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EDMUND BEECHER WILSON¹

By Professor THOMAS HUNT MORGAN

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

EDMUND BEECHER WILSON was born on October 19, 1856, at Geneva, Illinois. The first sixteen years of his life were passed there.

When Wilson was not quite sixteen his uncle Davis suggested that he take over the "little country district school" that his brother Charles had taught the year before. The offer was thirty dollars a month and board (with his aunt and uncle). "When the thermometer stood at thirty degrees below zero, as it did at times, this was, I assure you, no joking matter. I wonder how the modern city-bred youth would like such an experience. I had only twenty-five pupils or so, of all ages from six to eighteen, and I had to teach

¹ Condensed from a memoir presented to the National Academy of Sciences.

all grades, from the three R's up to history and algebra."

In the following summer he was in Geneva, where his cousin, Sam Clarke, had just returned from Antioch College. "As the summer passed I had gradually made up my mind to try for a college education and a life devoted to biology or at least to science." "I had nothing but my two hundred dollars and with this in hand I packed up my meager outfit in September and started for Antioch College in Southern Ohio." The college was a very simple one but with sound ideals. "We had good teachers. Here, for the first time I received regular instruction in zoology and botany, in Latin, in geometry and trigonometry

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