



Archdeacon H. A. Cody
Memorial Service
St. James Anglican Church
Sunday, February 15, 1948

Rev. Canon W. R. Hibbard

As one who knew Archdeacon Cody and enjoyed his friendship for nearly forty years, your Rector has asked me to address you on this occasion when we have met to thank God for a life which was so rich in giving, and to honour the memory of one we loved so well. I do not intend to deliver a sermon, but rather a meditation on that life, that we may all fix our attention on something definite which we can remember. I have chosen some verses of Holy Scripture which, it seems to me, describe wonderfully well the one about whom we are all thinking this morning. They come in the Epistle for today (1st S. in Lent) which is taken from 2 Corinthians 6 in which St. Paul commends his own ministry to his readers in terms of a series of contrasts, antitheses, opposites or paradoxes, whatever we like to call them, which are very striking. "Approving ourselves", he says, "as ministers of God", and then he gives a list of these contrasts; e.g. "as unknown, and yet well known; as dying and behold we live; as sorrowful yet always rejoicing." I shall not mention them all, but would ask you to fix your attention on the last two -

"As poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things."

The life of our friend was one of service; a service in which he was found faithful. When as a young man he felt the call to the ministry,

he readily obeyed it, and I feel sure he never regretted the choice he made for his life's work.

About five years after he was ordained priest, he offered himself for work in the Yukon, at that time at the height of the gold rush, and about his ministry in that mining center I learned much from my wife's brother who was then in charge of a detachment of the RNW. M. P., and when stationed at Whitehorse was for a time, one of Mr. Cody's church wardens. It was certainly not to seek gold of the material kind that the Rev. Hiram Alfred Cody went to the Yukon; he sought nothing for himself, but he sought to gain for his Master something more precious than gold; the souls of men and women in that rough mining town where conditions of life were very hard. My informant told me much about his work, his inspiring devotion to duty, and the love and esteem he won from those to whom he ministered.

I remember when my informant, Arthur Brooke, paid a visit to the east years afterwards; these two had a meeting when I was present and the delight they took in their reminiscences.

Then after seven years he returned to this diocese and to this parish where he ministered for over thirty years. You have no need for me to tell you anything about his work here. In fact many of you know far more about it than do I. But this I do know that he was a faithful pastor sharing in the joys and sorrows of his flock. All of us who knew him well know that there was nothing artificial or merely professional in his sympathy; it was sincere. His work in his own parish he always regarded as his chief work, and he gave himself wholeheartedly to it.

His influence spread outside the parish. As archdeacon of Saint John he had two deaneries; Saint John and Kingston in his territory, and he took a lively interest in what went on in every parish. Whenever there was a marking of some event, particularly of an historical nature, he was always asked to be the preacher, and whenever it was possible for him to do so, he accepted these invitations.

Then again he had a still wider public. A good judge and a profound

lover of good literature himself. He sought to implant the same love in others. I well remember when we used to meet he so frequently asked "What have you been reading?" And then we would have a delightful talk about books. He had the faculty of expressing himself in simple yet forceful prose, and of making his fictional characters live. Both his novels and his poetry were widely read. The highest ideals were upheld in all that he wrote, and there are undoubtedly many of us who have never seen his face or heard his voice who yet have reason to be grateful to him for the inspiration he gave them. They with us would join in thanksgiving for a life which was so rich in giving.

(Here followed an appeal to Scouts and Guides who were present to make his example an inspiration for holding to the good and noble in life, and the joy of giving of their best for the sake of others.)

What we need today are not clever people especially, and certainly not smart ones, but steadfast, reliable men and women who seek to give rather than to get. In these upset and anxious days our chief menace is not some foreign power, but it is right in ourselves. Unfortunately, there are so many in every class and occupation infected by the virus of selfishness. They would almost seem to pervert St. Paul's words and they live as rich, not caring how many they make poor; as having everything and possessing nothing.

One with the character and ability of Dr. Cody could have received far greater monetary awards in a secular calling. But I feel confident that he never regretted the choice he had made.

"As poor, yet making many rich." Could any words better describe his life? Even though the monetary awards were not great, yet he received something which money cannot buy – the esteem, the gratitude and love of so many. "As having nothing, yet possessing all things."

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