

## More Reminiscences of the Strict and Particulars.

(Continued from Vol. VIII., 210.)

JAMES BOYD WARREN was an Ulsterman. An Anglican by birth, he became a lay missionary of the Irish Church Mission, for which he laboured and suffered in Southern Ireland. His character so commended itself to the authorities of the Mission that he was sent to St. Augustine's College, Canterbury, to be prepared for the foreign mission field. His training included the Greek Testament, and studies of this led to his acceptance of the Baptist position.

He explained his position to Dean Alford, then Dean of Canterbury, who, while sympathetic, pointed out that he could no longer stay at St. Augustine's and sent him to C. H. Spurgeon, who, in 1864, welcomed him to the Pastor's College. Here he was trained for our ministry, but he had become a more pronounced Baptist than Spurgeon, for he was strict both as to membership and communion.

In a letter to me he speaks of the open church as "yoking an ox and ass together." Indeed, he was so rigid as to this that, although he regularly attended the College Conferences, he and one or two other like-minded brethren never took part in the Communion Service with which the Conference closed. This limited his opportunity of introduction by Spurgeon, who was ever a good friend. Warren was not much of a talker as to his own spiritual experience, and it was only under pressure that, when he was recognised as pastor at Shouldham Street, Marylebone, he was induced to give an account of his "Call by Grace," which he then did with considerable emotion.

Earnest and devout, he lacked the gifts which win popularity. He was too definite and plain-spoken to suit many even in our churches. An extreme anti-Romanist, on one occasion when he heard Dr. Cumming in a lecture say "Throw off the rags of Popery," he cried out, referring to the Genevan gown which the lecturer was wearing, "Then thow off your gown"; and yet my friend told me that he never could feel the horror at the Crucifix which so many had. This is the reason. In his Irish Mission days he was stoned and seriously injured by a mob, and taken to a hospital where the nurses belonged to a Romish Sisterhood. One day, when he seemed near death, a Sister held a Crucifix before him. "Take that thing away," he

said. She gently replied, "It cannot hurt you to be reminded of the Cross on which your Saviour died."

His first of many short pastorates was at Unicorn Yard, Horselydown, only a few years before it closed. Spurgeon came there to preach, and was not pleased with the appearance of the building. "If you are poor, Warren," he said, "you might be clean."

Just one of the rank and file, it is now over forty years since he passed home. Few will remember him, but I gladly pay tribute to his memory.

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Leonard Hills was a man of different stamp. I only knew him in his later years, when, in 1919, he came from a country church to "Zion," New Cross Road, a church which has for many years had a broader outlook than most of the strict churches. He was an acceptable preacher, ready to help any evangelical church, Established or Free, and not afraid to associate in social work with a Romish priest. Occasionally and deliberately he would startle his hearers. On one occasion he told them that there would be no strict Baptists in heaven. A look of astonishment spread over the hearers' faces. He added, "We shall all be sinners saved by Grace." To a lady he said, "I believe in the Bible from cover to cover, except the Epistle to James." The lady was startled. "Oh," he replied, "I said the Epistle *to* James—not the Epistle *of* James." My readers will know that his reference was to the fulsome dedication printed at the front of the authorised version.

While I was Moderator of the Home Counties Baptist Association we held our Assembly at South Street, Greenwich. Leonard Hills came and remained to the Communion Service with which we closed the morning session. I asked him what would his people say, to which he characteristically replied, "They can say what they like."

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William Jeyes Styles was a leader amongst the Strict Baptists for many years, and for some time editor of the *Gospel Herald* and, in later years, of the *Earthen Vessel*. He was a man of considerable literary ability, and spoke on one occasion at the Baptist Union Assembly. [At Portsmouth in 1895, on "Help Clement also."]

My earliest recollection of him was an address which he gave at the memorial service for my then late pastor, R. A. Lawrence. His text was "And devout men carried Stephen to his burial and made great lamentation over him." Nervous at

the beginning, as he proceeded he became eloquent and gave a really fine address. The Rev. J. T. Briscoe, my friend for many years, told me that W. J. Styles said that Peter was the first Strict Baptist on the occasion when Paul withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed. At least once he advised a young minister that his first business was to take the Baptist Union ministerial recognition examination; and, when he passed on, his funeral service was, at his own wish, conducted not by one of his own section of the denomination, but by the Rev. Frank James.

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James Cattell, a man of substance, some time a farmer, later devoted himself for just over thirty years to the little village church at Bessels Green, near Sevenoaks, having already served the church at Ramsey, Hunts., for nine years.

I first came in touch with him at "Zion," Heaton Road, Peckham, where, in 1884 or thereabouts, he spoke at the church anniversary. He was in a very real sense a Christian gentleman, and not without humour. He had a tendency, not always appreciated by the younger people, to be somewhat prolix, but he was universally and rightly beloved. He was a keen advocate of total abstinence and an earnest and active supporter of the Baptist Missionary Society. In his later years his sight began to fail and so it was that I became an occasional preacher at Bessels Green.

He had some devoted helpers. First in this connection must be named his wife, who survived him several years. Ernest Greenway still lives and serves the church. Another was a Mr. Packman, "only a working gardener." "Only," yes, but what besides? Here is the story. One Sunday morning I had quoted the verse beginning

"The birds without barn or storehouse are fed."

At the end of the service he told me that this had recalled an incident of his early manhood. He had been out of work two or three weeks and was becoming despondent. His mother tried to cheer him, reminding him that there was still food in the house. He, however, felt that he could not stay indoors, and went to the garden. The birds were singing, and he remembered that hymn, broke down into confession of his want of faith, and prayed, and returned to the house reassured. Work came, and, as he said, although he had never been well off, he never again was in such straits.

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# Baptist Manuscripts in the Birmingham Reference Library.

## MIDLAND ASSOCIATION OF BAPTIST CHURCHES :—

Minute Book. duo. 1733-1767. (Catal. 497348).

## BIRMINGHAM AUXILIARY, B.M.S. :—

Minutes, September 26th, 1855 to June 6th, 1918. *Printed and manuscript*. 2 vols. fol. 1855-1918. (Catal. 386536).

A collection of newspaper cuttings, circulars, handbills, letters, hymn sheets, etc., *pp.* 93. *Printed and manuscript*. fol. [1823-1880]. (Catal. 212491).

## BOND STREET CHAPEL :—

Minute Book. 8vo. 1785-1828. (Catal. 405889).

Minute Book for the use of Bond Street Society for Mental Improvement. duo. [1828-1843]. (Catal. 405835).

Article on the Rev. Dr. Price entitled "Bond-Street Chapel," by C. Price. *ff.* [4]. [c. 1908]. (Catal. 382335).

## CIRCUS CHAPEL, BRADFORD STREET :—

Minutes of committee. 2 vols. 4to. 1847-1890. (Catal. 497346).

Index and list of members. 8vo. 1850-1880. (Catal. 497345).

Edge (C.) Plans and drawings of the Circus Chapel and Schoolrooms in Bradford Street. *In* Edge (C.) *and* Edge (C. A.) A collection of plans and drawings, Vol. 3. obl. fol. 1847-1851. (Catal. 412421).

## GRAHAM STREET CHAPEL ("MOUNT ZION") :—

Manual for the use of the members of the church and congregation meeting in Mount Zion Chapel, Graham Street, Birmingham. 1860. [Two copies, with manuscript notes]. (Catal. 213304).

Mount Zion Benevolent Society Minute Book. 8vo. 1855-1856. (Catal. 405886).

## HENEAGE STREET BAPTIST CHURCH :—

Edge (C.) Plans and drawings of Heneage Street Chapel. *In* Edge (C.) *and* Edge (C. A.) A collection of plans and drawings, Vol. 2. obl. fol. 1838-1839. (Catal. 412420).

## NEWHALL STREET BAPTIST CHAPEL ("ZION CHAPEL") :—

Assignment of lease from George Bower to Robert Hall and others, of Zion's Chapel in Newhall Street, Birmingham. 2 July, 1808. (Catal. 257351).