

Narrative of the Facts, connected with the separation of the writer from the congregation meeting in Ebrington Street. [Plymouth]

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INTRODUCTION

The following narrative, though constantly demanded by brethren, would have never seen the light, had the work which occasioned the separation been confined to Plymouth, or its activity ceased. No desire of clearing up one's own grounds of conduct has influenced me, nor would such have induced me to publish any account of what passed. The best proof is that in a lapse of a year it had not. But convinced as I am that it is a work of Satan which has developed itself here, and finding that, as Mr. N. announced that he would seek to produce everywhere "united hostility" to the brethren who differed from him, the same system at present is carrying on elsewhere to propagate the work, and believing that many true-hearted saints become unconsciously instruments of this, I have thought well that they should be apprised of what passed.

The argument alleged against such an account would be the scandal of it. But that exists in the division already. The knowing the grounds of it will rather take it away. For it is a very serious thing indeed to separate from Christians, and indeed the saints have, in some sort, a right to know why it has been done. It may be very humbling to the saints concerned; but I do not think this is an evil. The strongest motive by far - the one which weighed with me - was the dislike of publishing evil. I never should have done it, but left it to the Lord, had the trouble occasioned by it stopped the activity of the evil. What overcame this motive with me was, that there was just as much activity as before in the evil, and the same unblushing unscrupulousness as to truth. It may perhaps be thought that I have exaggerated in this account. Far from it. None of the facts which did not enter into the public course of events are mentioned, though as numerous and in my judgment as grave or graver than what is here stated; and not only so, but were not similar facts now going on, which are not alluded to here, I should never have published these. Another motive might act, that is, the general discredit thrown on the brethren. But this must yield before duty to souls. I have never seen one who got into the active influence of the system, whose moral integrity was not ruined. Besides, I believe that this system had so puffed up the brethren, and worldliness had so crept in, that under such discipline as God has sent us, it is only our part to bow. Indeed the present influence of the spirit of the world is such in the system which has driven me out, that, unless the Lord corrected it, I should be thankful to be entirely free from it. Lastly, I do not expect to escape what Sir A. C., Mr. W., and others have been subjected to, that is, to have all my statements denied. I expect it. But this is no reason with me for not informing brethren if this latter be a duty. It cannot last long this.

It is possible that in a narrative extending over a year and a half, embracing many people, and even places, some inaccuracy of detail which may occasion cavil may have

escaped me. I have given too many names not to give the fullest opportunity of confirmation or correction, indeed always, save where charity demanded their suppression, or in the case of females. Engaged in such a business I had no need to conceal those of brethren. They must take their share when they acted in public. There is nothing here of which I am not assured of my own knowledge, or which were public facts before all, or facts stated already in print by others, or with the authors' names with some exceptions; in a word, nothing of the truth of which I am not thoroughly satisfied. At all events, what is here related is with other facts that which has led me into the position I am in; and I give them as substantially a thoroughly authentic and true narrative of what has passed. I have only to add, that the ground of evil doctrine or teaching, and the unsettling the souls of saints on every thing precious and even vital, is acquiring every day *very greatly increased weight in my mind*. This from its subtle and fleeting character, though conclusive with me, is more difficult to give. Some specimens however are here. The "Examination" of the "Thoughts" gives many though on less important points.

I may add one here from a tract sold in the tract shop. It is there taught that the wicked will rise with their diseased bodies; as that a man that had the palsy would keep it for ever, they would receive again their corrupt and sin-worn bodies, in all their wretchedness. This is addressed in a gospel tract to the careless. The tract is printed in London, but it was sold at Plymouth in the depot, nor have I any doubt of its origin.

I have communicated this narrative to others, to take all the care I can, that it should be perfectly true; I give no names, as I feel in such a case it is the juster way to let it rest on my own responsibility. I add here one or two corrections resulting therefrom.*

This is all that I can find to correct in what follows. It is, of course, possible that something may have escaped me.

I add another mark of the enemy's work. It is this: where there is the sudden reception of a whole system, and the authority of the author of it set up at once over the mind. When truth is received into the soul by the Spirit, it is received and engrafted by God, so that, though a blessed door may be opened by any given truth, we are built up truth by truth, each being wrought into the soul so that there is truth in it, and the consciousness of God's teaching us that, and the instrument of it, if any, is not between us and God as to it, though inspired teachers were of course an authority. In the case stated the mind is at once shut up into the system, and real progress in divine truth is entirely arrested. The consequences of having thus taken a system of error for truth is often most deplorable for the whole life, even if the person be delivered from it.

The reader will find another example of the unsettling the soul as to fundamental truths in the confusion between the life communicated to the saint and the divine nature in Christ. Thus, "But did Jesus think that the life which was in Him, and which He communicated to others, was not heavenly?" Did He not Himself say, "The Son of man *which* is in heaven? Were they (the angels) ignorant of the existence of a life in earth, which they had known in the excellence of its own uncreated glory, above? . . . Were

they ignorant that this life had, through the Son been communicated to persons chosen from among sinful men?"

I have felt unable, having reread this narrative after the corrections, to detect any inaccuracy. As to the expression "He will catch it" (p. 58), my memory is so vague that I could not pretend to give it as the word used. But this perusal has made me feel that such a publication of evil would be entirely unjustifiable, and evil in itself, had I not the conviction, the solemn settled conviction (not, I believe, led to it of man) that there is an active positive work of the enemy *going on*. That conviction I have. I do not publish it to justify myself, for in my own judgment it does the contrary. I feel, as I have stated in the body of the narrative, that I failed in spiritual energy, through human feeling, in letting the matter drop in April at the instance of others. I hesitated as to my own being, spiritual enough to do it in public then, though I had acquiesced in doing it in private. If it be asked why I do it in a worse way now, I answer that it became a public duty to the saints, cost me what it would. And I do not expect to meddle with such evil without its costing me something.

I have had, in journeys I have made since I wrote this account, abundant confirmation as to the doctrine taught and other points.

No one who was present at the meeting lately held in London can doubt that the brethren were brought (may I not in a certain measure say, brought back?) into the presence of the Lord - that the Lord has dealt with them in the manifestation of His presence, of His presence and dealings with them. This is a serious and solemn thought, and (I have felt) ought to take the lead and be as the source and spring of our other thoughts. I have myself been laid by, unable to read and write, so that, for my own part, I have been necessarily more particularly thrown into His hands, so that things should be more immediately judged as in His presence, viewed as they are seen there, and that what does not become His presence should alarm the conscience, man becoming little, but the saints exceeding precious.

After the meeting my conscience somewhat smote me for not declaring there in the plainest way what I believe to be the Lord's judgment of the work which has resulted in Ebrington Street at Plymouth: and it has been yet more pressed upon my conscience since I have been laid by. What prevented my doing so will be evident to every one who was there. The Lord took the meeting so entirely into His own hand, and so gave to it the character, and that of blessing, which He pleased, that I felt my part was to leave it exclusively with the character He had given to it. If it was a want of faith, my motives will be understood by every one who was there. But then this return into the presence of the Lord leads to dealing with brethren as in His presence. It is due to them. I feel I owe it to them to communicate to them as seen there, so to speak, what may press on my own spirit before the Lord. Now I believe fully that the work which has resulted in, what I may call in its present state, Ebrington Street, is a direct and positive work of Satan. And here I entreat brethren not to turn away as if these were mere hard words or a bad spirit. I mean simply and solemnly what I say. If such be the case, it is charity, unfeigned charity, to say so, and warn the saints of it. I so much believe it to be so, that I do not believe any

one who meddles with or is within its reach will be safe from its influence till they treat it as such.

5This may be always remarked, that where there is a work of the enemy even saints always fall into it if they do not treat it as such. It has power over the human heart, and where there is not in the soul the power of the Spirit to judge it as the positive mischief of the enemy (and so it will be judged where that power is), there the soul will fall into it, as if it were more perfect truth than what the Spirit teaches. See the early judaizing of the church, traced and detected in the Epistles to the Galatians and Colossians, and elsewhere. And see in the Galatian churches how the saints fell into it. See the same thing in Popery.

And here I would explain a little further. It does not follow by any means that there are no truths held by those who fall into such a snare. Many important truths may be held by them. Nor is it to be thought for a moment that true saints of God are not liable to fall into these snares. On the contrary, what makes it important to consider them, is that they affect the saints of God. Did they not, it might be sorrowful instruction, but no more: just as the awful darkness of heathenism, or the sorrowful condition of a poor unbelieving child of Israel. Nor does it follow (though it will generally have a legal tinge, because the flesh will in such case more or less resume its power) that many good works will not be done by those under it. They may abound. So that in saying that there has been a work of Satan I am not saying there are not many very dear children of God; I am not saying that they do not hold many all-important fundamental truths, as truths, nor that they may not be doing a great many good works. All this will be fully found in the system of Popery, for example, as it was in the Galatians, the earliest form perhaps of that amazing and deluding system.

But there is a further point which it is right to notice. Truly godly people may be the instruments of helping on a system which is truly Satan's. No one can doubt that Cyprian, who laid down his life for Christ's name, that Augustine, that Bernard, were godly men. Yet, though one opposed Rome episcopally, and the last declared Antichrist was risen there, no one can doubt that they helped on most eminently Satan's work in Popery. They did not perceive the bearing of certain points on the meaning and testimony of the Spirit of God.

Further, I do not call every evil I find a direct and positive work of Satan. Of course his hand is there. A saint I call a work of God, though Satan may mar it. Thus I believe there are serious defects and faults in the Establishment; but I believe it to have been a work of God, marred and spoiled by human considerations, which led those who framed it, to adapt it to circumstances and to the then state of the population, and to introduce principles which lay it now *open* perhaps to that work of Satan which is commonly called Puseyism. In that too itself, I dare say, several good men are labouring, because they do not by spiritual power discern Satan's craft who has a lovely religion for the flesh, a religion fairer to men's judgment and loveliest natural feelings than God's, which acts entirely on the conscience and gives all glory to Christ. So with Dissenters: I believe that was a work of God; with many defects, I judge, but still a work of God. And

so of others. But Popery and Puseyism are the work of the enemy, though you may, and doubtless would, find many dear persons among them. Of course the degrees of evil or power may vary. I speak of its character and source merely.

Satan originates nothing. This is God's prerogative. The work of Satan is to mar and break down what God has wrought, when this is left, as an effect produced, to the responsibility of man. God created Adam. Satan spoiled the work through man's folly. There was but One whom he could not touch down here; in whom, having laid his defiling hand on all else as prince of this world, he could find nothing. He can originate nothing, but he can build up with vast sagacity an immense system, out of the corruption, suited to the evil which is in us; yea, and stamped with the character of the evil that is in us to which it is so suited. What would money be without avarice? or worldly power without ambition? or superstition without a natural principle of religiousness in the heart of man? Such a system may be a vast fact in the economy of divine government considered as a judgment, as Mohammedanism; or a subtler corruption, as Popery, pregnant with greater mischiefs, but where the enemy of souls has not been permitted to blot out in the same way the great facts of Christianity, as to the manner of the Divine existence and incarnation, nor the historical truths of the gospel; or it may be a marring where, in the main, truth abides; or it may be the ruin of some special testimony of God as far as it goes.

A testimony of some special truth may decay, or be lost, or lose its power by becoming mere established orthodoxy; but I do not call this directly or properly a work of Satan. I call it a work of Satan, when, blessing and testimony having been brought in by the blessed Spirit of God, a systematic effort is made, producing a regular system; an effort which takes up the truth whose power has decayed as to faith really carrying the soul out of the influence of present things, or some neglected truth generally, and, while it seems to adopt it as it stands in its basis as a fact, subverts and sets it aside; throwing the soul back on ground which is no longer a test of faith, though it be truth (for there Satan can adopt truth for a time), and bringing in apparent additional instruction, but really subversive of the power of what the Spirit taught, and making the authority of this teaching sectarian, or superstitious, or both, though they will not last together. I am not speaking here of Satan's work in open infidelity.

Now many may be quite unable to detect Satan working in this way, but there will be always enough, through the faithfulness of God, to guard souls really waiting on Him from falling in; or if listened to, through grace to bring them out. But then it will be and must be judged as evil, not dealt with as a mere measure of better and worse.

There is a distinction which may yet be made.

There are two distinct characters of work which Satan does, which may nevertheless merge one in the other. Of these however one, if alone, will be ephemeral, the other lasting. First, where power is not the true power of the Spirit, so as to detect and judge Satan's imitation, there he can easily set up the imitation of power, and that even where there is a measure of true faith and owning of God, but subjection, intelligent

subjection by the Spirit to the word as of the Spirit, is not found. Where this is connected with the establishment of arranged human authority, this latter may subsist, but the work itself is ephemeral. Such a work as this will probably be connected with some of the most right-feeling, if not right-judging, persons among Christians, who have the strongest feelings of the decay which occasions it, but there will be generally shipwreck of the faith in some point or other. Yet it will afford exceeding difficulty to those who cannot discern the work of the enemy in the midst of this right feeling. I would instance as examples of this kind of evil work of the enemy, the Montanists, the Irvingites, and, in some respects, the Quakers or Friends. As to these last it is well known that what I now refer to has passed away, and that they remain amongst men a most quiet and, in many respects, most estimable body of persons. I speak of their early history. What remains is the authority that was settled among them, though with the old Friends very much defect in doctrine.

I have no doubt that this work began in a right feeling about the want of spiritual power. This may be easily seen in Dell's works. But no one who has read the remarkable history of George Fox, Naylor, and many of Penn's writings, or known much of the doctrines of Friends, can doubt the inroad of the enemy. I have added a few words on this because it was a more mixed and ambiguous case. I would not pass it over because it is one instructive to the church.

But there is another form of Satan's working.

In this orthodox truth is in general maintained. Any pretension to the possession of spiritual power is based on church position, not on any particular manifestation of power, and thus seems to honour the institution of the church and Christ in it. God is alleged to have set there, in that institution, the seat of blessing, and this also is an acknowledged truth, and the unity of the body of Christ is thereon connected with the institution. But the sovereign operation of the Spirit of God is set aside, and that which acts outside the actually formed institution is condemned as denying the authority of God's institution and schismatical sin. Thus the actual possessors of the power of the institution, in its then state, really take the place of God. His power is vested in them as far as it acts on earth. Divine condemnation attaches to all who act independently of them. Direct dependence upon God is unallowable. And thus whatever puts individual faith to the test (for going with the crowd under authority does not) is condemned as self-will and presumption.

The system which so judges is alleged to maintain the unity of the church. This may exist in different degrees, and in different circumstances; but it always attaches divine authority more or less to official position, and thus puts man in the place of God by attaching His name to man. It is not spiritual energy in man putting souls through Christ in direct relation with God, with the Father. There spiritual affections are happy and blessed. It is man eclipsing God, getting between Him and the soul. Not man revealing God, but the authority of God attached to man. Hence full love and grace will never be known. The Spirit of adoption and blessed assurance of salvation in the knowledge of Him will never be. It may survive such a system for a time, but it cannot be identified with such a system when matured. To be with God, while always rendering the soul submissive, must render it independent of man; that is, it asserts no rights, but when

the need is, it says, "we ought to obey God rather than man." The first of these works of Satan then is the pretence to the extraordinary operation of the Spirit. That is ephemeral. It is suited to the ill-directed but righteous cravings after that manifestation of spiritual power which was and is the only true source of living blessing on the earth, when that power has faded away. The other is the orderly establishment of men in the place of that power. This lasts. It is suited to unbelief, and in its full development it always generates it. Montanism is passed. The spiritual pretensions of Irvingism are in fact passed; the system of men and ordinances set up by it abides. So practically among the Friends. This is common to both, as far as they go, that the manifestation of Christ in living power for the peace of souls, and the truth as to Him, is weakened and set aside more or less. Orthodox truths may, as we have seen in one of the cases I have supposed, be maintained; but (as it is the work of the Holy Ghost alone to present Christ to the soul, so that it should be in the power of that living faith which sets the soul in blessed fellowship with the Father in true joy, leaving the impress of its own everlasting nature upon it, which the Holy Ghost can alone give, and the Holy Ghost alone maintain) the consequence is that such communion with Christ is lost, and the conscience ceases to be before God.

In the former of the cases I have supposed Christian truth is generally lost, that is, saving truths connected with the person of Christ, and error substituted on these points. The Spirit's alleged presence eclipses, instead of revealing, them. In the latter they are plausibly subverted in their effect on the soul rather than set aside. As justification by faith in the Popish system, where, while every orthodox truth is maintained, the love and work of God in Christ is as to its efficacy denied by it as a system, as effectually as it could be by Socinianism itself. We are enabled in this case to speak of the full and awful maturity of this abiding corruption of the enemy; but those most conversant with history, and most spiritual, know how much spirituality it requires to detect its commencement and early growth: and that it sprang really from the best persons and most apparently godly principles that appear after the record of scripture; so that, though there were counteracting principles which Protestants can justly cite, yet full-grown Popery can quote the earliest fathers to establish in principle her claims, and support her pretensions. The blessed and perfect word of God reveals in one word this history: they began in the Spirit, and ended in the flesh. If you inquire who were the persons who laid the basis of this amazing evil, it will be found that it was those who insisted on good order and unity; yet it was not in the power of the Holy Ghost (*God* is not the author of confusion, but of order in the churches), but in arrangements which attached to office the authority necessary to maintain it. There may have been fleshly workings which gave occasion to it; but the remedy was not spiritual acting on the conscience and affections of those astray, for this is what we see in the epistles, but the authoritative arrangement of order, because power was so much gone, and spiritual discernment to know it. Hence the effect produced by the power, the institution itself, the church as an ordered system (not the church as redeemed by Christ), became the object presented, and was made the guard as an institution, instead of being guarded by spiritual care. Hence when the outward institution became the positive enemy of Christ and of His people, it retained its claims, and used its power as His.

Now, however subtly at first, so that none scarce perceived it, if any, we now know what a work of Satan this was. It has, so to speak, usurped the world.

I feel satisfied that, as to the principle of it, a similar work has been going on at Plymouth. It will be ever founded on practically setting aside the power of that truth which has been, in any given case, the gathering principle, and the testimony of God to the world.

I do not exactly expect that in itself every one could see through such a work; but, as I have already said, there are sufficient proofs always afforded of God to the single eye: there will not, and cannot be, to others. I shall add here some of the points which seem to me to mark the presence and influence of the enemy in general.

The first sign of weakness is the gathering itself becoming the object of attention instead of their being a people enjoying the blessedness of their position by the relationship and fellowship it gave them with Christ, who had become and was their abiding object, revealing withal God the Father. But I would speak with more detail, for this is rather the occasion of Satan's power than the fruit of it as a positive word. Where this last is, you will find holy spiritual affections broken and set aside to give place to the claim of the institution. And so are even natural affections, whilst the latter are given all their natural force and weight in practice to hold persons in the institution, and even largely used for this purpose. In the same manner people are won and brought under the influence that acts there by them. The activity and zeal will be for the system. It will be to make proselytes, and establish them in what will keep them there, not to save souls or lead them on in Christ. There will generally be a good deal of acting *against* or depreciation of others who even hold the faith of Christ.

Paramount importance will be attached to the views which distinguish that institution, not to what saves or to what brings faith to the test by the revelation of Christ.

Good works will be found generally much pressed, and that in a systematic way in which it works for and into the system. Truth I mean truthfulness will ever be lacking. This I have always found where the work of the enemy is.

Connected with this is the pressing much certain doctrines, when it is safe, which form the bond of the institution, and denying them in the alleged meaning, or explaining them away, when they are pressed on them by those who detect the evil. This any one conversant with the subject cannot but have noticed. The denial of the doctrine positively stated where the influence exists, as held in any such sense or its explanation, is the very thing that marks the power of evil. With this will be found the attributing to those who hold the truth, every kind of doctrine they abhor, where there is influence enough to have their statements believed. Popery is the plain example of this.

Another mark, whatever the apparent devotedness, yea, and real devotedness sometimes, is that the spirit of the world is acquiesced in. The poor will be nursed as instruments, and the rich (and so the clever) flattered for support. Another mark is the

extreme difficulty of fixing them to any definite statement, save as they have power to enforce it; and then it is bound on others; and there is the sternest rejection of all who do not bow. Calumny of the saints, and of their doctrines has been known from the testimony of the blessed Lord Himself onward. The influence of females and of money will be found also largely employed.

In cases of the second character of evil I have noticed, the combinations of a party will always be found.

There is another mark, often incomprehensible to one not under the influence, and that is an incapacity of conscience to discern right and wrong, an incapacity to see evil where even the mere natural conscience would discern and an upright conscience reject it at once. I speak of this incapacity in true saints. The truth is, the soul is not, where under this influence (for it may be upright in other things), at all in the presence of God, and sees everything in the light of the object which governs it; and, as to these things, the influence of the enemy has supplanted and taken the place of conscience. The moral marks will be found to attach to every case of evil power.

I am satisfied that I have seen these principles distinctly at work in what has produced the system established at Plymouth. Some may think I have copied it for the picture. I have not. Let them, if they have ever been conversant with it, recall what the ways of Popery are, and they will easily find the same there. It is not because there are no saints among them, but because there are many and very dear ones, that I speak of it.

But having stated these general principles, a statement which I leave to work its own effect, I shall briefly narrate what I may call the public facts which have come under my knowledge; for much never has. I have never done so hitherto. I did not feel led to do it, and certainly had no inclination. I do not think a mind for which holiness has any charm at all will ever love the detailing or publishing evil: and, if one has any heart, most surely not what has passed among those he loves: but God's truth and His church are sacred things. I shall still endeavour to pass over in silence the private facts which seem to me to be evil. They might be called for in a case of discipline; but here they would only aggravate, without increasing, intelligent apprehension of the evil.

I will not detail the origin of the "brethren," but certainly that which characterized their testimony at the outset was the coming of the Lord as the present hope of the church, and the presence of the Holy Ghost as that which brought into unity, and animated and directed, the children of God; and they avowed their dependence upon it. The distinct condition of the saints of the present dispensation, as filled with the Spirit abiding with them and risen with Christ, marked their teaching, while the great truths of the gospel were held in common with other true Christians, only with the clearer light which God Himself directly, and these other truths, afforded. The distinct heavenly character of the church was much insisted on. Though the "brethren" insisted on a spiritual ministry, and the recurrence to the original principles of ministry were urged, they did not, for the same reason, pretend to appoint ministers, nor organize any church or special membership; for they held the unity of all saints. Themselves outside the camp,

whatever saints had faith to follow them were companions in their position, and they were not separated in life, love, or essential unity, from those who could not, though blamed by them. In this spirit they walked for a good while. I now turn to details.

From an early period Mr. Newton isolated himself much from the other brethren. He held reading meetings, and would not allow the labouring brethren to attend them; saying it was bad for the taught to hear the authority of the teachers called in question, as it shook confidence in them. At the later prophetic meetings in Ireland he did not attend.* At one of them, instead of going, he held a meeting for himself at Plymouth on the questions proposed and discussed among the brethren in Ireland, and published his views on them under the title of "Answers to Plymouth Questions." Particular meetings of his own for inculcating his peculiar views were multiplied without end, and sisters instructed in them, and provided with notes, employed to hold smaller meetings among the poor, and to write letters elsewhere to propagate them. Every visitor was at once brought under the most stringent process for imbuing him with them, and instruments sought wherever possible.** Indeed I have known a meeting closed the moment any remark was made on a statement of Mr. Newton's. "The Christian Witness" was denounced as the most mischievous book that ever was written. This process of course grew up gradually. This, with a train of similar conduct, I sorrowed over as an unhappy trait of isolation, and love of acting alone, and having his followers for himself; but I had no suspicion whatever of any purpose of any kind, bore with it as a failing of which we all had some, and left perfect individual liberty complete and entire untrenched on. I should not have so acted without my brethren. I should have rejoiced to have my views corrected by them when I needed it, and learn theirs; but there it was, and there for my part I left it.*** At the Clifton meeting Mr. Newton, speaking of ministry and the points connected with it, told me that his principles were changed. I replied that mine were not, that I felt I had received them from the Lord's teaching, and with His grace I should hold them fast to the end.****

{* I have what I believe to be a correct statement of the meetings Mr. Newton attended. He did not attend 1834, 1835, but he was at 1836; that is, I believe, the last Irish meeting. He did not attend London or Liverpool, that is, the two last English. }

{** One meeting of a smaller number of brethren was at once broken up, that is, never met again, on some objection to critical remarks being made by another brother. }

{*** Mr. Y. made, it is true, a mistake in his tract as to the Clifton meeting, which he states Mr. N. not to have attended: but, though this was made a handle of, the truth is that, though he mistook the particular meeting, the case was much stronger than that, as may be seen above. }

{**** Mr. Newton can easily deny this, as he and I were alone, walking up and down before the Gloucester hotel. This, of course, will not now hinder my stating it, though it did my referring to it publicly in the inquiry by the brethren. There is One who will judge who is truthful in the matter, if he does deny it, and to Him I leave it. I might here refer to the testimony of an intelligent brother, a physician, who plainly states that

Mr. N. ten years ago pressed the principles I have done now, and which he resists; but then he declares he always thought them a delusion, that he joined the "brethren" as a sect, and continues with them as such. Loudly, as this is denied, a sister, whose zeal for Ebrington Street would not be questioned were I to name her, said to me that it was quite evident there were two systems among the "brethren" which would produce their fruits and gatherings everywhere. My reply was, I did not doubt it, and respected her sincerity. I would that others had the honesty to own it: they were all assuring me there was not. }

This, however, subsequently went farther. Mr. N. got rid of Capt. H. at Plymouth. I do not enter into any details here, but I use advisedly the expression 'got rid of'* This also was let pass. My own mind acquiesced in it, though grieved, because I felt it possible that there was a tendency to accumulate labourers on one spot; and that, in the want of spiritual energy which led them, God might use this as a means of sending the testimony farther. In fact, the gathering at Hereford soon followed on this. Thus I consoled myself with what I felt the unhappy disposition of Mr. N. I was not indeed acquainted with all the facts which I have learned since. I saw what was public before all. I knew what had happened to myself. I suspected nothing; and from beginning to end of this history the truth is that grace has kept smothered up what pained individuals in the character of Mr. N. For my own part, much as I mourned many things, I was the last to suspect any plan or purpose. I sought for years to soothe and make peace, to maintain union and link all together.

{*Capt. H., of course, went freely at the time, and the influence of Mr. N. may even at that time have been shaken by circumstances; but the main fact of the statement remains unaffected by this. }

After the departure of Capt. H., two other brethren became the objects of attack, R-e and S-s; and in the first instance the latter. I myself interfered at that time to soothe and tranquilize matters, and soften the effect of the evident assumption and conduct of Mr. N. Subsequently to this I was, as is known, much abroad, and do not pretend to give the detail of what passed.

There is only one circumstance to which I may allude in passing, as it has been often referred to. At a time when Capt. H. and myself were leaving Plymouth, there was some anxiety as to pastoral care, the value of which I fully recognize. Some minds were restless as to the nomination of elders, or recognized authorities; some fearful of it. The question had been slightly mooted in a private meeting after one of the Irish prophetic meetings. I had been there, I may say, accused of swamping the question. I stated what is my present conviction, that the right-minded saint would surely own and "know" those who laboured, admonished, and took by the Holy Ghost a pastoral interest in them; but that still it could only be, in the present state of the church of God, by spiritual power, wisdom, love, and faithfulness, that such a place could be acquired and maintained. To attempt to authorize them would unsettle every right principle. There was no competency for it. The moment an authorized position is assumed - a title to it, I raise the inquiry, what is this title? and I defy any one to allege any which is not at once the formal

recognition of a sect; or otherwise the Popish ground of being the church, and then you must recognize succession and apostolic authority in the clergy.

Under these circumstances, on the departure of Capt. H. and myself, this question having been raised, I stated to the assembly that Messrs. H., N., and Sir. A.C., who were already labouring and visiting, as is well known, would still remain, and be under the responsibility of continuing the visiting I refer to this only because it has been frequently referred to lately. It was really avoiding the question, which none could have solved, calming the minds of others who were uneasy at those who had first laboured going away. And this I desired. I remember being blamed by some who desired something definite; and there were those who had difficulty as to Mr. N.'s being so named from distrust of his ambition. I have been told lately that some brethren were dissatisfied at my having done too much. It is of course possible, though I never heard it till lately, nor have I the smallest ground for thinking so. I merely relate the fact without comment. Mr. N. indeed has stated that Mr. R.H. advised me to leave Plymouth on account of the feeling it produced; but this is without a shadow of truth in it. Of this Mr. R.H. is equally certain with myself. It has no sort of foundation whatever. Mr. R.H. had nothing to say to the matter, good or bad.

On my returning from abroad, about six years ago, I was spoken to by brethren well known amongst all as to certain letters written by Mr. Newton, and circulated in MS. far and wide,* begging me to read them, as it had excited the feelings of many brethren, and made them very uneasy. I replied that I did not want to enter into these questions, that I had hitherto acted as a peacemaker, and sought to link and unite by going with all, and I had rather now keep out of the question. It was urged upon me that I must take a part in it, as the letters were making brethren uneasy everywhere. Thus urged, I read the letters. They were an elaborate argument on Mr. N.'s prophetic views, denouncing all who held the views of the rapture of the church before the end, and insisting on the evils of applying any part of the New Testament to any but the church, or of supposing that there were saints on earth, subsequent to the church's rapture, who could be spoken of in it prophetically. In these (besides accusing the brethren of rejecting "all** the Gospels," if they held principles contrary to his interpretation of Matthew 24, for this was the only and avowed ground, as may be seen in the passage in the note) he declared that, if they were listened to, "the foundations of Christianity were gone." And will the reader believe the reason which so many have swallowed down? for this is the grand cry at Plymouth still. It is this, "for the foundations of the city are the twelve apostles of the Lamb." He presses the duty on all, that a categorical reply should be received as to this from all that professed to teach, because ambiguities were to be avoided in the church.*** "With respect to such passages, we have a right to expect a clear unhesitating answer from all who teach in the church." Meanwhile brethren who took the opposite view were carefully kept away from Plymouth,**** and letters in one unceasing stream went out from the sisters against the brethren who did not receive these views, and everything was said to discredit them to those who visited Plymouth. The whole teaching there was to settle people in them. In this no pains were spared, as to either strangers arriving or those who had leisure at Plymouth. The sisters in particular were carefully taught, and held meetings

in their respective districts to retail what they had heard at the principal meetings held for that purpose. The poor were in general starved as to feeding them with Christ.

{*These letters have been sent to Ireland, India, Canada, and wherever an opportunity was afforded, as Mr. N. avows and (I may say) boasts of.}

{**"Thus this passage, and with it the whole Gospel, and all the Gospels, are swept away as not properly pertaining to the church." Till I found this passage of large inference, I never could conceive what gave rise to this charge of rejecting the Gospels.}

{***It is well that it should be known that, though this is the ground still taken as the reason for denouncing the "brethren," Mr. Newton has entirely given up the main point of his prophetic views, insisted on in these letters. The whole of the second letter, to refer to nothing else, is occupied with the proof of the saints of the Christian church being in tribulation. Indeed every one conversant with these matters, knows that it was a test of the holding of Mr. Newton's views. We were told what a mercy of God to prepare us for it by testimony. Indeed the fact is too well-known to require further proof. People were planning leaving the limits of the Roman earth, to be out of it; Mr. Newton now (both by argument in the "Thoughts on the Apocalypse," and in express terms in the "Thoughts on the End of the Age") declares that they will not.}

{****I am well aware that this is denied by the five signers of the letter to the brethren in London. But in the first place it is perfectly well known to multitudes of the brethren. Moreover Mr. Newton had been spoken to about it before I arrived at Plymouth. He answered, that he could not help their breaking bread, if they came, but it was a yoke he was obliged to put up with, and that they would have no welcome from him. Anyone can understand the effect of conduct answering to such language, unless a person came to contest the point with Mr. N. Mr. H. was asked, when saying at the last meeting in April that he should invite the Irish brethren, could he give them this invitation from the others at Plymouth, and he could not say he could. Further, confession, public confession was made of it by two of those who signed that paper by one with "if any have been kept away," by another without. It was owned in private by one of these, and Mr. N. was spoken to by him about it, saying that they had done so, and that he had participated in the sin. I am fully aware everything will be denied But this must not arrest the plain statement of facts for brethren. The writing of letters by the sisters discrediting the brethren was attempted to be called in question too; but brethren being present in the April meeting who had seen them, and having declared that heretic* was too good a name for the Irish brethren in their letters, it was no longer attempted to be disputed.}

{{*"Heretic was too good a name." Though I have a perfect recollection of these words being used, yet as being in animated conversation and a general representation, it is desired to correct this by saying that what Irish brethren held and taught was spoken of as heresy.}}

This had come to such a point before my last return from abroad, that the gospel had been formally sent away from Ebrington Street, and teaching substituted for it, the

gospel being banished to Raleigh Street, where some thirty or forty went. It was said in so many words they did not want the gospel - it was a bad sign to wish for it; they ought to be going on to more complete knowledge. It is not astonishing if a great body of the Christian poor were thoroughly miserable: they understood Mr. H. only. He was their visitor and friend.

But to return to the letters: I spoke to Mr. Newton about them (I refer to about five or six years ago), though I had no idea then of the assiduity with which they were circulated, and the views pressed. It was done by letter out of Plymouth, and I had been abroad. I read the letters, and I told Mr. Newton that T could not see that the Spirit of God had led to or guided in them. He told me thereupon, that all friendship between us was at an end, and that he should have nothing more to say to me in the way he previously had. I replied that this would not change me towards him or others, and I walked up and down the street with him till I got him to give me his hand; and, save writing to him to soothe him, buried it all. I wrote, at his request, some of my objections to the views in the letters; and this, furnished subsequently to a sister, formed together with his answers the famous appendix, of which so much has been said. But I speak of an interview, six years ago or thereabouts. Since then the letters were constantly copied and circulated. From that time I was a good deal abroad, though I visited Plymouth. I saw clericalism creeping in, but at first thought it was merely from circumstances. The deaf people were placed round the table, and consequently the speakers were to stand at it. This soon evidently defined them. I saw the tendency, and sat in the body of the congregation, and spoke thence when I spoke. I was remonstrated with, but retained my position. On the last visit before the present one, finding the teachers always breaking bread, I urged some other doing it, or this union of the two things would soon be a regular clergy. Mr. H., to whom I spoke (but as to all), made no difficulty, and something was done.

At this time, about three years ago, I suppose, I was thoroughly unhappy in the meetings. I felt the Spirit utterly quenched, and, if I went to the meetings happy, returned miserable. It was only at the last I was at I found it in my heart to pray. I had communication on the subject with Mr. H., who remonstrated with me. I returned abroad. While abroad (I cannot here give the date) Mr. Newton wrote to me that I was an apostle.* This did not, I confess, inspire me with confidence. About three or four months before my return to England I had a correspondence with Mr. H., one of whose letters, from the great change in its tone, convinced me that every barrier was gone at Plymouth; for he had long sought to keep himself free from the influence that ruled most things there. From that moment I felt that conflict and trial awaited me, though I knew not what: but I was satisfied before God that nothing which could be ventured on would be spared. I passed through much more conflict of soul than after I came to England. Nor was I mistaken in my judgment.**

{*This explains to me a statement in the letter sent to the London brethren, signed by the five leading brethren at Ebrington Street, saying, that they recognized no one in the position of Timothy now. At the time he wrote the letter alluded to in the text, Mr. N. in England denounced my views as subverting the foundations of Christianity. }

{**Prior to my previous visit to England, Mr. S. had issued a tract holding up a most beloved brother as a public warning, on account of holding prophetic views discordant with Mr. Newton's. I answered thus by shewing that Mr. S.'s arguments could not be sustained, hoping to check these attacks on brethren, made as if truth, "the truth" as it has been called since, was at Plymouth alone. What was unsold of Mr. S.'s was suppressed, and the whole of mine, at the instance of a brother who hoped controversy might be ended. I had stated no system of my own. It was a mere effort to check the tide.}

Mr. H. invited me, however, to come to Plymouth. I was greatly exercised as to leaving Switzerland, having the conviction that troubles, which nobody else then believed, would certainly break out, and I lingered there till violence and revolution took place, and all the brethren judged me better away than there. Ministry was impossible, and I should have rather occasioned trouble to them, as well as been particularly obnoxious myself, as having been the active person there.

I returned to England, and came directly down to Plymouth.

I may now relate what took place then, and what had been going on with others before my arrival.

About four years ago Mr. Newton and Mr. B. held meetings at Devonport on ministry, where the following statements were made: that there had been, indeed, the fisherman system, and that Christ had previous to His resurrection chosen poor men to be His instruments: but that after His resurrection this was all changed, the Paul system was then set up, and the Lord chose educated gentlemen,* as Paul was. This had been the case at the Reformation, as Luther and Calvin proved; at the modern revival as Wesley and Whitfield shewed; and now recently, as Mr. Darby, and I know not who else, proved. The result of this was that one poor man who had preached among the Methodists, and still did at times, went out of his mind, and was in that state for a couple of years from the conflict of feeling, pressed to declare the Lord's love for sinners, and harassed by the thought, as he had been now instructed, that it was wrong for poor men to put themselves forward. The application of the word of God to his soul, in the hands of one who then knew nothing of the circumstances, but who entered into his then state, has happily restored this poor brother.** To finish with Devonport, which was a place exclusively under the care of the Ebrington Street leaders. Since my return those who assumed the lead there arranged an assembly of those they judged elders, that they might recognize and own one another among themselves. Two however of the persons they included declined. A number of the brethren then met to know what was to be done, and this was broken up by authority. A good many left, and the rest, I apprehend, are tolerably peaceful and at liberty. Those who sought to govern all in connection with Ebrington Street having been stated by all who left as the persons whose assumption drove them away, they were withdrawn for the time, and now, I apprehend, go on pretty quietly.***

{*The confirmation by Mr. R.H. does not apply to the *words* "educated gentleman," but the general idea that God now made use of talent and worked by it, and,

as he apprehended it, not in uneducated persons and these statements of Mr. N. were commonly current at that time. }

{**These statements were at first denied, then explained, and then confessed and apologised for. I add this note on account of the last circumstance. The person concerned (a brother, whose integrity no one would dispute) freely forgave Mr. Newton, and thinks no more about it as a wrong to him. But this does not affect the historical state of things, and it is in that way that I bring it forward here. Mr. R.H. declared, when this came to be known, that it was no isolated case, but the constantly inculcated doctrine at that date. }

{***I have some doubt of the stability of this gathering, from what I have heard since, but I do not pretend to know much about it. Others can give more exact details of this than I can, as I took no part in it; but I give the substance of what passed, as I had it from the mouths of those concerned; and I myself know many of the facts. }

As to Plymouth, there was a constant labour to reduce the meeting to a clerical form, and to invest certain leaders with the sole direction.

This went on in a thousand minute and many private circumstances which it is impossible to detail, which made gracious brethren uneasy, but afforded little or no ground for any specific interference; if it did, there were few or none that dared.

For indeed one of the scarcely intelligible phenomena of the case to me was, the way people were cowed, and heart and conscience disposed of, I know not where; save that the quiet and gracious were oppressed and unhappy. I have remarked that it is the art and skill of some men to turn every conscientious man, every one who cannot or will not become an instrument, into a radical or a schismatic. But it is a sad state of things. I could name persons here that were denounced to us as radicals and busybodies, that I have found when not tortured and harassed in conscience, as quiet, unassuming, happy Christians as possible. Indeed in these cases, it is generally the truest-hearted and the least of a party spirit, who are thus miserable; if they stir, it has that uneasy unhappy character which is thus characterized by those who rule. With such it is only as in a famous Latin passage, when "solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant." When they make a solitude around them, they call it peace.

Mr. R.H. has mentioned in his tract some of these circumstances; little by themselves, but together gradually changing the whole character of the meeting. But he has wisely passed over many, many, private ones, which helped largely to alienate him from Ebrington Street.

I may add here, as it was a public one, that he himself was stopped praying in public. How many a gracious person, esteeming himself and his doings of little importance, has yielded in this way, till power was gained to change principles!*

{*At this moment there are some twelve or twenty persons that take part, who never opened their lips nor ventured to give out a hymn till the separation. Of these I refer

to several, even in Ebrington Street, where, *since the separation*, it has taken place as to speaking, praying, and giving out hymns. }

But thus things went on. A poor brother gave out a hymn. Nobody would raise it. He felt it, spoke of it in private. The simple were disheartened. They feared to give one out. Whose fault was it? Nobody's, and the point was gained. When tolerably disheartened it went farther: for Mr. Newton himself, at a prayer meeting, got up and went and sat down by the side of a young brother who gave out a hymn, and laid hold of his book. The hymn was, I believe, at last raised, but he was asked if he meant to pray too. The young man left, and goes to a free church, where the gospel is preached. Brethren have been hindered speaking; and not only so, but there is not a person resident at Plymouth who frequented Ebrington Street but (as Mr. R.H. has remarked) knew when it was Mr. Newton's and when Mr. H.'s day: and it became *the common language* to speak of it so by all, rich and poor; and people took their measures for going accordingly. I speak of Sunday mornings at breaking of bread. Now it may happen that there may be only one habitually able to edify in a body; though it is a sad thing if there be no diversity of gift in a large body. But a regular alternation of two, and if absent a sort of manager left, for so it really was, and the speaking prepared as previously considering the state of the congregation and preparing a discourse (and such was the ground avowedly taken with me as the right thing, when I arrived), is certainly not that dependence on the Spirit which characterized the profession of the brethren. I do not like the expression "going to meet the Spirit," but the devoted brother who used it expresses in it (badly, I think,*) the substance of an all-important truth, which those who cavil at it have been assiduously undermining: and, I may add, in such language as I am bold to say no one under the guidance of that Spirit could use, and which expresses real unbelief as to the substance of the matter. The church is the habitation of God through the Spirit. It is by the Holy Ghost God dwells in the church, though He cannot be separated from the Father and the Son. It has been formally, and expressly, denied that the presence of the Holy Ghost should be looked for in the assembly. It has been perhaps affirmed too. And this is one of the sad circumstances, as it strikes me, in Ebrington Street - not exactly unorthodox teaching, but important truths dealt with in so rash and daring a manner, and the authority of the teacher leant upon for them, and his wildest notions put upon the level of certainty with justification by faith; so that were his authority once shaken there would be danger that no one would know what was certain. It would be scepticism as to everything. So I have seen it with Roman Catholics.

{*"Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Now the presence of Jesus, though of course in Spirit, implies many associations of heart which His name peculiarly bears, and His authority too as Lord. But when met, the Holy Ghost is the acting power in every ministration which is not mere fleshly worthlessness. }

I have myself heard it taught from Hebrews 9: 27, that Christ had to be judged after His death as another man! as it was appointed to men to die, and He was a man. It has been taught that Christ was born under death, being a constituted sinner, and worked His way up to life by His obedience. So on Leviticus 1, that covering sin was not merely by

sacrificial atonement making satisfaction for it, but that Christ's devoting Himself, as typified by the burnt-offering, made up by a thing *of the like kind* for our imperfect devotedness, and what a blessing it was that it should be of the like kind, and so filled up and completed, its defects covered. The statement as to the Holy Ghost was, that they did not look for His presence in the assembly, but for God to be over it to bless it.

I admit that since the question has been raised, it has been stated otherwise. But the explanation recently given, to which I have alluded elsewhere, was, that they went to meet God, not the Holy Ghost; we the Holy Ghost, not God. I leave any sober and intelligent Christian to judge what the state of those must be, as to steady certainty on fundamental truths, who were habitually under this kind of teaching. I have given but specimens; I may add from my own experience that most decided legalism took the place of Christ and grace. I could not have recommended a person about whose soul I was anxious to go there, nor was I singular in this feeling. And these things are urged with all solemnity of the most important fundamental truths. The godliest of the poor happily never understood Mr. Newton at all.

But I return to the history of the circumstances.

When speaking was really impossible for unallowed brethren, some of these read a chapter in the Bible sometimes. This was stopped as hindering the ministry. This happened to three different brethren; to one of them it was one of the ruling sisters who went. The brother, a reserved and blameless brother, was told that he could read his Bible at home, and that he hindered the ministry. He read no more. In another of those cases Mr. Newton himself interfered, and when asked whose ministry had been hindered, and having stated, the brother went to that person, who replied that it had only been hindered by Mr. Newton.

As to the teaching I heard in Ebrington Street from Mr. Newton, the one undeviating object seemed to be to teach differently from what brethren had taught, no matter what, so that it set their teaching aside. This was so marked in many cases as to draw the attention of others besides myself.

And now as to the circumstances connected with rule and authority. It is alleged that we are radicals, and look for democracy. I trust brethren will seek nothing but the guidance of God's blessed Spirit. But what are the facts? There was a meeting from the earliest period called the Friday meeting, where those who laboured habitually among the saints and were occupied with their concerns met to consult together, instead of acting apart or isolatedly; and where many little things, such as arise everywhere, were settled in the fear of God, while what became matters of public discipline were presented to the assembly at large. There may be trouble between brethren happily terminated without the need of shewing them up in public before a whole assembly. If public discipline be needed, then it is clear from scripture the assembly must judge, and act to clear the consciences of all, *their own consciences*. But then this is a very painful case. However such a meeting there was, and, with the difficulties and trials incident to all things, went on with the confidence of the saints. Latterly, but after the lapse of a good many years,

when Capt. H., Sir A.C. and myself were no longer at Plymouth, Mr. Newton absented himself: only, when any case arose on which he had formed an opinion, and wished to interfere, he came down at the close of the meeting, inquired how it was settled, and insisted on its being judged his own way, setting aside what had been done where it did not accord with his mind. Mr. R.H. remonstrated once or twice against this procedure. This was received with great anger by Mr. Newton, and the practice being still followed, Mr. R.H. told Mr. H. that it was idle their meeting if things went on thus, and left. It lingered on awhile and finally closed about two years ago, it being impossible to bring them together again. Mr. H. however laboured at its restoration, but in vain, the following circumstance having occurred. On the occasion of the burial of a poor person on Sunday (which the poor always desire as their attendance is more easy, and which had been disallowed at Ebrington Street), the son of the deceased insisted on it. He came from a distance. Mr. S-s, who was habitually the resort of the poor in similar cases, sent him to Mr. H. He was away. Mr. S-s then told him to go and get the grave dug, and on Sunday morning he mentioned it to the assembly at the close of the meeting. Mr. Newton went over to him in great anger and told him it was impossible to go on with him any longer, etc.

On a weekday Mr. Newton sent down Mr. H. to summon Mr. S-s to the back room of the tractshop where he remained himself.* Mr. S-s asked what for, and was told to come up to be instructed in the principles on which the meeting was conducted if he did not know them. He declined going. Mr. H. declined going again, and Mr. Newton was obliged to go down himself; and there he told Mr. S-s that there were those whom God had raised up and given authority to, and his business was to obey. Mr. S-s asked who they were, and Mr. Newton replied, himself, H., S., and B., and that neither did he recognize Mr. S-s at all. Mr. S-s replied, that neither did he recognize Mr. Newton. This closed the attempt to re-establish the Friday meeting. The two brethren S-s and R-e were now the objects of every annoyance and dishonour. I found stories against the latter, which were totally false, circulated far and wide, which I knew to have been spread by sisters. These two brethren took care of the money, and paid the expenses, and distributed any allowances to the poor. Mr. Newton insisted on an arrangement, against their remonstrance, which separated the expenses from the poor; and soon after I arrived at Plymouth, it had to be announced that there had been no means of paying for more than a year's gas, and wine for communion for half a year.

{*Before I arrived at Plymouth, Mr. H. used to call this room the Chamber of the Inquisition. [Lest this note should identify unduly this name with Mr. Newton, it may be right to state that the name was given to the upper (not the back) room as much through Mr. H.'s use of it for the purpose as Mr. Newton's. Mr. S. went down as well as Mr. H. He stated in the conversation that they were not acting on the principles they began upon: if they were, he should leave. At Exmouth this departure from original principles was avowed by one brother distinctly.]

Such was the state of things when I arrived, ignorant of all these details, but since my last visit having felt that clericalism and worldly principles had usurped the place of the Spirit of God. I had received no complaint, no letter about it. It was a letter, as I have

stated, of Mr. H.'s which shewed me that all barrier was gone against evil which I knew to be at work, but which had been hitherto borne with as individual evil. The tractshop had become a violent party sectarian instrument. It was an institution I always indeed thought objectionable. One tract was sold there shewing how the universal consent of the church was against those who differed from Mr. N. and that it could easily be shewn that those who did were "subverting the first elements of Christianity." This tract had been published on a resolution of the Plymouth teachers, taken after a remonstrance* from some London brethren.**

{*I do not mean that the remonstrance turned on this sentence. It was, I believe, rather on the earlier part, and practically imputing certain views, and on other points.}

{**'London brethren' should be a London brother. As to the letters only one, which was the material one, was taken about by Mr. Newton. The word 'furnish' is merely meant to convey the fact of their communication.}

It has been supposed that it was my sudden arrival which occasioned the feeling and conduct which followed. This is all untruthful pretence. Mr. Newton had ever since my letter to Mr. H. (I have the *date* from Mr. Newton himself) been labouring to prepare the minds of all he could against me. This I learnt after my arrival. It is only since the London meeting that I have known that Mr. H. had furnished him with my three or four private letters to him, which Mr. N. took about and pressed on people, with his own reasonings, to prove that I was subverting the truth. Mr. H. did it most innocently.

In the letters (which I have not seen since*) I apprehend there was nothing. At least the brethren who came down to inquire asked me if there were others than these of the date in question, in which I had said something to Mr. H.: an inquiry of which I could not well tell the meaning till I heard the use that had been made of them (a use which was not confined to Plymouth). Of all this I was happily ignorant when I went there, and desired only in ministry to raise, if God enabled me, the spiritual tone of souls which I felt to be grievously sunk - I acknowledge I was a poor instrument for it. But the public weekly meetings in Raleigh Street were trebled in spite of all the prejudice raised.

{*Since I wrote this, I have seen them, and, though written with the unguardedness of private communications, there is nothing that I can see unscriptural. I suppose brethren thought so too by asking me if that was all.}

But this is the way the letter-shewing worked. A great many took Mr. Newton's statements as to my views without further inquiry, and at the same time it was based in their subsequent statements on my own letters. If not, distrust was produced, and this was something. Those who were disgusted with this way of getting on were known, and set down and discountenanced as Darbyites.

I leave to others to recount, if they please, the meeting and consultings of the leaders to ensure united opposition to and rejection of me, as I have only known it since the London meeting.* Such there were. I can only mention the facts as they occurred. I

went to stay at Mr. R.H.'s the next morning after my arrival. There Mr. Newton came, and I met him cordially in manner, however pained. He sat down at the opposite side of the room, whereon I resumed my seat by the side of one I was speaking to, and Mr. N. after a few words with Mr. R.H., who seated himself beside him, got up and said, Good morning, sir, and went out. Three brethren, Messrs. H., S., and B., then came, or were sent, separately, to ask me what I had come to Plymouth for.**

{* But in truth, when I think (knowing now something of what passed there) of all the professions and protestations made to me, and how I was assured all was suspicion on my part, and accident without design, if anything had crept in, it is sickening.}

**I would just ask what, now that I know such a meeting was held to get rid of me, I must think of the statements in the letter to C-w, that every door was opened to me, and that Mr. Newton would have a decided objection to its being otherwise; though why they should have opened it, if my doctrines subverted Christianity, would be hard to tell. I must add here that Mr. C. declared that the statement as to him (a brother from Ireland) in that letter was not the fact; that he was asked what views he held on prophetic points, and when he replied that he had no fixed views, but was open to receive anything that could be proved to him that then ministry was opened to him.

Mr. Newton then wrote me word, that he had met me with intentional coldness, considering I had come as an antagonist to them, but on the report of B. and H., he could walk on peacefully in separate paths. I replied, that I objected to his "having acted very badly towards many beloved brethren, and in the sight of God." He withdrew thereon the former kindly-written note, and applied for names and circumstances. I confess I felt this miserable. He had been writing for six years to every quarter of the globe (Mr. Newton boasted of it at last before the brethren who came), saying, the foundations of Christianity were gone if brethren were listened to; sisters had been employed in copying these letters; tracts had been published, declaring that we all subverted the first elements of Christianity! and he asks for dates and circumstances. I replied, it was the sectarianism and denouncing of brethren I complained of. This, he replied, was a *new charge*! And, as it involved all the rest at Plymouth in the charge as well as him, he would consult with them about it and meet, but demanded the dates or circumstances of the former charge or its withdrawal. As I well knew, and any one could see, that it was a mere explanation and enlargement of acting badly towards beloved brethren, I declined further communication unless before brethren; the rather as he alluded very incorrectly to past circumstances, and I thought such correspondence very useless. I had his letters declaring the foundations of Christianity were gone, and the tract saying we subverted Christianity, not to mention that there were letters without end written under his influence.

But there are other circumstances I must now mention because it has been supposed Mr. Newton was charged publicly all at once, and no steps taken, and this has been even much insisted on. Before ever I came to Plymouth, and without any communication with me, Mr. H.Y., who felt equally the sectarianism and that every principle was set aside, had been to Mr. Newton and spoken to him. Mr. Newton answered him with the greatest violence, and declared that we were destroying the

fundamentals of Christianity, that he was justified in what he was doing against us, and should continue. Mr. A.P. went also to him just about the time I came, and was met with the same avowed determination to persevere.*

{* It has been already stated that Mr. Newton had been complained of as to these letters by brethren all over the country, and I had been compelled to read them, and had at the instance of others remonstrated with him four years before. Mr. S.'s letter has also been referred to as hewing that it was going on and remonstrated against. }

To continue, Mr. H. came down to me to say that Mr. Newton would not consent to have a sort of jury formed on him, but that they could have a meeting, to see whether sectarianism had been introduced. I replied, that they would have had no difficulty in having what he called "a jury" on a poor brother, but that I was content to have such a meeting, as I could go and take my part in the inquiry like any one else. He asked me who should go. I said, I suppose Y. and P., as they had been already to Mr. Newton; for the rest, any Mr. Newton wished to bring as his friends. I declined bringing any. I have always avoided the very semblance of party. Subsequently Mr. R.H. desired to come. Mr. N-r from Jersey, having been conversant with affairs at Plymouth, was there, and Mr. P-'s brother, and Mr. McA. The rest, thirteen in all besides Mr. Newton and myself, were Mr. Newton's friends. Messrs. H., S., B., D., C-w., J., R., A.P.; C.P., N-r., R.H., Y., McA. from Exeter.

Being called upon to state what I objected to, I said, As an inquiry into sectarianism, any could inquire as well as me, any judgment on Mr. Newton's conduct having been avoided. Being pressed, I began by stating, that what I objected to was the sectarianism (I had previously declared to Mr. H. that I would not enter on the prophetic question as a doctrinal thing; it was a moral question to me).

Mr. Newton broke out in great anger, saying, that he waived all formal objections, that he did seek to make a focus of Plymouth, and that his object was to have union in testimony there against the other brethren (that is, as explained and is evident, their teaching), and that he trusted to have at least Devonshire and Somersetshire under his influence for the purpose; and that it was not the first time that I had thwarted and spoiled his plans.

After this declaration, I produced of course no proofs, and Messrs. Y. and P. said, that they had no need to state anything that passed, as Mr. Newton had declared his object as plainly as they could have alleged it. I called upon the brethren to say, If this was what Plymouth was to be, as, if it was, I should not go next Sunday. Mr. Newton said I had no right to ask that: it was his own affair, and he should go on with it. I however persevered. Mr. H. said, this made it difficult for him to act with Mr. Newton, as he could not seek union *against* anything. None other stated his feelings on the subject.* It was arranged, that those present should meet, to know what were the heresies which made such a course as Mr. Newton's desirable. There were two meetings, at which I attended as desired, and stated my views. Some there said, the mountains were molehills; but Mr. Newton declared he was farther apart than ever; and that the differences were fundamental.

{*This silence was subsequently taken notice of, and by some as matter of self-reproach. }

Mr. H. had interviews with Mr. Newton on the subject of the union in testimony, against the teaching of the brethren. He obtained from Mr. Newton the statement, that it would be *an* object, not *the* object, of his labours; with which he, Mr. H., was much delighted, as a means of peace. To me it was the proof of deliberate perseverance in a pursuit which anger had disclosed. Subsequently Mr. D. and Mr. H. obtained verbally from him, that his statement was objectionable, if taken irrelatively. But there was no explanation of this, but an unauthorized one by Mr. D., that Mr. Newton would go on with "brethren" on other points, but continue his own pursuit of the avowed object. I was dismayed, not at the existence of the evil, but at the utter insensibility to such a statement, the only thought of most being to save, not the church, but Mr. Newton from its effects; and all silent (save what I have stated). But on Mr. A.P. saying that brethren ought to say what they felt, Mr. B. replied, You may ask me, but I will not answer you. When I had asked at first, whether brethren acquiesced in this statement, Mr. Newton (as I have mentioned) interfered instantly, and said I had no right to put such a question. At the close of the last meeting, which was to know whether there was any disavowal of it, and at which the term "taken irrelatively," was discussed, Mr. R. indeed asked Mr. N-r why he said nothing, and he said he was a stranger, and Mr. R. excused himself on the same ground.

I left for Somersetshire to leave time for those less obnoxious to Mr. Newton than I, to obtain some disavowal of the purpose - the "objectionable if taken irrelatively" was all that could be obtained. I then stated that perhaps I had better leave and ask for Raleigh Street. Mr. R. said that very great good had been done, that I ought to be uncommonly thankful, and urged me not to press any further disavowal then, lest it should produce a rupture with Mr. Newton, but wait and see. I said it was a sorrowful position to be in, but it was all that I was then doing, and acquiesced in the wish, and I continued to minister on the general topics of the grace of the Lord Jesus.

But I must now relate what my journey to Somersetshire further opened to me. I went there, quite unconscious of it all, to evangelize where none of these questions were. These circumstances were important as to Plymouth, as unfolding the working of the plan there. As at Plymouth they treated what wonderfully blessed new light they had got as to their church position, so here it was taught that, as the brethren had first learnt brotherly unity and fellowship, now they had been, as fresh instruction, led to church order. This church order was the authority of the teachers, who were exclusively to judge of, and recognize or the contrary, others as teachers.* This was founded on "Let the rest [others] judge," in 1 Corinthians 14: 29. This was said to be the prophets, to which the teachers now answered. They were to try, and approve or not, of a person's being a teacher. Mr. Newton had gone up and held a tea meeting there and expounded this. This came to such a pitch in these quarters that one brother, on these points being mooted, having urged that after all the Bereans were more noble than those of Thessalonica, because they searched the scriptures whether these things were so, he was answered by a young, and, as far as I know, very nice-hearted young man who was associated in the ministry there, that it was

Jews searching Jewish scriptures, but that, now that God had raised up teachers and given gifts, all that was changed, and they must listen to the teachers. The brother replied, Surely, sir, if Jews searched Jewish scriptures, Christians may search Christian ones. It was there taught by Mr. Newton, that Puseyism was the devil's imitation of a truth, and that, if brethren did not adopt it, God would set it up elsewhere. It was stated at Plymouth, at the close of these matters, on the question as to judging in the church, that the teachers were the representatives of the church, and that they were to decide, and the church to act on their decision. This may be and probably has been denied; but I know it to be true, and to have been stated as well since, as before all the debate about it. As to the explanation of the chapter there can be no doubt about it; not only because it was urged upon me and numbers of other persons; but even before I arrived, H. had objected to this interpretation, on the ground that it could not be approving and sanctioning teachers, for it was the teaching that was to be judged; and the person was assumed on their own shewing to be a prophet already. Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.

{*The doctrine decidedly taught there was that the Holy Ghost, who was sovereign, wrought in the body by members, and that these members were the gifted teachers. I am aware that the five brethren who signed the circular letter say, "we do not hold that the Holy Spirit resides only in the teachers." I am aware they do not. But they did teach that it was by gifted members He acted in the body, that is, by teachers. And every one knows, that anyone's taking a part in the meeting as led of the Spirit to do so was denounced as "impulse." Moreover I know that, since this has been under press, it has been pressed at Plymouth, that it was by instruments prepared before they went to the meeting that God acted in it. And long ago, when praying and hymns were urged as not being gifts, it was admitted, but answered that only gifted persons would take part in either. It will be remarked in the statement referred to, that it is carefully avoided saying, that the Holy Spirit acts in the assembly. But on this hereafter. }

At Exmouth the principles were sought to be introduced first, rather roughly by one, and then more prudently by another; but the first person alluded to, acting on the principle, excommunicated a person on his own authority. He had withdrawn because the principles were abandoned, and it was asserted that no one *could* leave *the church*, and he was excommunicated. I know it has been sought to shew that this met the mind of others. Some may very likely have been under the influence of the same principles, so that I should not deny this in a measure; but the excommunication was refused to be received by two bodies of the brethren, and at last the most of the other brethren at Exmouth took courage and restored him.

It is alleged that government and order are rejected. But let it be remembered that it was Mr. N. who deserted and broke up the Friday meeting, a point on which we shall see more just now. And, as to the brethren who laboured according to what was given them as servants of all to administer and guide as helpers of the body, Mr. B. in the counties I here refer to (and he acted on the same principle elsewhere) urged that five ciphers never could make one, a statement which 'became such an accredited one that it was repeated elsewhere by another as original; so that I was very near getting into a scrape by

attributing it to him before those who had heard it from another. The excellent answer of a brother in those parts then was that, if the Spirit of God was there as *one* before them, the five ciphers would be 100,000.

All this be it remembered had happened before I came back to England. Mr. B. himself urged the point on me soon after I came. Yet, when things began to come out, it was repeatedly urged upon me, that some things had happened as accidents, but that there was no plan nor principle in it. It closed at Wellington by some of the leading brethren stating to Mr. Newton (in what terms I do not pretend to know) that they could not be distracted by these proceedings any more.

Mr. H. went to Ireland and was very happy there with the brethren who were the great objects of Plymouth denouncement.* This, after the open avowal of sectarian objects at the April meeting, I have no doubt acted greatly on his mind. At his return he spoke in the way of admonition. Such a party spirit blazed out against him, that I ceased ministering for a time. However, they seemed softened, and I began again. Mr. H. then laboured again at setting up the Friday meeting; as, except the few things Mr. N. wished to govern, which had now to be more cautiously done too, all common matters were in disorder. If it was a funeral, no one knew rightly what to do, nor a person wishing for communion; and he felt bound too to those who had been practically ousted. But he could do nothing.

{*At the April meeting of 15 when I referred to the sisters' letter-writing, denouncing the Irish brethren, I was challenged to prove it and produce instances. Of course, though I knew of it in every quarter, the letters were not to me, and I had none of them. But a brother who was there stated he had seen the letters - some that is, of course, and that in them 'heretic' was too good for the Irish brethren. }

At this time appeared the two documents upon which the famous question of the charges arose. Mr. C-w had printed a letter written to him by Mr. Newton to give an account of the April meeting of 15 - both having been there. Mr. S. got it suppressed as soon as he saw it, but Mr. N. himself subsequently circulated it again. This (though so bad and sectarian, that some brethren counted it as bad as what was said) is, confessedly now, not a true account of the meeting. This rests not only on (besides myself) the testimony of Mr. H., N-r, McA., and many others, but Mr. R. (who, the most openly of all, took the part of Mr. Newton, and was cross-examined at length by Lord C. to get some modification of his testimony) persisted in the same account as myself. The only modification was that, instead of saying that he trusted he should have at least Devonshire and Somersetshire under his influence for the purpose, he understood him to say, that wherever he could get influence in Devonshire, Somersetshire, and Cornwall, he should seek to do the same thing. Mr. N. himself at last said, as I understood, that as everybody said he did, he supposed he did say as alleged. Lord C. at last asked Mr. R. whether, if he had read that paper, he should say it was an untrue account of the meeting. He replied he must, but that Mr. N. was so angry (so chafed, I believe, was the word) that he did not think he ought to be charged with what he did say. This passed in my room when the brethren who came to inquire came to examine me.*

{* Mr. Newton declares in his letter to Cw that every door of ministry was thrown open to me, and that he should have decidedly objected to its being otherwise. At the time he says this was so, was assiduously insisting that we denied the Gospels, redemption through the blood as to some, life in the Old Testament saints; and that the fundamentals of Christianity were in question. Can anyone give credit to these things together? It is a mystery, I confess, to me, how Mr. H., who knew of the meeting held to arrange united opposition to me, could have got on at all after this letter was published. He did go to Mr. N. to speak to him about it, telling him he regretted it for his own credit and character, as he (Mr. H.) must say (if asked) that it was true; but I confess I do not see how common action is to go on in such a case. }

The other thing which formed the subject of charge was this. Mr. Newton published the first letter of the five, which had been circulating six years in MS., denouncing the brethren, with the following advertisement: "The following letter was written some years ago, in reply to the inquiries of a friend, who resides in Norfolk. It is now published with some omissions and alterations, but in substance it remains the same." What was my astonishment to find, on comparing it, that a quarter nearly of the printed matter was not in the MS. letter at all; partly mixed up, but chiefly added at the end; and that the new matter consisted of reasonings against the doctrines he was charged with holding now as to the authority of teachers. So that these charges appeared most wanton and unfounded, inasmuch as six years ago the person charged had actually written against the things he now was charged with. This is all woven in at the end of the letter, so as to form part of it.

I had been already pretty well disgusted with diplomacy and special pleading, but this was too much for me. I said to H. and S. I did not know what to do, and ceased ministering. But I still went down to the room, and sat in the crowd at communion, and went to villages to preach. I was greatly exercised about leaving - prayed much; and at last it occurred to me that, if the Friday meeting were set up again, these things might be inquired into there, and the body hindered from being responsible for it, or God might lead to some remedy, though humanly speaking it was a forlorn hope. But I said, I will not leave till I have tried all. I spoke to Mr. H., and he said he had twice tried, and it was no use.

I then spoke to Mr. S. He said there ought to be such a thing - it was absolutely necessary, but that he could take no step in it, as it would produce a rupture with Mr. N., as he would have nobody but the persons he approved of. I asked if everything was to be sacrificed to the caprice of an individual. In another interview Mr. S. said he had spoken to Mr. B., and referred to a particular brother as objectionable, not the one who had been chiefly obnoxious before. As to him Mr. S. said he must be of the Friday meeting. I said I should object seriously to some that thought themselves unquestionably entitled; but though I had difficulties as to some most looked up to, and which I could justify by Mr. S.'s own statements, I was content to waive them, and take them as they had been together.* Meeting him a third time, I found nothing was done, and I told him I must then act on my own conscience. Again I thought of leaving, when it occurred to me, that still I

ought not to charge the whole body with the matter, when it was only some party leaders and their followers that had yet been dealt with.

{*At this time Mr. S. spoke most freely on all these points, taking a sort of independent place. I think it better not to repeat what he said to me as to people, but merely relate the facts.}

I therefore begged the assembly to stop after the service one Sunday morning, and told them that Mr. H. having laboured to restore the Friday meeting, things being in disorder or dealt with summarily and irresponsibly by one or two, I had pressed the point on those more immediately concerned, but to no purpose; I now laid it on the consciences of the saints themselves. Mr. H. was at this time absent, and Mr. W. H-n wrote to him that I had sought to turn the meeting into a dissenting body,* but that nobody thought it worth taking the least notice of, and that it had dropped to the ground. This letter, I know, contributed very greatly to the emancipation of Mr. H.'s mind from the bondage it was under.

{*It is objected that the statement as to Mr. W. H-n's letter is rather too strong; that he blamed my act as being rather a dissenter's principle to bring it before the whole assembly.}

I then went to Jersey, etc., to give all the fullest time to consider the matter. As Mr. H-n stated truly, not one stirred. The fact is, while I attempted to heal or remedy, and walk with the evil, God, though He sustained me, never (after the April meeting) gave any efficacy to a step I took. I do not doubt I ought to have left then, or brought it publicly before all the brethren. I did not do so at the instance of Mr. R., Mr. Y., and some others. I can only sorrow now I was not more decided. The case would have been infinitely simpler, but God graciously overrules all. But no brother could have expected me to have stayed to have made Plymouth a focus, and join in helping a union in testimony against myself, not to speak of other brethren. It has been asked why I did not go on and teach at Plymouth. I answer, I did. Why did I not bring it before the leading brethren there to be remedied? They had been broken up, and their meeting was refused. Mr. Newton would not hear of it from any one. He had claimed, as already related, sole authority for himself and three or four others he had approved.

But I must now turn to some other collateral minor facts which entered into this miserable history.

An aged person, whom it is needless to name, who had long been opposed to and kept aloof from brethren, who himself preached, but whose congregation had died away, came into communion and began to minister on Sunday morning. He did not do so, strange to say, in general, when Mr. Newton was not there; at least when I was. I cannot answer for other occasions. But I heard him on week evenings. Though there was nothing unorthodox or wrong in his teaching, yet I did not at all think he was led of the Spirit of God in it, and when he came to speak to me about these things afterwards, I told him so. I was not at Plymouth when he joined, but I told Mr. H. I thought his joining was, under

the circumstances, a chastisement; but if they put away the chastisement instead of the thing they were chastised for, they would have worse. Mr. H. spoke to him with no adequate effect at any rate. But Mr. B. one Sunday morning, being left (practically) in charge of the meeting as was customary, the other chief leaders being absent, the old gentleman got up to speak while the alms box was going round after the communion. Mr. B. pulled him back to his seat by the tail of his coat, and on the return of the box closed the meeting. A brother, well known and esteemed, long suffering under the state of things, remonstrated; and another urging, just after when the first was not listened to, that the first had said that if this went on he must leave, Mr. B. replied, Let him.

This person however was not to be daunted by this; and one day, when he got up to speak at the Sunday morning meeting, the sisters tried to put him down by scraping with their feet. At this period I sat among the communicants, taking no part in general publicly in the service, though I once said something on a week evening. I was quiescent. That Sunday I was present. The next I was not, and then, as he rose to speak again, the sisters and some brethren began leaving, and before the close of the meeting one sister came and patted him on the back and told him, if he went on that way, all would leave. The Sunday following, before the brother who broke bread reached his seat to sit down, Mr. N. jumped up so as to prevent anyone's speaking.*

{* I was informed by several brethren that this was constantly the practice. I speak of what I saw.}

During the week I spoke to Mr. S., and said that it was impossible that all this could go on. He replied that it was very bad, it was regular jockeyship. I called his attention to his expression, and what would be said of me if I had used it. He repeated, Well, I say it again, it was regular jockeyship. I said, Do you feel the force of what you are saying? If the presence of God is thought of in the meeting, what jockeyship would be there? All this passed previously, and partly led to my putting the re-establishment of the Friday meeting on the consciences of the brethren at large. The present result was that Mr. Newton took Mr. H. and S. and silenced the person referred to, who left the meeting. No notice was taken of the means used to put him down in the meeting. I could not help feeling that all this was allowed of God as a humbling test of the state of things.

I now turn to another circumstance which occurred about this time. A brother, known at Plymouth (where the facts also are known, but whom I shall not name, as what I am about to relate is sad enough), rose up and spoke in the assembly after a hymn referring to the cross. He had never, I believe, spoken in the assembly, but had preached in villages. He was (I did not know him before this, but as far as I can give any testimony) a truly upright godly person, respected by those who knew him. It was a sad instance of Plymouth ways. He spoke a little nervously in manner, but gave a godly and useful exhortation on really crucifying self if we celebrated the cross, and then pressed the evil of aiming at any importance for oneself. I asked Mr. H. who it was as we went out. He said, He is a godly humble man, but it will make a proper hubbub, and he will catch it, or some such expression. He was accordingly immediately set at, so as to be effectually dismayed. Nor was there one, as is well-known at Plymouth, who spoke more

strongly (unless perhaps one other not there now) against the kind of tyranny which was practised there, and the hindrance of all liberty in ministry or otherwise taking part in the meeting.

Mr. Newton went to Mr. H. the next morning, and pressed him as to what he was going to do as to the brother's speaking. Mr. H. declaring he had no intention to do anything, Mr. N. pressed the matter, that this brother was not fit to minister, and that it was a sin against the order of God's church for which he had been sweating his soul for the last twelve years.* Mr. H. declined. However he had been quite sufficiently cowed by other means used already. How did this history close? This brother, a respectable godly man, for such he has been ever esteemed, had given up a place of confidential warehouseman in the town, I believe conscientiously from the nature of the employment, and waited to see what would turn up. He was given** a weekly allowance, sent out to preach, and began to speak in the meetings.*** In one of the meetings held by Mr. Newton by invitation to explain things, after the brethren who came to inquire were gone, this brother stood up and testified that he never had been hindered,**** but always encouraged to speak, Mr. Newton and Mr. S., who knew all that had passed, sitting by.

{*If anyone knew all the pains taken to persuade me that, if there were evils they were unintentional accidents, they would be surprised. This was not the only occasion on which Mr. N. made use of this same expression. }

{**Since writing this, the state of things here related has ceased to exist; and the brother, whose godliness none called in question, not only has employment of his own, but his conscience, I apprehend, better informed as to many facts, is out of the snare that he was in. But I have had no communication with him. It is not his path I refer to, though he may have been caught unawares in the snare; it is that of those who were active in the matter - the system. }

{***As regards the brother alluded to, whom I have seen since the publication of this narrative, he assures me that the supplies which he received he did not receive as a fixed weekly sum; and that as to the villages in which he went to preach, he went at the request of those to whom they had been previously allotted, and did not consider himself sent by the leaders of Ebrington Street. I may add, that he has since ceased speaking in Ebrington Street. }

{****The reader must remember that he did not know what had passed between Mr. Newton and Mr. H.; but he certainly was inconsistent in this, that no one had spoken more plainly as to the hindrances there were. }

Having gone through this collateral subject, I return to the general narrative. After some time I returned from Jersey, my mind much tried about leaving, but my conscience allowing me no longer to stay. I arrived Saturday and had no wish to act in a hurry. On Sunday week I detained the assembly and told them it was a matter of the deepest sorrow, but that I was going to quit the assembly; I felt it impossible to enter into details. It would have been a string of miserable facts, the public ones of which have been detailed here,

and practically an accusation of others. I therefore refrained from them entirely, and only stated the principles on which I went: that I felt God was practically displaced; and more particularly, that there was a subversion of the principles on which we met; that there was evil and unrighteousness unconfessed and unjudged; and, as a collateral point, that the Friday meeting, which was a means of inquiry and service, had been suppressed and refused to be restored, so that the remedy for much was taken away. I then left the assembly.

Mr. H. returned that week or the next, and, having communicated the day to Messrs. S-s and R-e, gave on Friday his reasons for declining ministering any more.* I had had no communication with him. Messrs. S-s and R-e had told him that they should gather the brethren to see what was to be done about his leaving. Accordingly, at the close of his address on Friday, Mr. R-e proposed their meeting on Monday to see if anything could be done or what. Mr. S-s got up and said it would be well at the same time if I was called upon to say why I left. I was not present, being no longer of Ebrington Street. It was communicated to me afterwards.

{*The meeting held after Mr. H.'s return, at which he explained his reasons for ceasing to minister, was at the instance of other brethren, not at the suggestion of Mr. H. }

Accordingly on Monday, after they had spoken of Mr. H., and prayed without any definite proposal or result, I was sent for to give an account to the brethren why I had left. Every engine had been meanwhile set in motion to hinder any coming. It was called a sin to go, because it was not called by the authorities in the church. The sisters held meetings in their districts for the purpose. It was denounced as "an electioneering meeting," etc. About two or three hundred however assembled there. I stated my reasons, and, I can humbly say, with the presence of the Lord and in grace towards all; so that I know one very dear brother still in Ebrington Street went to Mr. S. and told him all would be well from the spirit in which I had spoken. It was at that assembly that I stated, in the narrative I gave, that the two printed tracts already referred to had stopped my ministering three months before my leaving. I brought no accusation against Mr. Newton in general at all. So far from it that facts, many many facts, which I thought much worse of I did not allude to, because they had nothing to do with my *leaving*. These had stopped my ministering, and I stated them.

I shall just now state one of the other facts, because it also was one of the most public points in the affair. The rest I shall pass by. But I will first close the matter of the meeting. As to the appendix and the letters, I stated that the first thing that made me uncomfortable was the circulation of three out of the five letters which had been sent forth against the brethren, with an appendix which related to the last two given at the end of the third and professing to relate to the first, while much related to the two last which were not there. Mr. Newton was not mentioned in this statement; though, as Mr. N-r remarked, he being connected with this part of the subject, it would naturally be referred to him, which so far is true. I did not mean to appropriate particularly the measure of wrong, as I knew the copy I had was in a sister's handwriting. It has been alleged (and Mr. Newton made it a public charge at a meeting he held after the brethren were gone)

that I stated he had altered the letters, and that I stated he had altered them after I had been told he had not, and a great fuss was made about it. A Miss H., it was said, had been authorised to say he had not. Miss H.'s statement made to me by letter is totally incorrect.* Of this I have absolute proof. I never said the letters were altered. Had they been, it would have been no sort of subject of complaint. Mr. Newton had a perfect right to alter them if he pleased. Had I anything to complain of in this respect, it was that they were not altered; for they are full of the grossest calumnies against the brethren. Mr. N. had been remonstrated with about them; and in them brethren are called upon to have a categorical answer from any who teach, whether they agree with Mr. N.'s views on Matthew 24. What I spoke of was *the suppression* of the two last, and the adding the appendix which referred to them.* This was the fact. All I said of it was that it was the first thing which made me uncomfortable, without any other charge whatever. The fact of the last two letters not being there was stated, and so it was.

{*In saying this I have no doubt whatever of her entire uprightness, I merely state the fact.}

{**This itself was a publication of my private letter without communicating with me, but of the unsuitableness of this Mr. N. has no sense, and there I must leave it. It has been repeated in other cases and in much worse circumstances.}

Subsequently to this, the sister who had copied it sent for me to explain this, and of course I received all she said. I have published the statement elsewhere. I shall here say why I used the word "probably," because I could not honestly use any other. This sister put a copy of the letters (she was one of those employed to copy and circulate them) into my hand, and I observed that the three letters were there together also, and not the two last. This I noticed to her and said, Perhaps you copied them in two books, and that may account for it. She replied, Yes, I did so to give it to two to read at a time. This I of course accepted. But the sister added, that the reason the appendix was added at the end of the third, though it belonged to the first, was, that the letters were already written, and that she was obliged to put the appendix and notes in a space at the end. Now in my copy, written by this sister, this was not the case. The notes, which are very long, are all in their respective places. And therefore, though I let all this drop as utterly immaterial, I could (when urged to give the account) only say, the presence of the appendix there was probably accounted for; because, though I gave credit to this sister fully in what she said, it did not tally with the facts as to my copy in which the circumstance was to be accounted for.

As to changing the letters, not only would this have been no charge whatever (for what should hinder my altering my writings in a new edition?) but though Mr. N. made this a public charge among his own party at the meetings he held, that I had accused him of it after an authorised denial, and this was spread far and wide, he did not think of making it *to me*. I have his written authorized complaint, presented at his request by four of his friends, and there is not a word Of that; but only of what I have stated, the absence of the last two letters; the other, so publicly charged and widely circulated, was not

ventured on in the account he gave of the charges he complained of in the communication with me on the subject.

Being now fairly out, and Mr. H. having declined further ministry, I received a letter from Mr. L.P-r urging me to assemble a number of the leading brethren to see into it before I broke bread elsewhere. At the same time I received a letter from Capt. H. pressing on me the misery of a second table. I wrote two letters to Mr. P-r, stating in general, what led me to it, and saying that, if he felt as he said, he had better come himself. I wrote to Capt. H. to say I felt as sorrowfully about a second table as he could do, but it was a question with me of having any, not of a second; and, further, that I did not ask him to come as he had been considered hostile to Mr. Newton's views, but that if H-y or any of the brethren they thought right at Hereford came, they could judge of the grounds. No one came thence. I communicated to Lord C. what I had done, and said I did not ask W. as he was considered an adversary to Mr. Newton. I communicated it also to Sir A.C. Mr. P-r, who brought with him C., Lord C., and Sir A.C., with whom was Mr. McA., came. Mr. N. or Mr. S. sent for Mr. N.'s friends.

In result there were Messrs. McA., C., P-r, W., R., R-s, M-s, N-r, who arrived from Jersey at that time to let his house, Mr. M., Lord C., and Mr. W-r, who left early before the inquiry (I understood through the illness of his child). There is one fact I will notice here, that all who were not, and did not come as avowed partisans of Mr. Newton, declined breaking bread* any longer in Ebrington Street; that is, Mr. McA., Sir A.C., P-r., C., W.: I am not sure whether Mr. N-r avowed it as the others, but I believe there is no doubt of his judgment of the matter.

{*I am warned that this might seem to say that they did not break bread at all. This is not at all the meaning. "Any longer" refers to after their investigation of the matter, which gives it indeed its whole importance. }

And allow me to ask a question here. Sir A.C. declares he cannot break bread there, and leaves Plymouth. Mr. McA. does so and leaves Plymouth; Messrs. C. and P-r the same. What were people to do who had come to the same conclusion in conscience, and that from much longer and fuller evidence, but who had shops and children at Plymouth, and could not leave? I could have left, but I should have failed in faithfulness to those brethren had I done so. The others had other places perhaps that claimed them; I was free.

I will now mention another circumstance, which though it were a publication subsequent to my leaving so that it did not influence it, did influence any thought of my subsequent return, or recognition of Mr. Newton in ministry. Mr. N., previous to the Clifton meeting, had taught assiduously in public and in private that the Old Testament saints had not the new spiritual life; that the Holy Ghost had indeed acted on them as men in the flesh, but the new life was not communicated to them. This, which was Lord C.'s account before the brethren, confirmed by Sir A.C.'s testimony, was what I had in a general form spoken about at the April meeting; that is, that they had not life. Other persons, whom it is not necessary to name, had full recollection of it. And Mr. N. does not now deny it, brethren having spoken to him on the subject. This at the time made me

very uneasy. Mr. H. was very near being led by Mr. N. into it; but I spoke with him and he was preserved from it.* I spoke to Mr. N. at the Clifton meeting about it in Mr. H.'s presence, and he gave it up.

{*The reader will kindly efface from "Mr. H." to "from it." The circumstance alluded to, does not properly connect itself with this point. }

When at the April meeting Mr. N. was stating why he must pursue his purpose of seeking united testimony against us, he urged the notion that there might be a difference in the *circumstances* of glory in the kingdom between the Old and New Testament saints. I demanded how he could be so violent as to a supposition that there might be such a difference, which was after all a settled idea of no one that I knew, when he had held and taught that they had not life. He replied, That is false. I said I knew it was not; but what had he taught? He said, That they had not the new creature. I said, I know I am right, but be it as you say. He replied, But I did not say they would not have it in another world. I said with astonishment, Well! this is a new kind of life-giving purgatory. They lived a life of faith without the new creature, and get it after their death. He replied, No, they may get it at the instant of dying.* I left it there. This conversation is referred to in the publication I now proceed to mention. It had been very widely circulated, as every one knows at Plymouth and elsewhere, among rich and poor, that we denied that the Old Testament saints had life. This, and that I denied that redemption through the blood as to many, took away the Gospels, Hebrews, and Revelation, from the church, was the constant and assiduous charge by all the leaders at Plymouth, and still continues to be so.** I left them to destroy themselves, which in every upright mind they soon did.

{*To Mr. C., when the brethren were here, he stated that he always held at that time that they would receive it at the resurrection. }

{**Instances have happened while printing this narrative. }

At the time however I now speak of, Mr. N. published a second letter on my Examination. In this, in the coolest and most deliberate way, he charges us, and me particularly, with the doctrine which he, and he alone, taught, and says that, as people's minds are exercised about it, I ought to explain myself on it. There is not even the excuse, itself absurd enough, that though he had been brought out of it by those he charged with it, they had themselves fallen into and propagated it afterwards; because, in the publication in which the charge is, he alludes to the discussion held about it in April. The brethren P-e and M-l asked him as to this when I began to break bread. He stated that he had held as was stated, and that he was wrong; but that he had never charged us with holding difference in life, but only in glory. Every one at Plymouth knows whether this was true or not, but there is only need of appeal to the second letter itself (p. 17), where he says that it is no wonder we hold difference in glory, seeing we suppose difference in life. I must leave to every one to estimate the cool manner, and apparent zeal for the truth, with which this charge is made in the letter.

To proceed to what took place when the brethren came down. Lord C., Mr. M., and Mr. W. arrived, Mr. W. and Sir A.C. about the same time; the others shortly after. Mr. N. had a very long interview at the Dispensary at Plymouth, with Lord C., Mr. M., and W-r, and with a physician of Plymouth, who sent a jointly signed letter to me, to name four persons along with Mr. Newton's four to inquire into the charges I had made. I replied that I should not name any four persons; that the matter was an affair of conscience before the church of God (the most of it had already been first before 15, and then about 300 persons). I thought it a worldly way of settling it. Nor can I yet see that, when a person is charged with sin in the church, it is a scriptural way that he should name four persons to investigate it, and the one who has charged him four more. Indeed I was justified in this by every spiritual person I know before whom it came. I shewed it to Mr. H. and Mr. McA. then arrived, and they said, What is the good for us of four people inquiring into this when we were there? Their report could not affect our judgment. However, I only declined having four on my side. I said that I was quite ready to meet the inquiry, that I would meet the four friends of Mr. N. individually, or all four together, and tell them everything, or I would go before the whole body, or (if a limited number were thought more suited to investigate) I was content it should be done in that way, or Mr. N.'s friends might reassemble the 15 who met in April, or if Mr. N. chose to take it up as a personal wrong (which is what in fact he complained of), he could follow the scriptural rule in that case.

All I demanded was that it should be fully inquired into before the church of God. I mentioned that the statement of the charges themselves was inaccurate. I received for answer that it was not a matter of conscience but of fact; that they had expected to receive a withdrawal of the charges, or an acceptance of their proposal; that it was evident I was not prepared to substantiate them, and that they therefore treated my statements as unworthy of credit, and had given a copy of the letter to Mr. Newton to do as he pleased with; that bringing it before a public assembly was repeating the grievance, and that Matthew 18 did not apply, because it was a wrong done in public. They had never been near me at all (save Lord C., and with him there was nothing to say to this). They had never asked me what my charges were; and they had never asked a word of five or six brethren present at the April meeting, then in or near Plymouth, not partisans of Mr. N., that is, Messrs. H., C.P., McA., N-r, R.H. I replied that I was sorry some I loved had put themselves in such a position, and begged for a copy of my letter, which, as writing to brethren, I had not kept.

It is not for me to state all that the inquiring brethren did, for I stayed perfectly quiet. I can only allude to some facts. They came to me once. Mr. N. was so anxious about his character that they had difficulty in getting at the question of principle, which all pretty much agreed, with more or less decision of conviction, had been departed from - some most decidedly who had not before suspected it. The facts were proved which I had charged. Indeed, as to one there was only to compare the publication professing to be the letter six years ago, and the MS. The testimony as to what passed at the April meeting, was such that Mr. N. himself at last, said, he supposed he must have said what I stated, as all said so.

Here I would only remark as to the complaint of not going to Mr. Newton about it, that he had been gone to about it. Mr. Newton held no communication with me at the time. When the brethren urged me to wait in April, and grace and patience were to be continued, I went to call on Mr. Newton, and, not finding him, told him I had; but he never came to see me nor renewed any intercourse. I did not therefore go to him about it; it was indeed no wrong done to me, but Mr. H. and Mr N-r did, and both told him that his account was an untrue one; and, in spite of this, he himself continued to circulate it, before even I brought it before the brethren, and that I never did (having mentioned it only to Messrs. H. and S.) till demanded my reasons for leaving.

However Mr. N. assembled by invitation the brethren who came from a distance at the house of one of his strongest partisans, to give his statements.* Some demurred to this as not the fitting thing. Sir A.C., Mr. McA., and Mr. W. one evening would not go (I know not that they ever attended such an one). Mr. Nr urged they should, as statements and impressions might be made of which they would be unable to judge; but they would not. Mr. Nr went; Mr. N. sent out Mr. C-w to hinder his coming in, and declared he would state nothing at all if he were present; and he had to go away. Mr. Nr went to Mr. Newton's the next day to know why, being one of the persons in the invitation, he was thus treated. Mr. Newton turned him (very civilly) out of his house, and told him that he did not want to have anything to say to him.** Mr. McA. was soon convinced that all was wrong. He lodged in the house where Mr. H. lived.*** Mr. Newton met him, and said to him, Mr. McA. I should like to know on what ground you are here: you are in very suspicious quarters; and declared with very great violence, that if he believed one of the charges**** brought against him, he would have nothing more to say to him.

{*At the moment of this meeting, Sir A.C. was not, I believe, in Plymouth}

{**Mr. N-r had been here before the other brethren, and had gone among the Ebrington Street people. They had as usual made all kinds of statements to him, but instead of taking their truth for granted as most have done (and no wonder) he had inquired in detail, and found many things to be wholly untrue; and hence he was very obnoxious.}

{***It is suggested that I should insert that I lodged in the house. Mr. McA. was not, however, with me, but in Mr. H.'s apartment Suspicious quarters may be corrected by "renders you liable to suspicion." Mr. Newton's friends who had come, were guests among his friends at Plymouth, which no one of course thought of calling in question, nor would it be noticed now but for the insertion of this correction, as explaining the force of the remark. }

{****Delete "one of," and read simply "the charges."}

There is one other important fact which I mention, as it bears on other points, such as the truth of Sir A.C.'s statements so publicly and carefully denied.* At Mr. N.'s first meeting with the brethren, before he made his statement he declared to them that if they came to meddle in Plymouth affairs he would tell them nothing at all. If they came to

inform themselves, he could go on, and on this ground he continued. I may here add what is more important, that at their last meeting Mr. Newton (having had now months to consider, and many meetings to see the bearing of things, and his statement in April discussed) stated that his object would be to produce in every gathering united hostility to the brethren's teaching who differed from him on the points discussed.

{*It has been attempted to modify this denial. Any one conversant with the poor at Plymouth knows that the tracts of Sir A.C. being found to act on their consciences, it was publicly and privately declared to be entirely false, and by the secondary agents of these statements "willingly and wilfully," but by the principles everywhere declared to be false. Mr. Newton and Mr. S. both declared at the meetings they subsequently held, that if Sir A.C.'s statements were true, they themselves would have left Ebrington Street. As to the thing denied, it will come in by-and-by.}

Several efforts were made by Mr. Newton and his friends to obtain a vindication of his character from the charges, which issued in nothing, as several declined signing them for different reasons: not merely because they were not satisfied, but because they felt that the church ought to judge such a case. This was the feeling of many or most of the brethren who came, even of those who were more particularly friends of Mr. Newton, as of all the rest. I will recur to this as a very material point, but to close the narrative as to vindication. After the refusal, for whatever reasons, of a joint signature of such justification, five brethren in order to settle this point, agreed to sign a paper, which was in fact printed with their signatures, Sir A.C., Lord C., Mr. R., C., and P-r. Some refused, and I think I am authorized in saying that Mr. P-r was glad when the paper was withdrawn, as being more favourable than his conscience really permitted. It stated that Mr. Newton had read a paper which convinced them that he had no evil motive in the papers on which the charges were founded, but that he had given occasion to them by what he had printed. Before the document appeared, Mr. Newton came with Mr. D. and declared in great earnestness that he was ruined if this came out, and that he should go to Canada. It was accordingly suppressed.

Immediately after, a declaration was communicated that as the brethren had been able to come to no conclusion, the brethren at Plymouth itself had drawn up and signed a document declaring their conviction that he was completely cleared. This was signed S., and the names of C-w, B., D., -, were added as concurring. I am informed on the authority of Mr. D., by a brother to whom he stated it, that it was he drew it up, not Mr. S. However that may be, being the parties concerned in the charge, it certainly was a strange document, more particularly as Mr. D. (to excuse Mr. Newton) had declared that he had suggested the addition of the matter to the letter printed as six years old, and Mr. C-w present at the April meeting had had the other printed and circulated. So that two of them were personally concerned in the things they professed to examine and dear Mr. N. of. I had done nothing save be ready for every call of the brethren who came, and answer their questions when they came to question me. Mr. N. declined to meet me as I was in the position of an excommunicated person. At that time it was a common subject of triumph that I was so, and therefore could bring nothing before the church.

In connection with this I may proceed to mention what passed as to this bringing before the church. Mr. C., Mr. P-r, I think Mr. R., Lord C., as well as others, as is known by their letters, felt that this was right. Yet it was not only resisted but effectually resisted. Mr. C., with whom was Mr. R., went and pressed it on Mr. Newton and alleged Matthew 18. Mr. N. answered, The church could not deliberate nor hear any question. Mr. C. quoted, "Tell it to the church." Mr. N. said, The church might hear it but could not act. Mr. C. quoted, "Hear the church." Mr. N. replied that they might come as individuals and express their conviction, but that was all. Lord C. and Messrs. P-r and C. took it in hand. They came to me, and Lord C. stated that they could not get over the impression produced by my charges in the minds of others: would I meet the assembly if they could get it convoked, and undo the impression as to the charges? I said they must not ask me to state that my impression was not such, as I could not go beyond my conscience; but I would gladly meet the assembly, and urge upon them not to receive any impression from me; that I could do it with all my heart, as I earnestly desired that the conscience of the brethren should be aroused; that there was no good done, whatever judgment they arrived at, unless it was, that I thought the grand evil was that it had been deadened and dulled, and that they would be there to see whether I did it cordially; and that if these three brethren honestly brought before the assembly what they now admitted to be facts, and the assembly acquitted Mr. Newton of any evil in it, even if my individual judgment were not satisfied, I should acquiesce, because, being done as I should trust up rightly, the church's conscience would be clear before God. I left Plymouth to preach elsewhere, that this might be accomplished. Nothing was done. Sir A.C. made a subsequent attempt of which he has given an account. The church could not deliberate nor judge; nor could elders be judged by it. There was no person in the position of Timothy to do it. Since this has been formally denied (and persons authorized to contradict it) it was repeated amongst the poor,* and put to a person whether it was right for the children to judge their fathers, and positively stated by one of the leaders at Plymouth, as it had been by others before, that teachers were the representatives of the church, and that they decided, and that then the church could act. This was to meet the case of 1 Corinthians, where the church were called upon to act. The case of Mr. G. was put to Mr. D. thus. There at present is but one brother prominently active in teaching. Supposing he were to fall into some gross sin, what is to be done? The case where the person inquiring knew of only one active teacher was put, because they would admit that *elders* in the place could take up cases and judge them.** The reply was, No, they could not judge him. If he had assumed such a place, they must leave him to the consequences of it. If it was so bad as to be unbearable, they must only leave.***

{*It is now held amongst them avowedly, to my knowledge, where this influence extends, that the church itself cannot judge. They have told me that they did think it was right, and so understood Matthew 18, but now they understand it is not. }

{**At Plymouth it was the persons who assumed the place of elders who were charged. One poor person on whom following the elders was urged, replied, But are not Mr. Darby and Mr. H elders as much as Mr. Newton? Which am I to follow? She was told it was not denied we were, but God had raised up Mr. Newton to a special and peculiar place in the church. A paper to this effect and assuming the place of Mr. N., of

displacing leaders here and there by his own authority, was widely circulated at Exmouth.}

{***The last two lines are to be omitted. They are only an imperfect repetition of the preceding. }

The paper signed by the Plymouth leaders to clear Mr. Newton did more harm than good to their cause *at Plymouth*, as they were known by all to be the parties implicated, and it implied that the strangers would not do it. But the brethren from a distance having in fact come to no conclusion, for whose inquiry I had waited to give time, I had no longer now any reason for delay, and I proposed breaking bread. I hesitated whether I should demand Raleigh Street and do it as a public testimony; but praying over it I felt the humble and more gracious way would be to do it for my own need. I procured a small room, knowing about six who wished to do it, for I had most carefully avoided seeking any, and had entirely ceased visiting since I left, lest I should have even the appearance of making a party, though my heart was in that work. Sir A.C. would no longer break bread; nor W., nor C., nor P-r, nor McA. N-r still I think at that time did, or might, though strong in his judgment, but left for Jersey; that is, excepting Nr, all who were not avowed supporters and partisans of Mr. Newton. Mr. W-r had left. Mr. R. came to me on leaving, and while blaming my beginning to break bread said what I said as my reason was very strong, and that I ought instead of declining to invite Capt. H. and W. because they were considered hostile, to have got a number who took my view of it to balance the others. He left me saying that I had acted with the greatest forbearance.*

{*Mr. R. did not hesitate then to declare to strangers to both parties that they had ceased to lean upon God, and that the Spirit of God was not practically owned. I have not had an opportunity of communicating this to Mr. R., but my informant is one whose authority is above suspicion, and respected alike by Mr. R. and myself.

This part was now closed. I began to break bread, and the first Sunday there were not six, but fifty or sixty.

As soon as the brethren were gone Mr. Newton began to hold tea meetings by invitation, at which he explained everything. The statements of Mr. W., Sir A.C., and myself were declared to be entirely untrue; and both Mr. Newton and Mr. S. declared that, if there had been any truth in them, they would have left themselves. This was carefully insisted on in private visits, and repeated by all those under them. Sir A.C. in particular was declared by these last "willingly and wilfully false." Mr. Newton also said, publicly and privately, he had never sanctioned but always objected to the Friday meeting; that it had been begun by a brother who had semi-Irvingite views, on a wrong ground, etc. Unhappily a letter of his was in existence, appealing to it after years of attendance as a proof of godly order. It was then said, it was not the meeting which was objected to, but the composition of it. But alas! this same letter speaks of the persons composing it as recognized and submitted to by all. Subsequently it was declared that he had never objected to the church judging, nor to the brethren from elsewhere interfering.

This certainly was astounding to those who knew what had passed, if anything was so at Plymouth, his opening declaration to the brethren on their inquiring his statements of the matter, and all he had repeatedly said, as well as his associates, to so many. He declared that all he had objected to was the manner of doing it - that it ought to have been done scripturally: first come to himself, then take two or three more, and lastly the whole body put him out if need were. This was said at one of the last Monday tea meetings, a very large one.* Mr. B. has stated the same thing to others - it was only the manner which was objected to. Now, this scriptural manner which was declared to have been the only thing that would have been required, I had formally proposed, and had received a written refusal from the four persons employed by Mr. Newton, Lord C., Mr. M., Mr. W-r, and a physician at Plymouth, which written refusal was communicated by them to Mr. Newton at the time.

{*I know it to have been frequently repeated since, and recently. }

At these meetings, at which being by invitation, of course there was no one to answer, though invited friends were allowed to put questions, and did before the poor, a justification of Mr. Newton is stated to have been produced from the remaining part of the brethren who came to inquire, who had advocated Mr. Newton's cause all through. Indeed one of those who were thus sent for by Mr. Newton had privately written* to him to say he might count on his standing by him in any way, though inquiring now as if an impartial person. It was further most carefully repeated and urged at these meetings that we denied the Gospels were for the church, and equally took away the Hebrews and Revelation; that we denied redemption through the blood as to some, and denied the heavenly glory to the Old Testament saints.

{*This letter was circulated, because it contained statements of all the errors the writer had been led into by the brethren. }

These things drove from them many who knew it was not so, but were believed of course by others. These meetings were continued for many weeks, after each of which some came amongst us. Meanwhile a system, such as I never saw save in Popery, was carried on to influence the poor. Long utterly neglected, save as to the sisters' district rule, they were visited, caressed, and fed, threatened and literally worried, and what I must call open bribery employed, and the most positive and direct persecution. I declined visiting any who had not already come amongst us, unless a case of special invitation; and that there were not more than two or three of They did not dare. A few complained to others of my not doing it; but I had decided on my path, and declined exercising any kind of influence over them. This system went to such a pitch that, in one case under the exciting influence of sisters, a poor man refused to dine with his wife if she did not come to Ebrington Street, and when she wished to go and hear in the evening at Raleigh Street, said he would be master; she is now in Ebrington Street. The custom of the rich was withdrawn from the tradesmen also in general who came, though any they hoped to win back were sent for, caressed, and invited, and persecuted with solicitations. Soon after this, deacons were balloted for in Ebrington Street (though indeed the persons had been openly spoken of before), and there they are now.

I will now turn to the paper circulated privately to the number of three thousand - not to answer it (it is its own best answer to every true and upright mind), but merely to notice one or two things in it which connect themselves with the history. Nor shall I say a word on the meanness of courting the pity of strangers by publishing every word they can scrape together *out of its context*, when for years they have been calumniating their brethren and undermining them everywhere as subverting Christianity, and it has been borne with; and when resisted openly and honestly, crying out as if they were persecuted and oppressed. Does any one believe that they have not accused of falsehood, for example, myself, W., Sir A.C., over and over again? Everyone knows publicly and privately that their charges of falsehood were the most violent: aye, and in print, whilst they ventured to answer in public. No one need fear that I shall rake together here the proofs. The truth is, there was not a matter of which conscience told them they would be accused, but they anticipated by charging it on me or others, that, if it did come out, it might seem like retaliation and lose its weight. They must forgive my now saying "they." They have clubbed together in it themselves. Here the gravest complaint is "veracity even is impeached." Why in a previous letter of Mr. Newton's, in the correspondence of which this forms a part, he declares "there have been falsehood and misrepresentation to an extent I could not have believed before the late events."

I could cite plenty of like things, but surely I shall not. Everyone that has been at Plymouth knows it. The difference is this, Mr. N. charges in general with misrepresentation. Of such a general charge he can quote no instance as against himself. In his case specific acts are charged with being untrue; his account of the April meeting is said to be untrue; his addition of a quantity of matter to a tract professed to be written six years ago is complained of; his charging me and others with teaching a heretical doctrine, which he himself, as he does not now deny, and he alone ever taught, and out of which he was brought by those he charges with it; his declaration that all he required was acting on the scriptural rule of Matthew 18, and that he never refused to be judged by the church when it was positively refused; his declaration that he had always objected to and never sanctioned, the Friday meeting, when we had and have his letter appealing to it as proof of godly order. These which refer to the public course of events here (for I pass over all private ones), and not vague charges, are what he has to answer. Mr. N. was asked, as he charged me everywhere with falsehood, what it was. He said, saying he denied the unity of the church, but this was all he alleged. I say so still. And further I here add, I have no expressions save "intellectual process," and "eking out an argument" already apologized for, to regret or expunge - not one. If any, let them be produced with their context. The reader will say, but what of those quoted in this letter, and regularly between inverted commas? I answer, they are dishonestly charged. They are untrue, save that I do not own the table at Ebrington Street. The difficulty in this case is, that people have depended on idle statements of this kind, and it was *impossible* to answer them without charging the authors with untruth. This made me keep silence month after month. I did not know what to do. But the details I will enter into in their place.

Some phrases, though in inverted commas, are not in the tracts to which they are ascribed at all; others quoted and put into sentences which wholly alter their application

(an application often expressly guarded against), in the tract referred to. In my judgment this letter signed by the five is perhaps the worst thing yet put out.

But to resume: it is a saddening and yet an instructive thing, to see at the moment that under the Lord's special leading, and surely without their own wisdom, the brethren from every quarter were humbling themselves before the Lord for their own individual and common failure, the leaders at Plymouth, having refused to come because it would turn to an investigation on their conduct, were making out a case for themselves. It is an epitome of the whole matter; but I leave it without any remark, to notice one or two statements merely. And first of all, what is the meaning of this joint disclaimer and declaration, saying, *we* do not hold such and such doctrines, unless the pure clubbing of a party, hand joining in hand? Who ever charged *them* with holding such and such doctrines? What has Mr. C-w, or Mr. S., or Mr. B., or even Mr. D., to do with my charging Mr. Newton's book with denying the unity of the church? Mr. D. indeed has carefully in public and in private maintained the thing he here denies, as many intelligent Christians well know, but he never was charged with it. Many well know that he and Mr. Newton, as others, have assiduously maintained that the Epistle to the Ephesians refers to all saints from the beginning of the world; and 1 Corinthians 12 to a local perfect church, with some idea of a sort of model at the beginning; but that the unity of the church, as such, with Christ at its head on high, *in this dispensation*, was denied by the constant teaching at Plymouth.

But Mr. Newton has published certain views upon it. These views are plain enough. They have been answered. What have, save as uniting in a party spirit, these other persons to do, to come and say we do not hold? But to such an excess is this carried that these five proceed to say that "even personal veracity is impeached." And now let me ask whose? This is an unfortunate sentence in which to have talked of Jesuitism. While calling for sympathy for the five, and in a sentence beginning with "we," it is stated personal veracity is impeached. It is not ventured to state whose. Mr. Newton's has been openly and fairly. These four may of course identify themselves with him, if they please; but they cannot put their names as honest men to having their joint veracity *impeached*, because this impeaching is another's act, not theirs. Have they been charged with a joint lie, or have they been severally charged with one?

The same plan was resorted to at the April meeting. I was said by Mr. Newton to have charged all with sectarianism, because a person could not be a sectarian alone. This, though unfounded, had some semblance of reason in it; but a man may surely tell falsehoods alone. I charge Mr. Newton with sectarianism alone. He tried to make a party with the charge, as if others were accused by me of it. I charged none but him. Others might have helped him, but he could not say I charged them. I charged Mr. N. with untruth in certain definite acts; I believe him guilty of it still. But if others choose to take his part, and identify themselves with what I judge to be utter want of principle, do not let them, in signing an ambiguous expression say, or leave to be concluded that others have impeached the veracity of the five together. Mr. Newton's veracity has been impeached. I impeached it.* He has declined all means of clearing himself where those who charge him could meet him unless before eight persons, half to be nominees of his own, shutting

the church out. Does he mean to involve the other four who sign this letter in the charge to relieve himself? No one else has.

{*Only however before brethren, of course.}

Nobody doubts that I think the table in Ebrington Street one with which I cannot hold communion. I have left it. Can anything be plainer? The present narrative will say why: which I have never done yet. I have stated that they deny the real unity and holiness of the church of God; I say so still. The Lord will judge who is right in this. They may escape by the support of a party; but it is not the position of any one, nor the numbers which support him, which can make evil good or good evil, or clear the conscience of the church of God.

Mr. N. may talk of manner of doing this. It has been done in no manner; not at Plymouth, because the elders should take it in hand, and they had assumed that place; not by strangers down here, because they did not belong to Plymouth; not in London, because the gathered servants of the Lord had no right to judge them. What is the manner it could have been done in which Mr. Newton has not refused, with the aid of the co-signature of these same persons? I appeal to Mr. C., Lord C., Mr. P-r, Sir A.C., Mr. R., and all who tried to effect it, whether they secured the investigation of alleged evil, as they sought it, before the church of God. The holiness of the church of God is then given up.

I think it a very sad thing, a very great evil, when any thing of the kind has to be brought before the church at large. It is the extreme case of discipline. I take this opportunity of saying, that I think the bringing every case of evil, or alleged evil, at once before the body wrong and unscriptural. "Tell it to the church" is *the last resort* in every way. I think it still sadder if the person in question be one who has been looked up to in the church. It tends to shake confidence in all. But judgment has been refused in every shape to save character.

If it be said that I after the April meeting, when sectarianism was avowed before fourteen of us, ought to have brought it before the body, I have indeed nothing to reply, but that I refrained at the instance of others, particularly Mr. R., to spare Mr. Newton. Here I have always felt I may have been wrong. Further, I still state that unity has been denied, practically denied. And it is in part because of the way in which this has been disclaimed in the letter I am considering that I notice it.

I will now examine the statement as to No. 1. If these brethren had stated *what* they held about it, we should have known what to think. The question is, what is taught in the Ephesians on this point, and whether they hold it. They tell us they hold it as revealed in the Epistle to the Ephesians. This is exceedingly satisfactory. But what they hold we are evidently as much in the dark about as before. Now I allege that they really merely mean unity *in heaven* of all saints since the creation. It is clear there can be no other unity of all saints since the creation than unity in heaven. And this is what they have most assiduously taught as to the Ephesians. They have insisted that prophets, in chapter 2, verse 20, means Old Testament prophets; and the whole Epistle to apply to all saints from

beginning to end. It is quite clear therefore it has nothing to do with the present unity of the church by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. If they deny this teaching, the answer is, it is a dishonest denial. We have all heard it, whatever their partisans may say. Further, Messrs. S. and C-w (in reply to the brother B-i, who, from reading Mr. Newton's books, had come to the conclusion that he did deny the unity of the church as taught in scripture) stated distinctly to him that the unity he urged was in heaven. Each of them, that is, did, severally and distinctly. Further, when intelligent Christians began to be exercised about it, and referred to the teachers at Plymouth to clear their minds, not believing what I and others affirmed from what we had heard and read, they were in explanation distinctly taught the same thing, and it was stated by some that *none* at Plymouth had ever taught or held anything else, I among them. Now if public and private teaching, deliberate argument on the question, and explanation to clear the minds of those exercised, does not prove what men hold, what will? This second paragraph is then a fraud on the reader; because it conceals the fact that it only means a common unity in heaven, and has nothing to do with the church now more than with Abel, that is, that an individual now will be finally a member of the whole assembly of God. That is, it denies any special unity now by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Hence we have a second paragraph for unity of the saints on earth, as by one Spirit baptized into one body. Here however church is not used. But of this just now.

There is another circumstance connected with this I may here record. Mr. Newton has publicly taught (strange for one who complains of Matthew 24 not being considered to be exclusively the church), and taught after being remonstrated with by Mr. H.* when he taught it in private, that John 17 has no application now till you come to verse 22; which I beg the reader to note. Mr. H. urged the verse, "Sanctify them through thy truth." Mr. Newton replied, that a saint might appropriate it individually by special faith, but that it had no application to the present time. Evidently verse 22 applies to the future, and is absolute in its form, so that the denial of the unity of the church of God down here was confirmed in every way.** Indeed I would repeat here that in the teaching I heard from Mr. Newton one object was evident as *the* object, and this was teaching something contrary to the other brethren, so as to set them aside with those over whom he had influence, or who gradually took in his teaching. Nor was I the only one that remarked this. But as to the unity being in heaven, I had asked, Was the doctrine that the Gentile churches together constituted the one church St. Paul's statement of the unity of the church? Mr. N. answers (page 56, of his second letter), "I should think *not*, because St. Paul speaks of the invisible unity of the church in heaven." Can anything be plainer than such an answer where the charge was made, and, an explanation given? St. Paul's teaching, St. Paul's statement, is of the unity of the church in heaven! Mr. N. had "been speaking of the visible unity of the churches on earth." But "this visible unity of churches constitutes the one church of the living God." "The churches (page 60) were members of one body." "The Catholic unity of the body would have been marred and lost, the moment one church had forfeited its place and had its candlestick removed."

{*Mr. H. remonstrated with others, and spoke very strongly about this teaching; but I cannot confirm the fact that he spoke directly to Mr. N. I give the statement therefore as to the remonstrance merely as I heard it just after, of which I have an

absolute certainty. The fact of the teaching is unquestionable. I will add here the ground on which it was based: Christ's prayer could not but have been answered; hence He could have asked it only for the apostles in their time; that we have the heavenly blessing in this respect; they had the heavenly and earthly. It will be seen how entirely this confirms what is stated as to the assertions made as to unity in the letter of the five to the London brethren commented on.}

{**Mr. Newton has also distinctly stated, as is well known to many resident at Plymouth, that as to the heavenly calling, or the unity of the church, no new light whatever had been developed from the word amongst brethren; that others, before the present movement, had held it just as clearly. The only fresh light given was to be found in the prophetic views he insisted on.}

Now what is the good of five persons coming and saying *we* have not dropped the unity of the church into churches when one of them has printed it as plainly as words can be, save in the sense which is concealed in these numbered paragraphs, in the sense that the unity of the church, means its unity in heaven, "invisible unity in heaven"? And I ask here if St. Paul's statements refer, as Mr. N. has printed and published, to invisible unity in heaven, which are the passages in scripture which refer to the unity of the church in this dispensation on earth? It is totally untrue that St. Paul's statements refer only or properly to that (though of course it remains true), for he is speaking of joints of supply in the one body on earth. Which is right, or the truth, page 4 of the letter of these five, or page 56 of Mr. Newton's letter? Or, I repeat, what is the meaning of five persons coming and saying we do not hold what one of them has printed and published he does hold; and as every one who has heard it knows, taught constantly by word of mouth? Nay, the holding the contrary view, namely a special unity in this dispensation by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, was the very ground of the charges against brethren, and made the plea for accusing them of denying life and glory to Old Testament saints.

But further, as to these second and third paragraphs, they *entirely avoid the question*. No one says they deny the unity of the church, if it be meant of all saints from beginning to end in a glorious and heavenly state at the close of all things. But there is not a word in the second which would not be satisfied by this truth. The point in question, of *the unity of the body by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven now*, is entirely avoided. And so it is in the third, strange as such an assertion may seem to a simple-hearted saint. It is then changed into "unity of the saints upon earth"; not the body. But it will be said, but it is added as baptized into one body. So it is But what body is this? On earth is not added here. And the unity of the body here is not mentioned nor spoken of. There is the unity of the *saints* on earth (not as a body). Perhaps (as stated by Mr. N.) unity in faith, doctrine, manners, in independent churches, all alike, but all independent.*

{*"Separate one from another - all equal, all alike: connected by no visible bond, neither revolving round any common centre. They were independent one of another; but not independent of Him who invisibly walked amongst them, and who was able to preserve the likeness to Himself, and to one another, which His grace had given them; to

keep them what He had made them alike in faith, manners, and testimony"; and again, "in faith, doctrines, manners [they] were emphatically one." }

The body into which they were baptized is, as far as any one can tell here, the general universal assembly of all that surround Jesus eternally. Of this we all own they are. But the unity of the body, as by one Spirit sent down from heaven after the exaltation of Christ, is *entirely avoided here*. Now *that* is the whole practical question.

I may add that Mr. N. teaches, or did teach, that the Old Testament saints had received the Spirit as much as we, only that it was a spirit of bondage in them. He had taught of old, that the difference was, that it did not then *abide* in the saints.

On the fourth I shall say little. The Holy Ghost present and acting in the assembly is here avoided to be admitted. This is again the whole question. Any such action was denounced as impulse. It was stated that those at Ebrington Street went to meet God, and not the Holy Ghost, and we the Holy Ghost, and not God. But since even this letter the effect of the teaching on souls has been to make them believe that the Holy Ghost dwelt in individuals, but not in the body. When Capt. H. taught both, they were warned that they were likely to fall into Mr. Prince's snare. It was taught most positively that the Holy Spirit dwelt in individuals, and that the aggregate of these increased the blessing, but this was all. It was not taught that "the Holy Ghost resides only in the teachers"; but it was that the Holy Ghost worked by members, and that these members were the teachers, and that, though it was not a gift to pray or give out a hymn, none but gifted members would do it. It was stated, though here I believe the contrary was afterwards also stated, that the Holy Ghost was not in the assembly, but God over it to bless it. No intelligent brother can mistake the meaning of all this.

It was most distinctly taught, that it was wrong for the saints to meet, unless they had a responsible teacher to direct them; so much so, that a brother of known uprightness (who was never in communion, but had long known the brethren) said to his sister who was there, all the brethren's system is gone; because he had heard this statement from Mr. N. Nor were the most glaring facts wanting to demonstrate it.

Now turn, reader, to paragraph five. You would suppose that all these extracts were from "Darby's Remarks on the Tracts on Signs." You will be surprised, I trust at least, to learn that in the postscript to those "Remarks," which postscript is the statement alluded to, I have *stated* that the question had nothing to do with tradition. Mr. D. in that tract had appealed to "*universal consent*" as sustaining the doctrine taught at Plymouth. About this not a word is said in the paragraph; but tradition introduced which I said had nothing to do with it. I stated that "the demon of Popery is the active demon of the day"; and so I think, not that they were associated with it, and that in *appealing to the principle of universal consent*, and in addition to scripture, "its leading introductory principle was advanced" in that passage, referring to the wellknown canon of a father, always cited by high churchmen, who have a leaning towards Popery. I have spoken of a principle here *printed and published*, using these last words in the postscript. Is it not so? Why do they introduce extracts, I really know not whence, referring to tradition a subject I had

expressly *rejected as inapplicable*, and put my name as the authority they quote, leaving out the point I did assail, and which is printed and published by one of their number in a tract on the express words of which I was commenting? Is it honest to conceal what was attacked and implicate me, trusting to the confidence which would be had, that quotations with inverted commas must be truly given, in charges which he perfectly well knew I had nothing to say to It was Mr. Newton drew this up. And even in what is found in that postscript the citations are garbled. I have stated the course clericalism takes and its issue in the full-blown Romish clericalism, but I have never charged it on them, but urged the danger of introducing its leading principle in the doctrine of universal consent. I have said I did not allude to them, but to a system.

The reader may also remark that "uphold" is not of the quotation, nor "associated with"; and that the use I have made of the words which are so, may be as different as possible from what is here stated. The truth is in the postscript, *in the sentence quoted from*, I have carefully set aside individuals. I have stated, that I have introduced other principles of Popery not advanced, as a matter of general warning, because this one of universal consent, which drew forth my comments, shewed the door was not closed against evil on this side. "Advance *its leading principle*," is a false quotation. I have said that its leading introductory principle is advanced in appealing to "universal consent."

As to the sixth, no one speaks of the doctrines of Independents. Mr. N. has stated that the churches are independent.

As to the seventh my answer is that it is, as regards Mr. Newton, a bold untruth. I appeal to Mr. C., Mr. P-r, Lord C., Sir A.C. I ask the whole number of those who came whether Mr. Newton did not preface his communications to them by saying that, if they came to meddle in Plymouth affairs, he would tell them nothing at all. They all know that every opportunity was not given; that Mr. Newton would not meet me before those brethren, nor the brethren at large, nor a limited number of them. He told them what he pleased, but no other opportunity was or would be afforded. When was it afforded? Will it be afforded now, with this letter added to the subject of it, and the brethren who were there come down again? Either these five, or Sir A.C. and others, are guilty of flagrant untruth. That Mr. N. sought the presence of brethren who supported him is quite true, so that Mr. R. blamed me for not making a balance.

As to the eighth, how Mr. S. could sign this after his statements to Mr. R.H., for it is to him Mr. R.H. alludes in his tract, I leave him to answer. Everybody knows many were hindered, and many stopped. I may add an instance here. A sister went to one very gracious brother who has ministered both before and since with blessing to many, and told him he must attend Mr. Newton's prophetic meetings. He replied that he did not wish to do so, that he felt pressing peculiar views on either side tended to division.* He was told that then his ministry would not be allowed in any of the gatherings round. Of course he was shut up. But I will here give the sequel of what refers to him. He was offered his expenses and a weekly salary to go out and labour, which he refused.** Subsequently he left Ebrington Street. Whereupon it was circulated at Horrabridge that I

had offered him a salary. Happily the brother at Horrabridge mentioned it to one who had just heard from the brother in question himself that it was just the opposite.

{*The reason first given for not attending one of the more private meetings was somewhat different. This brother felt himself out of his place there; subsequently he ceased attending the more public meeting on the ground stated. The material fact however was rather stronger than stated here, that, unless he received Mr. N.'s views, his ministry would not be received here or in the meetings around. }

{**I know myself a second instance of Mr. Newton's doing so; besides which penny-a-week collections have been a long while carried on for similar purposes. After I came, the collectors were desired not to go to persons I visited; a foolish direction, for I visited everybody. The sisters were the agents in this. }

But to return to the paragraph. Mr. S. stated to Mr. R H as Mr. R.H. has stated in his tract (I only add Mr. S.'s name, as having now signed this), that he had said to Mr. Newton that he had participated in the sin of keeping brethren away, and instanced Mr. B-t and asked Mr. N. if he could now receive him. Mr. N. with some hesitation, said, Yes. Mr. S asked him why there was this change. Mr. N. replied that the people, he thought, were now sufficiently made up* to resist his teaching. Let any one only compare this with the eighth paragraph.

{*For "sufficiently made up," read "sufficiently instructed." }

As to the ninth, I appeal solemnly to all the brethren who came to inquire. Either their statement to me, that is, of several of them, was an invented calumny, or this article is a direct positive falsehood. From first to last Mr. Newton took this ground.

As to the tenth, my answer is, You do. Mr. Newton has *published* in his "Thoughts on the Apocalypse" what, as an expression of thought, is justly so designated. The grand doctrine of Buddhism is that a sort of absorption into Deity is perfect bliss; now Mr. N. states that the glorified saints will be omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent, using the terms; only they would still worship. And therefore I say, his doctrine does make a sort of Buddhism of Christianity. As to their views and opinions on open ministry, my object is not to discuss views but relate facts here, and I pass them by.

I have only one more statement to allude to. There is a scripture appropriate to everything, and I confess the one which at once suggested itself to me was, "The unjust knoweth no shame." "We are virtually excommunicated persons." Did any one ever dream that I excommunicated Mr. Hatchard, or Mr. Courtenay, and a thousand other saints, because I do not go to the Established Church? Was ever such nonsense palmed on people? And yet one of my reasons is because they do not judge evil nor exercise discipline, as it is as to Ebrington Street. Mr. Newton's alleged evil, and to my mind proved evil, deserved to be judged, and so did other evil, and it was not, but was avoided and refused to be judged. When the brethren, who certainly treated me with very little concern, whatever they did Mr. Newton, said I must be judged too, I made no difficulty;

but nothing could induce Mr. Newton to allow it, and they had no courage to go any further. It was not to be. But this is not treating people as excommunicated. Mr. C-w urged, at one time, walking in love as brethren still on me in Mr. R-e's shop. Did I treat him as excommunicated, or Mr. S.?

But this is not all. It is really not a shameful but a shameless statement. Mr. S. who signs first here, positively refused to dine at table with me. Will he deny it? Mr. Newton refused to meet me, when investigation was desired by our coming face to face, because I was an excommunicated person. It was the common ground of triumph that I could not bring the matter before the church, *because I was an excommunicated person* by leaving the assembly. Shall I say that Mr. D. lectured that, though Christians, yet all were not to be treated as such? Shall I name all those who, led by the example and instruction of Mr. Newton, refused to salute us in the street? * those who by Mr. N.'s directions refused to see old friends they had previously sent for? Mr. N. began it to a sister, who stated she had proposed calling on him to assure him it was no want of good feeling towards him in leaving, by refusing to see her, and telling her in the name of the Lord Jesus he could have no more Christian intercourse with her. The oldest friends were first not visited at all and then were told that they visited as friends, but could not own them as Christians nor pray with them. And this was done so grossly by Mr. N. himself that the husband (not in communion) of one sister met Mr. Newton and told him that, had he been still of the world, he must have used his cane to him. One poor man excited by the sisters refused to eat with his own wife till he got her back to Ebrington Street.

{*It will hardly be believed at Plymouth, that Mr. S. has stated in more than one place, that it was we who would not salute them!}

It has been attempted since shame has fallen upon them about it, to say it was only to be done to leaders. Were the sisters, one of whom only came to hear in Raleigh Street, who sent to dear Mrs. Newton flowers and little things suited to the sick when she was ill, leaders? They were sent back as unreceivable from Mr. N.'s house. Captain H. was refused to be received into the house of one long accustomed to look up to him, but who had fallen under this miserable influence. And now I challenge them to produce an act of ungracious or evil dealing towards one of them. Why, will it be believed that many of them no longer dealt with the shops of those who went to Raleigh Street, as well as threatened to withdraw Christian kindness from the poor? and to deprive them of temporal advantages they enjoyed? Last of all, while I am writing this, they have been forbidden, had they desired it, in case of any wishing to shew it was no want of personal kindness, to attend dear Mrs. N.'s funeral* - a person who, though excited about this matter, had by her walk among the saints for many a year engaged the affections, I may safely say, of all, and who has been happily, may we not say taken from the evil to come, and we have excommunicated them!

{*It will hardly be believed that after having forbidden any to come to the funeral, saying, that we hastened Mrs. Newton's death and were not to come and trample on her grave, it was carefully circulated by them that we would not go to Mrs. N.'s funeral!}

I have done. I have gone over the public ground only, and I have only to add, that I was confirmed in the resolution not to swerve, because I found that the system of untruth and finesse was undermining the probity and truthfulness of mind of others, and demoralising God's dear children. And it is. I have refrained from the private facts, which yet operated of course with equal force on one's mind as to the state of things, though not as fit to be publicly brought forward.

It has been alleged by Mr. Newton himself, and received by some, that it could not be with an intention to deceive when refutation was so easy. Those who receive this do not know how these things worked. This last letter is the proof. Nine-tenths of the saints out of Plymouth would take the statement as true: and I should be very sorry to think that they would suppose it possible to be otherwise until forced to it. I have yet a difficulty myself in believing the things I know to be true. At Plymouth the majority were Mr. Newton's party at all cost. If any separated themselves from it, they were not spoken to nor owned as Christians; even their temporal interests injured as far as possible. In private statements, it was a similar case. An untrue one, suppose, was made. Probably the person believed it; a gracious mind is not the most suspicious. The effect was produced, the prejudice excited, and the person fell under Mr. N.'s influence. If not, in general persons, particularly females, who were especially subjected to this, do not like probing into evil and discreditable things, nor getting into conflict with persons who act in this way. If they took the trouble of inquiring, and stated what had been said, the statement was denied, and it was a question of their character and Mr. Newton's. Few 'liked this; perhaps their husbands did not. If it was proved, then it was said, It was not meant so, and it was uncharitable to fix on a man what he did not mean. If they were disgusted and left, no one was to speak to them. This was the operation of the Monday evening meetings, held after the brethren were gone, for Mr. N. to explain everything. The majority believed the statements without more. A few were driven out every time. They were no longer spoken to, unless to worry them to come back, if there was hope of that.

And now, as these five, as well as Mr. Newton speak of the manner of the investigation, and Mr. N. and others for him have repeatedly said it was only this he objected to, I shall repeat what I proposed to him. I refused to name four as my friends to investigate it, because it was taking it out of the hands of the church of God when already before it. I never heard of a person accused of evil in the church of God naming four to inquire into his case, and those who knew of it four more. It was taking it out of the church of God altogether. I declined to name them.

It is supposed that no one had been to Mr. N. This is a mistake. They had: two had as to the untruth (and first two - besides myself by letter - and then thirteen as to the sectarianism); and the whole had been before three hundred of the brethren. But in reply to this proposal I offered to meet the four he named individually, or together, to go before the whole body, or before a limited number, if that was a better way, or to let the four named by Mr. Newton collect the thirteen before whom the matters first had been; or Mr. Newton might act on the scripture rule of Matthew 18 if he considered it a wrong. I received for reply, that Matthew 18 did not apply because I had done the wrong publicly; that bringing it before the body of the brethren was only seeking to repeat the grievance;

that my letter was an evasion; that it was evident I was unprepared to substantiate the charges; that my statements appeared unworthy of credit, and that copies of the letters were given to Mr. Newton

And two of the signers of this letter were among those who pursued the inquiry afterwards. One left almost immediately after signing it. It is generally known that these brethren refused to go up to the London meeting, too, because it must take the character of investigation.

In fine, when finesse and untruthfulness, when flattery of the rich with contempt and neglect of the poor, and then caresses and threatenings and appeals to their gratitude, attract the Spirit of Christ, then while under its influence I may return; or when avowed sectarianism and union in testimony against brethren is that to which I wish to be a party. Till then I can have no such thought. There are saints of God there who ought to be, and I can boldly say are, very dear to me. I would do all there every good I could. Nor have I the conscience of an unkindly feeling towards one. I should rejoice *with unfeigned joy were every statement I have made proved to be wrong to my own shame*. But, without pretending to apportion blame, to say who originated it or helped it on, supposing it possible (and I would hope true) that all have been only led in it ignorantly, I believe that there has been a direct work of the enemy, and this to subvert the blessed truth that Brethren were specially trusted with; a work which has shewn itself in doctrine, principle, and practice, as is always the case, very subtly and very gradually, but surely and constantly. I shall notice in their plain effects the doctrines.

First, practically the present hope and expectation of the Lord's coming was put off and set aside.

Secondly, the heavenly calling, which Brethren had specially been favoured to bring out, and the glory of the church with Christ, is confounded with earth, and subverted and set aside. *Our Mother* is declared to be the establishment of a system, which had been going on from the beginning in glory in the earth. "Christianity supreme in the earth in Mount Zion and Jerusalem" "identical with Zion arising in the moral grace and dignity of its high calling in the earth" (Thoughts on the Apocalypse, pp. 138, 142). "This is our parent, the system to which we belong," Jerusalem.

Thirdly, unfeigned faith in the presence of the Holy Ghost to guide and minister in the assemblies of the saints was undermined and subverted.

Fourthly, the unity of the body of Christ, as gathered by the presence of the Holy Ghost *in this present time of the church on earth*, was undermined and subverted too.

Fifthly, the deification of the saints, that is, "Omniscient power of superintendence," "Omnipotent power necessary to such execution"; and, referring to Ezekiel's vision but as a description of the power of the cherubim who symbolize the redeemed, "nowhere absent but everywhere present in the perfectness of undivided action," and they "will apply to the earth, the* wisdom of the elders, and the throne."

{*Mr. N. has since taught that the saints will have essential power. He states in the "Thoughts" that man will be blest in himself, and the source of blessing to others, p. 56.}

And, as a sixth point, the constant extenuation of the evil of Popery, with the decided absence of Christ from the teaching, while the saints were exalted "almost into co-equality with God."*

{*These are Mr. N.'s own words. This absence of Christ in the teaching was a very principal thing which drove the poor brethren out. They felt the effect, though knowing little of the cause, and felt justly. The way works were pressed and said to be offered by us to God because done in our new nature, statements (some of which are already mentioned) as to the Lord Jesus Himself, and the unsettling the mind as to truths relating to Him, would have made it impossible for me to have wished anyone I cared for to attend the ministry. As a mere question of ministry, it would have been sufficient to have driven me away. I add this while printing; for the more I have considered this point, the more I am satisfied of its importance and of its application to numberless statements made.}

I may add, as a seventh, the exaltation and beauty of a personal Antichrist in a way quite contrary to scripture, so as to alarm and shake the minds of the saints. As to principles and practice, I do not go over again the statements made in the preceding pages; statements more than confirmed by incidents arising from day to day which it is impossible to reduce to writing.

I have now sufficiently given the history of what has passed, as far as I have been concerned in it. Others must give what has passed behind the scenes. As I have already stated, private circumstances I have not mentioned. But it must not be supposed that they have not influenced those who dwell at Plymouth. If there had been remedy, they would not have been a reason for leaving; but they called for a remedy which, if refused, made it impossible to stay. This direct working of Satan few perhaps may distinctly estimate; but the Spirit of Christ will have no difficulty in judging the facts I have stated, and the course of things to which I have alluded.

My word of unhesitating testimony is, Come out from among them, and be ye separate. They have sought to perplex the poor (clear in their judgment of where evil was, and where Christ was) by asking, Now on what scripture did you leave? They knew what they left by experience, and judged rightly about it; though, as a priest might come and puzzle a soul that knew well on what ground it stood, they could ill answer perhaps a cross-examination of what scripture they were on. My answer to them is simple, my text is plain: Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you. If they would have yet more, I cite what they have sufficiently pressed upon others, "Cease to do evil." There is evil unconfessed and unjudged; evil (I judge) of the very worst kind, speaking of evil in a Christian assembly; and I suppose there must be scriptures for leaving it, or we should never have been gathered at all.

I will only add, as much has been said in print of Mr. S.'s asking Mr. H. to stay, that he asked Mr. H. to stay to help him to resist Mr. Newton, against whom he felt unable to make head alone, and he stated to Mr. R.H. that all the evil had come from letting him have his own way. Here you have the history of Plymouth. Whether Mr. S. is now able to do so and does so, others must judge. In its present form, Mr. Newton drew up the letter addressed to the brethren in London.* Mr. S.'s name appears the first in the list of signatures. He had been free through the earlier scenes, from the want of candour which existed. I must sorrow that at the close, why the Lord must judge, he has placed his name first on what, on the whole I must judge, to be the worst and lowest of all the sad series of this unhappy history.

{*Mr. C-w stated that he sat up all night, and drew it up that one night. }

I am aware of the influence which Mr. N. exercises over many minds, but I do not hesitate to say, that I had rather see my child die than be under the moral influence that rules at Ebrington Street. Wherever its direct influence reaches, moral integrity is gone. I know it has been stated, that it is a mere personal question on my part. Now I appeal to this single assertion just as a proof of the destruction of integrity. Has not Mr. Newton, have not others, stated in public and in private, that we deny the Gospels and I know not what else, and that the foundations of Christianity are gone, if our doctrine is received? Is this a personal question? The fact is where it is hoped that consciences may be alarmed, it is stated we deny the Gospels, etc. When a soul is getting uneasy at the state of things among them or it is thoroughly known that all this is false, then it is stated to be mere personality. Mr. N. is named because he has been the public actor in this matter. And I am not writing here to give my private opinion as to who else may be as really guilty as he, it would be quite out of place. I give the brethren at large the facts which led to my leaving Ebrington Street.

I have omitted to speak of the fasts. In doing this I add a circumstance early in the history, which I omitted to mention. There was very assiduous teaching from Revelation 1 on the stars, Christ holding the stars of ministerial authority in His hand. After a time during which I had ceased attending the prayer meeting, I think after the first fast (I am not quite sure), I thought there was some softening, and returned. The first thing I heard was one of the persons whose name appears in all these documents earnestly praying that Christ would uphold the stars which He had raised up and held in His right hand, and that we might own them. As to the fasts, at a very early stage of the business I urged that we might fast together. Mr. H. pressed it on them. I had conversed with Mr. D-k, Sir A.C., etc., as to it, who desired it and wished to come, and that brethren might join in it. But all pressing it was useless. Mr. N. declared there was nothing to fast for, and that he would not have Plymouth made a plague spot of. It was anxiously explained over and over again, that it was meant to charge none, but that, as we were all in trial, we could go and cast ourselves before God, and I said I should go with all my heart and confess any want of spirituality in me that had helped it on; but it was useless. I could only weep and fast to myself.

At last on the occasion of the disorder of the aged brother's speaking above mentioned, Mr. Newton went down on Saturday to the coach to Mr. H., who went for the Lord's day elsewhere, and stated he should give out a fast the next day; which he did for circumstances which had occurred here and elsewhere. However, though I thought all this very bad indeed, and all understood what this meant, and other brethren were necessarily excluded, as it was given out for Wednesday that week, I went. The brethren who have since left mourned and confessed unfeignedly. Mr. N. blessed God for giving them the truth and prayed God to give them firmness to maintain their position. I thought the whole matter the very worst thing that had taken place. When Mr. C-n came here, Mr. N. peremptorily refused to have any confession about Plymouth; Mr. C-n stated in private that he would not hear of it, and that they could only have it general for all the church. This to me was far worse than nothing here.

Subsequent to Mr. C-n's saying the evil was want of unity in judgment (he declined to me any inquiry into the circumstances here)* and that love depended on it. Mr. N. took it up warmly, and stated that the Lord had sent Mr. C-n; that brethren had all along differed as to redemption, Christ's offices, characters, and a fourth thing I do not now remember; and that there could not be union. After this they had other fasts which I of course did not attend; some, since out, did and part of it was so bad that I know those who had to leave the room. Since then I know nothing of what has passed there.

{*Mr. C-n's principle is that, where there exists a body of Christians, no false principle, even in the ground of their union, is a sufficient reason for leaving them. }

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