. The responsibility, therefore, of any division rests with your own act.

We have also to express our grief at the disregard of the protests, not only of "several," as you speak, but, as direct communication from those protesting makes clear, of a large portion of the assembly; and, in silencing them, claiming to be the assembly at Montreal without them. Surely, brethren, this is not according to God, nor will it commend itself to the saints gathered to the Lord's name.

We come, therefore, to the solemn conclusion that the ground you have taken, in excluding from the Lord's table a member of the body of Christ, against whom no charge of ungodliness either in walk or doctrine has been proved, is schismatic, and obliges us to regard you as having left the ground of the One Body upon which we are gathered, compelling brethren every where either to follow you in this departure or maintain fellowship with the one you exclude.

That the Lord may grant you deliverance from such a position is our earnest prayer.

Affectionately your brethren in Christ,
in behalf of the assembly,

L. A. RHEAUME.
T. O. LOIZEAUX.
JAS. F. PARKER.

MONTREAL *versus* PLAINFIELD.

The statements giving the facts as to the Montreal action towards F. W. Grant show that the judgment by Montreal was the result of months of party action, the forced opinion of a bare majority, the condemning of heresy not proved, and action taken by a meeting with which Mr. Grant was not locally connected, and that action based upon a Scripture which applies to individual conduct, and does not give a warrant for assembly action. (Compare "Questions," pp. 4, 5, 6, and "Doctrines," pp. 15, 16.)

The first circular, from some in Montreal, rejecting Mr. Grant as a teacher, was only signed by thirty-eight out of over eighty in the gathering. A counter circular signed by twenty-one brothers followed, showing that the former circular was not from the assembly. In this second circular it was stated:—"We feel it only right to add that if division is threatening us it is due to the course pursued by our brother Cecil and the attitude of determined hostility assumed by himself and others with regard to those who differ from them on

these points." Similar resistance was manifested towards sending Mr. Grant an admonition, yet in referring to his refusing it as the act of a faction, the Montreal circular says, "This is the manner in which *this solemn act of the assembly* was treated, and the assembly indeed railed at."

The action in putting away, as has been noticed, was likewise that of a party with a bare majority, though, indeed, only a third stood up when requested thus to assent to putting Mr. Grant away. This, however, in Montreal circular is boldly called "the assembly act," and that circular closes thus, "Earnestly praying that the saints everywhere may be led to a practical maintenance of *the Spirit's unity in accepting the judgment of the assembly at Montreal*."

Much has been made of the fact that those refusing to put Mr. Grant away commenced to break bread in Craig Street, in Montreal. By many who condemn the Montreal action this is taken to be the setting up of a new table, and is thought to be sufficient ground for refusing those who go with Mr. Grant. But to profess to own the original meeting in Natural History Hall, Montreal, and refuse its discipline, is pure independency. Further, to try to justify the meeting in wrongly putting away Mr. Grant, by what those refusing to go with the action did after he, or those with him, were away, is to admit that there was not sufficient ground for the action of casting him out. It is, indeed, from N. H. Hall point of view, simply judging those that are *without*, which really condemns those supposed to be *within*.—1 Cor. v. 12-13.

The real issue is not between the two companies of saints in Montreal, but between Montreal and Plainfield. Taking the statements from both sides, it is clear that instead of the Montreal action being an assembly action it was a Disruption of the assembly. Plainfield, where Mr. Grant went, and to which assembly Montreal sent on the case, gave the first real assembly judgment. We were in fellowship with Plainfield when it judged, refusing the assumption and confusion at Montreal. On making inquiry, and using even the "Narrative" of those assuming to be the assembly at Montreal, there is no difficulty in saying that we bow to Plainfield. If the "Statement" of the others and Mr. Grant's printed letters and papers are weighed, no doubt need be left as to the right course. As Mr. Grant says in his letter to me:—"The papers sent out leave really nothing to be said. Those on the other side you have probably seen, or can easily see, and, for my own part, I do not doubt as to the result, for one with a single eye, whether you agree as to certain points with me or not." It is therefore no question of accepting Mr. Grant's doctrine. Indeed, one of the papers, going into the whole case, is by a brother who does not accept the doctrine, but who refuses to be a party to putting away Mr. Grant as one who has written what affects foundation truths, or of making a party by pressing his views.

F. W. GRANT ANSWERING INQUIRIES.

Toronto, March 17th, 1885.

My Dear Brother,

One clear mark of the enemy's work at the present time is the spirit of falsehood which is found everywhere in the leaders in this unhappy movement. Deliberate falsehood, I do not mean. No doubt they are blinded. Yet this only makes their position, if possible, more solemn. It is sad to have to speak of it, but as many are really misled, I take the opportunity presented by your questions

to speak also as to some other points of this nature, and you are welcome to make public my statement in whatever way you see fit.

First, however, as to your questions themselves:

(1). I have never stated to any that we and Old Testament saints were "in Deity;" never used the expression, never had the thought. It was their interpretation of what I said, and I have uniformly refused and condemned it whenever I have heard it. It is, of course, supposed to represent the doctrine, as I hold it, of "life in the Son," but it was first of all spoken of (Sequel, pp. 11-12) as a CONSEQUENCE of my doctrine: "If to be in the Son is oneness and PLACE, BESIDE life and nature, then O. T. saints were one with God, and so in the Deity." He allows at the same time that what I taught was that to be in the Son was NOT position (p. 7). Now, we ARE in the Son and in the Father, and the Father never took manhood. Our life and nature are thus really divine,—in the Son as God, not man. This has been since converted into a teaching that we were "in Deity"—a phrase ambiguous enough, because "Deity" means properly GODHEAD, while it is less accurately used for GOD. Thus it could be inferred that what I taught was that we were in the Godhead—ourselves in fact God. I leave you to judge the character of all this.

(2). As to your second question, I find it very difficult to recall with exactness what was said in a certain conversation, especially at a time when there were many of them, and much said. But I am sure, whatever basis of truth may be in the assertion that I said I would hold to my book though we were broken to pieces, it is, in the way stated, and as to the impression meant to be made, as false as the last one.

(3). I did not believe that the publication of my book could lead to division. I did not imagine for a moment that brethren would anywhere lend themselves to an effort to override the conscience of one simply giving out what he believed he had from God, and where no positive false doctrine could be shown in it. Even in Montreal, I believed and said often, that their protest would end all.

Yet I say now, as ever (not in bravado; God forbid), that I will not, and dare not hold back one truth I have received from Him, whatever any may say. Nay, I would only desire to be more outspoken than ever. To forbid it is to quench the Spirit of God, and degrade us into a real "party." Who can forbid the truth to be uttered? Who is to settle for my soul what is truth?

(4). Mr. Darby did not, in all my acquaintance with him for twenty years, ever admonish me for my doctrine. In readings, differences would occasionally come out, and at Croydon, in one meeting, they did somewhat unpleasantly; but I was with him in the same house after that for a good while, without the least trace of any memory of it. What has been said of it is merely said for a purpose in the interests of division, and that is all.

(5). I went to Montreal, Ottawa, or anywhere else, not to press my doctrines, but to clear them of false imputations and show there was nothing to divide about. It was they themselves who rendered this necessary and then charged upon me as heresy a course to which they had compelled me.

(8). Finally, I only mention to give emphatic denial to the statement in Hall's paper, where amid much wrong imputation besides, he boldly accuses me of saying, when the N. H. Hall, Montreal, action was being considered at Plainfield, that it was "too late," because Plainfield had already accepted me as in fellowship with Craig Street.

It is utterly untrue. The assembly had pledged itself to no course of action, and could not act till the charges were before it. What I said was, that it was too late for those at N. H. Hall to ask Plainfield's concurrence as if they had not already decided without them.

It is impossible, and would be profitless, to take up a great mass of charges which have been rashly made. My tracts contain the certain doctrine for which I am really responsible, and the circulars give the main facts with sufficient clearness.

Affectionately, in Christ, yours,
F. W. GRANT.

TORONTO DECLARATION.

Toronto, January 19th, 1885.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

In view of the Scripture "that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another; and whether one member suffer all the members suffer with it, or one member be honored all the members rejoice with it" (1 Cor. xii. 25, 26); we now desire to make known to you certain events, of a very painful and humiliating character which took place in two at least—Yorkville and Gerrard Street—of the three meetings of the Assembly in this city, on the morning of Lord's day, January 11th, 1885, in which a deep and cruel wound was inflicted upon the Body of Christ in the persons of its members here.

Well knowing our oneness in Christ Jesus, and that whatever affects the interests of the children of God, as such, in any one place, is of equal importance and interest to all in fellowship with them everywhere, we feel that a deep responsibility before God rests upon us to lay before you some facts relating to those events.

After the Breaking of Bread at the meeting in Sydenham Hall, Yorkville, on the morning mentioned, a communication covering several pages of letterpress was read, purporting to be from the Montreal Assembly, conveying its decision; putting away Mr. F. W. Grant, a loved and honored brother, from the Table of the Lord and from fellowship with the saints gathered to His name, for heresy.

The reading of this pamphlet finished, a brother immediately rose and suggested, that, before taking action in a matter of such solemn importance, and recognizing the principle which we have always sought to act upon, viz., that of "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," the Assembly as a whole should come together, in order that the consciences of the saints might be assured, and a godly decision come to in the matter. Another brother followed, adding that he could not believe it to be their intention to press the brethren to an immediate decision, as that would be to trample upon their consciences, and considering the associations which specially connected Mr. Grant with this gathering would be an outrage. Other brethren then followed; but none of their suggestions were listened to. The Meeting was told that "the Montreal decision must be accepted absolutely and bowed to implicitly."

Undue influence alas, was also brought to bear upon the question by an elder brother exclaiming, "stand firm, brethren, nine tenths of the English brethren are with you." The same brother also stated "that those who accept the Montreal decision will meet here next Lord's day." He afterwards however, in the confusion, asked the brother from whom the Hall was rented, "what are you going to do about the room?" That brother's reply was to the effect that he

proposed that those who rejected the Montreal Natural History Hall decision, meet there next Lord's day to continue the Lord's table in fellowship with those at Craig Street, Montreal.* (This was objected to by several brethren who felt that an Assembly meeting should be held before deciding as to their course of action). He then stated, "then we do not meet here, you understand."

We separated in confusion: a wolf suddenly leaping into a sheepfold would not have caused greater consternation and dismay.

On the following day, the room in which we had so long met together was given up, and the rent paid to the day; while during the week the place of meeting for the breaking of bread on the coming Lord's day was only made known to those supposed to be in sympathy with these proceedings, a course, the character of which we shall leave you, dear brethren, to find suitable terms to express.

That this action constitutes the table to which they have gone, that of a faction, is beyond question, and that it is set up on a basis entirely new,—one hitherto unknown amongst us, viz., absolute and unquestioning submission to the decision of Assemblies *as such*—is equally beyond question.

It scarcely needs to be said that the principle involved in this has been the prolific source from which have flowed nearly all the corruptions of truth, and the instrument by means of which have been perpetrated some of the grossest acts of ecclesiastical tyranny in the professing church of God through the ages of its existence.

The proceedings at the Gerard Street Meeting, at the same hour, were, if possible, still more arbitrary and high-handed than those at Yorkville. The pamphlet was read *before* the breaking of bread and immediate submission required, or, as intimated by one brother, "the door was open." Many rose and left the room; bitter tears were shed, and a scene of distraction and confusion ensued, seldom, if ever before, witnessed amongst us.

It is hard to believe, beloved brethren, that such things took place around the Lord's table, that most sacred spot to us on earth, and during the hour consecrated to the sweet remembrance of His name. Indeed, such scenes would scarcely have been possible, but for the springing up in our midst of a system of human rule which—setting aside the Divine order—has for some time past been developing, and at last has culminated in these painful scenes.

In their distraction a few brethren came together in the evening of the same day, when it was thought best to call a meeting of the whole Assembly by circular, for the following Thursday evening, of which the following is a copy:—

Toronto, January, 12th, 1875.

*To the Saints gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ
in Toronto.*

BELoved BRETHREN AND SISTERS,

If the Lord will, a special meeting in connection with the Assembly here will be held at Sydenham Hall, Cumberland Street, Yorkville, on Thursday Evening, January 15th, at 7.30, to which all are invited.

Affectionately yours in Christ,

(Signed by seven brothers).

N. B.—* Notwithstanding all that was said on both sides, an opportunity was freely given to all in fellowship to meet together to consider the question and avert division if possible, as will be seen further on.

This was done; the meeting on that evening was a large one, and adjourned to the following evening, at which all present were of one mind as to the propriety and necessity of continuing to come together for the remembrance of the Lord's death on the next Lord's day as usual at Sydenham Hall, Yorkville. Indeed no other course was left open to them for they—of Yorkville, at least—knew not whither their brethren had fled.

It will be seen from the foregoing statements that the real issue in Toronto has been, not so much the acceptance or rejection of the Natural History Hall decision, as whether it or any other shall be forced upon the consciences of brethren in such an unseemly and imperious way as that attempted, the Assembly not even being permitted to come together to seek Divine blessing and guidance.

The troubles agitating the minds of many in Montreal, had not extended to Toronto. The questions in dispute there were unknown, or if known, it was in the most vague and indefinite way, to all but the few. It is true that the system—call it Eldership, Clerisy, Ministerialism, or what we may—which we have referred to, was causing anxiety in the minds of some who felt it to be a something entirely foreign to, and subversive of the principles hitherto prevailing amongst us; but with this exception there was peace.

The wickedness and folly of this course reached its climax the following Lord's day, 18th instant, when quite a number of names were read out of fellowship at the Gerrard Street meeting. The brother who performed this office, has since admitted that this was done, not by the action of the Assembly, nor by its authority, but by the action and authority of certain Gerrard Street brethren (whose names he gave), meeting in the private parlour of the house of one of them on Grosvenor Street. No accusations were made against the parties expelled, not the slightest intimation was given them of what was transpiring, nor were they made acquainted with the result. In this way the present and eternal interests of souls have been trifled with.

We have much to say, but prefer to leave these facts with you, dear brethren, in all their bareness and simplicity to speak for themselves, earnestly praying that the wisdom which cometh from above may be yours, and that you may so come to a right judgment, and to a right course of action in relation to these things, as in the presence of the Lord.

Our own hearts are filled with sorrow, and our faces covered with shame, in the presence of these deplorable scenes, so calculated to bring dishonor upon the name of our blessed Lord, and reproach and scorn upon His people. We confess the unfaithfulness to Him and to His truth, on our own part, which in any measure has served to bring about this state of things; but still look to Him, who alone can bring good out of evil, to make even this confusion serve His own glory and become the means of blessing to our souls.

For ourselves, although fully persuaded that the Table set up in Gerrard Street is now on a basis entirely new, unscriptural and sectarian, and that as such, from the necessity of our position, we are separate from it, our fellowship with you, dear brethren, who continue to walk in the "old paths," remains unbroken. We love "all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." Gathered to His precious name we own no other authority in the Assembly than His, ministered by the Spirit through the Word. We rejoice in the fact "there is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling,"

Listening for the Shepherd's voice, for that through grace we know we are prepared to obey it and no other. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me" (John x. 27). And "a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers" (John x. 5). One more Scripture we commend to you in conclusion, "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Jeremiah vi. 16.)

Up to this time our relations with the brethren at Craig Street, had not been brought before us, a brother from that Assembly, however, having presented himself for fellowship with us, a special meeting was called on Lord's day morning, 18th instant, for the same evening for humiliation and prayer and to consider our position as to that gathering. At that meeting the circular from Natural History Hall, was read (we had also a "Narrative of Facts" from another source before us), when after careful consideration of the same, we came to the conclusion that the charges of heresy made against our brother Mr. Grant had not been sustained. Failing, too, to see any mark of true Assembly action or any Scriptural reason for accepting the decision arrived at, we have been compelled to reject it as unwarrantable. Believing also that the brethren in Craig Street faithfully remonstrated with their brethren in the hope of averting division, and that their present position like our own, has been forced upon them by the arbitrary and intolerant action of a faction, we gladly own with them as heretofore, common ground—that which through grace we know to be *Divine* ground—and shall cheerfully receive from, and send any letters of recommendation to them.

Faithfully and affectionately yours in Christ Jesus.

(Signed by twenty-three brothers.)

("Questions," page 4, No. 6, 7.)

EXTRACT FROM MR. GRANT'S LETTER, FEBRUARY 2ND, 1886.

In reply to my letter of enquiry, December, 1885, to brethren in America, a letter and recent papers in connection with the troubles were sent. The papers on "Eternal Life," &c., reprinted or extracts given in the "Doctrines" (pp. 11-15, 17-19) came by the mail, March, 1886. These papers give me more light and had more to do with my decision as to Montreal action than anything previously seen. Mr. Grant, to whom my letter and sixteen questions were sent on, wrote on February 2, 1886. The following is an extract from a long and interesting letter. It shows clearly, by the way, whether or not I had written, as late as December, 1885, as one who had come to a decision.

Mr. Grant says:—"In one sense I would wish it (my letter) had fallen into other hands, as my rule has been to write to no one while undecided, and I do not think there have been half-a-dozen exceptions to this. I know what W. Lowe's letter (circulated in the extracts printed in Wellington, N.Z.) and others have said as to my energy in seeking to get my doctrines accepted. It is, sad to say for them, totally untrue, as much else is. They forced me into full explanation of what I hold that the truth might not suffer, for the first little paper was intended for a special class only, who I thought would judge of it with God. It was not even published; yet the edict as to my heresy went forth on this account.

I am very glad to be spared the need of saying more about this, for the papers sent leave nothing really to be said. Those on the other side you have probably seen, or can easily see, and, for my own

part, I do not doubt as to the result for one with a single eye, whether you agree as to certain points with me or not. Wherever there has been fair honest inquiry it has been always the same, and those who have gone from us have done so through English influence, blindly in the main. There will surely yet be a waking up for many, even here, if the Lord leave us here awhile.

He has brought us through what has been intensely painful, yet we are persuaded His hand has guided us all through, not without plenty of failure, alas! on our parts, yet, in His grace, none the less truly. We have been condemned for party-making, when all our fault was we could not accept a party-creed sought to be forced upon us by means of a clerical system everywhere long established. Witness the papers from Toronto, Philadelphia, Halifax, as well as Montreal. And we desire only the freedom of following the Word untrammelled by the dictates of human authorities, even were it of beloved J. N. D. himself. But, in fact, they have stigmatized J. N. D. himself, as well as others, in the doctrine mainly condemned.

In America, thank God, spite of the severity of the testing, the larger part stand; and, while owning our weakness, there has been recovery and blessing from God. In Philadelphia, where only five were left, there are again thirty-two. Several fresh gatherings have begun since the Separation, and the labourers have been largely preserved.

What, for my own part, comforts me as to my being so connected with the division here, is that the Stuart matter would have caused it in any case, and it would have, to all appearance, swept the field, had we not been otherwise prepared. For, in fact, few of us here are able to see with C. E. S., although we are sure there is no just reason for the course pursued towards him. But I fear the names of C. H. M., Stanley, Stoney, &c., would have carried many more than they have now. . . . In London two small gatherings remain, though many seem not in sympathy with the movement, but dazed and helpless. So it is, indeed, all through the country. What will come of it the Lord knows. It is a collapse of faith and conscience, which enables one better to understand how the Church fell prostrate just after Apostolic days. Only before us there cannot be, thank God, the long dark time that followed, but—

“Only a few more shadows
And He will come.”

What has struck me much of late in the address to Philadelphia is not merely that there are *overcomers* there, although I think we have hardly realized that, but that the overcoming can really have reference to the *one* only danger pointed out, “Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” *The* danger is here, to be proved as such, as we have been proving it, and if we be not low, as we may prove it again.

But Zeph. iii. is full of wonderful comfort as it is of admonition, and its application plain. Alas! have we not been haughty? What ecclesiastical pride has been growing up amongst us! If He has brought us low, it is a token of love. And, alas! all these accusations tend to bring out the spirit of self-justification in us, instead of bowing under His hand.

But the facts are out, and you can judge by the testimony of a good many witnesses; not the least, the testimony of the very ones who accuse us. If you shall judge that the Lord's path for you lies still

with us, it will give us joy to hear it. There are certainly no inducements but this, that one can imagine to prevail with you."

Mr. Grant also writes:—"The Narrative" (of those who put him away at Montreal) makes plain that the attack was planned and begun, before ever my last tract was printed or written, when all the ground for it was the paper on Life and the Spirit, *printed for private circulation*, and not published at all." ("Questions," p. 5, No. 9.)

JUDGING WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING.

F. W. G. and C. E. S. have not been proved guilty of pressing their views nor of self-will in publishing their tracts. What could they do as persons violently accused and concerning whose teachings gross misrepresentations, perversions, and falsehood, were circulated by those who were thought to be above suspicion of lending themselves to such practices? (See paper on "The Doctrines.") These aspersions were abroad uncontradicted and are still being used to prejudice the saints where there are no means of correcting them. It is only just that the accused should at least be permitted to speak for themselves. Mr. Darby wrote as to his tract the "Sufferings of Christ," that "not one brother in a hundred understands my doctrine." He had been urged to withdraw it in the interests of peace, and only the weight of his influence saved a division. He is also reported to have said to Wm. Reid at Edinburgh, "They don't understand Stuart," and he spoke from painful experience. All the reviews of C. E. S. and F. W. G. show that the tracts of these brethren are neither understood nor impartially weighed. Many going with both London and Montreal own and deplore the party action, and the questionable criticism and teaching of their leaders. There has not yet been the consistency, the courage, and faithfulness to act towards them as the leaders have led them to do towards F. W. G. and C. E. S. This is not "without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality" (1 Tim. v. 21; Jas. iii. 17). ("Questions," pp. 5, 6, No. 8, 9, 11, 12, 13). We have had many proofs that the doctrines are such as simple souls, or even the most instructed brethren, cannot readily discern. When such is the fact, is the matter ripe for assembly judgment? Is it time for the solemn act of cutting off? Months ago I was examining Phil. iii. 15-16 on this point. The Spirit of God allows that there may be a difference of judgment on certain things and urges walking together, "whereunto we have already attained." I found then also this important remark on the point by W. K., "Nor is it only the wise and intelligent who are able to judge things of the sort, but the babes also. The only cases that ought to be brought before the Church as such are those which every believer is able to Judge." If that is a sound Scriptural principle and who can gainsay it, then the evil in C. E. S's and F. W. G.'s tracts is not clear to strong men, much less to babes. These brothers therefore have been put away from the Assembly not by "the many" (ii. Cor. ii. 16), the Assembly as such, but by the few—the leaders—consequently the actions putting them away were clerical and sectarian actions.

London cuts off Reading without proofs that the judgment of Reading was unrighteous, or the teaching of C. E. S. subversive of foundation truths. Yet London bows to Montreal though its judgment and the doctrines and practices of A. P. C. have been proved to be unscriptural, and the actions of Montreal and Toronto have been proved to be sectarian. The contradiction and unrighteousness

charged against Reading appear to be more true of London in connection with Montreal. ("Questions" pages 4, 5, No., 6, 7; 8, 9.

DOCTRINES AND PRACTICES OF A. P. C.

Here are samples of the doctrines and practices of Lord Cecil as quoted in the papers.* "His giving you life does not deliver you from the sentence of death." When John v. 24 was quoted against this, he maintained that to be the second communication of life, not new birth. To a brother who asked him about it, he replied "God is with me, and you must take care not to fight against God." Mr. Grant had said, "John speaks of the *only begotten Son*, in the bosom of the Father; in Luke he is the Son of Man." Lord Cecil replied, "I totally deny that in John 'Son of God' means simply Deity." Again, "we receive the Son by the Holy Ghost bringing him into us—that is eternal life." "Rom. vii. 17 brings out new birth, but not Christ in us; but the Spirit brings Christ into me as eternal life; directly I receive eternal life I get the Holy Ghost. That is the deliverance out of a mere born again state. It is more abundant life by the Holy Ghost, not being born of God (John x. 10). 'I am come that they might have life' is one life. The first life is a new birth; the more abundant life is received by the Gospel." "I say positively, the man who has not learned the sentence of death in himself is not a christian. The seventh of Romans is an unsaved man."

"At the beginning of the meeting on this Lord's day morning Cecil prayed for 'help to put out evil that had got in among us,' after the breaking or bread, he spoke from Colossians, asserting that 'the Church is in union with Christ, not by the Spirit, but by life,' and denounced the doctrine of Old Testament Saints having life in the Son. We may add here that our brother Cecil made it a point also at meetings before breaking of bread to bring such Scriptures before us as 'warn the unruly' and 'whose mouths must be stopped.'" At a Saturday night meeting, Lord Cecil said, "Grant is making a party by publishing his tract, and that is a heretic." A brother replied, "Lord Cecil defines his own position exactly, as that is the course he is pursuing." Mr. Grant writes, "A. P. C. stated to me in a private interview, as before noticed, that he was the representative of the English brethren, and that J. N. D. had been raised up of God to give us the truth, and (save fundamental doctrines) whatever he put forth, he (A. P. C.) received as truth."

DIVERSE, STRANGE DOCTRINES.

Some quotations from "Recent Utterances," reviews of his Reviewers, by C. E. S., will show how J. B. S. and others have laid themselves open to charges of writing error in a way not to be found in the pamphlets of C. E. S. and F. W. G. Mr. Stuart writes:—

"To some of Mr. J. B. Stoney's recent utterances let us now turn, set forth in vol. xviii. of a publication entitled, "A Voice to the Faithful." In an article called "The Christian Standing," introduced to us as "Thoughts for this Day," we read that:—

"Unless *my relations with God are re-established* † before death overtakes me, I must remain under the doom which has come upon me through death' (p. 232). On p. 233 we are told that 'the love is determined to reach and *recover* its object, while

* Lord Cecil's initials are A.P.C., not E.P.C., as printed by mistake in "Questions," pages 4, 5.
† The italics are mine.

holiness insists that it cannot be done but in perfect holiness.' On p. 234 we are informed that 'the blessed God—as we see in the garden of Eden—resolves, according to His nature, to *retrieve man's lost condition** in His own way, and we are told at the outset how it is to be effected. When Adam admits his transgression, God not only announces the way He will effect salvation for man, but as a significant expression of His heart, He clothes both of them with skins, necessarily procured by the death of the animals; that is, setting forth figuratively that *God will recover man** through sacrifice, from the ruin of judgment under which he is placed.'

Poor Adam, when outside the Garden for ever, and tilling in the sweat of his brow the ground now cursed for his sake, little understood, I conclude, that his lost condition would be retrieved. His knowledge and experience were in painful contrast to what is presented to us as "Thoughts for this Day." If that teaching is true, all that we can say is, man's ruin by a fall is a myth. Atonement by blood is ineffectual, and more, it is unnecessary, for it does not retrieve man's lost condition. Nor need we to be in Christ. For, writes and teaches Mr. Stoney, unconscious, perhaps, of what he is about, that *man's relations* with God can be re-established. He would press upon his readers, that his lost condition can be retrieved: "God will recover man." T. H. R.'s reading of 1 Pet. iii. 18 is quite in keeping with this. Mr. Stoney teaches really a return to a state of innocence, Adam's condition before he fell, and by consequence man must have his home for ever on earth—not in heaven. Something like a millennial saint in that, I conclude. Atonement, however, by blood tells us of having to do with God on very different ground. It proclaims man's condition by nature to be that of a ruined creature. Recovery is impossible; but for those who stand on the ground of the blood of Christ there is salvation. And as in Christ blessings can be enjoyed, which Adam unfallen never had, nor never heard of. Mr. Stoney's teaching is in complete opposition to this. Whose thoughts, God's or Mr. J. B. S.'s, are on this point, "Thoughts for this Day"?

And no wonder, as the reader will say, there is this contrast, for, as we proceed further in that article, we are told, on p. 248, of "the carcass" (of the sin offering), "as execrable, burnt without the camp." I beg the reader to mark the words, *as execrable*. Is this the teaching of the Word of God? We read in that Word of the sin offering, "It is most holy." And of the carcass of the sin offering, "All the males among the priests shall eat thereof; it is most holy" (Lev. vi. 25—29). "Most holy," God calls it. "Execrable," Mr. Stoney styles it. And let the reader mark that the sin offering, whose blood was brought into the tabernacle of the congregation to reconcile withal in the holy place, was to be burnt outside the camp, but only after the making atonement was effected—all that was properly and fully effected ere the carcass was taken outside. And that carcass speaks of the Lord Jesus, the true sin offering. It was burnt *as execrable*—i.e., deserving to be cursed, very hateful, abominable—what can we understand, but that He who knew no sin was deserving to be cursed *after* the work of atonement was over!! What Saviour would He then be to us? Further, it is of that special sin offering that Christians are privileged to eat (Heb. xiii. 10, 11). Does God give us to feed on what is to be viewed as execrable? This is the gravest attack on the spotlessness

* The italics are mine:

of Christ's person one has met with for a long time. Was He, I ask, deserving to be cursed after His atoning sacrifice had been offered to God?

But it may, perhaps, be said, Surely such a statement was made inadvertently. Unfortunately for the author of it, that excuse cannot avail. I have quoted it from a paper written by himself for his own magazine. We have it also stated in notes of a lecture on *Our Standing*, published in "Things New and Old," for September, 1884, p. 233: "The carcase of the sin offering was burnt outside the camp, as an execrable thing." The attention of the editor of "Things New and Old" was called to this, I understand, but I ~~am~~ not aware that he took any steps to set himself right with his readers as to this grave affront offered to the Lord Jesus Christ—the holy, blameless, undefiled One.

This is the startling statement, fundamentally affecting our salvation, to which I referred to above, the upholding of which the editor of "Things New and Old" apparently now stands committed. The holiness of the Lord's person is thus surrendered, and by it, if such doctrine could be true, all our hopes for eternity are for ever dashed to the ground. Do any ask what is the teaching of the carcase being burnt? Its teaching is surely the same as that of the carcase being eaten, as Lev. x. 16—20 does instruct us! Moses there sought for the goat of the sin offering, which the priests should have eaten, but they had burnt it. Learning the reason of that, he was content, for whether burnt or eaten, the offering being consumed, and thus put out of sight, the sin transferred to it could never rise up again. God, by the command to the priests to burn it or to eat it, would teach the sinner that no imputation of guilt for that sin could ever rest on him. It was wholly put away.

"He (*i.e.* Christ), has come to vindicate God in the very order of man in which the first man had failed; not, indeed to resuscitate and perpetuate that order, but to remove it, by bearing Himself the judgment resting on it, and then rising out of it, to inaugurate an entirely new order—one that had never existed before" (p. 270).

"He brings to an utter end man maintained (or exhibited) by Him, in the most beautiful way, from a Babe to the Cross. He gives it up in judgment: 'In that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.' The old is judicially removed before the new can come to us. The old man goes in judgment; Jesus rises; and no believer in Him can be in the old man, for he is in Christ risen from among the dead" (p. 276).

"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 it was morally degraded. Abraham was to slay his son; Rahab to sacrifice her country," &c. (p. 271).

Abraham's faith, which is recorded in Gen. xxii., and written of with approval in Heb. xi., is here ascribed to the working of the flesh, which God tells us is enmity against him, and is not subject to His law, neither, indeed, can be (Rom. viii. 7). Abraham was justified by works, writes James, when he offered up Isaac. So was Rahab when she hid the spies (see James ii. 21—26). But all this was the working of the flesh, then alive and active, teaches Mr. Stoney. If so, man cannot be dead in trespasses and sins. His nature as a child of

Adam is not wholly corrupt. In truth, the fall of man by writers of this school is virtually denied; and, as a consequence, God's holiness, the need of the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and the spotlessness of His person, are all attacked. Substitution is virtually discarded by Mr. Reynolds; propitiation by blood was never made, according to Mr. Pinkerton; and the spotlessness of Christ's person really denied by Mr. Stoney. The veracity, too, of God's Word is called in question. What God calls the fruits of faith, Mr. Stoney, in his "Thoughts for this Day," characterises as the works of the flesh; and there must evidently be somewhere a revision—not of a translation of the Bible, not of the original text, but—of the revelation itself. In the "Voice to the Faithful," vol. xviii., we are favored with statements nowhere to be met with in the volume of inspiration as we have hitherto possessed it.—*Recent Utterances*, pp. 43-46; 47-48.

Mr. Ord (Mr. Stuart also writes) undertaking to refute my pamphlet—

(1.) He has *not* shown the unscripturalness of the statement, that "where the action of the throne is mentioned, as in Rom. iii.—v. 11, standing is spoken of."

(2.) He has *not* refuted the assertion, that, "where the saints' condition, or state as in Christ before God is the theme, his standing is not the subject of Divine teaching."

(3.) He has *not* proved that justification by faith, and the reception of Spirit, are *not* concurrent blessings.

(4.) Nor has he demonstrated from the Word, that new creation predicated of saints as in Christ is *not* the creation of a spiritual race.

(5.) I think, I can say it, without fear of contradiction, though in no spirit of boasting, that no genuine statement of mine on which he has animadverted in his pamphlet, has he proved to be contrary to the Word of God. On several points, as I have attempted to show, he has really answered himself.—*Recent Utterances*, p. 35.

JUDGE RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT.

As previously stated, about 310 gatherings remain in fellowship with Reading and Plainfield on the original ground of the one body. A *double disruption* has taken place, and the Colonial gatherings with a few exceptions, have been blindly carried away with a movement, which, unless their is enquiry and repentance, places them on distinctly sectarian ground. After extreme exercise and diligent enquiry, I say deliberately that I could with as good a conscience go back and sign the Westminster Confession of Faith, and labor in the Presbyterian Church, as be tied down to a party creed, and go on with the recent actions of London and Montreal and the Colonial gatherings which have endorsed the judgments, cutting off Reading and Plainfield.

We have been accustomed to make much of the principle of separation from evil. Other believers in fellowship with Bethesda have often been harshly and severely blamed. Their inability to see the evil and the need for judging it has been set down to indifference, want of conscience, the absence of faith, or the presence of self-will. Christians in the denominations have frequently been measured, not by their own consciences, but by our consciences, our light or our knowledge, forgetful of how grace alone has made us to differ. It has often been a matter for amazement that they did not see, and act upon the truth when it was put before them. Their bad teaching, their prejudices, their avoiding to test all by the Word, their

refusing to enquire into facts connected with discipline, their being hindered by relationships, their clinging to what is supported by honored names, and their pointing to blessing enjoyed as proof of being in a right position, have often been felt and deprecated. We have been sure that we would never have been so lacking in faithfulness in such circumstances. Many who will agree with these remarks are now to be tested. There is evil of a grave character connected with all who are in fellowship with London. If this has not been known before; it is known now, and the proofs have been given.

Is the reader prepared to "enquire and make search, and ask dilligently," and put into practice the principles he has professed? The matter is now on the conscience in the presence of Him whose "eyes are as a flame of fire." May "he that is holy, he that is true," have the joy of saying, thou "hast kept my Word and hast not denied my name."

WELLINGTON JUDGMENT, N.Z.

The course of action pursued by many in Britain and America regarding Reading and Montreal Questions has been closely followed in Australasia. The practices adopted in taking up the questions may well be challenged in regard both to the *time* and the *manner*.

In Sydney and Melbourne the cases came up in an orderly way through some presenting letters from the sources of the troubles in Britain and America. Wellington, N.Z., however, did not wait for such a call to act, but proceeded to settle matters and send out its judgment to which other assemblies might bow. This assumption of a kind of metropolitan position is unscriptural. If matters had been left to God, some other assembly in New Zealand might have been called upon to act by some one presenting a letter. Wellington might have had to bow to that assembly, and not that assembly to bow to Wellington, as required by the issuing of the Wellington judgment. Delay would also have permitted saints to know more of the facts, though this would have made them less like "dumb driven cattle." But, as pointed out by Dr. Burton, this desire to do something, instead of waiting for God, has done much mischief. An assembly, as well as an individual, may run unsest, and its action be of the flesh.

Then as to the principles adopted in taking up the cases, in announcing an Australian decision in New Zealand, a leading brother wrote: "I think you will feel, too, that it (the Reading and Montreal trouble) must not be laid before the assemblies as an open question that the saints may take sides upon." This principle has been, in the interests of truth and justice, all too well practised in New Zealand. It simply means that the leading brothers, who alone possessed any information, should choose or judge, and then bring their judgment, not "as an open question," but as what was previously determined, and get the assembly to endorse their action. If this is not clerisy in principle and fact I profess not to understand the notion of a clergyman. I proceed to prove that this was what was done in Wellington.

Previous to coming to a decision in Wellington, the saints were supplied by our brother C. E. Capper with printed extracts of papers or letters by A. J. T., F. G. P., C. S., W. J. L., and A. H. B. Copies of these extracts had also been sent to other gatherings:

This act called forth letters of caution to Mr. Capper from a brother in Christchurch; another in Dunedin, and from myself, then in Nelson. The following is from a copy of one of the letters of this correspondence in reply to one from Mr. C. :—

“I fully accept and concur in the principle you so clearly state, that we are not called upon to re-open or rejudge any matter which has already been brought before an assembly gathered in the Name of the Lord, and on which an assembly judgment has been given.

But in this case the question I do not feel clear upon is this,—which assembly is it that has recorded that judgment that was led to by the Holy Spirit, with the Lord Jesus in the midst? It is apparent that different assemblies have given different judgments. We cannot follow them all, any more than we can believe that all were given in subjection to the Holy Ghost. The first assembly judgment in the matter was given on the spot, viz., at Reading itself, and therefore the first question to be settled is, Was it an unrighteous judgment, and has it been set aside in a godly and orderly way? The mere fact that some of the London gatherings have come to a contrary judgment does not, to my mind, answer these questions, and to act conscientiously on the principles we have already stated we do need to be clear on this.”

In my own letter, Deut. xiii., as noticed in “Questions,” page 2, was urged, and “Question” 15, page 6, was put almost as now printed in my first paper.

It was also pointed out that the printed extracts sent out by Mr. Capper, were *onesided, extreme, untrue, and dictatorial*, and that instead of giving information and pointing out a scriptural course, they savoured of the spirit of clerisy. These points were expanded, and the letter closed as follows :—

“The sleight of hand by which knots are cut prevents godly exercise, and may hinder real progress. It is a mere human way of settling difficulties which leaves no room for God. I am not giving or even indicating my judgment; but urging that instead of blindly following men, the saints should, with humiliation, self-judgment and patience, go through the crisis with God.”

F. G. P., as quoted in the extracts, wrote :—

“I accept the judgment of London, &c., and personally for myself judge that their action is right and sound, and that this doctrine is subversive of the truth. . . . C. E. S. . . . issued a fresh tract endorsing all . . . he takes the place of a heretic by so doing, and by leading a party to support his views. F. W. Grant has done the same. . . . Grant and Stuart have shown up what and where they are. . . . Your path will be simple in the colonies as ours. We judge the decision right, and accept it by bowing to it as of the Lord. I hope the colonies will go right in this test too.”

W. J. L., quoted in the “Extracts” as writing to F. W. G. about his tract, says :—

“I must frankly say to you that it is heart-rending and distressing in the extreme to find the word of God torn to pieces and ground to powder, and then made up into a book—theology never meant for living souls, of whose care you seem to have no conception. I rise from the weary task with the involuntary question, Has the author ever known himself before God a ruined sinner, has he known forgiveness, has he ever called God Father? My heart would fain answer in the affirmative, but I speak of the impression your tract produces. . . . Lastly, heretic-like, you are striving might and main to get your system of doctrine generally accepted in the States and Canada, forming a party round yourself. P.S.—Since writing the above I have received a copy of the notice from the gathering in Montreal in respect to yourself and your teaching. I can only bow to their action, thanking God that He has given to some to be firm in this painful matter.”

Mr. Grant, to whom these extracts were sent by myself, as previously quoted, explicitly denies Mr. Lowe's charges. Other documents confirm this denial, and also show that the Montreal action was not an *assembly* judgment, but that of a bare majority. Plainfield gave the first judgment in the case, and their circular distinctly answers the charges. (See pages 35 (1), (5), 39, 32.)

C. Stanley, quoted in the "Extracts," says:—

"As to sealing, this is mere dust, as another has said. It serves to hide the levelling down which would gradually rob us of all we have in Christ risen from the dead. It is stated that Old Testament saints had eternal life *in the Son*, and the brother taught that they and we were in Deity."

As to "mere dust," C. S.'s statements are that and worse, for they are false. The edict against Mr. Grant, on the showing of his accusers ("Doctrines," page 16), had five counts, and three of these are connected with sealing. As to "rob us of all," &c., this is on a par with the reckless and untruthful statements of C. H. M. Enough has been quoted from Mr. Grant to show that the former statement, and that as to being "in Deity," have been explicitly denied. But C. S.'s whole paper was written before the division, and pleaded and tried to prove that the teachers should not be cut off. He owned this himself in a letter to Nelson lately, in answer to enquiry. In Wellington, however, parts of his paper were used with other extracts *urging cutting off*. This surely was "not honest."

Dr. Burton's thoughts as to the doctrines of C. E. S. and F. W. G. were also given in the "Extracts," but no indication was given that he considered the discipline was contrary to Church principles, and indeed that it was an "uncalled-for division," and the result of "the domination of a party," yet his influence was used to urge to action, while he really was opposed, as his letters show, to such a course.

Mr. Capper, in reply to my letter of August 28th, 1885, concerning the "Extracts," says:—

"You appear to mistake the object of the printed extracts from letters. I alone am responsible for their issue. They were simply intended to afford information to the saints here as to the judgment of godly brethren (known to many in the colony either personally or through their writings) concerning the doctrines themselves. As to the course of action here in the colonies, to my mind it is simple. We have not to do with the doctrines themselves directly, but with the *decisions* of certain assemblies in other places respecting these doctrines and the conduct of those holding and identifying themselves with them. If we recognise the fact that there is one body and one Spirit, we are bound to use diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and therefore to accept and bow to the judgment of such assemblies as were brought into immediate contact with the matter itself, and hence responsible to the Lord to act in their competency, if assemblies of God cannot be questioned. . . . on principle, we bow to the decisions of the assemblies on the spot, who were competent to act, and whose act is binding on us. In connection with the Reading matter all is practically clear, as far as I am aware. London as a whole has acted, and this was followed by Forest Hill, taking up an additional phase of the matter, which was not apparently previously dealt with by London, and I am not aware of divisions in connection with the actions of these assemblies—absolute unanimity is clearly not required. The decision of the Forest Hill assembly, brought into immediate contact with the question of reception from Reading, is itself quite sufficient ground for action by us. These are the facts, and to adopt the decision of an assembly of God, in a matter they were responsible to act in, and their competency to do which cannot be questioned, is incumbent upon us, and is *not* blindly following men and committing ourselves in the dark." (In reference to Grant) . . . The principle, however, is the same; what we have to do with is the decision of the assembly for or against him and his doctrine."

Forest Hill, though "taking up an additional phase," endorsed the judgment of Battersea, which has been shown to have no scriptural warrant. Till Battersea can show its authority, or give godly reasons for ignoring the judgment of Reading, the judgment of Battersea, and all others based upon it, fall to the ground. To take Forest Hill's, or any judgment based on that of Battersea, and bow to it, simply begs the whole question. The junction had been passed long before, and to join the train at Forest Hill, or any succeeding station, is to start on what had previously left the main line of divine principles.

We have now before us, in the main, the "information," "the facts," "the course of action," and the principles which determined the judgment of Wellington, as it is beyond question that Mr. Capper was chiefly instrumental in bringing about that judgment. The "information" in the Extracts, we have seen, was *one-sided, dishonest, false* and dictatorial or clerical. Through Mr. Capper and F. G. P., saints are just told what to do, and that "your path will be simple." Priests could not more distinctly direct papists or dictate to them. I find, through enquiry in Wellington, that even intelligent brothers did not hear the facts of the questions. Several who took an interest, in any enquiry there was, testify that they did not at all understand *till recently* that there was a *moral question* at Reading, or that the accepting of London judgment involved the over-riding of the Reading assembly judgment in that moral question. Others affirm that the Wellington action proceeded as already indicated by Mr. Capper's letter, and say that as yet they do not know the facts, and one added that he did not want to know them.

The following is the testimony of our brother Miller :—

"Now, I ask, when the assembly in Wellington decided to accept the London judgment, was there any knowledge of a Reading judgment? I certainly had none. Each can answer for himself whether he had or not. It was certainly not talked of in the assembly meeting. The simple impression left on my mind was that a division had occurred in the assembly at Reading, on the ground of alleged bad doctrine; London took up the complaint and decided against Mr. Stuart and those who held with him. The pamphlet on "Christian Standing and Condition" was the only paper I saw on the question, and it certainly does not contain any facts connected with the judgments. It is true that a statement was made at the meeting. What number of facts that statement contained I am not at present prepared to say, but what was said presented the London judgment in a very favourable light, and impressed me in a very different way from facts which I have subsequently learned. Moreover, it was made by a brother who had already made up his mind on the question, and which would naturally receive the tone of his own convictions.

If we had not all the facts at the time, we ought to have waited till we had, for without them it was manifestly a wrong course to take, even though the result could not be called in question. Ignorance can only bring weakness and shame to a cause, and truth does not require the support of ignorance. Thus the acceptance of the London judgment by Wellington upon such a basis was a questionable act, and its unanimity was not a thing of which to be proud."

In all his "information," printed or oral, it is proved that Mr. Capper looked at only one side of the questions. His letter to me, as quoted, and Mr. Miller's testimony, are of this the demonstration. He makes a choice of "the decisions of certain assemblies," and of *one decision*, that of Montreal, which was *not* the decision of an assembly. He shut his eyes to, and kept his mouth closed about, Plainfield judgment, which was the *first-real assembly judgment* in the case. He did the same with regard to the moral question judged at Reading. London and Wellington were in fellowship with Reading when it judged; and they were also in fellowship with Plainfield when it judged that the Montreal action was *not* an assembly action. On Mr. Capper's own showing, therefore, "If we recognise the fact that there is one body, . . . we bow to the judgment of such assemblies as were brought into immediate contact with the matter itself, and hence responsible to the Lord to act in their competency, if assemblies of God cannot be questioned." Plainfield and Reading, while still owned as assemblies of God, had to do with the "matter itself" in each instance. Why then, on his own principles, did our brother Mr. Capper not bow to Plainfield and Reading? Why did he not tell the Wellington saints that there was a grave question of discipline and assembly judgments involved, as

well as supposed false doctrines? Why did he not inform them of the judgments of Reading and Plainfield? Till months after they had judged in Wellington few of the saints knew of these first judgments. In regard to them, they were not told by Mr. Capper, "*on principle, we bow to the decisions of the assemblies on the spot,*" as he has put it as to London, which is not the same spot as Reading, where the moral case was first judged by an assembly.

But Mr. Capper's mind was made up and expressed in writing to me weeks before Wellington judged.

It is clear, therefore, that Mr. Capper, or others with him, made a choice of "*certain decisions,*" and so put them before the gathering that the Wellington judgment was recorded in favour of London and Montreal, and sent forth for other assemblies to bow to it. This was actually done by Dunedin, and, through some from Dunedin and Wellington, Nelson also accepted this judgment. These are facts of which the details might be given by oral and written evidence.

As we have seen, Mr. Capper was well warned as to choosing judgments and getting the saints to commit themselves in the dark. The thoughts and almost the exact language of my Questions Nos. 14 and 15, page 6 (first paper), were put to him in my letter of August 28th, 1885, regarding his printing the extracts. Yet this is what has happened: The Wellington action, from the proofs now given, was in substance the repetition of the clerical action of the Bethesda leaders in 1848. On the spot I record and send out my solemn protest against such ecclesiastical corruption as thus attaches the Lord's name and authority to the misguided though most sincere actions of men.

It is affirmed that Sydney had decided against C. E. S. and F. W. G., Mr. Powley being there at the time. He wrote that he was coming home to Wellington. Hence it was said that Wellington must decide or Mr. Powley would commit the assembly or be outside. Wellington judgment, from the Extracts and Mr. Capper's and Mr. Powley's correspondence, appears to have been a foregone conclusion on the part of the leaders. This has now been admitted by several in the meeting.

The Reading judgment in the moral question, we have seen, was never weighed, never distinctly stated, in the Wellington investigation. In Christchurch, on the other hand, from correspondence and the testimony of those who have since withdrawn from the meeting there, it is clear that the Christchurch decision to bow to London was almost entirely based on misrepresentations of the Reading moral case. This decision, after great exercise however, was come to chiefly through Mr. Oliphant's papers and Mr. Powley's representations. The former was purely special pleading and reasoning in a circle, after having begged the question at the outset. The latter have been sent to Reading, and have been proved to be one-sided and false representations. In Wellington, therefore, the Reading assembly judgment was ignored. In Christchurch, the representations of two brothers, and the one of them not knowing the facts, were accepted rather than the judgment of Reading assembly. Two individuals against 150 who profess to give an assembly judgment!! Brothers do not hesitate to say that except for Mr. Powley's visit to Christchurch the meeting would not have gone with London. But in these circumstances, whether was Wellington or Christchurch led of the Spirit? It is easier to believe that neither of them were, than that both of them were so led. Wellington looked at one side of things; Christchurch at another side; and putting what both saw together, you are a long

way short of the facts of the case. To solemnly attach the Lord's Name and authority to such actions, as being actions to which the Spirit led, with the Lord in the midst, and which are bound in heaven, requires more boldness than I profess. But such is what is assumed, or these judgments are a sham and solemn mockery. The gravity of them, however, is partly understood and attested. Simply because one has not bowed to these judgments, and has felt before the Lord that he should protest against them, he is treated on the street and otherwise by brethren as one who brings not the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9-11). That scripture was applied to me in Wellington; and one in Wellington was twice visited and warned as to receiving me into the house. Such conduct will work its own cure. But it seems that not merely C. E. S. and F. W. G., but all who refuse the discipline against them, have given up Christianity !!

It has now been proved conclusively that many saints have been led to a judgment without knowing the facts. Will false pride prevent them from owning their error and keeping good consciences by confessing their failure and retracing their steps?

PERSONAL CHARGES.

It was thought that an emphatic denial of the charges of "want of honesty and truthfulness" against myself, together with the fact that others who had the proofs also denied them, would have rendered it unnecessary to say much more on such a painful matter. But former charges are being kept up in the face of the denial, and fresh accusations have recently been made; and my first pamphlet is said to contain false statements. When those brethren who do know, are contradicted by brethren who do not know, whereof they affirm, it is not difficult to tell who is affirming the truth. But my referring to these things is said by many to be self-vindication, of which there appears to be a peculiar horror. One has not heard a single expression of the kind, however, in regard to the gross *false accusations*. This hollow profession of high truth with such low practice and want of conscience about real moral evil shows how like the Pharisees we have become. The balance of truth seems to be lost. There is the one side, "avenge not yourselves;" and there is the other side, "thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him," or as in the margin, "*that thou bear not sin for him*," (Lev. xix. 17-18). I entreated by letter, and by two brethren, and waited for months in vain, to have the false charges withdrawn. Instead of this I found that they were kept up and being used to overthrow my testimony in at least ten assemblies. To have been silent any longer would have been to have borne the sins of my brethren, and to have been regardless of the consciences of those who felt about a servant through whom they had received blessing being under such grave accusations.

Besides, unless the charges against me can be proved (and this is impossible) there is moral evil in connection with Wellington gathering of a more pronounced character than that for which Reading and C. E. S. have been judged. There is also manifest clerisy on the part of two of the brothers. Of this their conduct, towards myself, and the way they have led the saints blindly in recent troubles, is definite proof. One felt called upon to protest against evil and unscriptural practices, and as through these brothers in *at least ten assemblies* one's testimony had been falsely impugned, it was necessary to refute

their "charges of want of honesty and truthfulness." On being asked on what authority he repeated such charges, a brother who does not know me replied that "they were in everybody's mouth." Others have also been bold enough to write them. If refuting them is self-vindication, it is a shame that it should be required, but in answering one would desire to feel one has to do with the Lord. He also is an example. He answered, and did not answer when falsely charged. While He was a witness whose testimony might be received he answered. When all was over for testimony He did not answer. To the charge, "Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil," Jesus answered, "I have not a devil."—John viii. 48-59. ~~When~~ He was delivered up and the false witnesses testified against him, "Jesus held his peace."—Matt. xxvi. 59-63. One gathers from this that unless all is over and testimony is vain, one is bound to deny, and justified in denying, false charges when they hinder testimony for the Lord. The Spirit of God led Paul to do this, frequently and fully.—1 Cor. ix. He writes, "*Mine answer to them that do examine me is this,*" &c. He returns to it in a second letter, "*Do we begin again to commend ourselves?*" and says, "I speak foolishly, as he wishes to "cut off occasion from them which desire occasion."—2 Cor. xi. So far as I know, I have no other desire or motive. Some of the things have been borne in silence for six months, and others are of nearly two years standing.

Some time ago the sorrow, through misrepresentation, suspicion and isolation, was such as to make one feel well nigh overwhelmed. Some definite incidents came before me where there could be no mistake as to there being persecution and falsehood. At once it appeared to me that these were the works of the enemy. From that time, through treating them as such, through mercy, I have been carried above the sorrow. The violence and falsehood which have been brought to bear in connection with C. E. S. and F. W. G. have been painfully experienced in the colonies by some of us who have refused to bow blindly to London. Like the fire forces of the earth, there is a connection though the outlets are so widely apart.

We have long known that we have had smouldering and steaming volcanoes in New Zealand. While these pages were being written they have broken out into violent eruption. The roar of Tarawera has echoed round the world. There have been serious losses of life and property, and beauties of nature are lost for ever. There are geysers of scalding mud, and it is neither comfortable nor safe to be near the craters. These things are an allegory. Some of us have known for years that there have been moral quakes and earth tremors among assemblies here. Without going beneath for motives, the clerisy, the jealousy, and the envy and strife have reached the surface, and there is enough of hot mud. Doubtless the writer is thought to have been much to blame. But he has not *made the mud*. From numerous geysers it had become so hot and heavy that he had to try to scrape some of it off that he might walk and work more freely in digging out other sufferers in the eruptions.

But when will a common calamity banish petty differences and bring us all together in the dust in brokenness and confession instead of the separation, the bitterness and haughtiness, now, alas, so common? The Lord is my witness that it is my desire to see reconciliation according to fervent love and holiness of truth. I have stayed two months at the source of the personal differences without having one single enquiry which might tend to heal the breach, and,

alas, with many other proofs that there is no desire that it should be healed. I have also put matters before other brethren where I am better known without any result. I am willing to look at anything here or elsewhere written or said, and if shown wherein it is untrue or wrong I shall gladly, I trust, own my fault. I have written, but I am ashamed to print, the details as to the bitterness and falsehood brought to bear in the detracting from, and the undermining of, my testimony. I have waited and still wait in the hope that these things may give place to grace and truth. Should this prove all in vain and the charges still be maintained, as they have been in the face of denial, it may be needful to put the details before brethren. I sincerely pray that it may not be necessary, and still so far, while being persecuted, I suffer it; being defamed, I entreat.—1 Cor. iv. 12-13. This, however, does not preclude the pointing out of evil which ought to be judged.

It seems I am severely blamed for not seeking the brothers who have given offence, and also falsely blamed for avoiding other brethren. There is another side to this. I have had no encouragement, as the brethren who visited on my account and others can testify. I have to the one himself who wrote the charges and to others, offered to withdraw whatever others judge to be amiss. He, however, though charging me so grossly, has "nothing to withdraw or alter," and recent actions show that he does not even accept any withdrawal made by me, and he distinctly took the ground that unless I was in fellowship with London he would not hear me, and he showed it by passing me on the street while I looked in vain for recognition. This was done, moreover, before he knew from me what position I had taken, and before my first pamphlet was even written. Neither he nor his brethren ever once asked why I took my seat behind in the Wellington meeting, though they marked it by ignoring me on the street. To most of them I am known by sight and repute.

The other brother who circulated and confirmed the charges has shown estrangement for about two years. So long ago, though knowing of nothing on my part to cause estrangement, at the request of brethren I went from Ashburton to Christchurch to see him. He declined my offer to come to where he was staying. I have not seen him since then, and my offer to meet him in Wellington lately was not even noticed in his reply, but by saying that he was busy "house riding," the impression was left that the report that he was going away was correct. From his evading enquiries, and his conduct towards me, specially in relation to an assembly judgment at Christchurch, as I had the proofs, I gave him facts and told him that I now avoided him on the ground of Rom. xvi. 17. He then had cause for seeking me, but he sent no remonstrance. He had also previously warned Nelson brethren, by letter, not to receive me, after having on his own authority, in several quarters, declared me out of fellowship, and circulated the false report that I had proposed a neutral meeting. I was still breaking bread then and afterwards on the old ground, and my only fault had been that I would not bow blindly to London. When, months before, I sent my sixteen questions to him for information, as already noticed, they were not even acknowledged. Thus the one who circulates the charges instructs a gathering in fellowship with London not to let me into fellowship, and the one who wrote the charges will not hear me unless I am in fellowship with London. There must be clerisy somewhere in no mistake.

Since the issue, and on the ground of, my pamphlet, the Wellington meeting, in which I never broke bread, has acted in declaring me out of fellowship, and taken pains to have the notice of it read in other meetings. I had sat behind on the very day action was taken, yet neither before nor afterwards was one word said to me about this metropolitan procedure. *Metropolitan indeed*, for if I asked now to be received in any gathering where I have broken bread, and with which I have been locally connected, they could not now, and dare not, receive me without asking Wellington—a gathering which never once included me in one of its assembly meetings.—Further, the well-known chief rulers of Wellington—Mr. Capper and Mr. Powley—are the brothers who have written and circulated the charges against me. The one refused to hear me unless I was within; and the other gave instructions that I was not to be received, and now Wellington has authoritatively closed the door, and taken pains to let this be heard throughout New Zealand. There has not been any inquiry into the moral charges, and the very reverse of any effort to clear my character is practised by the friends and partisans of the offenders. What was held to be sin at Reading, deserving even the extreme act of excommunication, by London, is by Wellington's action towards me shown to be beneath notice. That the making and keeping up of gross false accusations is no sin if the accused only gets out of fellowship, is a new doctrine which is much worse than the supposed heresy of C. E. S. and F. W. G. I am content and thankful to be outside of what looks so like popish and moral corruption, but I do not and will not ignore that it is among the members of the one body with whom I am still united. These things, however, more than answer to J. N. D.'s words as to "*the demoralisation that had set in.*" May the words from the Prophets, quoted in my first paper, be laid to heart by us all, for "truth is fallen in the street and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the Lord saw it and it displeased Him that there was no judgment.—Isa. lix. 8-25; Jer. xiv. 17-22; Am. vi. 2-13.

My brethren, in several quarters, have had facts before them regarding my connection with publishing, years ago. As they express themselves perfectly satisfied, I am now free to break bread and labour as before, in fellowship with C. E. S. and F. W. G., and all who remain on the original ground of the one body. We must not separate ourselves from what is of God, but must bear its shame as our own before Him. May there be the simple heart-felt sympathy with both the glory of a gracious God, and the sorrows and humiliation of a failed, erring testimony.

W. CORRIE JOHNSTON.

N.B.—The contents of this paper, and the first one on "Questions," are strictly private for those in fellowship. Anyone using them otherwise is abusing the confidence which belongs to a private letter.

ERRATA.

- First paper, page 2, 6th line, read "the poor" for "he poor."
,, pages 4, 5, four times read "A.P.C." for "E.P.C."
"Doctrines," page 2, 2nd line, read "nearness" for "nearest."
,, page 7, 21st line, read "in the fact" for "in fact."
,, page 16, 16th line, read "Grant" for "Grant's."
,, page 19, 30th line, read "deifying" for "defying."
"Discipline," pages 2, 3, omit quotation marks in paragraph beginning
Now, dear brethren, and ending, *no malice.*
,, page 4, middle, read, "The first" for "the false."
,, page 17, 7th line, read "D. L. H." for "Dr. I. H."

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