

ANTHROPOLOGY

Scopes Trial Recalled

Thirty-five years ago the famous Scopes trial was held in Dayton, Tenn. Watson Davis, director of Science Service, returned to Dayton to recall the historic battle.

A FEW of those who fought the legal and scientific battle of Dayton, Tenn., at the famous Scopes trial returned to that town July 21 after 35 years to recall the arguments of Clarence Darrow and William Jennings Bryan over the state law against teaching the evolution theory.

John T. Scopes, the convicted defendant who was supposed to have violated the state law, was one of those who returned for Scopes Trial Day proclaimed by Dr. J. J. Rodgers, mayor of Dayton.

The celebration of the anniversary was inspired by the first public presentation in the United States of the motion picture version of "Inherit the Wind," which as a stage play had a long Broadway run.

"Inherit the Wind" will stir up the evolution controversy anew, just as the original trial did, when it is shown throughout the land a few months hence. Dayton today is a Bible stronghold for old-time religion, and already there are fundamentalist radio programs on a local station. Bryan University, named for the great orator, who died just after the Scopes trial closed, is

still going strong, although it is perhaps not so uncompromising as it was when founded as an aftermath of the trial.

Dr. Watson Davis covered the 1925 trial for SCIENCE SERVICE newspapers and also cooperated with Darrow and the defense attorneys in selecting and summoning scientists to Dayton. He was among the newspapermen at Dayton for the anniversary.

Many of the principals, including Bryan, Darrow, Dudley Field Malone and Arthur Garfield Hays, are dead. Some, like Scopes, who is now an oil geologist, are very much alive.

The controversy is feeblers, perhaps, but not dead. The law is a dead letter, but still on the statute books is the provision that it is unlawful "to teach any theory that denies the story of Divine Creation of man as taught in the Bible, or to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animals."

There is a petition circulating to repeal this law.

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ANTHROPOLOGY

Testimony for Evolution

"THE VERY HILLS themselves testify for evolution," Dr. Watson Davis wrote when, 35 years ago, he covered the famous trial of John T. Scopes for violation of the Tennessee anti-evolution law. The hills of Dayton, Tenn., still present their evidence for those who will but read the record of the rocks.

The following SCIENCE SERVICE dispatch needs no correction for filing from the Scopes Trial Day celebration:

The little town of Dayton could not be better placed geologically as the site for such a test to determine whether natural law, made by God, or legal law, made by man, shall prevail.

The very ground the courthouse is placed upon, the rocks of the landscape with the embalmed life of ages ago, will all be irrefutable witnesses for the defense if men will but use their eyes and their brains.

West of the little country town of Dayton is Walden's Ridge—named for an event in a previous struggle that concerned the freedom of the body of man. It is appropriate that this ridge is composed of the youngest and most recent rocks of the region thereabout and that below it, exposed by the wear and wash and the uneasiness of the earth for millenniums, there is layer upon layer of rocks, each representing different and progressively older deposits. The ridge

itself is composed of sandstone interleaved with layers of coal, the natural source of one of the commercial products of Dayton. This is the record of the rocks that testifies today that there was a time when trees looked like gigantic ferns and had spores instead of seeds. Look at a piece of coal under the microscope and those spores can be seen and identified today.

Close by the coal seams are layers of iron ore made by the accumulative activities of millions of bacteria millions of years ago. And lower down in the hills and earlier in age are strata of limestone, useful to man in utilizing the iron. These many layers of rocks were made by nature in the geological era now called by scientists the Carboniferous on account of its coal. Below them there are Devonian and Silurian rocks and earth upon which the town of Dayton itself rests and out of which spring strawberries and peaches, the principal products of the region.

In all of these rock layers evidence of prehistoric life can be found. There are spores of the trees that made the coal, calcified remains of trilobites, ancestors of the modern cockroach, fossil tree trunks, and other animal and vegetable remains of a time that antedated man by millions of years.

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DEEP DIP—This unmanned sphere, developed by the U. S. Naval Ordnance Laboratory at White Oak, Silver Spring, Md., will carry research devices deep into the ocean.

MEDICINE

Congenital Heart Defect Diagnosed Before Birth

HEART BLOCK in three unborn babies has been diagnosed with an electrocardiograph.

Drs. Saul D. Larks, University of California, Los Angeles, and Lawrence Longo of the Los Angeles County General Hospital report in the Journal of the American Medical Association, 173:1217, 1960, that this unique use of the electrocardiograph may permit surgeons to prepare for corrective surgery immediately after delivery.

They say the technique may help uncover the cause of such inborn defects. Recent improvements in the use of the electrocardiograph permit physicians to make accurate charts of the current produced by the contraction of an infant's heart muscle as early as the 22nd week of pregnancy.

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ASTRONOMY

Sun Rotates Faster at Equator Than at Poles

IF THE EARTH rotated in the same way as the sun, the day would be shorter at our equator and people would have more birthdays there. This was reported to observers of auroras, or northern lights, by Prof. C. W. Gartlein of Cornell University's IGY Auroral Data Center, Ithaca, N. Y., to illustrate the fact that the sun's rotation is odd, being faster nearer the equator than at the poles. The solar rotation period is usually assumed to be 27 days, but the reason for its variation from equator to pole is not known.

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