

Hector Macpherson.

(Read February 9, 1925.)

HECTOR MACPHERSON was born in Glasgow on 16th October 1851. His mother died while he was still an infant, and he was sent by his father to the charge of his paternal grandparents in the Vale of Leven. He received his early education in the Parish School at Alexandria, and after leaving school was employed in the office of one of the large dye-works of the district. In 1873 he began to write articles on various topics for the local press, and four years later he applied for and received an appointment on the staff of the *Edinburgh Evening News*. He ultimately became editor, and filled the chair until 1908, when he resigned, and devoted himself to free-lance journalism and authorship. While directing the policy of the *News* he found time to write on literary and philosophical subjects. In 1896 he published a critical study of Carlyle in the *Famous Scots* series, and this was followed three years later by a similar work on Adam Smith. A keen admirer of Herbert Spencer, he published in 1900 an authoritative biography and analytic study of the synthetic philosophy. This book, *Herbert Spencer, the Man and His Work*, was undertaken with the approval of the great philosopher, who gave him every facility for preparing it.

Mr Macpherson's later works include, *Books to Read and How to Read Them* (1904); three volumes on historico-ecclesiastical subjects: *Scotland's Battles for Spiritual Independence* (1905), *Scotland's Debts to Protestantism* (1912), and *The Jesuits in History* (1914). More important were three larger volumes on the development of philosophical, religious, political, and economic ideas: *A Century of Intellectual Development* (1907), *A Century of Political Development* (1908), and *Intellectual Development in Scotland* (1911). Besides his larger works, he was the author of many articles in reviews and journals on philosophical, economic, and political subjects.

Mr Macpherson was elected a Fellow of the Society in March 1924. He died suddenly in Edinburgh on 17th October 1924. He married in 1880 Mary Janet Copland, eldest daughter of Moses Copland, banker, Glasgow; she survived him only three months. Their only son is the Rev. Dr Hector Macpherson, F.R.S.E.