

ernment, there is still no justification for the action taken in depriving them of their scientific materials. No doubt the government claims that all these things belong to the colleges, and not at all to the particular men; but while this may be true in a sense, all scientific men will agree that they had rights in the matter which have been apparently ignored.

Would it be possible for some representative scientific body to appoint and pay the expenses of a man who would enquire into all the facts, and furnish a carefully considered report? Should such a plan be contemplated, preliminary enquiries might be made to see whether the case of the exiles was apparently good. If the report supported the exiles, organized protests from the scientific bodies of different countries might be appropriate.

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"DOMESTICATED ANIMALS AND PLANTS"

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: I write to correct an impression made by Professor Cockerell's criticism of "Domesticated Animals and Plants" in SCIENCE, issue of October 27. The impression left by this article is that the errors he mentions are to remain uncorrected, whereas the facts are they were corrected months ago.

I have no desire to discuss the criticisms made further than to relate how the unpardonable error as to the types of pigeons occurred, which may be of interest to the psychologist if not to other scientists. The manuscript was submitted in advance of publication to a number of individuals, and every attempt was made to utilize and harmonize the criticisms and suggestions. This resulted in the practical reorganization of the copy. My original intention had been to use cuts and descriptions of both the rock pigeon and the passenger pigeon, and how the two became so completely confused in the final make-up is a mystery which I have not yet solved. It is perhaps unnecessary to say that for thirty years I had known that the rock pigeon is the foundation of the domesticated types, and the appearance of the plates was,

perhaps, as much of a surprise to me as to others. The only explanation is that the proof was running during my illness and a press of other work, and my own attention was directed chiefly to eliminating the difficulties that had arisen by the rearranging of the text and the references. The publishers are in no wise to blame for this mix-up, for which I accept full responsibility and which was corrected at the first possible moment.

The same remarks apply to the "definitions" mentioned and to one or two other errors not mentioned by Professor Cockerell.

I have only this remark to add; namely, the book was prepared, after repeated suggestions, for boys and girls in the secondary schools and not for the elucidation or even the discussion of such disputed points among scientists as the ramifications of Mendelism or the controversy between biologists and mathematicians. My regret is for the absurd errors that crept into this volume, not for statements that may be disputed when taken out of their connections.

E. DAVENPORT,
Dean and Director

QUOTATIONS

PENSIONS AND THE LEARNED PROFESSIONS

It is part of the undisciplined heritage which we call human nature to assert rights strenuously and assume obligations reluctantly. With the growth of the altruistic spirit, which cultivates thinking in the larger terms of social benefit, the sense of public obligation is gradually and laboriously maturing. There is no idea that stands in greater need of this beneficent socialization than that conveyed by the term "pension." American experience had been peculiarly unfortunate in linking the term with one of the greatest scandals of public extravagance, showing human quality at its worst. It is also unfortunate that the pity extended to old age and poverty and lack of thrift, has enveloped the term in an atmosphere of charity. Foreign examples and an attention to principles should have kept in mind the more dignified sense