

HOSS, BISHOP ELIJAH

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Bishop Elijah E. Hoss

BISHOP ELIJAH E. HOSS of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, whose death at the age of seventy took place last week at his home in Muskogee, Okla., was one of the outstanding personalities of American Methodism. Virile, intellectually keen, witty, a man of convictions, an incisive writer and a forceful speaker, he made for himself a place of commanding influence in the councils of his church and won distinction as a leader in American Protestantism. His death is a distinct loss to the forces of righteousness and of aggressive Christianity.

No one was long in any gathering of which Bishop Hoss was a part without feeling the force of his presence. He was possessed of a positive mind and was sure to make himself felt whenever great questions were under discussion. In social intercourse he was genial, scintillating often in conversation, interesting, and always the perfect gentleman. One of the last times he appeared in public was at Philadelphia last fall at the sessions of the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was introduced to the gathering and, although broken in health, his words sparkled with wit as he brought fraternal greetings from the church of which he had all his life been an honored member.

Bishop Hoss was a man of unusual intellectual ability. His mind had been well trained. He was thoroughly at home in the classics and read his Bible constantly in the original. To what an extent this familiarity with the linguistic background of Holy Writ enriched his preaching only those who have heard him can realize. He was widely read likewise in the best literature, and gave the impression of one who moved at ease among the products of scholarship. Yet there was about him nothing of the pedant, no affectation of knowledge. He was simply a master workman.

In his intercourse with his fellows he was courteous, but he was always true to his convictions. He was a son of the South and always loyal to its interests as he saw them. As editor of the official organ of Southern Methodism for a time, as bishop, as member of boards and commissions, he spoke his mind freely and openly. And there was that genuine

quality about him that led one to admire him even though forced to disagree with his position. He was a hard fighter whenever a fight was necessary, but he left no sting, no bitterness of spirit. As a defender of the faith as he saw it, whether it were theological or a matter of ecclesiastical polity or denominational relation, he was ever alert and true to himself. And men liked his open mind, his frank and honest spirit.

Bishop Hoss was born in Jonesboro, Tenn., April 14, 1849, and received his education at Emory and Henry College in Virginia, from which he was graduated in 1869 and of which he later became president. He was ordained to the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1870 and served churches in Knoxville, Tenn., San Francisco, and Asheville, N. C. In 1875 he was made president of Martha Washington College at Abingdon, Va., and in 1881 went to his alma mater, first as vice-president and later as president. From 1885 to 1890 he was professor of ecclesiastical history in Vanderbilt University, and from 1890 to 1902 editor of the *Christian Advocate* of Nashville, Tenn. He was elected a bishop at the General Conference of 1902.

Bishop Hoss was often heard at important gatherings of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He had a large place among us. The manly vigor that marked him won him the friendship of those who came into touch with him. It was this same characteristic that gave him his place of leadership in his own branch of American Methodism. He was everywhere held in high repute. As an administrator wise, sympathetic in his intercourse with the ministry, loyal to Methodism, true to his convictions, friendly, a man of affairs, and withal spiritually-minded and deeply religious, he was a bishop beloved and trusted. Men believed in him and readily followed his leadership.

The Methodist Episcopal Church mourns with its sister church over the death of this princely man. It has shared in the honor of counting him as a son. It has rejoiced in his brilliant career and in his distinguished service to the upbuilding of the kingdom. And today in his death it feels more than ever that he belongs to both Methodisms. His life and his achievements are a common possession.

no man gave unto him." The prodigal was on the utmost limits of the affection or consideration of his fellow men—in the outer zone where social sympathies freeze up, and nothing is done. "No man gave unto him." Often this statement has described the case of an apostle or confessor who, by reason of his faith or his fervor, has been rejected from the society of his day, and oftener perhaps it is the description of the state of the slave of vice from whom all passers-by instinctively turn away. When that condition of moral beggary and physical rottenness is reached there is nothing to be done but to turn to Him who gives even to the weakest or the worst, so soon as they repent of their sin and lift to heaven for help their emaciated hands. These cases of utter degradation and complete moral beggary, try the temper of Christians and test the churches as severely as did the aggravated cases, in the time of our Lord, whom the disciples could not heal at once, or perhaps cure at all. Preventatively the churches ought to secure any persons in their neighborhood from becoming reduced to the prodigal basis of a non-social status, and curatively they ought to possess the power, through their closeness to God and absolute faith in His promises, to give unto him who needs of the help which will set him on high for all eternity.

THE ANCHOR OF HOPE

WORKED on the collars of many men in blue whom we see these days is the device of an anchor, which is becoming familiar to people of the interior as well as of the seaboard. To a man who has never seen the ocean that device may mean little, but to a sailor it speaks of one momentous interest—the holding of his ship from destruction off a lee shore, or if not that, an easy and safe anchorage in some quiet harbor. Some form of anchoring device has always been in use among seafaring men, and hence we do not wonder at finding it men-

ing waves runs the stout cable which at its farther end, "within the veil" of obscurity, grips the rock, or burrows

It Must Have t

OUT in one of the suburbs of Boston, the alert pastor of a prominent Methodist Episcopal church announced as the subject to be considered at one of the services, "Can We Be Saved Without the Centenary?" One who has thought at all seriously about the Centenary now rapidly reaching a climax cannot but be impressed with the ingenuity of the theme in its world-wide implications.

If there is one thing that the Centenary movement means, it is this—a church effective as a saving agency for the whole of life everywhere.

This is the challenge of the period of reconstruction to organized Christianity. Nothing less than this will save the church in this hour of crisis, and nothing less than this will save the world.

We are now in the most crucial days of the Centenary. Upon the next few weeks hinges to a very large extent the success of the whole movement. The campaign of education is practically at an end. Throughout the length and breadth of the church the cause has been presented in all its phases for months. Area conventions, district gatherings, group meetings, newspaper articles, Minute Men, Annual Conferences—every method that could possibly be devised has been utilized to bring the movement to the attention of the church and the world at large. Never before has there been such a campaign of publicity and education for a religious object. It has, in fact, been the marvel of all who have studied it in its various phases. And in all justice it must be admitted that the case has been made out. The Centenary no longer needs to be argued.

With practically every other Protestant church in America following in the wake of Methodism in launching a movement of a similar nature to equip itself for the enlarged and constantly enlarging needs of the day, the burden of proof has passed to those who would oppose the Centenary.