AUGUST KIRSCHMANN (1860-1932)

August Kirschmann replaced James Mark Baldwin as director of the Psychological Laboratory at the University of Toronto. When Kirschmann took over in 1893 the laboratory consisted of only four rooms in the west wing of University College. By 1900, Kirschmann expanded the laboratory to include sixteen rooms and several more instruments for demonstration and experiments.

Kirschmann studied under Wilhelm Wundt at Liepzig and was Wundt’s fifth Ph.D student. In the 1890’s experimentalists frequently cited Kirschmann’s intensive study of control apparatus in Wundt’s laboratory (Külpe and Kirschmann, 1890). At U of T, Kirschmann acquired international fame for his work on colour perception. The Kirschmann Colour-Mixer became standard equipment in every psychological laboratory. When Kirschmann arrived in Toronto he did not speak English, and could not lecture in his first year. By 1900 Kirschmann and his graduate students established an in-house publication, the University of Toronto Studies, Psychological Series.

In 1909 Kirschmann left U of T for Germany. A series of unfortunate circumstances, including, poor health, lack of money and the first World War, prevented him from ever returning to Canada. (Myers, 1982; Slater)

References


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