

Death of Lord Aberdeen

C 138337

Tribute  
House of Commons  
March 8, 1934

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Leader of the opposition): I rise to associate myself and hon. members on this side of the house with the felicitous tribute which has been paid by the right hon. the Prime Minister (Mr. Bennett) to the memory of the late Marquis of Aberdeen and Temair, who for five years held the high office of Governor General of this dominion. I should like to express my appreciation not only of the tribute the Prime Minister has paid but of his establishing the precedent of voicing, on behalf of parliament and the country, abiding remembrance of those who, as great public servants, have come to Canada from other parts of the British Empire and made worthy contributions to the history of our land. In this, I think the House of Commons will heartily concur.

To speak of Lord Aberdeen and to recall the fact that it is some forty years or more since he came to Canada as the representative of the crown, causes one to recognize that one is referring to a previous era in British history, the era of Queen Victoria and of Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone, an age which occupies a unique place in history. The lives of Lord and Lady Aberdeen were closely associated with those of the Gladstones, and the traditions of that time come naturally before our minds.

I suppose the most appropriate reference at the moment is to remind the house, as the Prime Minister has done, of what was said in our parliament of the late Lord Aberdeen on his return to England, after having spent his five years here. An address was moved in this house by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the Prime Minister of the day, in which Sir Wilfrid, on behalf of the House of Commons, expressed the warm appreciation felt by the people of Canada of the public services of both Lord and Lady Aberdeen, of the very acceptable manner in which in the performance of the different functions pertaining to royalty they had discharged their duties as representatives of the

Queen, of the great service they had rendered to art, science and letters during their stay in Canada, and, above all, of their democratic sympathies and close identification with those causes which have to do with human welfare and social well being. Nothing could have reflected better the success of Lord Aberdeen's administration in Canada than his reappointment to the vice-royalty of Ireland in subsequent years.

To many of us in Canada the death of Lord Aberdeen will mean not only the passing of a great public servant, one who has been true to the highest traditions of devoted and disinterested service to the state, and to the church to which he belonged, but the loss of a very dear personal friend. Lord Aberdeen possessed to a marked degree those qualities of generous sympathy, kindly interest and loyalty which win for their possessors many intimate friendships. He never lost touch or association with Canada and its people, but maintained both by the welcome he gave Canadians visiting the old land, and by return visits to Canada of Lady Aberdeen and himself.

Recalling the nature of the life-long services of Lord and Lady Aberdeen to great causes, recalling how closely for nearly sixty years they were united in purpose and in the happiness of their domestic life, and recalling, above all, their devotion and their fidelity to the faith of their fathers, I desire to join in all sincerity in the sympathy extended by the Prime Minister on behalf of parliament to Lady Aberdeen, who has been so greatly bereaved, and to the members of her family.

Like the Prime Minister, I would conclude in what seems to me an appropriate quotation in reference to Lord Aberdeen and his many years of public service. Slightly transposing Wordsworth's familiar lines, it might truly be said of him:

His high endeavours were an inward light  
That made the path before him always bright.

W. L. M. King Papers, Memoranda and Notes, 1933-1939  
(M.G. 26, J 4, volume 198, pages C138036-C138367)

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