

CHARLES MANNING CHILD

It seems fitting for me to express my indebtedness to my former teacher and colleague who passed away December 20, 1954 at Palo Alto, California, having reached almost 85 years of age. I was associated with him first as a student, beginning in 1902, as his teaching assistant 1904-1906, teaching some of his courses in his absence; then as a colleague in the Department of Zoology of the University of Chicago from 1907 to 1914.

Professor Child was born in Ypsilanti, Michigan. He took his undergraduate work, including economics under Woodrow Wilson, and master's degree at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut. His parents having passed away about the time of the completion of his training in the Connecticut institution, he took his heritage and decided to go to Germany and take a doctor's degree, which was the usual way of completing one's training at that time. He gave me a copy of his thesis, which I have saved to this time. Following the usual German procedure, in the first two lines—the thesis "wurden in dem Laboratorium des Herrn Geheimrath Leuckart zu Leipzig vorgenommen" (strangely enough Leuckart was not designated often with the additional Doktor Professor) followed by the usual thanks and salutations. The title is, "Ein bisher wenig beachtetes antennales Sinnesorgan der Insekten, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Culiciden und Chironomiden," which, although morphological, has a strong natural history appeal on account of the functioning of the antennal organ.

Professor Child spent his summers tramping over Germany, and told me many interesting stories of German customs and regulations at that time. Notably, on one occasion he walked into a village, accompanied by a like-minded American student. They went forthwith to the proper officials to be registered and taxed when they left. The German officer got confused, recorded the two as Charles Manning and child, and when the tax was to be paid as they departed, there was no charge for the other man, because children were not taxed.

After receiving his degree in Leipzig, Professor Child returned to the United States without marrying his landlady's daughter, which was an entanglement from which many Ph. D's of the period failed to escape. The prospect of a daughter becoming a future professor's wife looked very glowing

to German landladies, as a professor had great dignity and standing in Germany at that time. He proposed to accept any job he could get in a good university, regardless of rank or salary, so he began at the University of Chicago as an assistant in 1895. He was fairly well established as an instructor in the spring of 1902 when I took one of his courses.

The scientific controversies with the zoology big six of Woods Hole in the early 1900's were often interesting, because it appears that he was more nearly on the right track than the six who heckled him. Letters were often exchanged; many of them were interesting. In answer to one of them, he told of one of the distinguished professors of zoology in an eastern institution that he did not care to receive any more of his sermons.

Among other things, he introduced me to one of the important features of the administration of American universities. When the Tower group and Men's Commons was built in 1902, a proposed wall which connected the cloister portion of this building to the zoology building interfered with microscope lighting. Professor Child went to the business manager, and asked if the completion of the wall could not be deferred until zoology had more space. The old retired major of the U. S. Army straightened up, looked at him, and said, "We have had three architects work on this building plan. They all say that that wall will not interfere with the lighting, and furthermore, the departments of instruction will not be permitted to interfere with the plans of the University." Thirty-five years after this incident, I repeated the words above in the presence of 150 persons attending a seminar, and asked Professor Child, who was present, if this was correct, and he said it was.

Occasionally we hiked together in the dunes to the east and woods south of Chicago. Without formality he gave me the best advice I ever received from anyone. This advice ran something like this: check your ideas with experiments, but remember that your results will at most seem only $\frac{1}{4}$ as important to others in the same field as they do to you. One publication of an idea is not enough. It must be presented again and again, and so far as possible illustrated by different results. The things that happen to you are rarely personal, and should not be considered so; even when students appear to be laughing and joking in the rear of the room, it is usually something other than the lecture or the lecturer. In scientific and administrative controversies, use only sound scientific facts and principles in your arguments.

Professor Child taught a course entitled, "Field Zoology" which was very interesting, largely because of a method he used with a class of five to ten students. Animals that were picked up were the basis for a short talk on the life history and relations to environment, of which he had an unusual knowledge; so the work dealt principally with the lower vertebrates and invertebrates. When I received my Ph. D. in 1907, Professor Child, as was learned afterward, went to Professor C. O. Whitman, head of the department, and proposed that I be appointed a member of the staff, and given an opportunity to see what could be done with this field of natural history, which has since become ecology. It was a tough job to secure materials for lectures and discussions which could approach in any way the knowledge which could be handed out in plant ecology by Professor H. C. Cowles. Naturally, with such an assignment, mistakes were made, but throughout my stay at Chicago, Child was a friend and supporter on all occasions. A debt is due him in connection with my first book, "Animal Communities in Temperate America."

Source: Bulletin of the Ecological Society of America, Vol. 37, No. 1 (Mar., 1956), pp. 32-34.
Courtesy of JSTOR.

I also owe a broad general debt to him, but never knew whether or not he thought I had made good with the opportunities which he secured for me, and support which he gave me.

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Vivarium Building, Champaign,
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June 27, 1955

Approved for publication by Committee
on Resolutions, W G. Moore, Chairman.