

A. V. best Douglas

Publications

Review of Life of...
Eddington by AVD, 1957

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Loc 23039

Box 1

An Appreciation

Dr. Robert Chambers

In the death of Dr. Robert Chambers, M.A. '02 LL.D. '44, Ph.D. (Munich), last summer, Queen's lost one of her most distinguished graduates and the scientific world one of its most illustrious names.

Dr. Chambers was best known for his fundamental and enduring work on the biophysics of protoplasm, according to W. R. Duryee of the George Washington School of Medicine, writing in a current issue of *Science*. Many special problems and characteristics of plant and animal cells were resolved and made understandable by the use of micro-instruments which he devised, improved, and logically exploited. To scholars of cellular physiology, his work on the structure of living membranes, capillary physiology, mesonephros function, fertilization problems in marine eggs, and adhesiveness of cancer cells in tissue culture remains classical. His astonishing development of the micromanipulator, along with the essential glass needles, micropipettes, electrodes, and microgages, stands as a landmark in the progress of science.

A contemporary and close friend of men like T. H. Morgan, E. B. Wilson, E. G. Conklin, and G. H. Parker, Dr. Chambers was nevertheless a *modern* man, says Dr. Duryee. It is to his credit that more than half of the programme for the forthcoming International Congress for Cell Biology, in Scotland, is, almost prophetically, directly related to cellular studies in which he was at one time or another actively engaged. He furnished basic ideas for others to follow. His superlative services to biology and to science are, unfortunately, not well known. Dr. Walter R. Bloor of the School of Medicine and Dentistry at the University of Rochester writes:

"In my opinion he was one of the most brilliant scholars and investigators in biology in North America. He was, however, the quiet kind who did not advertise and so missed out on a good deal of recognition which should have come his way."

The prime quality of Dr. Chambers throughout his long life was his warm, human sympathy for his family, his students, and his host of friends in many lands. At his home, he and Mrs. Chambers entertained prince and pauper. No one was turned away. His hospitality knew no bounds. His long associations with New York University, where he was research professor of biology, and with the Marine Biological Laboratory of Woods Hole, of which he was a trustee, enriched both institutions immeasurably.



DR. ROBERT CHAMBERS

Biography Acclaimed

Widely acclaimed, the biography of Arthur Stanley Eddington, O.M., written by Dr. A. Vibert Douglas, Dean of Women and Professor of Astronomy at Queen's, continues to evoke warm praise from scientists, scholars and the reviewers of learned journals. The book was published by Thomas Nelson and Sons of Edinburgh last year.

Dr. Douglas had studied at Cambridge under Eddington, generally regarded as the leading astronomer of his generation. Eddington lived an outwardly calm and unspectacular life, but as a man of science he was one of the super-giants in an age of giants, whose life as a thinker was filled with adventure, excitement, suspense, achievement. How well Dr. Douglas succeeded in capturing the essential character of the man and the significance of his contribution to the world of science may be gathered from the following sample excerpts from the reviews of her book:

Endeavour, London (Sir H. Spencer Jones, formerly Astronomer Royal at Greenwich)—“An excellent account is given of the course of Eddington's scientific work on stellar movements, stellar structure, and stellar physics, on relativity and on fundamental theory.”

The Times Literary Supplement—“A very complete record of the most modest of all scientific luminaries of the age.”

The Scotsman, Edinburgh — “The author had to be equipped with knowledge, understanding, literary skill, and appreciation of the man in the astronomer. Eddington has indeed been very fortunate in his biographer, who does not fall short in any way.”

The Manchester Guardian (This review was written by Professor Herbert Dingle, Professor of the History and Philosophy of Science, University of London, himself a distinguished astro-

Life of

Arthur Stanley Eddington

Written by

Dean A. Vibert Douglas

Evokes Warm Praise

physicist) — “Dr. Douglas is to be congratulated on success in this very difficult task. Memorable scenes are faithfully and excitingly presented, no one who is interested in the wider aspects of science and its philosophy will fail to find stimulation and enlightenment from this account of one of the great original spirits of our age.”

The New Scientist (Professor F. J. M. Stratton, F.R.S., Cambridge, former Director of the Solar Physics Observatory)—“It can have been no easy task to make an interesting story of the unspectacular life of Eddington . . . But Dr. Douglas has successfully done so . . . a full account of the many battles with Jeans and later Milne . . . a full account of Eddington's work on relativity.”

Nature (L.A. Pars, Cambridge) — “The author of this excellent book . . . has achieved a nice balance between the story of the man and the story of his scientific work.”

The Observatory, London (W. M. Smart, Regius Professor of Astronomy, University of Glasgow, for eighteen years Eddington's Chief Assistant) — "The writing of the biography of such a man as Eddington required great courage and deep understanding of his scientific works, for his mind and pen ranged over the whole expanse of astronomy and atomic physics in a measure unequalled by any of his contemporaries. Professor Douglas has combined these qualities in a notably high degree; moreover she reveals a literary skill befitting the eminence of the subject of her book . . . Professor Douglas has rendered a signal service in the realms of scientific biography; her book will bring delight and profit to all classes of readers."

Archives Internationales d'Histoire des Sciences, Paris (Dr. N.B. Slater, Leeds) — "This biography brings together so much enlightenment on the development of Eddington's scientific and philosophical outlook that all students of his work will thank Dr. Douglas."

Montreal Gazette, (Garran Patterson) — "One of the finest books to be published this year."

Queen's Quarterly, (Dr. C.S. Beals, F.R.S., Dominion Astronomer) — "A book packed with information which no one interested in the history of science should miss reading."

Dalhousie Review, (M. W. Burke-Gaffney, S.J.) — "A piece of literature and a work of art. It is highly commended."

Sky and Telescope (T.K. Menon, Harvard College Observatory) — ". . . an integrated view of the activities of a truly great scientist . . . an interesting account of his early studies of star motions, through stellar structure, relativity, and cosmology . . . a lively narrative of his controversies with his fellow astronomers . . . a lucid outline of Eddington's personal philosophy . . . No review can be complete without com-

menting on the literary excellence of the biography . . . fascinating reading for both the professional and amateur astronomer."

* * *

Many of the reviewers have praised the beauty of Dr. Douglas's writing. But none has specifically mentioned the appropriateness of the quotations used in connection with the chapter headings. Here are a few:

CHAPTER 1 EARLY YEARS 1882-1902

The childhood shows the man
As morning shows the day.
—Milton

CHAPTER 2 CAMBRIDGE 1902-1906

Each day grew older and learned something new.
—Plutarch

CHAPTER 7 STELLAR PHYSICS

Courage, my mind, and press on mightily,
Press on where Truth begins to dawn
—St. Augustine

CHAPTER 11 FUNDAMENTAL THEORY



Unfinished Symphony.

—Schubert

In Eddington's final years he worked upon the idea of a great synthesis to be called Fundamental Theory. It was never finished, but in part was published posthumously. With fine poetic feeling Dr. Douglas placed beneath her Chapter 11 heading, not a quotation but four bars of Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*.

CHAPTER 12 VALE ET SALVE

Let us now praise famous men . . .
Leaders of the people by their counsels,
and by their knowledge of learning . . .
wise and eloquent in their instructions. . . .
men furnished with ability
living peaceably in their habitations:
all these were honoured in their generations
and were the glory of their times.

—Ecclesiasticus XLIV

Alumnae Annual Meeting

Mrs. W. J. Hyde

Succeeds Mrs. Norman Miller

as President

More Residence Accommodation

for Women Students

Is Stressed

● Queen's University Alumnae Association held its forty-sixth annual meeting on October 27, 1957, in Ban Righ Hall common room, with the president, Mrs. Norman Miller, in the chair and approximately fifty members present.

The following are the elected officers for the year 1957-1958: Past President, Mrs. Norman Miller, Kingston; President, Mrs. W. J. Hyde, Montreal; First Vice-President, Miss Kathleen Elliott, Toronto; Second Vice-President, Miss Esther Harrop, Vancouver; Third Vice-President, Mrs. R. H. Bissell, Hamilton; Secretary, Mrs. F. W. Benn, Montreal; Treasurer, Mrs. E. M. Van Koughnet, Montreal; Councillors — Mrs. Norman McLeod, Toronto, Mrs. Walter Little, Parry Sound, Mrs. Charles O'Reilly, Smiths Falls, Mrs. R. W. McLean, Ottawa, Mrs. R. G. Davidson, Ottawa, Mrs. G. R. Woolsey, Montreal, Mrs. Frank Fortune, Ottawa.

The following appointments were made at the annual meeting or at the post-annual executive meeting: Liaison with N.C.W. and C.F.U.W., Miss Mora Guthrie; Representative to Alumni

Board, Mrs. T. K. Waddell; Membership Committee, Mrs. B. M. Cormier; Nominations to Ban Righ Board, Mrs. W. S. Brooke, Miss Mary White; Delegates to Canadian Conference on Education, Mrs. W. J. Hyde, Miss Mora Guthrie; Nominating Committee, Mrs. A. R. Foster (convener), Mrs. Frank Fortune, Mrs. A. W. Brodie; Convener of Residence Accommodation Committee, Mrs. D. W. Boucher; Marty Memorial Scholarship Committee, Miss Ellen Thibaudeau (convener); New Member, Dr. Arliss Denyes; History Committee, Mrs. D. M. Chown to continue; Constitution Committee, Mrs. J. W. McEwan to continue.

The keynote of the meeting was: "More residence accommodation for women is urgent." Reports from the Dean of Women, the Ban Righ Board and the President stressed this. Already the pressure of numbers means:

(1) Many applications for rooms from girls in their second, third or fourth year were refused.

(2) The proportion of first-year girls in residence to all other years is now over two to one.

(3) This year for the first time some new girls had to find rooms outside of residence.

(4) Annexes will before long be removed to make way for other structures and it is increasingly difficult to find large houses to convert to this use.

It was moved by Miss Mary Macdonnell and seconded by Miss Mary White that the incoming executive appoint a committee on planning for further residence accommodation. At the post-annual executive meeting Mrs. D. W. Boucher was appointed.

Considerable discussion took place. This included the suggestion that additional units should be built with single rooms only, and that buildings should be so planned that they may share such