

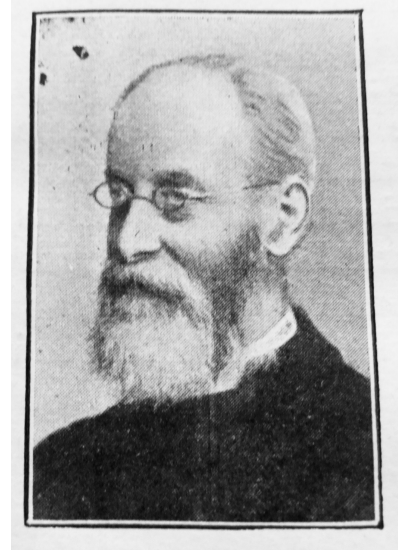
Henry George Button

Transcription of Obituary in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by H. Fletcher

On Wednesday, April 26th, 1905, Henry George Button passed away after a life of exceptional goodness and devotion. Born at Saffron Walden in 1840, he was early drawn into fellowship with our

Church. When fifteen years of age he commenced his life work as a preacher of the Gospel, and had the joy of seeing many souls won for Christ. It was soon felt that the young man was specially adapted for the work of the Christian ministry, and in 1861 he was fully set apart for ministerial work. He travelled forty-four years, literally giving his life for the Primitive Methodist Church. He was one of the finer products of the religion of Jesus, and could well say with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am." By intuition he knew God and possessed rich experimental knowledge of Divine grace. There was "an inner state of love and humility, of

infinite confidence in God and of severity for self, accompanied with tenderness for others." There was a peculiar intimacy between him and the Unseen, God's secret was divulged to the man who trusted Him. In keeping with all saints there were in his character the elements of asceticism, strength of soul, purity and chastity.



With becoming modesty and gentleness of bearing, there was intertwined firm adherence to principle, dogged persistence in the right course and the strongest morality. The soul of the man was gentle, but it had a glorious might. His life was a signal illustration of the fact that goodness is greatness.

It goes without saying that a man with such a beautiful character, and full of activity, did effective and lasting work in our Church. In toil he was assiduous, persistent, thorough and consecrated. Rising early in the morning he worked on the whole day. It is not surprising that in his churches the tone of spiritual life invariably rose, for a man who "walked with God" was at the helm. First the wave of spiritual power gradually stole over the circuit, its heart got warm, and then every department of the work flourished, chapels were built, debts were reduced, weak causes strengthened. He did considerable work in connection with the Temperance cause. While at Portsmouth he was District Deputy for the Good Templars, and had the oversight of over fifty lodges, and this extra work was done without in the least neglecting any of his pulpit or station duties.

In prayer he had few equals. As he poured out his soul to God in prevailing prayer, his congregations felt a holy influence and acknowledged that the preacher was intimate with God.

As a preacher he had natural abilities beyond the average, and aided these with careful preparation. To the end of his ministry there was power and freshness in his sermons. Speaking out of a pure

heart, with a deep sense of his responsibility to God and a passionate love for men, his words went right home. He preached under the direct power of the Spirit of God, and ever sought to “get a verdict for Jesus Christ.”

He had gifts as a circuit administrator. If he was gentle, he was firm. He possessed tact and wisdom. He was most attentive to details and did everything at the proper time, and with carefulness and precision.

As a pastor he was welcome. Sympathy and kindness flowed from him. The dying ones longed for a breath of this good man of God. The sad and dispirited were made glad and took fresh heart as he spoke words of cheer.

As a colleague we can speak of him with gratitude. He was so generous and unselfish, so kind and sympathetic. Consistency, devotion, honesty, truth, transparency were all seen in him.

When he died a hush fell on the town, Watford was in mourning for a man who was beloved. At the funeral the streets were thronged with the admirers of the strong saint. As we passed along we heard often the words, “He was a good man.” His goodness had spoken, his life had been even more eloquent than his sermons.

He has gone to God, but he still influences us for good. We devoutly thank God for him and his work. His dear wife and children are poorer through his absence from them. We pray that God may strengthen them. Till the dawning of the morning we say farewell.

References

Primitive Methodist Magazine 1906/903