

JESSE M. SHAVER, MASTER OF TEACHING¹

HENRY H. HILL

*President, George Peabody College for Teachers
Nashville, Tennessee*

It is a pleasure to be here this evening as a guest of the Tennessee Academy of Science. Especially do I appreciate the opportunity of saying something about Dr. Jesse M. Shaver who is being honored by you.

Paraphrasing an old Kentucky saying, Dr. Shaver is a scholar, a gentleman, and a judge of good students. As a scholar and researcher, he has dealt chiefly with ferns. His labor of love to advance human knowledge in this field has been long continued and successful.

He has the interest and zeal which characterizes good teachers. I recall just a few weeks ago when I met him about noon as he was walking into the science building with a pail of slightly discolored water which he had brought from the Peabody Knapp Farm some eight miles from the campus. Here he was a full professor, head of the department, a man well started in his sixties, and yet he had taken the time and energy and his own car and gasoline to go out to Knapp Farm and bring this exhibit in order to do a good job of teaching. There were some tiny objects in the water which darted here and there with speed and suddenness. I asked Dr. Shaver what they were. He said they were midges. "And what is the chief business of midges, Dr. Shaver?" I asked. With a twinkle in his eye, he responded, "Midges like to eat and mate and run around somewhat like people."

I have indicated that he is a judge of good students. He has had many good students during his long career. It is part of my duty and pleasure as president of Peabody to speak to alumni meetings and regional and state teachers' meetings frequently. On many of these occasions I am directed to convey greetings to Dr. Shaver. When I have done so and have mentioned the name of the student, Dr. Shaver has always been able to tell me practically all about him, his shortcomings, as well as his assets. His description of former students is remarkable for its accuracy and completeness.

In summation, I would like to confer unofficially upon Dr. Jesse M. Shaver the honorary degree of Master of Teaching. In every way he typifies the science and art of teaching, the discerning and self-sacrificing devotion to the advancement of knowledge, and the warm human qualities and interest in students which have always been characteristics of fine teaching.

¹One of a series of talks given in Dr. Shaver's honor at the dinner meeting of the Tennessee Academy of Science in Oak Ridge, November 27, 1953.