

students: Nathorst, Bartholin and Halle, of Stockholm; Benson, Royal Holloway College; Berry, Johns Hopkins; Cockerell, University of Colorado; Gordon, Edinburgh University; Hartz, Copenhagen; Hickling, Stopes, Watson and Weiss, of Manchester; Holden, Nottingham; Hollick, New York Botanical Garden; Jeffrey, Harvard; Kidston, Stirling; Knowlton and White, of Washington; Lewis, Liverpool; Maslen, Oliver and Mr. and Mrs. Clement Reid, of London; Möller, Sweden; Mr. and Mrs. D. H. Scott, Oakley, Hants; Arber and Thomas, Cambridge; Wieland, of Yale.

Judging by the protests one hears in the United States and the accounts of the Botanical Congress, it would appear that a good many of the rulings which it adopted are very far removed from being international in character or origin. Certainly its proposals regarding fossil plants, which emanated for the most part from Berlin, did not display much insight into the subject.

EDWARD W. BERRY

EXECUTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: May I trespass on your space to the extent of replying briefly to the criticism by Professor A. D. Mead in your issue of June 23, of my letter on academic tenure, which was printed in SCIENCE on May 12?

Professor Mead's criticism has such a moderate tone, and there is so little in it that at all affects the tenability of my position, that it would not demand a reply were it not for the fact that it seems to imply that the "freedom of opinion and utterance" he declares to be so well guaranteed to the Brown faculty, should not extend to the columns of SCIENCE as well; and that it has other implications which suggest the workings of the theological rather than the scientific mind, by a reliance on dogmatic assertion instead of evidence.

Professor Mead admits that men have been removed from the Brown faculty, but declines to enter into any "futile controversy" over the cause. They must have been removed

justly, he argues, because the charter forbids such action for anything else than "misdeemeanor, incapacity or unfaithfulness," and the present administration only enforces it for such reasons. This may be the case, but we have no evidence of its being so except Professor Mead's opinion; and that is offset, in my mind at least, by the assurance of several present and past members of the Brown faculty, that tenure is extremely uncertain there, and that arbitrary removals are frequent.

There are always two sides to any question, and it would be unjust to accept the statements of men who have been removed from the Brown faculty, as unbiased evidence. The statements of such men, however, that I have heard made with increasing frequency during the last few years, go far to call into question, if they do not disprove, the assertion of Professor Mead that men of long service in the university are not removed until they are given a "reasonably fair chance of readjustment in other positions." Of course there is room for difference of opinion as to what constitutes a reasonably fair chance; but I question very much if, even after the statements of these men had been much discounted to allow for personal interest, an ordinary jury would agree that they had had much of anything in the way of a chance to readjust themselves in new positions.

Leaving out of the question, however, the statements of men who have been removed, a case is made out against the Brown administration by the very arguments with which Professor Mead tries to justify its course. He admits that men have been appointed to various professorial grades and continued in them for years, only to be removed afterwards by the same administration that advanced them. Such a course as that can not be justified, and the attempt to do so by statements about "having reached the limit of growth in the environment of the particular institution," should be very severely reprehended by everyone who desires to save education from serious discredit. Even in our largest institutions too much is said about the necessity for rare and special talents, and in Brown,

where the problems of instruction are less varied, such remarks have even less justification. The qualities that make a successful teacher, in any environment, are high character and wide knowledge; and a very few years trial should suffice to inform the discerning and disinterested judge whether or not a man possesses these essentials. If he does not there is no justification for retaining him, no matter how much money or inconvenience is saved by doing so. If he does there is no justification for removing him, no matter how much money doing so releases for other purposes, or how much the administration believes in his incapacity, so long as it has no other evidence of it to offer to the public except vague general statements about environmental unfitness, and having reached the limit of growth. Such statements are based altogether too much on personal opinion and on intangible, esoteric considerations to justify action so serious in its consequences as removal from an academic position always is.

SIDNEY GUNN

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE
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ACADEMIC AND INDUSTRIAL EFFICIENCY

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: Referring to Mr. Handschin's letter concerning academic and industrial efficiency in your issue of June 9, I feel that it should be said that it is very doubtful whether the efficiency of educational institutions can be compared in any way with the efficiency of industrial concerns.

I very much doubt the unsupported thesis: "But the institution which pays the most to 'productive' labor is the most efficient." If a railroad were to be built by hand labor the labor cost would be relatively high, but I fancy no one would say that the work was efficiently done. Indeed, it may be stated with almost no other support than our general knowledge of things that in proportion as new machinery is devised to take the place of hand labor the efficiency of production is increased.

In general, efficiency, as the word has been recently used, is the ratio of useful energy of one form recovered to total energy of another form supplied or destroyed. I should like to inquire who can measure the total energy supplied by a teacher or the useful energy recovered?

Without question there are certain economies that may be realized in the conduct of an educational institution of any kind, but, while these economies must not be overlooked, they are the least important of all of the items to which attention should be given. In most of the discussion that has appeared it has seemed to me that the duties of the college and the university have been confused. Whatever may be the dictionary definition of a university, it is accepted as a place for research, a place where enthusiastic men may find encouragement and the means to assist them in their efforts to increase the world's store of knowledge. It is not necessarily an aggregation of colleges—it is not a commercial laboratory. Its duty, therefore, is to promote research with only so much control by a group of scholars as to make it reasonably certain that any study undertaken is worthy of effort. It is the duty of a college to give young men and young women a certain small proportion of knowledge already available, to teach them where and how to get more, and to endeavor to inspire them with a high sense of duty to their country, their neighbors, themselves and their God. This is as we know the college in America.

In its mechanical or commercial sense efficiency is not a word to be used in connection with this duty of the college, or the work of a university. The cost matters little if the duty and work are well performed.

I would not have this statement considered as a reflection upon the excellent report of Mr. Cooke to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, which report seemed to me to be full of suggestions of great value.

WM. G. RAYMOND

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