

found and the other circumstances as related by Professor Very, but he added a statement with regard to a bright flash of light which he had noticed in the sky during the evening of October 7. His description, however, was only that of an unusually brilliant shooting star. A meteorite of the size of this specimen would surely have illuminated the region over many square miles with almost the light of day, judging from the reports of known meteorites which have been seen to fall, but no such occurrence was reported from Norwood. If the falling of a meteorite was the cause of the broken bars, the mass has not yet been found, or at any rate it was other than the specimen described by Professor Very and seen by me.

The circumstantial nature of the observations made by the several persons who had to do with digging up the "meteorite," as quoted in the article to which reference is made, are not as conclusive to me as they are to Professor Very, through scepticism engendered by the falsity of nearly all of the many reports that have come to my office during the past sixteen years in which people have described "meteorites" that they "had actually seen fall" at their feet or on the lawn in front of their houses, or in the road, or in some other very near-by place. On request, samples of some of these "meteorites" have been sent in, one of them proving to be a piece of fossiliferous limestone; another a bit of furnace slag, another a glacial boulder of trap rock, another a glazed stone that had been used in the wall of a limekiln, another a glacial boulder of quartzite covered with a film of limonite. The list might be extended almost indefinitely, but it is not worth while. In almost every case mentioned, the mass when found "was so hot that one could not bear his hand on it."

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#### A WORD OF EXPLANATION

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: May I trespass on your space for a word of explanation? A series of public lectures on human sense-or-

gans recently delivered by me in Boston has given occasion to a number of newspaper reports. Most of these reports are entirely erroneous and misleading. None of them have been published with my sanction, but, on the contrary, quite against my wish. I am therefore not responsible for either their form or content.

G. H. PARKER

#### QUOTATIONS

##### THE SERVICE PENSION OF THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION

AN official action taken two months ago, but only now publicly announced, by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching seems to have certain ethical aspects that deserve consideration, not only from members of the teaching profession, but also from the public at large. Those aspects will, I think, become sufficiently apparent from a brief recital of the facts in the matter.

Upon its incorporation in 1906 the foundation announced that it would grant retiring allowances to teachers in accepted institutions upon two grounds—old age and length of service. The conditions relating to the old-age pension are not relevant to the present communication. The rule relating to service pensions reads as follows: "Any person who has had a service of twenty-five years as a professor, and who is at the time a professor in an accepted institution, shall be entitled to a retiring allowance"—computed in a specified manner. Between April, 1906, and November, 1909, many university teachers and many governing boards based definite plans and actions of their own upon the supposition that, so far as its resources extended, the Carnegie Foundation would do what it had announced that it would do. The expectation of a service pension was, in some cases, named among the inducements offered men who received calls to institutions upon the "accepted list" of the foundation; it was in other cases a motive for the refusal of otherwise advantageous calls to institutions not upon the foundation. In instances either known or reported to me, teachers nearing the time of eligibility for a service pension have in a great variety of ways altered their plans,