

David Fowler Lowe, LL.D. By **J. B. Clark, M.A.**

(Read October 27, 1924.)

DAVID FOWLER LOWE was born in Leslie, Fife, on 11th January 1843. He was educated at the school of his native village and at the University of Edinburgh, where he graduated in the Faculty of Arts. His special intellectual interests during student days and early manhood were the classics and modern languages, and in later years he turned his mastery of French and German to full use during the long vacations, which were almost invariably spent on the Continent.

From the University Dr Lowe went to a teaching post in Wales, from which, after two years, he returned to Edinburgh to be resident English—and afterwards also French—master in Heriot's Hospital. Five years later saw him installed as Rector of Bathgate Academy, and then in 1880 he was appointed to succeed Dr Bedford as House-Governor of George Heriot's Hospital.

In 1886 the Hospital was converted under a scheme of the Endowed Schools Commissioners into a secondary day school for boys, and it fell to Dr Lowe to carry through the difficult work of conversion. How thoroughly well the task was accomplished, and how profound was the Doctor's influence for good on the many boys who passed through his hands, need not here be dwelt upon. It is enough to say that when he resigned in 1908, it was generally recognised that a great headmaster had passed out of active service.

In the University of Edinburgh, which in 1899 had recognised his eminent services to education by conferring upon him the degree of LL.D., Dr Lowe was always keenly interested. He had long been a member of the Business Committee of the General Council, and in 1903 the Council elected him to a seat on the University Court, where he served for fourteen years. His colleagues on the Court showed their esteem for him and their appreciation of his business capacity by appointing him Convener of the Works Committee, and later by making him one of the Curators of Patronage. It can be truly said that no part of Dr Lowe's very varied public work—he served on the governing bodies of many of Edinburgh's most important public institutions—was more interesting or congenial to him than his service to his old University.

Dr Lowe became a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1888, and he was

elected to the membership of the Royal Society Club in 1911. Needless to say, he was a popular man socially. He had travelled widely and seen much, and few could better tell a humorous story or had a richer wallet from which to draw. At the social board of the Royal Society Club he was always most welcome, and no Chapter of the Monks of St Giles was complete without "Hospitalis."

Within the last year or two age began to tell on the Doctor. His step became more slow and his voice less resonant. But his resolute spirit never faltered. Where duty lay, there he was. As one of the founders of the Edinburgh Sir Walter Scott Club, he felt it to be a duty to attend the annual meeting in December last, but the effort was too great; he caught a severe chill, which led to bronchitis with other complications, and on 17th January, at the long age of eighty-one years, he passed peacefully away.

In the death of Dr Lowe, Edinburgh has lost a distinguished citizen, and the Society a loyal and much respected Fellow.