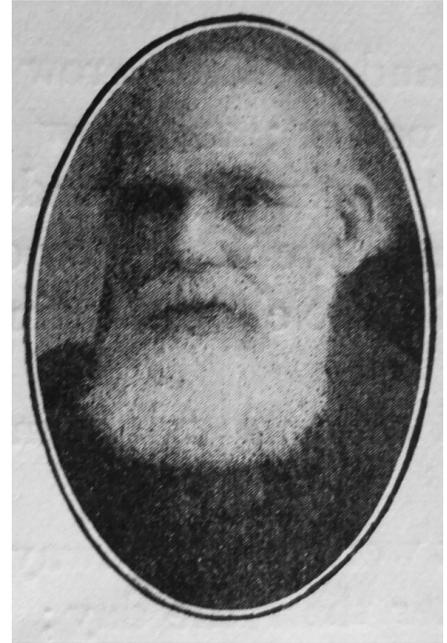


Rev John Hill

Transcription of obituary published in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by Geo. E. Butt

Born in Cornwall, Nov. 4th, 1826, and taken to Jersey in infancy, John Hill started life amid circumstances friendly alike to physical and moral health. His parents were devoted members of our church of whose piety and wisdom he ever spoke in the highest terms. His father was a useful local preacher and class leader. In addition to good home training he had a liberal education, the best available at the time.

Greatly influenced by the ministry of Revs. Robert Hartley and Thomas Russell he was led to Christ by Rev. P. Maddocks. Excellent as had been his previous life this made a great change. He was soon appointed to raise a new Society class and did it, every member being a new convert. Then he was called to preach. His diary of his time is before me; it is full of records of Christian activity, and among them is this: "Attended the five o'clock prayer meeting every morning during the week."



In spite of his deep and perhaps undue sense of inadequacy for the work the call to the ministry was so imperative that he felt he must obey, and so left his island home for Luton in 1850, giving up fair earthly prospects for hardship and incessant toil. His youth, piety, modesty and zeal commended him to the appreciation and regard of the people and he was very useful.

Aylesbury was his next station, and he records of one year that he walked 2,138 miles, preached 380 sermons, visited 2,463 families and witnessed thirty conversions. No salary two quarters, and on half pay the rest of the year! He afterwards travelled in Newbury, Basingstoke, Brinkworth, Sturminster, Witney (thrice), Oxford, Winchester, Poole (twice), Chinnor, Salisbury, Leamington, Horsham and Aldershot. His talent, culture and scholarship were far beyond the average of his day, and but for his modesty and lack of ambition he might have attained to the position of leadership for which he was fitted. Poet, artist, and scholar he shrank from public recognition, and preferred to labour in remote country districts. A faithful minister, a diligent pastor, a true friend, he had a passion for soul saving and his spiritual children are all over the South of England, while in his old circuits he is affectionately spoken of as "our dear old friend, Mr. Hill."

Superannuated in 1890 he still rendered much service, and was deeply interested in the later developments of the Connexion, contributing out of his slender means £5 to the Centenary Fund. The end came suddenly in his eighty-first year but found him ready for the call. As my second super I derived lifelong advantage from the service he rendered in directing my studies and shaping my methods of work. Intensely missionary in spirit he consented to go to Africa, and was ready packed for the journey when a change in the policy of the Committee prevented his going. He greatly intensified my interest in missions, and when my opportunity came no one rejoiced more than he, while of all the letters that reached me yonder none cheered me more than his. I deem it a privilege to be allowed to lay this wreath of personal obligation and grateful memory on the grave of my dear and honoured friend.

References

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