

faults on both sides—of too ready retirement, and of enforced retirement—may be amended without sacrifice of fundamental interests? The remedy proposed throws out the child with the bath in too drastic fashion. Some regard the “service” retirement as a most valuable provision; others question its value or its practicability. Where opinions differ, autocratic decision is premature. The retention of the provision for cases of disability may be gratefully noted; though the suggestion that the professor worthy to retire on his merits is a “rare” individual, seems superfluous. The summary action does away with the *right* to retire. The professor may be so fortunate or so unfortunate as to be granted it.

Such is the issue at hand. Those with confidence in the important mission of the Carnegie Foundation, and in the wisdom of its guidance, are unwilling to believe that financial reasons of future retrenchment—as has been variously implied, but in no manner officially admitted—have determined this regrettable abandonment of an estimable policy. The individual and collective protests that have been presented to the authorities indicate two essential steps. The injured sense of justice may be allayed and confidence restored by a temporary, or even a long-term, if not a complete reinstatement of the “service” retirement; this is imperative. Meanwhile, additional experience will suggest measures whereby the advantages without the shortcomings of the original provision will be preserved. Justice and wisdom and a loyalty to high purpose are the three saving graces of public institutions. May they all prevail!

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#### MEN OF SCIENCE AND PRACTICAL LIFE

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: There is certainly at the present time a great opportunity for improvement in the relationship which exists between the scientist and men in practical life.

In looking over the catalogues of some of

the larger educational institutions, it is not an infrequent occurrence to see announcements, in their various departments of research, that the laboratories and all their facilities are open to men possessing the requisite qualifications for carrying on their independent investigations, while it is seldom that any one is found availing himself of this privilege, this being especially true of the middle western institutions.

The principle involved in these announcements is, without doubt, correct, if put into practise, but the fault seems to lie in the fact that the advantages to be derived from this are not clear to the outsider, and the men in the educational institutions do not take it upon themselves to make it so and to advertise this one of the most important functions of the schools, which are turning out engineers, professional men and men taking up research in pure and applied sciences.

It is well recognized that the association of the student with men who are enthusiastic and who are doing research, either practical or scientific, is one of the greatest stimulants that he can have. Above all, he is more likely to acquire the power of original thought and of handling an original problem in a better way and with more ease, the greater the number of men with whom he has the pleasure of association. This is especially true in practical lines where there are a large number of engineering students.

Although men engaged in instructional work in many of the leading colleges are expected to and do carry on scientific research, for the greater part there is nothing of a practical nature undertaken either by themselves or men working under their direction. This should not be the case in those institutions where the student is looking toward his college education as a means to an end. He should have the opportunity for association with men who are carrying on research of direct practical application.

There are advantages to the instructor that may be considered as nearly if not quite equal to those obtained by the student. The men who are engaged in teaching scientific

and engineering subjects, while they may be conscientiously carrying on scientific research in their own line, are much more likely to become broad, efficient teachers if they come more frequently in contact, in a professional way, with men who are engaged in work outside of the institutions of learning.

It is also true that the advantages are not, by any means, all one-sided, as the man in practical life, who has a problem to solve or who is working on the solution of some problem, can very frequently obtain valuable information by consultation with some man who is working along the same line in an educational institution. He may also frequently find it possible for him to work with a scientist who is well acquainted with that particular line of work, to their mutual advantage.

What can be done has been shown in one way at the University of Kansas with her industrial fellowships. This particular case may be the best possible thing for this place but, on the other hand, might prove anything but a success if undertaken at some other institution or under some other man, who did not have the personality to carry it through. Each man will have to work out the plan best suited to himself and his locality.

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#### THE REFORM OF THE CALENDAR

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: In the September 2 number of SCIENCE is a communication signed Charles E. Slocum, in which are conveyed some expressions of Moses B. Cotsworth which suggest a method for remedying the troublesome irregularities of our present-day calendar.

Our calendar, among other heritages from our more or less remote ancestors, is characterized by incongruities that make it fit awkwardly into present-day human activities, industrial, commercial and social; and has indeed become an anachronism. The suggestion of a reformation of the calendar appears to be very timely, and the method proposed is simple and feasible, the changes indicated ap-

parently not involving any embarrassments nor confusion in the business and social world.

It is to be hoped that this suggestion will take the form of an active movement, and will be promoted before international councils.

The discussion of the calendar not unnaturally invites some reflections upon our "legal holidays," those wandering comets of our almanac, which not unfrequently drop upon us unawares, to the great disturbance of the business world.

It is not a small matter to have the complex machinery of the whole body of finance and commerce throughout the country brought to a sudden stop, with most of the functions of the federal government suspended, at irregular times and when most people are unaware of such an event. This also is in the nature of an anachronism, and out of harmony with the working of the vast elaboration of machinery of present-day activities.

This is, moreover, a growing evil, based upon a combination of sentiment and politics, and legislators seem disposed to add a new "legal holiday" to the growing list on small provocation, in commemoration of some conspicuous person or political event in the country's history, apparently without consideration of the effect upon the business world.

A simple remedy would seem to be available for this evil also.

There are, it may be said, four cardinal holidays in our calendar, that have so grown into our system by habit of thought as not to constitute a disturbing element in the current affairs of the people, as all are thoroughly familiar with the times of their recurrence. These are New Year's Day, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas. Other than these we have fifty-two Sundays in the year, which together would seem to afford ample time for rest and recreation.

The suggestion of a remedy for the evil of irregular "legal holidays" is, that they shall all be made to fall on Sundays instead of on week days.

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