

THE CALGARY MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR THE LATE DEAN ABERHART

For the benefit of those who were unable to hear the Memorial Service held in the Institute on Sunday afternoon, May 30th, we would like to give a brief report.

Long before the time the service was due to start, the Church was packed to capacity, with many having to stand throughout the whole two-hour period. Other hundreds were accommodated in the lower auditorium, and listened to the service from a loud speaker. The front of the church was hidden by a mass of floral tributes centred by a draped portrait of the late Premier, kindly loaned by the well-known artist, N. de Grandmaison. The nine speakers occupied the platform, behind which sat the members of the Official Board of the Church.

The chairman said that in company with Mr. Hutchinson, he had attended the service in Vancouver. He gave a brief report of the funeral service, of which the following is an extract:

"At first it had been hoped that we could have brought him here where so many of you have loved him, but due to the fact of Mrs. Aberhart's illness, and an unhappy combination of circumstances and illness in the homes of other members of the family, this wish had to give place to necessity. The service was consequently arranged to take place at Vancouver. The beautiful Canadian Memorial Church, where the service was held, was packed to capacity with mourners. The faces of many former Albertans were noted in the congregation. The front of the Church was just a mass of beautiful floral tributes from hundreds of friends.

"The service was conducted by the Rev. Harrison Villett, an old friend of Mr. Aberhart's for the last twenty years. Mr. Villett paid a beautiful tribute to the splendid life of service of 'Bro. Aberhart. Rev. Dr. McCaul, Pastor of Wesley United Church, led us to the throne of grace in

a gracious prayer so full of comfort at a time when comfort was so sorely needed.

"Mr. Manning, struggling under the stress of strong emotion, spoke of the splendid qualities of our departed brother, both as his best friend, and in the larger field of public life.

"The long funeral procession then drove the seven-mile journey to the beautiful Forest Lawn Burial Park, where our dear brother was finally laid to rest amidst lovely surroundings. Thus we paid our last loving respects, not only on our own behalf, but for you all who were unable to be present. So we said farewell to the tired body, and now we have returned to take up the task, as he would have wished us, each one, to do, to carry forward the banner of love, and in bringing the claims of a dying and risen Saviour to mankind until we, too, shall be called away 'that with all saints our rest may be in that bright Paradise with Thee.'"

Eight speakers gave addresses and paid eloquent tribute to the splendid life and qualities of this great Christian who has been called away to higher service. During the service it was announced that those present would be invited to sign their names on cards furnished so that a grand list could be compiled of the names of those wishing to go on record as paying tribute to the memory of our late Dean and Premier. Radio listeners were also invited to send in their names to be included in this list.

Space will not permit us to acknowledge all the kind messages which we have received, so will those who have written please accept this expression of our grateful thanks, both for the words of sympathy, and also for the encouragement given to carry on in the Master's name, and this we will do under the direction of the Holy Spirit. On another page will be found the text of the funeral address given at Vancouver by the Rev. Harrison Villett.

Never think you can make yourself great by making another small!

ADDRESS BY REV. HARRISON VILLET WHO CONDUCTED FUNERAL SERVICE FOR THE LATE WILLIAM ABERHART

Second Samuel 3:38: "And the King said, 'Know ye not that there is a Prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?'"

So well-known are these words and the historical background from whence they have come that they need no word of explanation from me.

I wish to take them from their context and use them to express what we all feel today.

When David used the words "PRINCE" and "GREAT MAN," in relationship to his friend they had no reference whatever to Royal lineage and kingly ancestry. Rather he was expressing the gifts of leadership displayed, and the bonds of affection uniting him to his country and to his people.

So, too, I feel that I can use these words today without fear of misrepresentation and misunderstanding.

"Know ye not that there is a Prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?"

My knowledge of Mr. Aberhart goes back some twenty years when he was well known as one of the most capable and most effective school principals in Alberta. Teachers who served on his staff and students who passed through his school, alike held him in high esteem and deep respect.

He was known, too, as an educator who believed in Christianity as fundamental to any stable form of citizenship, and long before I met him I knew his voice as he crusaded by radio for Christian teaching and Christian practise in our every day mode of life.

He was our pioneer radio preacher and one of the first to recognize the power and influence of the radio in education and religious teaching. Consequently when our paths met and we became personally acquainted I already felt we were not strangers but friends.

And in his latter years while serving the people of Alberta in the highest place of responsibility in the province I have had no reason to change my early estimation of his sincerity, ability and genuine character.

Today, I wish to mention several things that must not be overlooked, and without which we shall miss the key that interprets all his career and his rise to Dominion-wide, nay, world-wide prominence.

Mr. Aberhart had a deep love for and an abiding faith in young people. Doubtless in his class room and principal's office there were forged those chains of affection for youth that later determined his career.

His graduates invariably led the Province; and when the depression laid the blight of poverty, unemployment, vice and defeat upon his graduates, Mr. Aberhart suffered in their suffering and prayed for their deliverance. It was this shocking state of affairs that impelled him to seek alleviation of the tragedies of our glorious Canadian youth.

When no voice was speaking for them, and no statesman had any solution, when orthodox politics and orthodox finance had utterly failed to shed any ray of hope, Mr. Aberhart was forced by conviction and desperation to launch out into the untried seas of political action.

And every man or woman who recalls the "jungles" of Canada and the roaming, desperate, unwanted youth, will recall with gratitude this Friend whom Conservative Leader Graydon yesterday in Ottawa called "a pioneer in social and economic reform."

Alongside his deep concern for young people was his sympathy for the poor. One

You can't crush a good man who is undergirded by the Almighty.

from The Prophetic Voice June 1943

of Alberta's best known men said to me in a letter yesterday, "What kept so many people in Alberta loyal to him was the feeling that he was interested in the poor people; and many felt that no matter how dark the situation was, some day Mr. Aberhart would see that justice was done to them." These people now echo David's words, "Know ye not that a Prince and a great man is fallen this 'day?'"

It is a trite saying that we stone our prophets, crucify our Saviours and ridicule our reformers. Certain it is that nearly all accepted inventions and discoveries were once the cause of cruel mockery and insults. A pioneer in any realm walks a hard road but in social and economic adventure the via dolorous. This way was taken by Mr. Aberhart because of his deep conviction that a solution of our ills was possible.

I saw him sacrificing his place of security, of honor in the neighborhood, his place of influence and service—deliberately taking on a task that would bring heartache, and eventually shorten his days, for a hope that possessed his soul. No responsible man in Canada has ever doubted his sincerity, nor has any one questioned his motive.

His character has been above question or suspicion and no shadow of any unworthy act has marred his administration.

The things I have mentioned as characteristic of this unusual leader had their roots in an abiding faith in Jesus Christ. His love for his fellowman was the product of his love of God. A writer, "Roman Collar," said in one of our national papers, "For a Premier to confess Christ constantly is indeed something."

I know nothing of Mr. Aberhart's boyhood and early manhood but I know that from his arrival in Calgary until the day of his death, his witness for his Lord and Master has been steady, constant and unashamed. His example of Christian discipleship has been a beacon light to many a youth hard pressed in the battle of life.

Emerson says:

Not gold, but only men can make
A people great and strong,
Men who for truth and honor's sake
Stand fast and suffer long.

Brave men who work while others sleep
Who dare while others fly—
They build a nation's pillars deep
And lift them to the sky.

But it was at his own fireside he found his inspiration, and approached the ideal in his domestic life. He and his faithful wife, who was both his helpmate and companion, inhabited as tenants that sacred spot called home, and needed no court to define their relative rights and duties. The invisible walls which shut in that home and shut out all else had their foundations upon the earth and their battlements in the skies. No force could break them down, no poisoned arrows could cross their tops, and at the gates Love and Confidence stood ever upon guard.

The sympathy of the country goes out to Mrs. Aberhart and her two daughters, nor would we forget his aged mother in the east, in the hour of their bereavement. Our prayer is that the Lord who comforted the husband and father may comfort them in their sorrow.

And now we must say farewell.
Farewell, to a Prince and a great man.
Farewell, to a Pioneer who never spared himself, but whose chief concern was for others.
Farewell, to a Christian gentleman who by his walk and conversation enriched the lives of countless numbers who with us now mourn his passing.

"Now the labourer's task is o'er;
Now the battle day is past;
Now upon the farther shore
Lands the voyager at last.

Father, in Thy gracious keeping
Leave me now Thy servant sleeping."

Blessed is the man who is too clever to be deceived by his own alibis.

WORDS OF COMFORT

Absent from the body, to be present with
the Lord.—2 Cor. 5:8.

Our well-belov'd
 think not of them as gone,
Only just absent
 for life's little way,
And we are swiftly,
 closely, following on,
Nearer and nearer to them,
 every day.

I shall go to him, but he shall not return
to me.—2 Sam. 12:34.

the mother who teaches her child to pray.

WE MUST GO ON!

The passing of our beloved founder, Dean Aberhart, has been a severe blow to us all. Yet we are confident Almighty God will lay it on the hearts of our many friends to continue to assist us in this work, which was so dear to Mr. Aberhart; that we may press onward, in the Master's name even to greater things.

We will do our part—May we depend on you?