

Frank Scott Hogg

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Tribute to

DR. FRANK S. HOGG

Delivered by

Rev. Mr. C. B. Brethen, Minister

Richmond Hill United Church

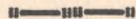
January 4th, 1951



In the death of Dr. Hogg, astronomical science, and the community in which he lived, lost a man who was loved and admired for his qualities of heart and mind.

The Reverend Mr. C. B. Brethen, who knew him more intimately than many of us, delivered a eulogy at the service attending his obsequies.

It reveals an aspect of his character with which many of his friends had little opportunity to become acquainted. For these, it is reproduced in the following pages.



FRANK SCOTT HOGG

1904—1951

Frank Scott Hogg

DR. FRANK S. HOGG was born at Preston, Ontario, son of the late Dr. James Hogg, a physician of that town. On completing his earlier education in the schools there, he entered the University of Toronto, being graduated in 1926. From Toronto he went to Harvard University where he obtained both his A.M. and his Ph.D. degrees. Awarded a travelling fellowship, he studied for a year at Cambridge University in England and later at the University at Göttingen, Germany, following which he toured nearly all the observatories in Europe.

Returning to Canada he was engaged as a professor at Amherst College in Massachusetts in 1932. From there he went to Victoria, British Columbia, to become astronomer at the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory. In January, 1935, he came to Toronto as assistant professor of astronomy at the University and began his work for the David Dunlap Observatory at Richmond Hill when it opened in May. In 1946 he became a full professor of astronomy and director of the observatory.

From this brief outline of his career, it is obvious to all that he was possessed of extraordinary brilliance of mind, and that well before reaching

middle life he had established his position as an authority in various departments of astronomy. His work done in calculating the speed at which stars travel to and away from the Earth will remain of monumental worth to those who succeed him. His election as president of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada was a tribute of his fellow astronomers and a testimony of their high estimate of his achievements.

In attempting to refer to his life, we cannot begin to enumerate the various claims that have been made upon his time and energy in addition to his work as professor at the University and director of the Observatory. For years he found time to write for one of the Toronto daily newspapers a weekly column entitled, "With the Stars". The responsibilities, engagements and appointments which his standing at the University and Observatory entailed were many. And here in Richmond Hill, where he made his home, he endeavoured to carry his full share of work as a citizen and resident of this community; we remember him as the first president of the United Church Men's Club, as a former president of the Richmond Hill Lions Club, and as chairman of the Richmond Hill High School Area Board. It is now that we begin to realize how intensely he

has lived and that his comparatively brief life of forty-six years was rich and full beyond ordinary measure. It is indeed true that

"He liveth long who liveth well:
All other life is short and vain."

And Dr. Frank Hogg lived well. During the ten years that I have known him, serving with him in our own Church, in the Men's Club, and meeting him at every Lions Club Meeting for that length of time, I have come to esteem him for his keen sense of right and wrong and his fearless convictions on religious and moral questions. I can recall a short address he gave some time ago in which he referred to the great danger of the modern man's becoming merely a mechanism in this modern mechanical age. He visualized a time when machines might do even our thinking for us. He was abreast of the very problem that so disturbs our churches, the danger that men may lose their hearts and souls in a tide of materialism. I recall, that in recent weeks he expressed himself strongly on a social and moral question before an audience which did not fully

agree with his views. When he had finished his remarks, I could not withhold my commendation and I told him that I wished that he, as a layman of the church, might consent to express those same views before the Presbyteries and Conferences of our church.

How ably he could have done it! What weight his position would have lent to his words! And moreover, how gently and kindly and with what penetrating thought he would have convinced his audience. Never did he speak in bitterness or anger, never with biting sarcasm but always in the spirit of love. And when the edge of his words became sharp he would suddenly surprise his hearers with such clever and abundant humour that laughter become irresistible and the anger of his adversary was done away.

His strong moral convictions would naturally be a result of his early religious training, but his scientific mind, ever seeking for the truth of things as they are, established his convictions. Habitually he sought for truth in the scientific world, and when it came to truth in the social and moral realms of

life, he had no place for exaggeration or under-estimation or sham or mere social custom.

And that reverence for truth which was in him, leads me to refer to another virtue of which he had a double portion, namely, his humility. It is said that a scientist is humble because he is ever a student, ever teachable. He sits down humbly before the Universe and seeks to hear what the Universe has to say. He does not impose his views upon the Universe—but seeking to learn what the Universe will say to him, he tells the truth as he hears it and obeys that truth.

That accounts partly for the humility of Dr. Frank Hogg, but it does not tell all. For no man can view as he did the staggering immensities of the cosmos without being humble too. It is told by a friend of the late Theodore Roosevelt that the two friends would go out on the lawn together and search the skies until they found the faint misty spot of light beyond the corner of the Great Square of Pegasus and then one of the friends would say to the other, "That faint spot is as large as our Milky Way and that is one of a hundred million galaxies. It consists of a trillion suns each larger than our

sun." Then Roosevelt would say, "Now I think we are small enough! Let's go to bed."

Yes, the stars had made Frank Hogg humble and the stars had made him great—for there is no greatness without humility. And the Heavens declared the glory of God to him, and he not only beheld, but he received, and continued to receive within himself the wonder and the glory of the Heavens. Kepler was not the only astronomer who declared "I think Thy thoughts after Thee, Oh, God." Frank Hogg could do the same. Through the telescope he saw the wonders and mystery and power of the Creator in the astronomical universe, but it did not blind him to the microscopic universe and to the wonders at his feet. Of God he believed with the Psalmist that "He telleth the number of the Stars, He calleth them all by their names" but he also "healeth the broken hearted and bindeth up their wounds." Like the Psalmist he knew that we never have believed enough about God. He is mightier than we have ever dreamed. He is infinitely afar off and our thoughts of Him have ever been too small, but He is near to us, "as near to us as the air we breathe, as near as hands and feet", and of His nearness we cannot believe too much. We cannot believe too much about

His Universe — too much about His Wisdom — too much about His Love — too much about the Past — too much about the Future "that He hath prepared for those who love Him."

It is this faith that will be of infinite help to those who mourn today—to the widow, Dr. Helen Hogg, who together with her husband has travelled the pathways of the Heavens—she will know, and their children will know, and all the relatives including those unable to be present today because of illness—they will believe, "That as high as the Heavens are above the Earth, so high is His Wisdom above ours," and that He is still in control of things and His Infinite Wisdom and Love and Power order all things well. They will believe that, trusting the Father as Jesus did, we can say, even though we do not understand, "Not my will but Thine be done." And with us as with Jesus, a Peace like the ministry of angels shall come to abide with us—and may that Peace abide with us—always.

Frank Scott Hogg

*He liveth long who liveth well:
All other life is short and vain;
He liveth longest who can tell
Of living most for heavenly gain.*

*He liveth long who liveth well:
All else is being flung away;
He liveth longest who can tell
Of true things truly done each day.*

*Be what thou seemest; live thy creed;
Hold up to earth the torch divine:
Be what thou prayest to be made;
Let the great Master's steps be thine.*

*Fill up each hour with what will last;
Buy up the moments as they go;
The life above, when this is past,
Is the ripe fruit of life below.*

*Sow love, and taste its fruitage pure;
Sow peace, and reap its harvest bright;
Sow sunbeams on the rock and moor,
And find a harvest home of light.*

HORATIUS BONAR.

The above verses were sung during the service at the request of Dr. Helen Scwyer Hogg.

