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**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LIFE AND WORK OF DARWIN**

By Dean C. E. Bessey

In the world's history it has occurred again and again that there was need of "a voice in the wilderness," and it was so when Darwin came and began to cry in the biological wilderness of the middle of the nineteenth century. Like the other great biologist, Linne, who was born a century earlier, Darwin's great work was not some notable contribution to the anatomy, the physiology or the taxonomy of any group of plants or animals, but it consisted in putting biological science upon a new plane, a higher plane than that which it had occupied before. As Linne gave to biology a comprehensible taxonomy which made it impossible for separated workers to intelligently and accurately communicate and compare their results; Darwin made possible a taxonomy which involves phylogeny. Linne's classification was easily understood and easily applied, and this was its great merit. It saved the time of the biologist, but it did not, nor indeed was it intended to give any clue as to the real relationships of plants and animals. Darwin's work made necessary the introduction of the idea of relationship in classification.

It may be asked, "What may all this mean for the ordinary student in the university?" It is granted that for the student in botany and zoology. Darwin's work is of high importance, but on what ground may general students claim an interest in Darwin's accomplishments? I am so fortunate as to have seen something of the time preceding Darwin's famous publications. I saw with my own eyes the conflict between the old and the new ideas; the old and the new philosophy of the world. It was worth while living through that period, for it allowed me to see the fierce onslaught, the long continued battle, the dogged resistance, the repulse, the retreat and finally the complete rout of the attacking forces. It quickens my pulse today as I look back to those years when the battle was still raging. I was personally so fortunate as to be a student in a college where to espouse the new doctrine of evolution was not considered a sign of moral depravity. In fact, as nearly as I can make out, all

of the members of the faculty were evolutionists. So we were free to become evolutionists if we felt so inclined. But in many colleges of that period the doctrine of evolution could not be taught, and I know of one state university in one of our neighboring states in which professors and students who were suspected of harboring such heretical notions were discriminated against and made the subject of denunciatory chapel harangues. Thought was not free in most of the colleges of that period. The student today can not realize what a change has been wrought. The battle so bravely waged by the Darwinians and finally won by them gave intellectual freedom to students in the colleges and universities, whether they sat in the professor's chair or on the student benches. And today professors are free to put any doctrine before their pupils, provided it is well and decently clothed, and often even this precaution is not rigidly insisted upon. The fight for freedom four to five decades ago has freed the college of the old-time intellectual trammels, and for this the student today has cause to be grateful to those who battled for him. For this the general student has as much reason for celebrating the birth of Charles Darwin as has the scientific student. Darwin was more than a scientific man, he was a propounder of a new philosophy, and in this capacity he became the apostle of intellectual freedom.

**PETITION IS BEING CONSIDERED**

**Request of Innocents and Black Masks Soon Decided.**

The petitions offered the board of deans by the senior societies of Innocents and Black Masks for the advancement of commencement exercises one week is now being considered by the individual deans. The petition as related in Saturday's Nebraskan asks that the commencement affairs be held one week earlier in order that students may attend them who would otherwise be at home in various towns of the state during the later period.

The deans will take action on the petition within a few days and their

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**Happenings of the Past**

**Seven Years Ago.**  
 Freshman basket-ball team defeated by Y. M. C. A. second team in a close contest.

**Six Years Ago.**  
 Daily Nebraskan has spirited editorial on the custom of those in charge of university dances of making a great deal of money for themselves out of university functions.

First inter-class debate held between the juniors and seniors.

**Five Years Ago.**  
 Sophomores protested against the way in which the Sombbrero was being managed and demanded that the manager and editor be elected by the sophomore class.

**Four Years Ago.**  
 Nebraska defeated Baker by the score of 49 to 19 in basket-ball.

Dr. Clapp matured plans for forming several faculty basket-ball teams. Members of faculty, however, declare that they do not wish to place themselves in a compromising position.

**One Year Ago.**  
 Captain Bellamy of the baseball team made severe complaint over the small number of men trying out for places and declared a good team could not be selected without more men.

recommendation will go to the senate, who will then take the matter up with the board of regents in case the action taken is favorable to the petitioners.

**JOINED FEDERATION OF CLUBS**

**Catholic Club Becomes Member of National Organization.**

At a recent meeting of the Catholic Students' club they decided to accept the invitation to join the American Federation of Catholic Student clubs. The club has elected J. F. Coupe as a delegate to represent them at the second convention of the federation, to be held in Iowa City on the 12th and 13th of this month.

Other prominent clubs represented in the federation are those of Cornell, Pennsylvania, Purdue, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Missouri, Iowa and Colorado. The federation was organized two years ago and held its first meeting at Lafayette, Indiana.

For the first time in several years the financial status of athletics at Wisconsin is a healthy one. As a result of her return to "big games," Wisconsin has a surplus of \$11,000 in her athletic treasury. The situation is a decided contrast from that of not more than two years ago when the badger treasury was not only empty but a debt of \$1,200 was to be paid and indoor sports were entirely impossible because of the funds scarcity.

**Some Valentine Books**

- Book of Sweethearts—Illustrated.
- Rileys Old Sweetheart of Mine—Illustrated.
- Memories—by Max Mullen.
- Love Song—by Henrich Heine.
- For Thee Alone—Grace Hartstrom.
- A Dream of Fair Women—many illustrations.
- For Love's Sweet Sake—Love Poems.
- Love Letters of a Violinist—Eric Mackey.
- Old Love Stories Retold—Le Gallienne.
- Henry Hutt Picture Book.
- Love Songs From the Greek.
- Sweeter Still Than This—Sutton.
- Love's Young Dream—Pictures by Underwood.

These are only a few of the many book Valentines—each with bands and ribbons. Priced at 1.00 to \$3.00.

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