

On Prof. Mitchell's Scientific Method

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: You remember, of course, Mr. Pickwick and Count Smorltork?

"The famous foreigner—gathering materials for his great work on England," said Mrs. Leo Hunter.

"Have you been long in England?" asked Mr. Pickwick.

"Long—ver' long time—fortnight," said the count. "Large book at home—full of notes—music, picture, science, poetry, poltic; all t'ings."

Now, frankly, is Count Smorltork's survey any more absurd than Prof. Broadus Mitchell's?

The professor, after visiting Salisbury from "Friday to Sunday," announces the scientific conclusion that Salisbury is "backward" and that Chesapeake Bay (by isolating Salisbury) is responsible for the "backwardness" and, hence, is also responsible for the lynching. Obviously the entire Delmarva peninsula must therefore be "backward"—since it is isolated in exactly the same way.

But the question as to whether or not the professor is correct in his conclusions is not the point at all. Here we have a member of the staff of Johns Hopkins University making the merest parody of an investigation—giving about forty-eight hours' study to an entire community. And then upon such a ludicrously insufficient survey he bases the most cocksure and damaging conclusions.

Darwin, Mendel, Cope and all great scientists spent years in gathering facts and then announced their conclusions modestly and diffidently, although those conclusions could by no possibility have caused any material injury to anyone. But Professor Mitchell's "report" will inevitably cause heavy material injury to the entire Eastern Shore—and both spiritual and material injury to the Federal Council of Churches and Johns Hopkins University. . . .

Let us by all means have all the facts about Salisbury and the rest of the Eastern Shore, but let these facts be gathered in the customary careful scientific way by serious investigators, not by a Professor Smorltork in a week-end visit.

WILLIAM DRAPER BRINCKLOE.

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