TRENDS OF MODERN BIOLOGY

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An occasion such as this is thought-provoking. Why should anybody endow a chair of biology? When I began the study of the subject a little more than a quarter of a century ago such things were not done. In most of our large universities biology had a fairly secure position, but in all but a very few of the small colleges, at one of which I am proud to say I had the privilege to study, if present at all it was so distinctly only on sufferance. Much doubt existed and was often expressed as to whether this novel subject had any disciplinary value in the training of the youthful mind, or had any particular cultural worth in the producing of better citizens. Those of us who were irresistibly lured, by the fascination of the wonderful field opened to our vision, to spend most of our time in the biological laboratory, were looked upon by our fellow colleagues as queer freaks of nature, and would certainly have been called Bolsheviks had that overworked appellation been current verbal coin in those days. For the subject distinctly lacked respectability. It was thought by those who pursued the classics or other orthodox lines of educational conduct to be a messy business, was known to be smelly, and was generally held to be low. This attitude inevitably called forth a defense reaction on the part of its callow devotees, which resulted in distinctly worse messes and smells than were really requisite for the successful pursuit of knowledge in the field.

Now all this has changed. Biology has come

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