

pointed assistant professor of mathematics. Dr. Charles Lane Poor, professor of astronomy in Columbia University, has been transferred to a chair of celestial mechanics.

At Cambridge University Dr. E. W. Hobson, F.R.S., fellow at Christ's College, has been elected Sadlerian professor of pure mathematics.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

THE RETROSPECTIVE ANTICIPATIONS OF THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: The fourth annual report of the president of the Carnegie Foundation, the most important part of which is published in your issue of February 25, is marked by one feature which seems scarcely less sinister than the breach of faith on the part of the foundation which was discussed in my remarks printed in the same issue.

The rules for the granting of service pensions by the foundation, as promulgated in the first annual report, and as explained in the statements of the president at that time and subsequently, contained no word indicating that these pensions were to be regarded as disability pensions. In the federal charter of the corporation, moreover, as well as in many other expressions of the purpose of the foundation,¹ service, old age and disability pensions have always been specifically distinguished. The first annual report contains, further, the following statement (page 37):

To better the profession of the teacher, and to attract into it increasing numbers of strong men, it is necessary that the retiring allowances should come as a matter of right, not as a charity. No ambitious and independent professor wishes to find himself in the position of accepting a charity or a favor, and the retiring allowance system, simply as a charity, has little to commend it. It would unquestionably relieve here and there distress of a most pathetic sort, but, like all other ill-considered charity, it would work harm in other directions. It is essential, in the opinion of the trustees, that the funds shall be so administered as to appeal to the professor in American and Canadian colleges from the standpoint of a right, not from that of charity, to the end that a teacher shall receive his retiring allowance on exactly the same basis as that upon which he receives his

active salary, as a part of his academic compensation.

These early announcements of the foundation have been generally construed by the profession, in their natural sense, as implying that both service and old-age pensions were to be regarded as a form of deferred salary, earned by the previous service of the recipients, and not presupposing on the part of the recipients either destitution or disability. Acting upon this understanding, some twenty-eight gentlemen,² who were not physically incapacitated, and who apparently made no pretension to being either "pathetic cases" or "geniuses," accepted service pensions.

The trustees of the foundation have now determined to abolish all service pensions as such, and to substitute therefor a system of disability pensions. The new report of President Pritchett accordingly reads back into the past intentions of the foundation its present purpose, and makes it appear that the service pensions were, from the start, designed essentially for disabled teachers. The new report contains the following passage, which should be compared with that just quoted from the first report. The original Rule II. was adopted to make

provision for teachers, who, after long service, have become broken in health, or who, by physical infirmity, such as loss of hearing, are incapacitated for their calling. Among the most pathetic cases in the profession of the teacher, and those most embarrassing to the colleges, have been ones in which teachers have, often after faithful service, broken in health and found themselves with approaching age practically helpless.

The same rule was in a minor degree also intended to provide for "the rare cases which now and then arise when a man of real genius as a scholar might prefer to accept a smaller pension and devote himself exclusively to productive work in science or literature." The president of the foundation quotes verbatim the original service pension rule (which says nothing whatever about disability) and immediately adds the surprising comment, "the second rule thus became a complex one, covering service and disability." (It may be noted

¹ Cf. especially First Report, p. 14.

² Fourth Annual Report, p. 72.

that the word "disability" was already to be found in ordinary English dictionaries in the year 1906.) "It was believed," says President Pritchett, "that the number of teachers who would avail themselves of retirement under such conditions would be confined almost exclusively to those who were physically impaired."

In accordance with this retroactive construction of the original rules and announcements—a construction nowhere sanctioned by anything in the language of them—the president of the foundation reflects severely upon the twenty-eight persons who, without disability, accepted service pensions.

The expectation that this rule would be taken advantage of almost wholly on the ground of disabilities has proved to be ill-founded. . . . The correspondence . . . indicates that a number of teachers have persuaded themselves that they are specially intended for research. Some of these have a small income, which, even with the minimum pension, promises a safe, if not ample, support. Others are "tired of teaching." It seems that this rule offers too large a temptation to certain qualities of universal human nature.

From this and other recent statements it appears not only that no one is assured of actually receiving the retiring allowances which the foundation by its rules at any given time announces it will grant, but also that those who are granted pensions upon terms which seem to be clearly understood, and to be sanctioned by the foundation at the time, may thereafter be subject to censure from the president of the foundation for having taken the pensions which were offered them. This is not a situation wholly calculated to increase the attractiveness of the foundation's pension system, or "to dignify and strengthen the calling of the teacher."⁸ It certainly affords conclusive evidence, which should be pondered by professors and governing boards in "accepted institutions," that the apparently plain language of the foundation's rules gives no clue whatever as to what the officials of the foundation may subsequently announce that they have previously been anticipating.

⁸ First Report, p. 31.

The recent report also mentions, among the chief reasons for the abolition of the service pension, "the tendency of the teacher assured of a retiring allowance to become ultra-critical toward the administration" of his university. This seems to mean, if it means anything, either that an important proportion of the members of the profession are kept in order only through their fear of losing their positions, and that, if assured of an independent competency, they would forthwith behave in an unreasonable manner; or else it means that, whether the criticism that might proceed from professors were reasonable or not, they should, in any case, be kept silent and subservient by a mild form of terrorism. I can not think that the publication, by a person holding the position of the president of the Carnegie Foundation, of such views as this concerning the average character and self-respect and the proper status of the members of our profession, is likely to improve the public standing of that profession. There seems to be grave reason to conclude that it is time for the rank and file of the teaching body to demand that the management of the Carnegie Foundation shall be altered in whatever manner is necessary in order to protect them against the sort of deception and the sort of indignity to which they have been subjected in the recent administration of this potentially beneficent institution.

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THE NORWOOD "METEORITE" A FRAUD.¹ HOW
METEORITIC EVIDENCE MAY BE
MANUFACTURED

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: As a result of continued investigation of the supposed Norwood "meteorite," I am now able to state definitely that the whole thing is a cunningly devised fraud. In order that investigators may be on their guard against similar deceptions, it seems to me desirable to put the facts on record. I will first state the apparent facts.

¹ See SCIENCE, N. S., Vol. XXXI., No. 787, January 28, 1910, pp. 143 and 156.