

DUBLIN, DEC. 17th. 1883.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Your last note has certainly surprised me a good deal. Unless I have greatly misconstrued your former communications and the documents you so kindly lent me, I understood you to assert:—

1. That Major Mc. C. attempted to fasten upon a sister in fellowship the charge of having for years practised the most horrible sin, and yet that he has neither attempted to give, nor can give, any evidence that would prove the truth of this abominable charge, which mainly rests on a false construction he puts on a verbal confession, most wrongly reported by him, and which in reality contained what would be the distinct denial of any such sin.

2. That by threats and coercion he actually got this sister put away from the Lord's table on this accusation, notwithstanding her solemn denial (to which denial she still holds) and in the very teeth of the scriptural demand that there should be plain evidence of guilt before conviction and punishment. Thus committing a meeting professedly gathered to Christ's Name to the profanity of using that most holy and blessed Name to perpetrate a shameful outrage on one who, though she did sin, yet honestly and openly confessed to him what the actual evil was, and who (as truly restored) was forgiven, and welcomed back to the table some months before she was thus ruthlessly and unscripturally excommunicated.

3. That from that time to the present he has neither attempted to prove nor retracted the imputation, but has

himself circulated and has allowed others to circulate this charge against her without having produced any proof of its truth.

4. That he falsely accuses those who very properly objected to excommunicate for sin which was not proved, of having maintained the sin and of having fought hard not to have the table of the Lord cleared.

5. That he made other false charges against this same sister, which charges he has utterly failed to substantiate, his attempts at proof having completely broken down, and yet that he has never openly withdrawn these charges.

6. That this wicked conduct was the outcome of a vindictive feeling, and was really an indirect attack upon another, whom he saw no way of reaching, and whom he sought to wound through this sister, because she had openly resisted his views as to baptism; and that a well-known leading brother in his fellowship knows this to be the case, and has avowed it in your hearing.

Now, dear brother, these are the *principal* things, as I gather from all you have communicated to me, that Major Mc. C. stands charged with by you. Is it not so?

Taking for granted that it is, this is what surprises me,—that you express yourself as “satisfied [!] to leave the question with the Lord, only replying to questions as you may be able.” This I cannot believe to be the course scripture points out under such circumstances for those who name the Name of the Lord. You speak of some going out of fellowship because others behave badly. But “behaving badly” I scarcely think adequately describes such conduct as you charge upon Major Mc. C. If I cannot say of it what he said of another, “sin which no human society would tolerate five minutes,” it is because no mere human society could have such sin amongst them. Only those who profess to be Christ’s, and to be gathered round Himself, could be guilty of such pro-

fanity as thus to link His thrice holy Name with wickedness. I call it shocking iniquity, not simply "behaving badly." To introduce himself to a married woman in the absence of her husband (a christian and a gentleman by his own admission), and to seek to elicit from her an avowal of jealousy because of her husband's visits to the house of an old married christian friend, may perhaps be rightly called "behaving badly," or conduct that no human society would tolerate. But this and other such like things that come out in your notes seem small indeed in comparison with the profanity, wickedness, lying, and railing involved in the preceding charges.

And then (what concerns me most directly), as if all this were not enough, an eminent and godly servant of Christ, and all in fellowship with him, have been foully maligned and slandered for years, because he dared to challenge and condemn such an unscriptural mode of procedure as that pursued by Major Mc. C. in this case. And not only so, but those who are seeking (in this day of God's testing and Satan's opposition) to abide, however feebly, on the ground to which the Lord had, years ago, recalled them,—the holding fast His word and not denying His Name,—are falsely reported (not publicly, but in an underhand way) to be linked with moral evil in Ryde too bad to be named; and thus timid souls are frightened from taking the only path that is of God by this wholesale slander on thousands of God's saints. And yet you are "satisfied to leave the question with the Lord, only replying to questions," whilst the principal actor in all this is still in your fellowship—yea, going about ministering, but quietly and successfully evading what you have so long sought for, an open investigation face to face!

How one guilty of such conduct as you charge upon Major Mc. C. can be at the Lord's table, and you and others know of it, and remain in fellowship with sin, after for years seeking in vain for an honest investigation, without corporate defilement as the result, I cannot conceive. For some meet-

ings (or even all for that matter) to simply decline his ministry while he continues at the table, does not at all meet the case. To me it appears there must be one of two things:—either a thorough, honest judgment and clearing of the whole matter before God; or else the common moral defilement of all in such association.

Some time ago I left the fellowship of those with Major Mc. C. on account of the unscriptural and sectarian position they adopted. Since then the open slight they put upon scripture, by asserting that they do not need it for their assembly decisions, has already led to a pretty plain indication of their slipping into bad doctrine. Now it would appear that moral iniquity is to be allowed or tolerated amongst them, and of such kind that it must be a real relief to any who value the holiness of Christ's most precious Name to be, through infinite grace, completely outside the pale of such a fellowship.

Trusting the Lord will give you, dear brother, to see the true nature and extent of your responsibility to Him and to His saints in this sad and solemn matter, which so deeply affects the honour of Christ, and that you may be enabled by His Spirit to act aright for Him and for those of His members whom *you know* to be so groundlessly defamed, and likely to be so as long as (to use the words of a well-known brother in your fellowship) "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth of the Ryde matter is most carefully hidden from most amongst us." I am,

Yours, dear brother,
affectionately in Christ,
T. WESTON.

In the earnest desire that consciences should be exercised before God, the above (with a slight change) after prayerful consideration is placed in your hands, and should not be seen save by those who are entitled to consider it. The documents seem to bear out what is expressed, so far as one can judge without that which hitherto has been evaded—a full investigation before a competent tribunal. The Brighton enquiry, where Major Mc. C. failed to appear, though ample notice was given, makes it apparent that the brethren with whom he is in fellowship have long known that he stands charged by at least one of their own number with falsehood and calumny of the grossest kind. Is the tolerance of such a state of things for years consistent with real care for the holiness of God's house?

T. W.