

## JOHN WALLACE BAIRD (1869-1919).

Fellow in Class II, Section 3, 1916.

In the untimely death of John Wallace Baird American science and particularly his science, psychology, have suffered a grievous loss. Born at Motherwell, Ontario, May 21, 1869, of Scottish parents, Baird early learned the virtues and rewards of self-reliance, devotion to duty, coöperation and loyalty.

He was one of twelve children, all of whom lived to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the marriage of their father and mother. Charles Baird, the father, was an industrious and successful Canadian farmer of sterling worth in home, church and state. The mother, Agnes Browning, possessed exceptional patience and wisdom and rare skill as singer of old ballads and narrator of family and neighborhood traditions.

Undoubtedly our colleague's essential education was gained at home. His formal education began in the "little red school house" and ended in the university. His undergraduate work in the University of Toronto was interrupted by years of school teaching, which enabled him to pay his own way. After graduating from the university in 1897, he devoted himself almost uninterruptedly to the study of psychology, first in his own university and subsequently in Leipzig. For two years he was a fellow in psychology at the University of Wisconsin and for one year at Cornell, where in 1902 he was granted the degree of doctor of philosophy. Thereupon he was appointed assistant in psychology at Cornell. After one year, this appointment was followed by that of research assistant in psychology, Carnegie Institution of Washington. At the end of his year's work as Carnegie research assistant, Baird accepted his first major academic appointment, that of instructor in psychology, Johns Hopkins University. This was followed after two years' service by appointment to an assistant professorship in psychology in the University of Illinois. In 1910, at the end of his fourth year in Illinois, he accepted an assistant professorship in psychology at Clark University, where, in 1913, he was given the status of professor of psychology.

Ever a serious minded and diligent student, Baird, at first alter-

nately and later simultaneously, studied and taught until he had mastered his chosen profession of teacher and investigator in psychology and had achieved academic position of eminence, influence and rare opportunity for service. His appointment as Carnegie research assistant in psychology gave him an excellent chance to demonstrate his originality, resourcefulness and enthusiasm for research. The result of the year's work was a report on "The color sensitivity of the peripheral retina," which stands as his most important publication, for subsequently he gave himself increasingly to his advanced students and his research was conducted largely by and through them.

During nine years of fruitful service to Clark University, John Wallace Baird achieved immortality by training many able students for psychological research. With a genius for friendship he pursued his path of duty and opportunity single mindedly, whole heartedly and with entire forgetfulness of self. Honors he never sought; praise he shrank from. His students learned to respect, admire and love him because of his devotion to their interests and the obvious sincerity of his belief in constructive work in teaching and research.

In April, 1917, despite physical unfitness for the strain of work in Washington, Baird undertook to assist in directing the work of the committee for psychology of the National Research Council. In December he was compelled to go to the Johns Hopkins Hospital for treatment of a recurring malady and there, on February 2, 1919, in his fiftieth year, his life ended.

The career of our lamented colleague is a consistent lesson in unselfish and loyal devotion to family, friends, country and human welfare. His life clearly was sacrificed to duty, for his fatal illness with its frequent and long continued periods of acute pain resulted from a terrible ordeal of strength in which he saved others from a watery grave. The sort of sacrifice which he willingly made at a time of exceptional anxiety and risk, he continued to make throughout his life, defying bodily suffering and manfully doing his full duty until the end.

John Wallace Baird's life of generous service has received fitting tribute of respect and affection in a memorial volume bearing his name published by Clark University.

ROBERT M. YERKES.