

NOTES on MEMORIAL SERVICE for the late JOSEPH RANK
held at QUEEN'S HALL, HULL
on Wednesday, November, 17th, 1943, at 2.30 p.m.

Service conducted by the Rev. A. B. Cannon.

Assisted by Mr. H. Loten.

Address by the Rev. Broadbelt.

Hymn No. 1. Methodist Hymn Book — "O for a thousand tongues to sing."

Prayer by the Rev. A. B. Cannon.

First reading from the Book of Psalms, No. 23. "The Lord is my Shepherd."

Second reading from St. John's Gospel, Chapter 14. "Let not your heart be troubled"

Lastly reading from Revelation, Chapter 7. "After these things I saw and beheld a great multitude which no man could number."

Hymn No. 99. Methodist Hymn Book — "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds."

Address by the Rev. J. A. Broadbelt:—

It is 35 years since I first made friends with Joseph Rank, whose passing we have come together here to mourn, and yet in whose life we rejoice and give God thanks for all that he did for His service.

Strangely enough I made a friend of Mr. Rank in the City of Hull, and it was in the building of the Thornton Hall Mission 35 years ago, and in those days he showed me great kindness and helped me in a great many ways - too many to mention this afternoon.

Associated in those far off days with Mr. Rank in his work in the Hull Missions were three other well-known men in this great City. I refer to the Rt. Hon. T. R. Ferens; Sir Alfred Gelder, who was the architect for all these Halls, and my old dear friend Mr. Charles D. Holmes. They were all Mr. Rank's friends and they were all friends of one another, and in those days Mr. Rank gave great encouragement and wise guidance and generous help to the men who had charge of the Hull Missions, as many of you who have come together this afternoon to this service will remember. Many of you have received encouragement from Joseph Rank, and many of you have received wise guidance and generous help, and I think it is very fitting that we who were his friends, still are his friends, should gather in this Queen's Hall that was largely helped by him in those far off days, and is so near the great Mill that has been destroyed by enemy action, that we should gather together in this Holy place to pay, what I should say, is a loving tribute to the memory of a good man, and to give God praise for all that he was able to do for this city, and many another city, in the days of his life.

I think you will all agree that Joseph Rank was a very remarkable man, and the people who knew him best knew how remarkable he was. He was an outstanding personality, and he would have made his mark upon men and upon things in any sphere of service. I think that many of you will think of him to-day as first and foremost a man who was successful in the business life of this great city, and in the business life of the country. The story of the growth of Joseph Rank, Limited, is one full of romance, as you know, in the modern business world. From small beginnings, many many years ago — and oft he has talked to me of his early beginnings — I am told now that his firm supplies food for one in every seven people in this island. What a remarkable thing that is. I remember him once telling me some of the secrets of his business life, and he said "One of the secrets of my business, and any success that may have come to me, has been owing to the fact that I knew how to choose my colleagues and helpers." He had a remarkable understanding of human nature.

I remember being in his office in London one day; the telephone bell rang, and it was Mr. Escritt on the 'phone, who was the head of one of his Departments, and apparently they were talking of a boy they were expecting to engage and Mr Rank said: "Has he got any' nous and what does he look like?" I gathered at the other end of the telephone Mr. Escritt had said: "He is not a bad chap to look at, and he seems to have some brains," and then Mr. Rank said: "You had better engage him." I think Mr. Rank was right, and how greatly he was helped.

When I lived in the city 35 years ago, I remember what a tower of strength Mr. Kemp was, and what a help he was to the mission. I am told that on Mr. Rank's last visit to this great city he went out to Hornsea to see this old friend of his. That is a very lovely thing. Mr. Rank never forgot an old friend, and I want to tell Mr. Kemp to-day that in this service of memory, when we are giving thanks to God for Joseph Rank, we think of him.

Perhaps others of you who have come together this afternoon will think of Joseph Rank as an honoured Freeman of the City. No doubt Mr. Rank could have had many worldly honours. He could have had them for the asking, but he coveted them not; in fact, he turned them down. Many many years ago a Bible character who shall be nameless said: "I dwell among my own people," and Mr. Rank loved to dwell among his own people. There was one honour he did receive and that was the Freedom of your City which was his city, and I know he counted it a very great honour indeed; in fact, he loved the City of Hull, and one of the reasons why I became his friend was because I was here in the Hull Mission in the early days of the building of the Thornton and King's Halls.

Perhaps some of you who have come together this afternoon think of Joseph Rank as a large hearted generous giver of his wealth to all sorts of social and religious activities. He often said that there was one thing about John Wesley - there were many things about John Wesley that Mr. Rank remembered- but there was one thing about John Wesley that he liked. You will remember, some of you that Wesley said it was his motto in life to "make all he could, save all he could, and then to give all he could," and Joseph Rank followed John Wesley in that particular. He certainly made all he could, and you will certainly agree with me he gave all he could, but I am not quite sure whether he saved all he could. He once told me: "I shall die a poor man; some people think I shall leave a lot of money, but I shall die a very poor man." I see sane of the papers speak of him as Joseph Rank, the Millionaire Miller, but he said to me: "I shall die a poor man," and it was because he gave so much away. How princely he gave, and how generous he was, but yet how carefully he gave, wasting nothing, and spending little upon himself.

I remember once he came to a mission I built in London, and I should not have been able to do this if he had not been behind me. When we were clearing off the debt of the mission we wanted £5,700, and Mr. Ferens had promised to preside and Mr. Rank was asked to speak. He wondered why he had been put down on the bill as a speaker, but afterwards he saw there was method in my madness. He got up and said: "We want £5,700, and I shall give what you do not give." The people gave £1,000 and he gave me £4,700, which was a very generous gift. He was a generous giver. He stayed the night at my home, and the next morning I went to the station with Joseph Rank. I said to him: "I will go to the station with you and carry your bag; I will carry any man's bag who has done what you did last night. He said: "All right, you can carry my bag." When we got to the station I said; "I will buy you a paper." It was in the last war, and the "Morning Post" had become 2d. "No," he said, "I will buy my own paper," but when he found it was 2d., he said he would not have a paper, and yet he gave £4,700 for God's work, but he could do without a paper because it had gone up from 1d to 2d.

Our departed friend, I believe, had as much pleasure in giving as he had in making. Just think of the princely gifts to this city; count if you can the number of great missions like this he has helped to build and support, and we should be amazed at how much Joseph Rank made, and how much he gave to Cod's work,

You know, I like to think of Joseph Rank, not as a successful business man, or a Freeman of your great city, but I like to think of him as a Christian gentleman, a Christian disciple, a simple follower of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ that is how I want to think of him to-day. He was a great Christian. I knew him so well because I stayed in his home. I was his Minister

for some years, and if a Minister does not know his Circuit Steward, who does? He was my Circuit Steward and he was my Sunday School Superintendent, and you think of it, until his eightieth year he came to his Sunday School, Sunday afternoon after Sunday afternoon, in order to be there among the children. Yes, he often talked to me about the influence of children upon his early life.

He had a great love for Thomas Champness, and I know that Mr. Simpson Johnson, who was a Minister of this city many years ago, was a dear friend of Mr. Rank, and so was Samuel Chadwick, who had a great influence over him, and gave him a great love for Evangelism.

There are two or three things that have impressed themselves on my mind through the years, and they are these. Although Joseph Rank lived a very busy life, as you know, directing a great business with remarkable efficiency, and with Great success, he never allowed business to crowd God and religion out of his life. I think it was true of him that the more he prospered the more earnest he became in the things of the Spirit. I know how devoted he was going to his weekly class meeting, and what an example he is to merchant princes of these modern days. So many men as they prosper, the more they prosper the less they pray. I think we may say truthfully, without any exaggeration, as I knew him intimately, the more Joseph Rank prospered the more he prayed and the more simple became his faith. Although he could have had all the honours, and he could have had many pleasures that money could have given him, yet you know he found real pleasure in 'the simple things of life. He read his Bible. What a good thing that is for a business man to do. He read it like a child. He believed it, and he kept the Sabbath. What a good thing that is in these days of Sabbath desecration, and as I said a few moments ago he attended his Sunday School. He was the Honorary Superintendent, and even when he had nothing much to do, when another man had taken over his job, still force of habit brought him to Tooting on Sunday afternoons for an hour, in order to go round the classes, speak to the boys and girls, and make friends with them. He loved Sunday School. He attended his class meeting; he enjoyed his garden and his farm, and you know he often went to a Cricket Match. Some people thought he had not time. I remember once going to the Oval to see England playing Australia, and I thought nobody would know me, but who should I meet but my Circuit Steward. I said: "What are you doing here?" and he said: "What you are doing here?". So we made friends.

Joseph Rank found the inspiration of his life in the simple faith that he had in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I the very real sense he knew how to cast all his burdens on God. Many a time when I have been talking to him, and have perhaps been a little bit discouraged with my work, he has said to me; "Do your best and leave the rest," and that is a fine motto and I think he practised what he preached. He knew how to cast all his burdens on God. That simple faith of his; that simple love of good things, manifested itself in all sorts of ways.

I remember very well once coming to speak for him in the Tooting Mission in London. He had been building another Sunday School and he wanted me to speak to them, and I went. At the end of the meeting he said: "Well, Mr. Broadbelt, you will have some expenses." I had come across London. "No, Mr. Rank," I said, "I have got no expenses; it is a pleasure to do anything for you." He said: "Do not you want anything?" I said: "No, not from you." He said: "Thank you very much." Two days after, I had a lovely letter from him enclosing a cheque for £50. That was typical.

I remember going to see him in his office in London. Some of you from the London Office will remember the lift man. He entered into a conversation with me. He said: "Are you going to see the Governor? He is a very kind gentle man. Do you know, sir, every afternoon he always brings me a cup of tea. He has one himself and he does not forget his lift—man." What a lovely thing that was, wasn't it, for a man who was a millionaire and director of a great business.

I remember in a mission of mine in London, he once came and one of my Sunday School girls who was very keen about missions and thought Mr. Rank was a very generous man and would help her with her missionary subscriptions, ventured to write a letter to Mr. Rank. After a time she brought me a letter from him to her — a beautiful personal letter to a little girl — telling her how delighted he was that she loved Jesus, and telling her how pleased he was

she was keen about missions, telling her that once upon a time he wanted to be a missionary but the way never opened, but now he was supporting many missions, giving much money to the extension of God's Kingdom. What a lovely thing to do, and we have come here in this Queen's Hall this afternoon to pay our tribute of affection to a great man, who did much for this city, and much for this country, and he did much for God, and we pay our humble tribute and give God thanks for the life that was lived and the death that was died; "Therefore my Beloved Brethren," says the Apostle in the Revelations, "Be ye steadfast immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

Hymn No. 831. Methodist Hymn Book — "Give me the wings of faith to rise."

Prayers by the Rev. Loten.