

trious than his fellows may be deserved. If he ruined his health and thereby became a charge on his fellows the truth would be less obvious, and we suspect that this proverb, like most proverbs, is only a half-truth. But what shall we say of the chemist Liebig who found that those two blades could be made to grow with no additional sweat of the brow, both this year and next, both on his own farm and every other farm, by merely spreading on the soil a little potash or niter or phosphate from a neighboring farm? Pasteur by his own researches saved France enough to enable her to pay off the Franco-Prussian war debt, according to Huxley. So we may assume that our colleges, which assume this research obligation to society, will eventually be amply repaid for their trouble. Conquest by war made men rich by making weaker peoples poor, but the conquests of science make us all rich, the many enjoying the luxuries of food, raiment and education formerly afforded by the few.

Lastly now as to that philosophical inquiry of Bertrand Russell, as to whether all this wealth and leisure made possible by our mastery of nature is making the race better or worse. Undoubtedly he is right in saying that the biological equilibrium of man is being disturbed, which may produce profound changes in him. Believing in evolution, this is the same as saying that the world is even now passing through one of those cataclysms which in the past caused the destruction of many species, but always caused the emergence of higher forms better suited to the new environment.

I make the plea, therefore, not for scientific research alone, but for the unshackling of knowledge as a whole. Research in language and religion, for example, has to too great an extent been devoted to the dead past instead of to the vibrant present and the pregnant future. Research along the line of eugenics is necessary if the race is to improve.

Mind has not in the past been a conscious directing force in evolution, but there can be no doubt that much can be accomplished in just this thing and the universities and colleges must lead in formulating our ideal and the method of approximating it. In the end it will appear that the aims of science and religion are one. "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you. You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

EUGENE C. BINGHAM

LAFAYETTE COLLEGE

### DISMISSAL OF DR. HENRY FOX FROM THE FACULTY OF MERCER UNIVERSITY

"PITILESS publicity" is often the only remedy for educational as well as for governmental ills, and this is

equally true whether these ills are recognized as such or are defended in the name of religion or patriotism. The latest instance of the wave of religious intolerance that has been sweeping through certain colleges in this country is the dismissal of Dr. Henry Fox from the faculty of Mercer University, Macon, Georgia—ostensibly not because of anything he has taught or done but because his private theological opinions are not as positive and clear-cut as those of "a majority of the Baptists of the State of Georgia."

Dr. Fox holds the degrees of B.S., M.A., and Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. He has been instructor in biology in the University of Wisconsin, professor of biology in Temple University, professor of biology in Ursinus College and since 1918 professor of biology in Mercer University. From 1907 to 1912 he was field investigator for the U. S. Bureau of Entomology and he has continued to serve in that capacity during the summers since that time. He is the author of numerous research papers and is a member of several national biological societies; he was president of the Georgia Society of Biologists for 1923, and has been secretary of the Georgia Academy of Sciences since 1922. These items are mentioned to show that Dr. Fox is a scientist of recognized ability.

That he was a hard-working and inspiring teacher and an unselfish and helpful colleague is shown by the high esteem in which he was held by the students and faculty of Mercer University. On learning that he was to be dismissed the students passed resolutions (*Mercer Cluster*, Oct. 17) protesting against his removal and commending him for his high Christian character and loyalty to truth, to Mercer University, and to religion; they state that he never taught evolution as a fact but as a theory, that in matters of religion he always showed a reverent, sympathetic and constructive spirit, that "he always advised students to maintain their religious faith and ideals, stating that there is no conflict between true science and true religion; and finally that the great development of the science department at Mercer University had come through his efforts." Students preparing for the ministry who had taken Dr. Fox's work were particularly strong in their commendation of him and in their condemnation of the proposed dismissal.

President Weaver, in an article published in *The Christian Index*, the organ and property of the Baptists of Georgia, after the dismissal of Dr. Fox said of him: "Dr. Fox is a member of one of our Macon Baptist churches in good and regular standing, one of its most constant attendants, a generous contributor to the 'Seventy-five Million Campaign,' and a man whose daily life commands the admiration of all who

know him. The [theological] views which he has set forth were not known to any one on the campus or in the church of which he is a member. He held them as private opinions until he was instructed by the board of trustees and the president to state them fully in writing." And in the letter transmitting to him the resolutions of the executive committee of the board of trustees demanding his resignation, the president wrote (*Christian Index*, Oct. 16):

In transmitting to you these resolutions, I wish to express for you my high personal regard, and to assure you that so far as I am able to form an honest judgment, you have observed every regulation, and have taught your classes in harmony with the educational policy of the institution which has been affirmed and reaffirmed by the Board of Trustees. This policy requires all professors in teaching any subject, theological or scientific, to distinguish clearly between the theories and the facts, and not to become avowed partisans of any theories, but to set forth fairly and thoroughly the arguments for and against the theories, leaving to the student the conclusions to be reached. . . . I regret that the judgment of these two bodies [the Administrative Committee of the Executive Committee of the Georgia Baptist Convention and the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of Mercer University] the one possessing the moral right and the other the legal right to control Mercer University, should not be favorable to your continuance until the termination of your contract next June. As I endeavor to interpret the reasons which have led to this judgment, I am persuaded that it does not involve the question of evolution. You have not taught the theory of evolution as an established fact. In your class-room work you have always represented its hypothetical character. This theory is one which every student in science must know, and I am glad that in your presentation of it you have never shown a dogmatic or arrogant spirit. Therefore, I am led to the conclusion that the real reason for the course taken by our two governing bodies is the statement of your beliefs made to a committee appointed by the Board of Trustees, in which it seemed to this committee that your attitude toward certain basal evangelical beliefs would prevent you in giving any instruction, from presenting the facts of science in such a way as to strengthen the faith of the students in those doctrines which evangelical Christians hold to be most essential. It is true that in your department the points of contact have not been many, and I am informed that you have always avoided in your classroom any discussion of subjects that would have bearing upon theological issues. It follows that the Trustees and the officials of the Georgia Baptist Convention hold to the conviction that to be an acceptable interpreter of any subject taught in the institution, there must be on the part of the instructor an earnest desire to promote the faith as it is held by evangelical Christians. I thank you most heartily for your faithful services as a teacher, for the splendid record your students have uniformly made in the medical schools of the nation, for your high scholarly

standards, and for the irreproachable life you have lived among us. With every expression of esteem, I remain

Cordially yours,

RUFUS W. WEAVER,  
President

Dr. Fox was a member of the Baptist denomination before going to Georgia and was not aware that his theological beliefs differed materially from those held by intelligent Baptists generally. When he was employed by Mercer University he was not asked regarding these beliefs and he had never stated them until he was ordered to do so by the inquisitorial committee appointed by the trustees for that purpose. He was a good and faithful member of a Baptist church in Macon. His teaching was in full accord with the requirements of the trustees and was eminently satisfactory to the students and the president. Why then were the trustees so concerned about his private theological opinions at just this time? The fact is that the criticism arose because it was reported among the Baptists of Georgia that he was teaching evolution, and although the president assured the Baptist Convention that he was teaching it only as a theory and not as a fact, one of his critics expressed a general opinion when he said to Dr. Fox: "What the average Georgia Baptist desires is that after the professor has discussed the scientific evidences bearing upon a given view, he should then pick up a copy of the Bible, read there what the Bible has to say on the matter, and announce that the Bible is the final court of appeal."

The questions put to Dr. Fox by the committee of inquiry were of a purely theological character, such as his conception of God, of personal immortality, of the inspiration and authority of the scriptures, of the divinity of Christ, of the virgin birth, etc., and his written answers to these questions, which were prepared without any thought of publicity, are an admirable presentation of the religious views of a reverent but liberal Christian scholar. This statement was afterward published by the committee in the *Christian Index*, Oct. 16, p. 27, as a justification of the summary action of the trustees, and it deserves wide publicity as an example of rational religious faith, but of course it only served to inflame the more those fundamentalists who renounce reason and common sense in religion and who demand the expulsion of all who do not accept their own narrow and literal interpretation of the scriptures or creeds.

And so, at the beginning of the academic year for which he had been reappointed only last spring, Dr. Fox was paid his salary for the year and dismissed from his professorship, since he declined to resign, and a high school teacher in Macon whose religious

beliefs are satisfactory to the Baptists of Georgia was appointed in his place, and in order to avoid any liberal contamination in the future, plans are being devised to require every member of the faculty or candidate for appointment to sign a religious covenant or creed that will be satisfactory to the Baptists of Georgia. Thus are religion and scholarship and science promoted at Mercer University.

E. G. CONKLIN

PRINCETON, N. J.

### SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

#### CELEBRATION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF STEREOCHEMISTRY IN FRANCE

ON December 22 the Société Chimique de France celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the science of stereochemistry. It was in 1874 that two scientists, the one French, Le Bel, and the other Dutch, van't Hoff, both former students of Wurtz, professor of the Faculty of Medicine of Paris, published independently and within a few weeks of each other, the general theory of the asymmetric carbon atom which explained in a rational manner molecular asymmetry discovered by Pasteur twenty-five years previously.

M. François Albert, Minister of Public Instruction, presided at the ceremony, assisted by M. Painlevé, member of the institute and president of the Chamber of Deputies, Jonkheer J. Loudon, Minister Plenipotentiary of Holland, and a number of representatives of French and foreign scientific societies.

Argentina—A. Saubidet, chancellor of the Argentine Consulate and president of the International Office of Analytical Chemistry.

Belgium—Professor Wuyts.

Estonia—M. Schmidt, Chargé d'Affaires of the Legation of Estonia.

Great Britain—Sir William Pope, Cambridge University.

Greece—Dr. Valtis, representing the Ministry of Greece.

Holland—Jonkheer J. Loudon, Minister Plenipotentiary; Professor Cohen, Institute van't Hoff; Dr. Alingh Prins.

Norway—M. Brettenville.

Serbia, Croatia, Slavonia—His Excellency, M. Tomitch.

Switzerland—Professor Paul Dutoit, delegate of the council of the Chemical Society of Switzerland.

United States—Professor Paul M. Dean, University of Colorado.

After a discourse by M. Moureu, president of the Société Chimique de France, M. Haller, in the name of the Academy of Sciences, presented to M. Le Bel the "grande médaille d'or de Lavoisier." Following

the response by M. Le Bel, who still maintains an active interest in chemistry, brief addresses were made by Sir William Pope and Professor Cohen. The meeting was closed by a lecture on the "Progress of stereochemistry" by Professor Delepine.

PAUL M. DEAN

#### PROJECT FOR THE SCIENTIFIC IMPROVEMENT OF AGRICULTURE IN CHINA

AN international project for the scientific improvement of the important food crops of China has been inaugurated by the University of Nanking and Cornell University with the aid of the International Education Board. Dr. H. H. Love, of the department of plant breeding in the New York State College of Agriculture, at Cornell, will leave Ithaca in March for China, to devote his sabbatic leave of six months to organizing the work. In February of 1926 Dr. C. H. Myers, of the same department, will go to China and carry on the work for six months. In this way the several members of the department will take turns in devoting their regular sabbatic leaves of absence from Cornell to this work in China until a staff has been trained at Nanking to carry it on. The cooperative plan is expected to be continued for the next five to ten years.

This program is a part of a large scheme for the prevention of famines in China, in which the University of Nanking is doing important work, and it looks to a permanent improvement and increase of the food supply. Improved strains of the various food crops must be developed so that the Chinese farmer can obtain an increased yield at a very slight increase in cost. Dean J. H. Reisner, of the College of Agriculture and Forestry at Nanking, has sought American aid in establishing the plant breeding part of the scheme.

As much plant improvement work as the facilities and time will permit will be carried on from the beginning. The experiment staff will make a general study of the more important food crops in several provinces so as to determine which varieties of each crop will serve as foundation stocks for improvement work. At the same time they will train a group of Chinese to carry on this work after the cooperation shall have ceased.

The University of Nanking will provide the facilities, Cornell will cooperate by enabling its specialists in plant breeding to lend their services, and the International Education Board will furnish certain financial aid.

#### THE BELL TELEPHONE LABORATORIES

THE growth of the research and development work of the Bell System has led to the formation of Bell