

[PRIVATE—FOR THOSE FORMERLY IN ONE FELLOWSHIP.]

THE DECISIONS

AND

THE DOCTRINES

CONNECTED WITH

“THE READING QUESTION;”

AND

AN APPEAL TO BRETHREN
IN FELLOWSHIP WITH LONDON.

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[Private—For those formerly in the same Fellowship.]

THE DECISIONS AND THE DOCTRINES IN THE READING QUESTION.

THE Assembly at Reading judged its own case of supposed moral evil on March 13th, 1884. After full investigation, for two evenings, with the parties face to face, and all the facts before the Assembly, it was declared that there was no evil requiring Assembly action (1). In the way the case was pressed upon the Assembly two things were involved—viz., a question of malice, and a question of facts. There were no proofs of malice; so, in regard to that, both parties were cleared. As to facts, Mr. S. was justified in his judgment of Miss H.'s letter, and she was blamed and asked to withdraw the letter. She would not, but withdrew from the Assembly. One brother at first, and then other two, within a month, with the sisters, made up the number of those who withdrew from the Assembly to about eleven. Except a few others, the Assembly of about one hundred and thirty saints cleared itself and went on then, and goes on now, as formerly. Those who withdrew, and London saints who took them up, were, therefore, the divisionists, and those who follow London put themselves in the same position. They go out and form a new fellowship: where whole meetings follow London, though they meet in the same place and appear to go on as before, they have in reality changed their ground of gathering and gone into a new fellowship.

Mr. Stuart's tract, "Christian Standing and Condition," was not issued till six weeks after the division. His teaching on Propitiation was not published till fully a year and a-half after that. The division was made, therefore, not on account of evil doctrine, but on the ground of a supposed unrighteous judgment. It has also been urged that the judgment was contradictory. Neither of these things have been proved. The facts show that the judgment was consistent and righteous; and, on the ground of the one body, all other Assemblies were bound to own it till it was proved to be otherwise. This has been owned as a fundamental principle of gathering for the last forty years.

The seceders and influential brethren kept agitating the question. Hence, eight months after the judgment of Reading,

(1.) "The Reading Question: A History and Review," p. 28-31; "Review Appendix" (Reading Assembly Circular, signed by twenty-six brothers), p. 70-73.

seven brethren from London visited Reading. They met the saints, and said that they were there owning the full standing of Reading as an Assembly of God. They also owned the righteousness of the judgment; but they wanted to get an alteration of the *wording* of the first clause of it, to take away a handle from others. In due time this was complied with; but the letter from Reading containing the alteration was never read to the saints in London (2).

Bath took upon itself the responsibility of re-judging the Reading Question on December 22nd, 1884. Bath thus acted independently, and also relied upon a one-sided, untruthful narrative, which suppressed important letters. In expressing its own judgment, Bath also made a false accusation, and this judgment, founded upon and containing falsehood, was sent forth in the Name of the Lord. To this day it is not withdrawn, nor has there been any confession of having thus dishonoured the Lord and defamed His saints at Reading (3).

A sister from among those outside at Reading had gone to Battersea meeting at London; but she was not received. After some months, however, on February 9th, 1885, Battersea re-judged the Reading question. How it was done may be seen further on; but the following judgment was issued for acceptance by London meetings:—

“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. Stuart’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 judgment is that the meeting at Queen’s Road, Reading, cannot be owned as on the ground of the Assembly of God.”

When this judgment came before Park Street, London, on February 23rd, 1885, the meeting did not accept it, but gave the following judgment of its own:—

“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 (4).”

Leaving other points, meanwhile, this judgment is remarkable in that it makes the Assembly, as J. N. D. puts it, “take the place of God.” The meeting actually assumes Divine prerogatives in judging the *notices* of the saints who had acted at

2. “Review,” p. 51–53; “Appendix,” p. 75; “Recent Disruptions: Discipline,” p. 8, 15.

3. “Recent Disruptions: Discipline,” p. 6–9; “Review,” p. 56, 57.

4. “Recent Disruptions: Discipline,” p. 19–11.

Reading. It not only falsely accuses them of persisting in an unrighteous judgment, but imputes to them the ungodly *motive* of doing what they did " *in order to screen and support a teacher.* " To think and declare that so many saints, gathered to the Lord's name, would lend themselves to such wickedness was too much, even though Park Street said it, for other saints in London (5). They would not have this Park Street judgment, and, when the assumption and wicked nature of it were pointed out, Park Street leaders were glad to let it pass out of sight. But they have never to this day confessed to the saints at Reading that they had done them such a cruel wrong. Honour and righteousness were ignored by Park Street. "The unjust knoweth no shame." This judgment, however, was the one accepted by Christchurch and Auckland (N.Z.), so far as they knew what they were doing.

Still the Reading Question was not settled, for London. Battersea meeting again took the matter up on March 15th, 1885. Instead of the last paragraph of their previous judgment, they substituted the following:—"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." Thus the Reading Question was first re-judged at Bath, and some Assemblies actually accepted Bath judgment. Next it was re-judged at Battersea; then at Park Street; and then Battersea had virtually to judge again, as their first judgment had gone too far in denying that Reading was on the ground of the Assembly of God. London was said to accept this altered judgment.

1. All this betrays utter *confusion* . London also mixed up the moral and doctrinal questions, and thus increased the confusion. To say that God is the author of that is to deny Scripture (I. Cor. xiv., 33.)

2. Look at how Battersea judged. Ten of the brethren at Reading endorse the truthfulness of the "History and Review," by C. B. Here is an extract (p. 61): "Had Battersea sent or written to Reading, in order to assure itself of the truth, where alone it could be learned? Neither! We received no communication whatever from Battersea until we received its so-called judgment. Yet they say: 'Having before us the facts relative to the judgment of the Assembly at Reading on March 13th, 1884!' What other facts had they but D. L. H.'s one-sided 'Narrative'? None! for none had been published by us. And so they accept, and that without inquiry, the evidence of one witness, and that witness the brother of the principal party concerned, and one who had suppressed material evidence. 'In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established' is the Divine rule."

Mr. Powley wrote to Timaru saints, "A letter of commendation came from Queen's Road (Reading) to Battersea" (6). On inquiring at Reading as to the truth of this, Reading answers: "This is not true; no brother here gave a letter of commendation to Battersea. . . . We had no inquiry 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 brothers even—simply settled by two or three leaders, and then given out to the Assembly." We might explain that a letter was taken to Battersea by one of the seceders at Reading, from one of their number, and this has been put as a letter from the Assembly. But on this ground Battersea took up the case, and thereby denied the one body—denied that they owned the Assembly at Reading by taking up the case of one who was outside at Reading. They had no Scriptural warrant for taking up the case at all. But, suppose Reading was wrong; Bath had already judged. Battersea did not bow to Bath, but judged again, and their judgment says that they judged the Reading judgment. This was pure *independency*—a flat denial of the principle of the one body—and so they put themselves, and all who bow to their judgment, off the ground of gathering.

3. Then we have the proofs that Battersea judged on one-sided, partial evidence, which even contained falsehood. It was also done in the absence of the parties, and without once referring to Reading Assembly. This was manifestly *unrighteous* judgment. "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him" (Prov. xviii., 13).

4. Battersea says, "Having had before us the facts." From the evidence of some brethren at Battersea who refused the action, as well as the quoted testimony of eleven brethren at Reading, it is proved that the statement as to having the "*facts*" is *untrue*.

5. Battersea says of Reading, "Their judgment is leavened with unrighteousness. This is a *second untruth*: the Reading circular and the seven brethren from London being witnesses, as they only wanted, not the judgment itself, but the *wording* of the first clause of the judgment, altered.

6. Battersea says, "Mr. Stuart's tract undermines the *fundamental truths* of Christianity." This is a *third untruth*. If not, from the multitude of attacks, produce the proof of fundamental error. It cannot be done. Then Phil. iii., 15, 16, is a word in season, and gives the plain path.

7. Then, we are compelled to come to the astounding conclusion that it has been proved that the Battersea judgment contains three falsehoods. Further, it is also characterised by *confusion, independency, and unrighteousness*. These things, more-

over, are done *in the name of the Lord*, and saints everywhere must bow to it as that which is bound in heaven, or be dishonest in continuing in the fellowship of London. Some may be allowed to continue, though they have doubts about the judgment, but it certainly is made a *test*, so that some of us would have to bow to it before we would be received by London meetings. Then, whether it is owned or not by those within, they make themselves partakers of London's guilt by going on in that fellowship. And what guilt! Surely the dogmas of Rome cannot go much further in corruption and iniquity than this London judgment does when it demands us to bow to a thing like this, as if it was bound in heaven! What spell has come over saints if they can consider these things and not be exercised? Have they lost all moral sensibility? Has conscience become paralysed? Is it not calling evil good, and good evil, and putting darkness for light, and light for darkness, in an extraordinary way? Yet, if one does not do this, he is said to be out of fellowship. If there are only eyes to see, it is matter for thankfulness to be out of such a fellowship. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all."

The consciences of unconverted men would at once repudiate London's actions. J. N. D. says: "Dear friends, when the natural conscience is more upright than that resulting from religious forms, it is over with the Church—it touches its end; and the candlestick will be removed there where it serves only as the instrument of wickedness, such as the world can hardly imagine. The corruption of that which is the most excellent is the worst of corruptions."

THE MONTREAL QUESTION.

While saints in Britain were occupied with the Reading Question, saints in America had trouble, which resulted in division at Montreal, on December 17th, 1884. The cause of this division can be traced to Britain, and, indeed, to the same leaders who were behind the agitation against Reading. Much that has come to light points to the bitter fruit on both sides of the Atlantic springing from a common root. Saints at Liverpool testify that, when Lord Cecil was among them, previous to going to America in 1884, he was occupied with the same themes, and manifesting the same spirit, as during the next three months when his agitation led up to and brought about the division at Montreal. In attacking Mr. F. W. Grant, he openly claimed to be the representative of English brethren. Their letters were constantly referred to for the purpose of strengthening his arguments and leading the saints to go with him against Mr. Grant. The result was that, after three months' agitation, a circular, signed by thirty-eight brethren, was issued from Montreal, rejecting Mr. Grant as a teacher. This plainly showed that a party was already formed. Mr. Grant had not then published his tract, though his small tract had been sent to labouring brethren, but

not published. Montreal Assembly had not then taken up the question. The publishing of the tract, and Mr. Grant's visit to Montreal, were forced upon him by the actions of the party led by Lord Cecil. After the circular of the thirty-eight, in which the party distinctly declared itself, a counter circular was signed by twenty-one brothers, in which they say: "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." But matters were pressed, and those who objected ignored, though they numbered over forty, and the remainder assumed to be the Assembly, and act without them. To quote from witnesses:—"In defiance of the plainly expressed opposition of a large number, they (the majority with A. P. C.) sent, as from the Assembly, a letter of final admonition to our brother F. W. Grant, thus falsely claiming, as the act of the Assembly, what our consciences refused." "The letter went, spite of our protest, to the brother in question, but was refused by him as not really from the Assembly, as it purported to be, and then a meeting was called to receive his answer. At this meeting it was stated that the paper then presented to the Assembly for their adoption, had been *already* assented to by forty-five persons! This kind of canvassing had been steadily going on and every effort made to influence people *before the professed deliberation began*. The result was that, regardless of the opposition of a large number, they again declared, as *an Assembly act*, the will of a majority, and F. W. Grant was put outside." (Circular signed by twenty-two brothers who met in Craig Street, Montreal.) The Montreal circular from the main meeting confirms these statements when it says, "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." Again, asserting the same claim, "the Assembly do hereby give him this last admonition." Of Mr. Grant's refusal of the letter "on account of this false assumption," they write. "This is the manner in which this solemn act of the Assembly was treated, and the Assembly indeed *railed at*." Again, in writing of the meeting to which they brought the judgment to be adopted, and actually stated that forty-five persons had *already* assented to it, they call it "*the Assembly act on the 17th December*," and "*the judgment of the Assembly in Montreal*."

Plainfield, having had the case sent on to it, states in its judgment in reply to Montreal: "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."

Without enlarging, four cogent reasons may be given for refusing the action of Montreal towards Mr. Grant:—(1) Mr.

Grant was not rejected by the Assembly, but only by a large party in it; (2) It was unscriptural to deal with Mr. Grant and put him away at Montreal, as he was not locally connected with that Assembly; (3) Mr. Grant's views do not touch foundation truths; they are not heresy, nor has he been proved to be a heretic; (4) It was unscriptural to base Assembly action on Tit. iii., 10, as that properly applies to individual, rather than Assembly, action.

Brethren with Mr. Grant in America, therefore, go on with brethren with Mr. Stuart in Britain, refusing division, and adhere to Phil. iii., 15-16.

THE DOCTRINES OF C. E. STUART.

As far back as 1879, the "Elements of Atonement" were stated by Mr. Stuart, in an article in the *Bible Herald*, just as he states them now, though more briefly. No one thought of objecting then to the way he put Atonement. In the *Christian Friend*, in 1831, he also put the ideas in almost the very words which he has given in the tracts, "Christian Standing and Condition" and "Propitiation by Blood." Lord Cecil thought he had found error in the article, and so the editor sent it to Mr. Darby for his judgment. Mr. Stuart went and saw Mr. Darby about it, and he expressed himself satisfied. Mr. Stuart was allowed to be sound in the faith then: his last book, on "The Epistle to the Romans," just issued at the end of 1889, will show that he is sound in the faith now. Every attack upon him in the years between, as may be seen in his tracts, has been answered by him in a way which proves that he is more sound and Scriptural than his accusers. Let any candid mind read Mr. Stuart's book on Romans, on questions at issue, and say, if he can, that Mr. S. is unsound on fundamental truth.

But, in looking at the doctrines, the first thing towards a just estimate of them is to get the mind free from *prejudice* as far as possible. The *influence of leaders*, likewise, ought not to be allowed to bias one's judgment. These two things blending together result in the superstition which keeps the mass of people in the Church of Rome under her sway. Extremes meet, and it is all too plain that those who have thought themselves furthest from Rome, and priestcraft, and clerisy, have again come under the control of such baneful principles. By the principles of the Reformation the spell was thought to be broken. It was the glory of that movement that the humblest believer should have his conscience before God, with none allowed to come between. With many this has already been quite surrendered, and their consciences are as much in the hands of leaders as those of the Romanists are in the hands of the priests. There is great need for getting back to what we have heard from the beginning, and acting upon the statement. "We ought to obey God rather than men."

Again, the doctrines of C. E. S. ought to be *understood*, even if they are to be refused. Nothing is more plain than the fact that even leaders have not taken pains to comprehend what they condemned. The printed letter of C. H. M. is a notorious example. Even after having had his attention called to his false statements by Mr. Stuart, and the passages pointed out which disproved them, he answered the letter, but confessed nothing, withdrew nothing, and then dated his own letter the next day, and issued it notwithstanding. In it C. H. M. says: "Think of having anything—standing, position, calling, hope, privilege, pardon, justification—apart from, or independent of, Christ." In the second edition he altered this to "apart from our being in Christ." In the preface he solemnly affirmed that he had not misrepresented the substance of what C. E. S. taught, and only admitted "verbal inaccuracy" in quotation. This made matters worse. Even the altered expression, "apart from our being in Christ," is flagrantly false. This was published, in both instances, after Mr. Stuart had written to C. H. M., asking, "Where will you find, when have you ever heard me teach, that we had, or could have, anything apart from Christ? Such a monstrous doctrine as that never entered into my brain, and never, that I am aware of, gained currency by my lips or my pen." Quoting the pages refuting another charge, Mr. S. also says to C. H. M., "You write, 'I see in it simply an effort of the enemy to rob the Church of God of all the characteristic truths of our glorious Christianity.' A more unfounded statement I could scarcely conceive." Further, C. H. M. says, "It is not Christianity at all," and, quoting this, Mr. S. suggests that he ought to have asked the writer, "whom you have known now for twenty years, whether he has really renounced the Christian faith?" Brethren at Reading still testify that C. H. M.'s false charges are not withdrawn.

The letter by C. H. M. has influenced thousands; and when its contents, and the way it was published, are considered, the hand of the enemy may be distinctly discerned. A copy of the first edition, with the original statement as quoted, is now before me. This copy was sent by Mr. Powley to the brethren with whom I was staying. In several other places I have seen copies of the second edition, which were sent to others by Mr. C. E. Capper. I find saints influenced by, and quoting this document, even now. The following sentence from this famous letter, in the light of the facts just stated, is an appropriate and truthful commentary, "To try and keep people together at the expense of truth and righteousness, is the principle of popery—the greatest moral blot in the universe of God." Then to C. H. M., and those who have diligently used his letter, it may simply be said, "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee."

Many have been told that they could not judge, and they should accept the judgment of leaders. But even babes in Christ can judge the moral turpitude of such conduct. As to the

doctrines, too, it should not be forgotten, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." On Phil. iii., 15-16, W. K. makes this important remark: "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." This is true, or no proper Assembly judgment can be given. Otherwise, it would be the few, not the "many" (II. Cor. ii., 5).

"CHRISTIAN STANDING AND CONDITION."

Let us try to put what Mr. Stuart teaches so that babes in Christ may understand it. The subject is "Scripture teaching about the believer's standing, and about his condition as being in Christ." These things, *standing* and *condition*, are said to be both true of every Christian at the same moment. They are taught distinctly, though not separated. *Standing* is connected with being before the throne of God; *condition*, with being in Christ. But it has always to be borne in mind, that both are true of the Christian at the same time. Say that there is a company of subjects before the Queen on the throne, and in the company there is the Prince of Wales and a page boy. As subjects, the Prince and the page have the same standing. The one on the throne has nothing against them; they are, in this respect, standing in the same favour as accepted subjects. But, if you go on to speak of the Prince as the Queen's son, and of all that is true of him in that respect, it is like speaking of what a Christian has as being in Christ, and united to Him, and as sharing in all the peculiar blessings which belong to the Church of God. This is what Mr. S. calls "condition." The standing of the Prince is the same as that of the page, or any other subject, before the throne; but the condition of the Prince is very different from that of the page or a mere subject. Then it is taught that all believers, New and Old Testament, or Millennial saints, have the same standing before the throne, on the ground of the perfect sacrifice of Christ. But if you speak of the blessings which Christians have beyond those ascribed to Old Testament, and to Millennial saints, that is their condition, and it adds nothing to the standing which they have in common with saints of all ages. This teaching, therefore, takes nothing from the Christian which belongs to him, and it adds nothing to the Jew which is not true of him. The things taught about the Christian are called by different names than those most frequently used, but the blessings are neither increased nor diminished. Instead of saying that Christians stand in Christ, Mr. S. would say that they stand on what Christ has done; but at the same time they are in Christ, and this, he says, is condition. This, therefore, in no way undermines the fundamental truths of Christianity.

For instance, Abraham is said to have been justified before God (Rom. iv., 1-5). God gave him a standing before Himself.

This must have been a perfect standing. This was ages before Christ came; so that Abraham could not then have been in Christ. Here, therefore, was a man with a perfect standing before God, and yet he was not in Christ. But Abraham's standing is shown by Mr. S. to be the same as that of the Christian, though the Christian is in Christ. "Hence," Mr. S. says, "the being in Christ adds nothing to a man's justification. It is a distinct line of teaching, and a different character of blessing." "It is true that in the part of Romans, iii., 5-11, which treats of justification, we read not of being in Christ, any more than in the portion which treats of being in Christ (v. 12; viii. 11) have we a word mentioned of the body of Christ, though it is quite certain that the one who is in Christ is also united to Christ as a member of His body."—"Christian Standing and Condition," p. 11.

PROPIATION BY BLOOD.

In this connection, it will be better to let Mr. Stuart put the doctrine in his own words:—

"So far in the Book of Leviticus we see how God ever pointed His people to it (atonement), and intimated what was needed to make it. In the sixteenth chapter of the same book, however, fresh lessons were taught them and us—viz., what are constituent elements of atonement, which to state them briefly, as there set forth, are the death of the victim (ver. 6); the scapegoat on which the sins were laid (ver. 10); the dealing with the blood in the holiest, by which propitiation was made (ver. 16); and the consuming of the burnt-offering, as well as the appointed parts of the sin-offering on the brazen altar (ver. 24). This last symbolises Divine judgment borne by the victim, for the fire which burnt thereon came down from heaven (Lev. ix., 24), and was never to go out (vi., 13). Over the scapegoat the High Priest confessed 'all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins,' putting them on the head of the goat, and sending it away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness (ver. 21). Within the veil he made propitiation by blood an essential element of atonement, 'because of the uncleannesses of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins' (ver. 16). This distinction should be noticed. Iniquities, transgressions, and sins were confessed on the scapegoat, whilst propitiation was made because of the uncleannesses of the children of Israel, as well as because of their transgressions and their sins. This throws some light on the subject of propitiation.

"Now this was a service done wholly within the sanctuary, when the High Priest had passed out of the sight of men. . . . Short and silent was the service. Aaron sprinkled the blood as directed, and came out. No provision was there in that ritual for a prayer inside the veil. The blood spoke, not Aaron, and it spoke to God. The cherubim, the supporters of God's throne,

gazed, as it were, on it, and the action of that throne, which must otherwise have been in judgment, could by virtue of it go out in grace. In the bright light of the Divine presence, the blood was put on the mercy-seat, and there remained; for, typical of the blood of His Son, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, nothing but holy perfection could be seen in it. Having dealt with the blood in the prescribed way, Aaron came out. Propitiation for the sins of the people had now been made. God's nature had been rightly cared for, and He could act in grace towards guilty ones consistently with His holiness and His righteousness, thus maintained and fully vindicated.

"In Hebrews we read (ii., 17): 'Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God to make propitiation for the sins of the people: for in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted.' Having passed through trials even to death—the death of the cross—in order to make propitiation for the sins of the people, He is fully able, as having suffered being tempted, to succour them that are tempted.

"His past sufferings fit Him for the exercise of His present priestly service of helping His saints. Again: 'But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building: neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once for all into the holy place, *i. e.*, holy of holies, having found an eternal redemption.' Again, 'Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, figures of (or, like in pattern to) the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us' (ix., 11, 12, 24). Again, 'A minister of the sanctuary (or holy places), and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man' (viii., 2). These passages tell us of the *when* and of the *where*. *When* could He make propitiation? *When* He became High Priest. *Where* could He make it? In the heavenly sanctuary, contrasted, as we see it is, in chapter ix., with the earthly one in which Aaron officiated. To make propitiation at all He must be High Priest. But He could not, we read in Heb. viii., 4, be a priest upon earth—that is, on this side of death. He must die before entering on His High Priesthood, and this is confirmed in a way which cannot be gainsaid, for He entered the heavenly sanctuary by *His own blood*. For Aaron to enter the earthly sanctuary on the day of atonement the blood of the sacrifice must have been first shed. For the Lord to enter the heavenly sanctuary, to make propitiation for the sins of the people, the blood of the sin-offering must likewise have first been shed. But Aaron went in whilst in life; the Lord only after death. For He entered in by *His own blood*. Hence there was a double reason for His death, if propitiation by blood was really ever to be effected. He must die as the victim, and He must die as a necessary prelude to His entering

upon His High Priesthood. Now, unless these two points are kept in remembrance, we shall not understand the subject. 'If He were on earth He would not be a priest at all,' so runs the Revised Version. 'If then, indeed, He were upon earth, He would not even be a priest,' so Mr. J. N. Darby translates it—that is to say, He could not be a priest on this side of death.

"Does this sound strange doctrine? It is both Scriptural and simple. Nor should it excite one moment's surprise in anyone who studies the Mosaic ritual. For the priest, it will be there seen, had no *locus standi*, in an ordinary way, till the sacrifice had been slain.

"With the teaching of the Word, then, before us, the following points connected with the subject come clearly out:— 1st, The Lord, as the victim or sacrifice, must have died ere propitiation could have been made at all. 2nd, Made by Him in His official character as High Priest, who could not be a priest at all on earth, it involved His death taking place before He could enter on that office. 3rd, Made in the sanctuary, as Lev. xvi. teaches us, when the High Priest was alone with God, and hidden from the eyes of men, propitiation by blood could only be made by the Lord in the heavenly sanctuary; for He never did, nor ever could, have entered as High Priest the holy of holies at Jerusalem. Hence it is self-evident, surely, that all that was needful for the making of atonement by the Lord Jesus, if Lev. xvi. correctly instructs us as to its component parts, could not by any possibility have been completed in this world. To affirm that all was done in this world is to ignore the need of His death ere He could be a priest at all, not to mention other grave consequences which must ensue. For by His death He left this world (John xiii., 1; xiv., 19; xvi., 28).

"The Lord died on the cross, and the veil was rent. Now, the rending of the veil, as Heb. x., 19, 20, teaches us, was the opening for us by God of a new and living way into His presence through the flesh of Christ. Was that new and living way opened up by God (for did He not rend the veil?) before His nature had been properly cared for, and He glorified, through propitiation by the blood of His Son? On that same day the graves were opened, the token, surely, that death now would have no power to retain the bodies of God's saints one moment longer than He would permit it. Was that effect of the Lord's sacrificial death manifested, and atonement not completed? On that same day the penitent thief, whose death took place subsequent to that of the Lord (John xix., 32, 33), was with Him in paradise. Can any Scripture be pointed to which teaches he could be in that place of bliss with the Holy One after he had died, whilst as yet propitiation was not made? The Lord's side was pierced ere His body was taken down from the cross, and forthwith came thereout blood and water, this speaking to us, as John teaches (1. John iv., 9, 10), of life and propitiation provided by

His death, and flowing forth when He was dead (v. 11). Was that fact witnessed by the Evangelist ere propitiation was accomplished? By His sacrificial death He took away the Jewish sacrificial ritual (Heb. x., 9). Was that then removed, and no atoning sacrifice completed and accepted by God till He ascended up from Bethany, in sight of the eleven, six weeks later? Was there during that interval no High Priest accepted of God on behalf of His people?

“But there is a kind of reasoning in the things of God which should be condemned, and that is the exercise of the human mind apart from the Word, or in opposition to it. Now this is just what some, perhaps unwittingly, are doing when they ask, How could the Lord, ‘in the disembodied state,’ enter as High Priest the heavenly sanctuary, to make propitiation for the sins of the people? An objection of this kind is entitled to no consideration, because it views the Lord as if He were a *mere* man, forgetful that the mystery of His person no creature can comprehend; forgetful, too, that He could speak of Himself, when on earth and before His cross, as the Son of Man which is in heaven (John iii. 13); forgetful also that none of us, apart from any Divine revelation, could possibly say how He should enter the holiest as High Priest to be alone there with God. On this Scripture is silent. So we must be silent. It was a question for God and Himself, with which none of us have to do. There, if we would not be wise above what is written, let us leave it.

“A theory has been started thus expressed, that ‘the whole work on which our souls rest with divine certainty was accomplished in this world, not in heaven.’ And that the Lord entered heaven, ‘as we know, by His own blood; but let us beware of the thought that He did so to make atonement or propitiation.’ To this we must offer the most strenuous opposition, seeing that it would rob us of propitiation, and, by consequence, of the cardinal doctrine of atonement. This theory, with other doctrines from the same pen, I had occasion to notice in ‘Recent Utterances’ (pp. 40—43). As was natural, the author, Mr. Pinkerton, has sought to clear himself from what was brought against him by the publication of a pamphlet, entitled ‘Atonement: What is It? and was It made in this World or in Heaven?’

“Our author teaches a propitiation made without blood, without a High Priest, and without a sanctuary, which, to borrow his own language, is ‘a myth of fancy or a fiction of the intellect’ (p. 20). ‘I believe,’ writes Mr. Pinkerton, ‘and affirm that Christ accomplished the atonement in all its aspects and parts, fully, perfectly, and for ever, when He was in this world suspended on the cross between heaven and earth, rejected of man, and forsaken of God’ (p. 14). ‘I believe that our adorable Lord and Redeemer committed His spirit into the hands of His Father, after the cup of wrath had been drunk, and the divine majesty had been maintained, yea, and propitiated also; when, as we say, Justice itself was satisfied and said, It is enough’ (p. 20). Clear and explicit are these statements, but wholly irreconcilable with God’s word. ‘Without shedding of blood is no remission,’ God has told us. If He were on earth He could not be a priest, the Holy Ghost has revealed. ‘The atonement was accomplished in all its

aspects and parts . . . when He was in this world, forsaken of God.' That is Mr. Pinkerton's belief, and he affirms it. Let the reader mark, death, both of the victim and of Him who had to die to become High Priest, both fulfilled by the Lord's death on the cross, are wholly excluded by this theory. According to it they were not essential to atonement. No theory could be better contrived to rob us of atonement by blood. According to it, all was done *before* the Lord died. Twice over the reader may see, and in language which leaves no room for uncertainty as to his meaning, Mr. Pinkerton teaches that propitiation, which could *only* be made by blood, was effected ere the Lord died. That is really to teach what is not propitiation at all. So, again, to use Mr. Pinkerton's own language, one must say, 'It is not a true atonement at all, but a false one which is thus defined' (p. 22).

"And now let Mr. Pinkerton himself tell us the effect of advocating an unscriptural system of doctrine: 'No man in the presence of the light we have all had, can bring in a system of his own without, sooner or later, coming in contact with the very foundations of our Christian faith; for he has too many objections to answer, and too many things to account for, for his system to be introduced and defended without it touching vital truth' (p. 26). How true. But surely he little thought whom, and what, he was condemning. And no wonder. For, to quote him again, we shall learn from a source, which he will not question, the effect an unscriptural system has on its upholders: 'Christian reader, the power of delusion is rapidly increasing, and there is no blindness like that which results from despising or trifling with the light—it soon becomes judicial' (p. 18). True. And what shall we say of a theory, he must pardon my so calling it, which teaches a propitiation made without blood, without a high priest, and apart from a sanctuary? What shall we think of its defenders, from whom we might have hoped for better things, upholding a theory, which, as another has remarked, lands its advocates in a position analogous to that of the upholders of the Romish doctrine of the Mass? Both really advocate a theory of a sacrifice without blood shedding, and both probably would say they did not mean it."—"Propitiation by Blood," pp. 6, 7-8, 13-14, 17-18, 20, 23, 28-29, 32.

Whether we agree with Mr. Stuart or not as to details, one thing is clear and indisputable—he teaches that God was glorified by the perfect atonement made by the Lord Jesus Christ. The undermining of atonement, the real false doctrine, is with Mr. Pinkerton and those who hold with him. To my mind, another strong proof as to the way Mr. Stuart puts the Priesthood of Christ is Heb. v., 8-10. The Lord was obedient unto death; in suffering He was not "made perfect" till death: then, as J. N. D. puts it, He was "saluted of God (as) High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec."

But many seem to stumble at the words "It is finished;" and leaders have been bold enough to prejudice the simple by saying that Mr. Stuart denies the finished work. This is double, if not deceitful, in words and meaning. To me it is a proof of the enemy's work. But let us look at the Scripture (John xix., 28-30). "It is finished" is one word in Greek. It occurs twice in these verses: once in v. 28, and again in v. 30. Being a verb, we have to look for its subject. In other words, in "It is

finished." what is meant by "it?" "Atonement, of course," most would reply. You will look in vain for atonement in the context. There is no mention here, or even in this Gospel, of the enduring of Divine wrath, or the hiding of God's face, that real and terrible part of atonement. But v. 28 says that "all things were now accomplished," and the connection shows that it is of *things* that Jesus says "It is finished." He had the fulfilment of Scripture before Him; and there was one part (Psa. lxxix., 21) as to "gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink," not then fulfilled. So soon as this took place, "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said. It is finished." His life-work, the Father's will, the finishing of His work, the fulfilling of Scripture, the enduring of Divine wrath—indeed, "all things were now accomplished" (John iv., 34; v., 17; xvii., 4; xix., 28-30). The most awful element of atonement—bearing Divine judgment—was included; but "all things" took in His life-work, and He was not making atonement then; so "all things" is the real subject of "It is finished," and this subject is much wider than atonement. The way Mr. Stuart puts atonement, therefore, leaves untouched the real meaning of "It is finished." But, indeed, he would say atonement was finished *then*, though not *there*. It was instantly done in heaven by what answered to the High Priest putting the blood on the mercy-seat. The veil rent from the top, as by God's hand from heaven, was the proof that God owned that the claims of His throne and His nature were vindicated. This was the real character of *propitiation*. It was made by the *activity* of the High Priest, using the blood, so that God's judicial wrath against sin was appeased. In this, humanly speaking, God was passive. So to speak, God received from an active High Priest what turned His wrath away. This was not, could not be, done on the cross. There Christ was *passive*: God was *active*. There was no appeal of God's wrath for Jesus; it was poured out upon Him. He received and drank the awful cup of Divine wrath. But, being the perfect and eternal One, He passively endured the whole weight of Divine judgment, and then became High Priest on the other side of death, and entered the heavenly sanctuary by His own blood, and made propitiation for the sins of the people (Heb. viii., 4; ix., 12; ii., 17). Such, then, is Mr. Stuart's view of atonement as *embracing all the four elements* he points out from Lev. xvi.

Some of his thoughts may clash with cherished notions; but brethren have had to let many such notions go, that they might learn things again from God's word. See what most of us held and said as to the "righteousness of Christ." We lost nothing by letting our thoughts go and learning to speak with Scripture of "the righteousness of God." So with other truths. So here, if the will is broken, the understanding may be opened to learn more as to God's thoughts about atonement. On such a theme who has not something to learn? Dr. Duncan, the famous professor of Hebrew, came on a word with his students one day, and

the only English equivalent he could think of to express the strength of the original was the word "tremendous." Pausing for a moment, he looked up, and the students expected some striking thought. They were not disappointed. Adapting the meaning of the word to what the Lord endured, under Divine wrath, the Professor said: "Gentlemen, there is something *n'ah-tzah*—there is something *tremendous*—in the atonement." (Isa. xxxvii., 3.)

In view of what we have considered, the conclusion is irresistible, that the charges made by the London judgment against Reading and C. E. S., are false charges—false in saying that the Reading judgment was *unrighteous*, and false in saying that Mr. Stuart teaches fundamental error.

AN APPEAL TO BRETHREN IN FELLOWSHIP WITH
LONDON.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

GOD is witness how one longs after you in the bowels of Christ Jesus. Then, consider what is here stated as in His presence, and forgive if the solemn way things appear lead to their being put strongly and pointedly. The Lord grant that it may be the truth, in love for some consciences.

After having weighed nearly every paper of importance on the Reading and Montreal Questions; after having been to Reading, London, Montreal, and Plainfield; after having talked with many who went through the sorrows in these places; permit me to testify that the *facts* are not as you have been told by brothers. In these Colonies, from what one knows, saints have been kept in the dark and deceived. Instead of your consciences being exercised before God, inquiry has been discouraged, and even forbidden, and a few brothers "have dominion over your faith." Clerisy has been practised as in the mere systems of men. Unknown to most of you, you have been led to change your ground of gathering; you do not now practically own the one body; you have a test of fellowship which has no warrant from Scripture; you are no longer separate from evil; you are not answering to "He that is holy, he that is true." Some thousands of saints, free from evil in doctrine, practice, and associations, are cut off and cast out by you at the bidding of leaders, and you are partners (unwittingly) in such unholy work. Then, in doing this, you have become identified with independency, unrighteousness, and doctrines which undermine the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Such things have *not been proved* as to C. E. S. and F. W. G., and those with them; but they *are* proved in the clearest way as to those who have attacked these brethren. This is said advisedly.

Then, as misrepresentation is rife, it also may be distinctly stated that C. E. S. is "slanderosly reported" when he is said to teach that we are *not in*

Christ, or that he limits or takes from the perfection of the Atonement. His writings convict those of falsehood who say such things.

Further, the so-called Assembly judgments of London and Montreal, to which you have bowed as I, the Lord led to them and they were bound in heaven, have been proved to be unrighteous judgments, having no authority whatever. This must be so since they are mixed up with misrepresentation, contradiction, and falsehood, and solemnly connect the name of the Lord with iniquity. Many of the papers are misleading and untruthful. For instance, the printed letter of C. H. M., which one finds influencing many saints even now, has been shown to be most untruthful. The evidence can be given that he was shown that it was untruthful before he published it.* There has been no withdrawal, no confession of the manifest wickedness of defaming a servant of Christ, and misleading saints by misrepresentation and falsehood. The prejudice and the dread created in this way by leaders is simply the cry of a confederacy, and many have feared their fear and their dread, instead of sanctifying the Lord of Hosts Himself (Isaiah viii., 11—14). J. N. D.'s words—"The corruption of the best thing is the worst corruption"—are very solemn when such sin is practised, and passes unjudged in connection with the greatest profession of separation from evil and the owning of the one body.

But, simply to look at the question on moral grounds, those who have followed London do not act honestly, nor do they tell the truth as to what they have done towards saints with Reading. The mass of the saints say that they have never moved nor changed their ground. But the meetings they are in have followed London; and the London judgment, and the leaders, say that they have changed ground. A brother rebuked me for having turned my back, as he affirmed, on the Lord's table, whereas I was then,

* "History and Review," Appendix (C. E. S.'s letter to C. H. M.), p. 73—76; "Recent Utterances," p. 51.

and I am now, breaking bread in the same fellowship, and at the same table, as I have done for years. He had changed, and blamed me for what he had done himself: the fellowship he was in then was *newly created by coming out of the one where we had formerly been together*. Mr. Powley's account of what had been done, as put to those who told me, was: "We have just come out as we came out of the sects." A well-known brother of Park Street, London, also said to myself, "I have just come out as I formerly came out of the Church of England." Then, this was a change of ground indeed. It is the simple truth as to London's action towards Reading. But London has utterly failed to give *proofs* as to the evil which would make such an action necessary; and there is not a line of Scripture authorising such a separation. London took up the case from a few outside Reading Assembly, and thus *denied* the one body by acting independently. The action was also *unjust*, as it was taken in the absence of the parties judged, and it also proceeded on one-sided evidence. But, now that it has taken place, you ought to tell the truth about it, and act honestly, by saying to us that you have *gone out from us* because we were not holy enough for you. This, in plain terms, is what London has done; yet many, in going with the action, give us the unkindest cut of all by telling us that *we*, rather than *they*, have gone out of fellowship. We are still where we were before division. You have formed a *new* fellowship, with a *new test*, so that some thousands of us would have to say that the Reading judgment was *unrighteous*, and that the teaching of C. E. S. and F. W. G. is *fundamentally* erroneous, before we could be received by the London meetings. Knowing the facts, that these things are *not* so, we could not say so, and go with you with good consciences. This shows, moreover, that London meetings are no longer on the ground of the one body. They *say* they are, in the face of all pointed out; and one feels that word should be pressed home to the conscience—"Speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another (Eph. iv., 25). The mass of saints (unknown

to themselves) do not act honestly and tell the truth as to what has been done by London in leading them to change their ground of gathering. Some own that London's action was wrong, and still go with it; and they even try to keep others from getting exercised as to where the action has landed them. How inconsistent! Fire and frost may as soon go together as God and untruthfulness and dishonesty. Then, the division, made and maintained in this way, has not been of God; and the fruits of malice and wickedness in these colonies show that the London tree is corrupt indeed (Matt. vii., 16-20).

Beloved brethren, how solemn it is to write such things of you, and to you, in the presence of the Lord! But you can have the *proofs from competent witnesses in the documents signed by them*, and I have had them confirmed by them personally in many instances. Then, if you did not know before, you know now that you have been kept in the dark, and deceived, and led astray. Each one is now responsible before the Lord, to "Enquire and make search, and ask diligently" (Deut. xiii., 12-14).

"God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." "Every one that does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, that his works may not be shown as they are; but he that practises the truth comes to the light that his works may be manifested that they have been wrought in God." (J. N. D.'s translation.) These Scriptures in each case have been set aside by those who have told you to read nothing and just bow to your brethren. They are putting *brethren first* and Christ next, just, in principle, as Rome puts the Church first; and their power, like that of Rome, can only be maintained by keeping you in the dark. They judge for you, while Scripture shows that the little children are able to judge (I. John ii., 20, 26, 27). If such cannot judge, then it is clear that it was not an Assembly judgment which decreed your separation from us. But your leaders framed and passed that decree, and you have not taken in what it implied. In urging you to

inquire, no doubt some will set me down as sowing discord among brethren. You would not think it discord if by *facts* and *truth* believers got exercised in a denomination and came out of it. But the facts show that your position is now akin to theirs; and Scripture says that the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable (Jam. iii., 15).

The things here stated are sincerely believed concerning you. After returning from the localities of the troubles, real love leads me to put things before you. If I am wrong, I implore you to give me the proofs, and through grace I will confess and forsake my error. But real *proofs* are another thing than answering by repeating false charges, personal or otherwise, and shaking the head and looking horrified, saying, "It's very sad," &c. In what precedes you may find some proofs which will show the necessity for inquiry. Are you, then, prepared to court the light, and face the facts and Scripture bearing upon them? Beloved brethren, the Lord is coming, and the facts and this appeal must soon be faced by us at the judgment seat. I would solemnly, yet in love, protest that the Christ-dishonouring division has been made and is maintained by those with whom you are in fellowship, so that we are on the defensive, while *you* are the aggressors, as it was London that broke with Reading, and we refuse and withstand division.

Yours faithfully in Christ,

ONE WHO HAS INQUIRED, AND MADE SEARCH,
AND ASKED DILIGENTLY.—*Deu. xiii. 12-15.*

