

**NOTES of an address given by the Rev. W. G.
Thornal Baker at The Methodist Central Hall, Redhill,
Surrey, on Sunday evening, November 14th, 1943.**

The Church at the Central Hall has suffered a great loss in the passing of Joseph Rank in his 90th year. He will be missed as a dignified and devout worshipper, one who bowed down before God his Creator in simple faith and final trust.

Only a few weeks ago he was with us about the Lord's Table, now he has gone to the Larger Life of which he was so certain.

But this Hall is only a tiny spot in the Methodist Church where he will be missed. The whole Church thanks God for such a son in the Gospel, and will be deeply moved by his death.

Our Church has never had so munificent a benefactor. His deepest desire was to use his great wealth to propagate his own passionate Evangelical faith, which he regarded as his greatest possession. This faith was expressed in one of his favourite hymns:-

“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear.”

His purpose was to get this message over to the people by any and every means.

He was a forthright Yorkshireman, straight but kindly, possessed of an innate courtesy which was striking in such a strong personality. A man who refused to run away from difficulties, and faced the stress and strain of all his great business undertakings and daily contacts, with an amazing serenity and simple faith in final issues.

For he completely believed that the course of his life was set and in the hands of God, he was the Steward of all that was granted to him.

He was simple and unpretentious in the finest sense, and spent very little on himself. That is one of the deep reasons why he had so much success and joy in Sunday School work, and as a class leader he could when occasion arose tell the story of his own heart with simple direct effect, for he knew beyond peradventure, in whom he had believed, and was fully persuaded throughout his long life that Christ was his sufficient Saviour.

He was one of the towering businessmen of his day, with something akin to genius in his understanding and direction of commercial undertakings. Yet his supreme achievement was his simple, entirely honest, goodness of heart. I, with very many others, thank God for such a man, a gift of high purposes to the Methodist Church, and a great donor in other philanthropic Settlements, but most of all for the privilege of having known him as a simple child of God.

Fear of death was unknown to him. When the time came he simply desired to go Home.

A great and good life lived in the triumph of a simple faith in God his Saviour.