

JOHN HICK, born on the 2nd of July, 1815, was the eldest son of the late Mr. Benjamin Hick, one of the founders of the well-known Soho Ironworks at Bolton. At an early age the subject of this notice was sent to the Bolton Grammar School, where he received a sound commercial and classical education. He then entered the Soho Works and, after making himself familiar with the various operations carried on, was taken into partnership, when he assumed an active share in the management of the firm. Some time after the death of Mr. Benjamin Hick, which took place in September, 1842, the late Mr. William Hargreaves joined the firm, from that time known under the style of Messrs. Hick, Hargreaves and Company. Mr. Hick continued to take part in the management of the works until 1868, when his parliamentary duties necessitated his relinquishing active connection with the firm.

Mr. Hick was elected member for Bolton in the Conservative interest in November, 1868, and for nearly twelve years represented that borough in the House of Commons. He rendered important service to the community during his parliamentary career in bringing before the House the question of the loss of life and destruction of property resulting from the frequency of explosions in steam-boilers. This was a matter with which his long experience as a Lancashire engineer made him well qualified to deal. In May, 1870, a Select Committee was appointed to inquire into the cause of these disasters and the best means for their prevention. Mr. Hick acted as chairman, the investigations of the Committee being of a very complete and exhaustive nature. In its report¹ certain recommendations were made with a view to securing greater safety, one of the suggestions being in favour of periodical but not compulsory inspection. In August, 1871—shortly after the presentation of the Report—Mr. Hick introduced a Bill “to provide a more efficient remedy to persons injured and property damaged by the explosion of steam-boilers through negligence.” He also served on a Select Committee, appointed in June, 1874, to inquire into the efficiency of the testing of chain cables and anchors.² Mr. Hick warmly supported the general principles of the Education Act of 1870, as a measure calculated to promote popular education, but he also strongly adhered to the view that religious and secular instruction should go hand in hand.

For many years Mr. Hick was a magistrate both for the borough

¹ Library Inst. C.E.

² Report, Library Inst. C.E.

of Bolton and the Salford Hundred of the county of Lancashire. On taking up his residence at Mytton Hall, near Whalley, he acted as a justice of the peace in that division of the county. From 1870 he served the office of a deputy lieutenant of the County Palatine. As a director of the London and North Western Railway Company he took an active interest in the development of that system. He had a large share in the movement which resulted in the formation of the 27th Lancashire Rifle Volunteers, recruited from Bolton and its neighbourhood, and was a liberal supporter of the local charitable and educational institutions. He also rendered public service in connection with the prevention of the pollution of the River Ribble and its tributaries by refuse from cotton factories and other works near their banks. His artistic tastes induced him to fill his home at Mytton Hall with a large and valuable collection of paintings and sculpture, and the last two years of his life were devoted to the preparation of an elaborately illustrated catalogue¹ of these objects of art.

Mr. Hick died at Mytton Hall on the 2nd of February, 1894, after some months of failing health. He was elected a Member of the Institution on the 11th of March, 1845.

MARK HYDE was born at Sheffield on the 13th of March, 1823. From 1844 to 1850 he was engaged in surveying and preparing for Parliament several of the railway schemes projected in Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire. He then joined the staff of Mr. (now Sir John) Fowler, under whom he was employed on the construction of the eastern section of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway, between Sheffield, Grimsby and Hull. On the completion of that work he removed to Manchester, the headquarters of that Company, in the service of which he remained as Chief Engineering Assistant until June, 1886, when ill-health compelled him to retire.

The most important works upon which Mr. Hyde was engaged during his long connection with the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway Company were the construction of the lines from Grimsby to Cleethorpe; Godley to Woodley; Tinsley to Rotherham; and Rotherham to Masborough: and the doubling of the Barnsley branch. He also designed and assisted to carry out

¹ Library Inst. C.E.