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IN MEMORIAM—HARRY BALCH BAILEY.

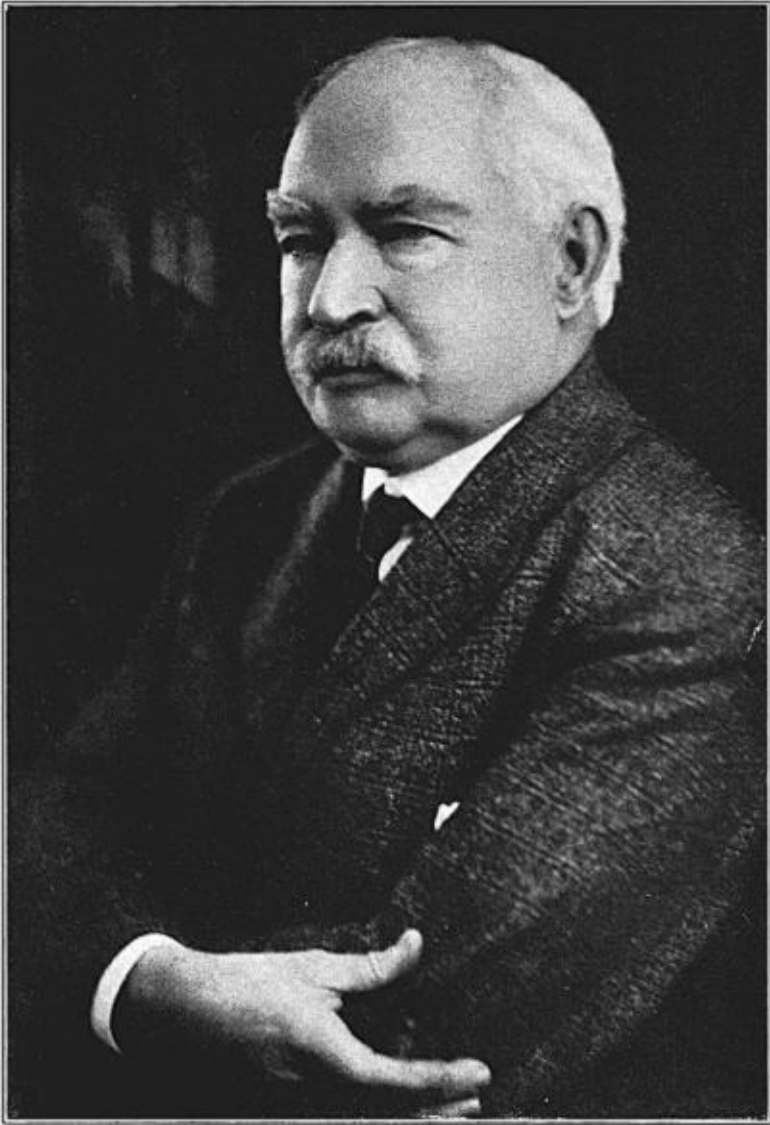
BY A. K. FISHER.

(*Plate VI.*)

It oft has been said that coming events cast their shadows before. Experience would seem to justify us in giving this thought ready acceptance, but the manner of approach may be so subtle that those on the alert only are blessed with premonition.

In the same way increasing popular interest in new or developing activities seems to generate a pervading spirit that enters the baby mind to be developed as life matures. An illustration is found in the extended western explorations that were made possible by the transcontinental railroad surveys. These so greatly stimulated ornithological research, that between 1850 and 1860 through the activities of Spencer F. Baird and his enthusiastic co-workers wonderful progress was made, and Baird's superb volume on the 'Birds of North America,' in collaboration with Cassin and Lawrence, appeared in 1858. During this same period, as if to be in position to receive the mantle from the pioneer workers, a number were born who later with a few of their elders became founders or early members of the American Ornithologists' Union and other natural history associations. Through the inspiration which they carried forward, and through their own efforts and co-operation, the ornithology of the United States today is recognized to be of the highest standard.

Among those who entered on the stage of life with the raising of the curtain in the decade I have mentioned was Harry Balch Bailey, the subject of this memorial. Bailey was born on February



A. P. Parker

27, 1853, in Boston, not so far from where many of our forebears got their first glimpse of the Western World. He passed away in Buxton Hospital, Newport News, Virginia, after a brief illness from pneumonia, at eleven o'clock, P.M., on February 10, 1928, on the threshold of his seventy-sixth year. The burial was in Greenlawn cemetery.

He graduated from the Boston High School in 1868 shortly after he was fifteen years old. Just how early in life he took up the study of birds is not clear from data at hand. Undoubtedly, however, the song of birds attracted his attention in early life, for by the time he was twelve years old his interest in music had developed an ability as pianist that enabled him to play in a concert at the Boston Conservatory of Music. This assumption is based on the fact that often there is a certain correlation between bird song and instrumental music in the minds of those who are interested in both.

In the early seventies Bailey was especially fortunate in having Ruthven Deane, William Brewster, and Henry A. Purdie among his companions, all of whom were enthusiastic in the study of birds and bird life. Since many valuable non-game birds were brought to the market by gunners with their game, these young ornithologists kept a close watch of the Boston market and secured much desirable material.

In February, 1879, just after Dr. C. Hart Merriam and I had received notice of successfully passing our examinations at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York, Bailey, Deane, and Purdie called, extended congratulations and spent several pleasant hours with us in which was formed the beginning of a lasting friendship.

While in Cambridge and Boston, he was active in assisting in the organization of the Nuttall Ornithological Club, and in its early stages was its treasurer—from February 12, 1876, to April 16, 1877. In the opening number of the 'Nuttall Bulletin,' which by the way was probably the first truly ornithological journal in this country, he had a paper on the breeding birds of Cobb Island.

On May 17, 1875, Bailey married Lillie Adams Taylor, of Brookline, Mass., and on their honeymoon trip by boat from New York

they went to Norfolk and thence to Cobb Island off the Virginia Coast. At this time birds were abundant on these outlying islands and it was not difficult to secure good series of their eggs. Material and notes taken while on this trip to the island furnished the data for the paper above mentioned.

Presumably because his grandfather was a wholesale dry-goods merchant, his mother was anxious to have him enter this line of business, which he did just after completing his high-school course. Four years later, however, he became connected with a shipping firm in Boston. While thus employed he had opportunities to give some time to making a collection of eggs and to join his friends Deane, Brewster, and Purdie in various trips. The collections made by Bailey and his friend Deane at Lake Umbagog in May, 1870, undoubtedly inspired Brewster to visit this locality, where becoming interested he later spent much time in an extended study of the avifauna, which finally took form in a valuable posthumous publication,

In 1877, along the line of advancement, Bailey removed to New York, where with two partners he engaged in a ship and insurance brokerage and general commission business at 51 South Street. Among their assets were fourteen sailing vessels. While in New York he lived at least part of the time at South Orange, N. J., which gave him a better opportunity for out-of-door work. Writing to a friend June 7, 1877, he mentioned seeing a fine Cardinal Grosbeak, as he was on his way to the morning train. In the winter of 1877-78 he joined with Dr. C. Hart Merriam, Eugene P. Bicknell, S. Lowell Elliot, R. B. Lawrence, Newbold Lawrence, George Badger, Franklin Benner, Harry Edwards, and several others in founding the Linnaean Society of New York.

It must have been about this time, too, that he devoted many days of hard work to the preparation of an index and summary of all the bird notes that had appeared in the first twelve volumes of 'Forest and Stream.' This publication, which was printed in 1881, had in its one-hundred and ninety-five closely printed pages a wonderful mass of material of the greatest value to working ornithologists and to progressive sportsmen. It is to be regretted that he or some other self-sacrificing ornithologist did not have the time or inclination to continue this work to include subsequent

volumes, especially those in which Dr. George Bird Grinnell, as editor, brought the natural history columns to a high state of accuracy and usefulness. From his remarks in the preface it would seem that Bailey had in mind this commendable plan for future work.

When twenty-three ornithologists from various states met in New York, in September 1883, to found the American Ornithologists' Union, Bailey was of the number. It was a memorable occasion, and those who were fortunate enough to be present got the thrill of anticipation of the future of this rather unorganized but enthusiastic beginning. Our distinguished foreign guests, P. L. Sclater, Howard Saunders, and Hobson, looked with interest and confidence upon the blossom from which has developed such abundant fruit.

In 1888 Bailey made a collecting trip to the Dakotas and California, and was fairly successful in securing choice material. In 1887 a branch of his New York shipping house was opened in Newport News to which place he moved in 1889, on account of the falling off of business in New York. On leaving for the South he sold his collection of eggs, which at the time was considered one of the finest in the country, to the American Museum of Natural History. He was one of the first to arrange the smaller eggs with the nests, and took great pride in securing sets of the rarer Warblers of New England and Canada. In 1891, on account of financial reverses, he resigned from the Union, but in 1926 was elected a Corresponding Fellow.

After moving to Newport News it is understood that on account of lack of congenial ornithological friends and because his two elder sons became interested in entomology, he took up this study with them, specializing on beetles. Within a few years he had amassed a fine collection, but unfortunately it was ruined while it remained packed for two years, awaiting the building of a new home.

Those who have had the privilege of knowing Dr. E. A. Schwarz can readily understand that as soon as the student met this distinguished coleopterist, cordial relations immediately followed. Later, under the mellowing influence of mutual interests, Bailey rarely visited Washington without giving himself the pleasure of

calling on his entomological friend. Through this intimate contact he presented to the Smithsonian Institution many interesting specimens of insects some of which now are incorporated in the study collection. It has been stated that on his last visit to Washington in September 1927, after calling on Doctor Schwarz, he was much depressed over the enfeebled condition of his friend, who nevertheless through the irony of fate outlived him for a number of months.

Through a boyish enthusiasm for the out-of-doors he readily found interest in all branches of natural history, and his adaptability to varying conditions in accordance with which he could change his major activities, gave him a well-rounded life full of enviable experiences. When the American Society of Mammalogists was organized in Washington in 1919, he became one of its charter members. Although he continued to collect insects at every opportunity, after losing his large collection, he paid considerable attention to assisting his son Harold in developing his oölogical collection and library.

As time went on his interests had a tendency to revert again to ornithology and as a consequence a portion of each winter since 1900 was spent in southern Florida, assisting his son in making collections. Feeling the allurements of watching birds in their mountain homes, he spent portions of the last four summers in the higher reaches of North Carolina and South Carolina, where he obtained quite extensive bird records. At intervals between 1908 and 1916 he worked individually, and also associated with his son, on the birds and mammals inhabiting the Alleghany Mountain region of Virginia. The notes and observations made during the first five years materially assisted his son and furnished most of the data relating to the region in his work the 'Birds of Virginia,' which was published in 1913.

Soon after Mr. Bailey became a resident of Newport News he assisted in movements for its betterment. His friends assert that perhaps one of his most important services to the city was in connection with the establishment of the public library. It was largely through his efforts that the library association was organized, and through his untiring work in coöperation with others that the fine collection of books was made available to the public.

It is a remarkable coincidence that the change of the library from a voluntary association to an organized corporation, to increase its usefulness, which was Bailey's ambition, should have been accomplished on the day of his death. This involved a bond issue of \$50,000 that was authorized to erect a suitable building, and for other library purposes. The chairman of the Library Board in speaking of the great loss sustained by the library in the death of its honorary librarian, voiced the sentiment of all the members. For years Bailey had been the guiding spirit of the library, giving much of his time and energy unselfishly for the public good, with no pecuniary benefit. No sacrifice of self seemed too great, and the fine collection of books stands as a monument to him, and to his devotion to his ideal. To the members of the Board who for so long have had the privilege of his friendship, his passing brought the keenest sense of personal loss. His kindly presence and greetings made his visits to the library a pleasure to everyone on the force, and his knowledge of books was most helpful to them. Since all were accustomed to turn to him for advice in matters of uncertainty, the library, without him, will have its added perplexities.

At the time of his death, he was a Corresponding Member of the American Ornithologists' Union, the Nuttall Ornithological Club, and the Natural History Society of Glasgow, a member of the Wilson Ornithological Club, and of the American Society of Mammalogists, and a Director of the Florida Society of Natural History.

Numerous ornithological and other friends throughout this country who always had held him in high esteem, were saddened by his passing, and those who were blessed by his friendly visits will miss him, now that they are at an end. He is survived by his widow, three sons—William J., Harold H., and Gordon P.—and ten grandchildren.

He has gone; but the results of that which he accomplished during the activities of life remain to soften the problems of others who follow, and in so doing will help the world on its upward trend. Who knows but that this is one of our most important duties in life?

Biological Survey,

Washington, D. C.