

# THE SCIENCE NEWS-LETTER

*A Weekly Summary of Current Science*

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## SCIENTISTS PLEDGE SUPPORT TO TENNESSEE PROFESSOR ARRESTED FOR TEACHING EVOLUTION

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Prof. M. I. Pupin, President of American Association for Advancement of Science, Calls Arrest Lawless Act and Says "Self-Respecting American Citizens" Must Aid Defense.

The Scientists of America, 14,300 strong, were called to the support of freedom of teaching and of evolution, when Prof. 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 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. E. 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, Long Island, and author of "Body Build and Its Inheritance"; and Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn, President of Trustees of 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."

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By rearranging her kitchen utensils, a Virginia woman recently saved herself 323 steps a day or nearly 3 miles of walking a month.

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The United States is using up its timber four times as fast as it is growing.

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