

Theodore W. Torrey

It is difficult to conceive that four decades have elapsed since Dean Fernandus Payne persuaded Theodore W. Torrey to accept a position on the faculty of the Department of Zoology at Indiana University. Dean Payne was convinced that advances in zoology, and indeed in biology in general, would be made by the new experimental approaches to the age-old mysteries of living processes. He chose the young Dr. Torrey, who had obtained his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1932 after earning his baccalaureate degree from the University of Denver in 1927, to introduce the concepts and methodologies of experimental morphology into the biology curriculum.

The wisdom of the appointment was evident almost immediately, because shortly after arriving on the campus Professor Torrey was asked to assume responsibility for the undergraduate and graduate programs in embryology. His versatility and the excellence of his training under the late Professor G. H. Parker enabled him to reorient his research interests from the mechanisms involved in taste-bud regeneration in catfish to the even more challenging studies of the development and function of the vertebrate kidney, includ-

ing that of the human being, and he became an authority in this field of investigation.

His teaching went hand in hand with his altered research interests. The undergraduate embryology course rapidly evolved into a dynamic exercise in the mechanisms of organogenesis. Long before the terms "relevance" and "innovative teaching" became educational shibboleths, he brought new viewpoints and techniques to instruction in comparative anatomy and embryology. He was among the first to use three-dimensional photographs for laboratory teaching, to exploit visual aids in both lecture and laboratory, and to participate in the production and use of motion pictures of high scientific caliber.

Throughout his early years of teaching he continued to stress that vertebrate embryogenesis and comparative anatomy were not separate but were a continuum. This conviction eventually led him to organize a new course, Developmental Anatomy, in which he combined two traditional disciplines, embryology and comparative anatomy, into a single offering. This is one of the few times in academic history that the trend in course proliferation has been reversed. His textbook *Morphogenesis of the Vertebrates* epitomizes the pedagogical transition which has occurred in this phase of zoological study. The ideas embodied in his course and text have received wide acceptance in the United States, and many biological curricula in other institutions have been influenced by this modern presentation of developmental anatomy.

Professor Torrey has been a meticulous teacher; the hundreds of preprofessional students in the health sciences who enrolled in his classes were required to work independently in laboratory and to report their observations accurately. There was occasional grouching about the high standards of performance he set, but accolades invariably followed from those students who subsequently became doctors or dentists. A typical comment has been that "T² taught us the most valuable course we had as undergraduates."

His involvement in curricular change was not limited to the biological sciences. He served for several years as Chairman of the All-University Curriculum Committee which was instrumental in making University-wide changes in course and degree requirements. His patience, foresightedness, and fairness during these proceedings made the innovations recommended by the committee more accept-

able to those who dissented. More recently, he was actively involved in the committee deliberations which led to the transformation of the Junior Division into the University Division.

Although Professor Torrey's teaching and research have been impressive, his greatest contribution to the University is his performance during the eighteen years he served as Chairman of the Zoology Department. His cooperation with other departments in the biological sciences led to the creation of interdepartmental courses and their cross-listing, to the development of courses for non-majors in an effort to broaden the cultural background of students and, finally, to the expansion of offerings in all major areas of teaching and research, especially in experimental biology. He consistently recruited outstanding faculty members and supported their research activities. The Department prospered greatly under his quiet but firm leadership, and the success of his guidance is evidenced by the fact that the Zoology Department has been ranked repeatedly among the top ten departments in the United States.

My relationship with him as a colleague and friend has been an enriching experience. All of us in biology at Indiana University, past and present, owe an inestimable obligation to him for his effectiveness in advancing the biological sciences and for his leadership in undergraduate education at this university. His has been a good life, a rich and rewarding life, and we wish him well in the years ahead.

W. R. Breneman