

Saturday.

THE LEEK POST

Death of Mr. John Hall, J.P.

PASSING OF A GREAT CITIZEN.

Prominent Manufacturer and Church Worker.

We deeply regret to record the death of our well-known townsman, Mr. John Hall, J.P., which occurred on Sunday at Monte Carlo, France, where he went in February last for the benefit of his health.

Mr. Hall was one of the town's two nonagenarians, having attained his 90th year in January last, when he was the recipient of congratulations from friends in Leek and district, and was then in wonderful health considering his age. He has for over half a century been one of the town's leading citizens and most prominent business men.

The deceased was a son of Mr. Thomas Alexander Hall, a farmer, of Ipstones, and a brother of Mrs. Tatton, of Westfields, Leek, who died a fortnight ago at the age of 86.

EARLY ASSOCIATION WITH BROUGH'S.

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In the course of time he became a traveller for the firm, and was very suc-



cessful in that capacity. Endowed with keen foresight and business acumen. Mr. Hall quickly became impressed with the possibilities for development, and the idea of taking up the manufacture of other goods than sewing silks possessed him so strongly that he appealed to the firm to allow him to begin with certain goods. These were successfully made, and it soon became necessary for him to leave "the road," and give himself wholly to the manufacture of new classes of goods in which he was entirely successful.

It was about the year 1869, that Mr. Hall became a partner in the firm, and the business developed to such an extent that new premises were acquired. New mills and cottages for the workpeople were erected, mainly under Mr. Hall's direction and by his planning. The Silk Mills at Cheadle were purchased for their new goods, and a new Mill, planned and designed by Mr. Hall, was built, finding employment for over 300 persons. Mr. Hall designed the new Mill in Ashbourne Road; entirely planned the extensions and dwellings owned by the firm, and he also planned and designed the extension of the new mill at Cheadle.

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The progress of the firm was phenomenal. At the outset they employed from 60 to 70 hands, but so extensive had the firm's connections become that the number of employees grew apace, and to-day something like 2,000 are now in their employ at Leek, Cheadle and London.

In 1895 Mr. Hall had the honour of conducting the Duchess of Teck over some of the departments in the Mill, and a loom was arranged for the weaving of silk ribbon, elaborately designed, containing a copy of the duchess's autograph, monogram, and coronet.

On July 28th, 1900, the mills were again visited by royalty, this time by the present King and Queen (then Duke and Duchess of York) who came to Leek and laid the foundation stone of the Carr Gymnasium, and, while here, they were conducted over the different departments of the Mills by Mr. Hall and the late Sir Arthur Nicholson, and on that occasion a loom was arranged for the weaving of ribbons, on which appeared the portraits of the Royal visitors. In 1913, the firm were honoured by a second visit by their Majesties, the King and Queen.

PUBLIC AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.

Notwithstanding the claims of expanding business made upon him, Mr. Hall found time to devote to the public and social life of the Town, and, as far as he was able, gave freely of his time to the furtherance of institutions and interests in which he was interested.

Like his father, Mr. Hall was a devout Wesleyan. He attended Brunswick Church, and was a generous supporter and contributor to the various church movements. In 1873 he became Superintendent of the West Street Sunday School, a position which he held continuously to the time of his death. During that long period, he always took deep interest in the welfare of children and young people, many thousands having received instruction from him, and what

they owe to him for his precept and instruction is evidenced by the regard entertained for him, and the messages received from distant places from time to time. Mr. Hall devoted himself wholeheartedly to the furtherance of the work of his church, which he represented at Conferences, and he filled most of the offices open to a Layman.

In 1874 he established the present Day School at West Street. It was a mixed school, and the first of its kind in the town, and the attendance increased so rapidly that extensions soon became necessary, towards the cost of which considerable sums of money were raised. All along he kept a fatherly eye, and, where possible, a guiding hand, on the various branches of work in connection with his church, and was ever ready and willing to do everything possible to further the causes which he had so much at heart. He had a lot to do with the erection of a number of chapels and schools in the Leek Circuit, and 16 years ago provided the Wesleyan Institute at a cost of £2,000.

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HIS WORK FOR TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.

On the resignation of the late Mr. Jno. Robinson, Mr. Hall was appointed Chairman of the School of Art, and shortly afterwards Leek Urban District Council asked him to take in hand the formation of a Technical School for the town, and it was mainly through his efforts that one was established. He knew something of the Continental schools and their methods, and subsequently visited and inspected the Technical Schools in Berlin, Leipzig, Chemnitz, Dresden, Munich, and other places. The large buildings were erected at Leek, with added provision for a High School, which still exists, and he has been chairman of both since they were opened; also of the new Council School.

TRIBUTE TO HIS LATE WIFE.

Mr. Hall had been a widower 26 years. Many of the older residents will remember the late Mrs. Hall was an active personality in a long list of philanthropic movements in Leek and district, not only in connection with the Wesleyan Communion, with which the Hall family are so prominently identified, but also for the general welfare of the town; The great boys' home conducted by Dr. Stephenson, and to which Wesleyan Methodism contributed so largely, was also amongst her cherished schemes, and she not only liberally assisted its funds herself, but as a collector, aroused a wide interest in the work and obtained much support for it from others.

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