

## J. A. Hardcastle.

### AN APPRECIATION.

The passing of Mr. Hardcastle on November 10 means a great loss to astronomy. He will be missed by many B.A.A. members who can recall his various instructive, interesting papers at the meetings and his ready answers to questions. His vivid personality and power of making abstruse and difficult subjects fascinating will be remembered by all. But it is to his university extension students that he specially endeared himself, for he was unsparing in his efforts to make them as keen as he was himself. He gave to them freely from his own store of scientific knowledge and lent them his books and instruments. The only reward he looked for was that they too should be fired with enthusiasm for the science he himself loved. His methods of teaching were unique and carefully planned. Nothing but the best was good enough for him, and he taught to many that invaluable lesson of working whole-heartedly and observing faithfully.

His lectures were so excellent both in manner and matter that they were listened to with unfeigned interest and pleasure, even

by many who had little or no previous knowledge of the subject and no intention of taking up the study seriously. In regard to those who did respond to his appeal for enthusiasm, no words can describe the generous ardour with which he threw himself into the task of helping them in their difficulties, encouraging their efforts and suggesting to each one the line of work most likely to prove useful later on. He grudged no amount of time and trouble to individual students and actually encouraged them to select subjects to write about, instead of taking those suggested at the lectures—a proceeding which must obviously have added enormously to his own trouble in correcting their papers. He would even, if he received a paper early enough, send it back with corrections and suggestions before the date of the next lecture, in order that the student might send it in again, revised and with additions. When the course was ended he did not forget the students, but continued, by correspondence, to help and encourage them. No wonder some of them came to look on him not only as a teacher to whom they owed a deep debt of gratitude, for true knowledge imparted and fascinating work made possible, but also as a personal friend, whom they will always remember with the warmest regard.

For many years he and the late Mr. S. A. Saunder worked together at Wellington College, and Mr. Harcastle helped Mr. Saunder to obtain those selenographical positions of formations (Mr. Harcastle doing the measuring for all of them) which are now of such great value.

His last big undertaking was the search for and classification of nebulae on the Franklin-Adams plates, in which, to their delight, several of his students were able to render their aid. At that time he was in failing health and he has never regained his old vigour since then.

His appointment to Armagh was a great pleasure to him and it is a sore disappointment to his many friends that he was not spared to carry on the work there which would have been a great enjoyment to him and would have given him the opportunities for carrying on original astronomical work for which he was so fitted.

Was it the "serene and gladsome influence on the mind" of the stars that gave him such a gracious personality, or was it not rather his trust in their Maker that enabled him to remain happy and peaceful, and helpful to others, during years of wearisome ill-health?

We would unite with all his friends and those students who owe him so much in expressing our deepest sympathy with Mrs. Harcastle and his children in their grievous loss.

A. GRACE COOK.  
MARY A. BLAGG.●