

SCIENCE NEWS

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**THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE AND
LEGISLATION AGAINST THE
TEACHING OF EVOLUTION**

THE scientists of America, 14,300 strong, were called to the support of freedom of teaching and of evolution, when Professor Michael I. Pupin issued through Science Service the following statement in regard to the case brought in Tennessee under the recent anti-evolution law:

"As president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science I pledge support in the defense of the Tennessee teacher arrested for teaching evolution; this support to accord with the resolution of the Association's Committee of Drs. Conklin, Davenport and Osborn. The American Civil Liberties Union can count upon the Association providing scientific expert advisers in defense of Professor Scopes. This case will be a test case, which was bound to come sooner or later, and its trial will define the law, if there be any, in a lawless procedure like this arrest. Both as fair-minded scientists and as self-respecting American citizens we must aid in this trial."

Professor Pupin is the inventor of the system of loading coils on wires that makes long-distance telephony possible, and is well known to the public through his fascinating autobiography, "From Immigrant to Inventor." He holds the chair of electro-mechanics at Columbia University.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science is the largest general science society in the United States. It has 14,300 members and 86 special scientific societies are affiliated or associated with it.

Three years ago the association appointed a committee composed of Dr. Edwin G. Conklin, professor of biology at Princeton University and author of "Heredity and Environment in the Development of Man"; Dr. Charles B. Davenport, director of the Station for Experimental Evolution of the Carnegie Institution of Washington at Cold Spring Harbor, L. I., and author of "Body Build and its Inheritance," and Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn, president of the trustees of the American Museum of Natural History, New York, and author of "Men of the Old Stone Age," to report a resolution on evolution. The resolution recommended by the committee and adopted by the council of the association reads:

"Inasmuch as the attempt has been made in several states to prohibit in tax-supported institutions the teaching of evolution as applied to man, and

"Since it has been asserted that there is not a fact in the universe in support of this theory, that it is a 'mere guess' which leading scientists are now abandoning, and that even the American Association for the Advancement of Science at its last meeting in Toronto, Canada, approved this revolt against evolution, and

"Inasmuch as such statements have been given wide publicity through the press and are misleading public opinion on this subject,

"Therefore, The council of the American Association for the Advancement of Science has thought it advisable to take formal action upon this matter, in order that there may be no ground for misunderstanding of the attitude of the association which is one of the largest scientific bodies in the world, with a membership of more than 11,000 persons, including the American authorities in all branches of science. The following statements represent the position of the council with regard to the theory of evolution.

"(1) The council of the association affirms that, so far as the scientific evidences of the evolution of plants and animals and man are concerned, there is no ground whatever for the assertion that these evidences constitute a 'mere guess.' No scientific generalization is more strongly supported by thoroughly tested evidences than is that of organic evolution.

"(2) The council of the association affirms that the evidences in favor of the evolution of man are sufficient to convince every scientist of note in the world, and that these evidences are increasing in number and importance every year.

"(3) The council of the association also affirms that the theory of evolution is one of the most potent of the great influences for good that have thus far entered into human experience; it has promoted the progress of knowledge, it has fostered unprejudiced inquiry, and it has served as an invaluable aid in humanity's search for truth in many fields.

"(4) The council of the association is convinced that any legislation attempting to limit the teaching of any scientific doctrine so well established and so widely accepted by specialists as is the doctrine of evolution would be a profound mistake, which could not fail to injure and retard the advancement of knowledge and of human welfare by denying the freedom of teaching and inquiry which is essential to all progress."

**ANTI-EVOLUTION LEGISLATION IN THE
VARIOUS STATES**

Tennessee

The text of the law under which the Dayton suit is brought is as follows:

An act prohibiting the teaching of the Evolution Theory in all the universities, normals and all other public schools of Tennessee, which are supported in whole or in part by the public school funds of the state, and to provide penalties for the violations thereof.

Section 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, That it shall be unlawful for any teacher in any of the universities, normals and all other public schools of the state which are supported in whole or in part by the public school funds of the state, to teach any theory that denies the story of the divine creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animals,

Section 2. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That any teacher found guilty of the violation of this act, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction, shall be fined not less than one hundred dollars (\$100.00) nor more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for each offense.

Section 3. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act take effect from and after its passage the public welfare requiring it. Passed March 13, 1925. Approved: March 21, 1925.

Florida

The following joint resolution was passed by the Florida legislature in 1923:

House Concurrent Resolution No. 7

"Whereas, the Constitution of the State of Florida expressly states in section 6 of the Declaration of Rights that, 'No preference shall be given by law to any church, sect or mode of worship, and no money shall ever be taken from the public treasury directly or indirectly in aid of any church, sect or religious denomination, or in aid of any sectarian institution.' And

"Whereas, The public schools and colleges of this state, supported in whole or in part by public funds, should be kept free from any teachings designed to set up and promulgate sectarian views, and should also be equally free from teachings designed to attack the religious beliefs of the public, Therefore,

"Be it Resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate Concurring:

"That it is the sense of the Legislature of the State of Florida that it is improper and subversive to the best interest of the people of this State for any professor, teacher or instructor in the public schools and colleges of this State, supported in whole or in part by public taxation, to teach or permit to be taught atheism, or agnosticism, or to teach as true Darwinism, or any other (sic) hypothesis that links man in blood relationship to any other form of life."

Kentucky

In 1921 a bill forbidding the teaching of evolution in public schools and universities under penalty of a heavy fine and jail sentence, was introduced into the lower House of the Kentucky Legislature, and after a hot fight was defeated by a vote of 42 to 41.

North Carolina

In April, 1925, Representative Poole introduced the following resolution into the lower House:

"Resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring, that it is the sense of the General Assembly of North Carolina that it is injurious to the welfare of the people of North Carolina for any official or teacher paid wholly or in part by taxation to teach or permit to be taught as a fact either Darwinism or any other evolutionary hypothesis that links man in blood relationship with any lower form of life."

The bill was referred to the Education Committee which reported unfavorably. It was brought to the floor of the House by a minority report and defeated by a vote of 64 to 47.

In January, 1924, the High School Text-book Committee at the suggestion of Governor Morrison struck

from the list of school books two well known works on elementary biology, because, as stated in the press, of their containing matter on evolution.

South Carolina

In 1921 a rider was attached to the general appropriation bill by the Senate of the South Carolina legislature providing that:

No moneys appropriated for public education or for the maintenance and support of state-supported institutions shall be used or paid to any such school or institution teaching, or permitting to be taught, as a creed to be followed, the cult known as "Darwinism."

Senator Miller, who introduced the proviso, explained that it applied only to "Darwinism" and not to such theories of evolution as are advocated by Lamarck, Bergson, Osborn and others. The amendment passed the Senate without opposition but was stricken out of the bill by the joint committee.

California

In 1924 a group of Fundamentalists protested to the State Board of Education against the use in the high schools and junior colleges of text-books teaching evolution. The board referred eleven text-books on general science, biology, zoology and astronomy to a committee composed of the presidents of nine California universities and colleges. The committee found no fault with the books and reported in part as follows:

In our opinion, these books have treated the subject with moderation and circumspection. There appear to be no statements derogatory to the Bible, and in the few instances in which the possible bearing of evolution upon religion is discussed at all, the writers have taken special pains to assure the readers that there is no conflict between science and religion. Evolution is presented as a theory, and not as an established fact, although it is stated here and there that the theory of evolution is commonly accepted by scientific men, and that is true.

The text-books before us are concerned with presenting scientific facts and theories of which every person with any pretense to an education in the subject or subjects treated should be informed.

ITEMS

ELECTRIC mine lamps may cause gas explosions just as readily as a match or other source of ignition according to tests just reported by the U. S. Bureau of Mines. These tests were made to determine whether the bureau had been taking unnecessary precautions in requiring a special design for electric lamps to be used in mines where explosive gas was known to exist. The present study conclusively settles the question. It has clearly proved that the methane which is found in such gassy mines can be set off by electric lamps if the little bulb is broken. Hence the bureau is reassured in its insistence that all precautions of construction now required for such lamps must be maintained. These precautions include the requirement that the lamp shall go out immediately if the bulb is broken. Thus the cause of ignition disappears at once when an accident damages the lamp so that the hot filament might be exposed.