

Dr. Enoch Benson, Former Brooklyn Pastor, Dies

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(From The Brooklyn Chronicle)

Dr. Enoch Benson died Dec. 28, 1934, at the home of his son, B. M. Benson, in Fresno, Cal. Dr. Benson was born in New Jersey, and just as his residence spanned the continent, east, midwest, and west, so his influence, exerted so forcefully during the 23 years of his pastorate in the Presbyterian church, Brooklyn, Ia., has spread abroad into many states of the union. Many groups of young people, growing up under his religious instruction, were taught to think, to feel, and to act for the good of their various communities as they went forth into the world.

Dr. Benson was always most liberal and progressive in thought. He was vitally alive to and interested in many phases of life. Although the religious ideal was always kept first, how much he gave, both in his sermons and through daily conversation, of the inspiration that comes through literary, scientific, and many other lines of progress.

Because he was broadminded and knew not the narrowness of sectarianism, he drew unto himself friends from many walks of life. He had great tenderness for the one in trouble, for the one whom society passed by unheeding. He was willing to spend time, thought and effort to be of comfort or assistance to such a one. He gave strength and fortitude to those of his own congregation.

Dr. Benson was essentially a student, his active mind and fine intellect were always reaching out, exploring new fields, re-reading old classics, examining new phases of philosophy. Few indeed are intellectually keen and ambitious enough to undertake the study of a new profession after 70 years of age, as he did.

This same delight in mental activity was early inoculated into his four sons. Today their interests represent three professions, and each son adds to that by taking part in the civic, educational and social aspects of life in their several communities. This brought a great pride and joy to their father.

Enoch Benson was born in Bridgeton, N. J., Sept. 30, 1849. He completed his academic education in the Bridgeton Presbyterian Academy, graduating in 1869. He attended Lafayette college in Easton, Penn., graduating in 1873. In the fall of that year he went to the Union Theological seminary in New York City, graduated from the same in 1876, and was then licensed by the New York City Presbytery.

He then proceeded to the mis-

sion fields in Nebraska and located at North Bend. Here he was married to Mattie J. Tobias. As a result of the union there were born four sons, Charles G. Benson, an attorney, of Portland, Ore.; Brenton M. Benson, an attorney in Fresno, Cal.; Rev. S. C. Benson, pastor of the Kent Street Reformed church, Brooklyn, N. Y., and Perry H. Benson, an educator in Fillmore, Cal.

He remained at North Bend one year, and then removed to Seward, Neb., where he spent five years in the ministry, and two years as superintendent of public instruction. While at Seward, he was given the degree of A. M. by his Alma Mater.

He then went to Benedict, Neb., for two years. At the end of this time he was called to Brooklyn, Ia., where he spent a pastorate of 23 years. He had conferred on him the degree of Ph. D. by Parsons college.

In 1910 he went to California and took charge of a group of newly organized Presbyterian churches for two years. He was then called to the pastorate of the Trinity Presbyterian church in Portland, Ore. Later, for two years he served the church at Burns, Ore. In 1916 he retired from the active service, studied law, and was admitted to the Oregon bar. For a number of years he spent his time in supplying the vacancies of the Presbytery of Portland, and of the state.

During two years of the World war he supplied the Unity church and Northminister church of Portland. He has made his home in Portland since 1916, but recently flew to California to visit his son.

Funeral services were held in Fresno, Cal. For three months, Dr. Benson had made his home with his son, Ben, there.

A prelude, "Going Home," was played on the organ. A friend sang, "One Sweetly Solemn Thought." The pastor of the First Congregational church of Fresno gave a brief talk which was followed by "End of a Perfect Day."

The funeral service was followed by cremation and the ashes were scattered in one of the beauty spots of the Sierra mountains, where, at Mrs. Benson's request, her ashes were scattered some three years ago.