

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

which the pension may carry as a recognition of merit, a badge of honor. It will ever be impossible and perhaps undesirable to separate the economic responsibility applicable to all meritorious servitors of society from the special recognition to be accorded those who might well be relieved of economic pressure, or to those who through devotion to intellectual or moral purpose have been debarred from the more lucrative pursuits. The distinction is none the less to be held and clarified, despite the similar resultant expression; moreover the sturdy justice and even the humanitarian sympathy that invites to the acceptance of economic responsibility is itself congenial to the sentiment that finds a duty and a pleasure in lending honor and dignity to a pension conferred in recognition of distinguished or altruistic service.

Our sole institution for recognizing this claim to recognition of the learned classes owes its existence to the wisdom and beneficence of one man—the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The present reflections are prompted by the opinions of its president, Dr. H. S. Pritchett (*Popular Science Monthly* for November), in discussion of the “Moral Influence of a University Pension System”—or let us say frankly by the considerations which are conspicuously absent from his presentation. We stand ready to accord Mr. Pritchett the authority of judgment as to management, growing out of his official experience and accumulated wisdom; but we can not grant him by virtue of his office any special warrant in the appraisal of wise principles which management is to follow, other than that conferred by the possession of insight and ideals and the personal qualities to carry them to expression. We are ready to accept his summary that “the experience of the world seems to point strongly to the conclusion that on the whole a contributory form of pension is likely to be more just and least harmful”; and we can not withhold a regret that the experience of the world was not available five years ago when the contrary policy was adopted by the Carnegie Foundation. Let it be recognized that every pension sys-

tem applicable to many and to all sorts and conditions of men presents problems of management and requires economic considerations of the greatest good—or as Mr. Pritchett seems to view it, the least harm—of the largest number. The foundation must balance its books by economic as well as by intellectual and moral standards. Yet fundamentally the selection of university professors of selected institutions as beneficiaries carries an honor and a privilege as well as a benefit. This aspect of the pension must dominate and guide the spirit of the institution as it inspired Mr. Carnegie’s deed of gift and appealed to his wisdom and philanthropy; and considerations of management must on no account or pretext be permitted to disturb the trend of a far-reaching purpose, or to encroach upon the field where policy is sacred and politics profane.

Mr. Pritchett’s article gives the impression of an official weighed down with administrative annoyances, and deeply concerned to avert the impending demoralization of the professor when confronted by the remote prospect of an allowance granted without supervision or under the care of a trustee or guardian, if such should be granted at an age when the allowance might still be used for the advantage of his career. Mr. Pritchett’s doubts extend to many distressing aspects of the professor’s character. Under these circumstances it would be as fair as kind that President Pritchett should be relieved of the burdens of his office, which might well be placed in the hands of someone more strongly convinced of the worthiness of the academic class as beneficiaries, more deeply interested in furthering the purposes for which the foundation was established. The symptoms, we venture to diagnose, point to another case of the prevalent malady of hypertrophy of the executive centers of the spinal cord, and atrophy of the higher cerebral centers of intellectual vision and directive purpose. The suggestion is obvious that the malady may be of contagious origin, since the board of trustees is made up of college presidents. But is it not transitively clear that this institution, of such

profound significance for the academic life of the nation and of such great potentiality for intellectual interests—an institution founded purely and simply for the benefit of one of the learned professions, and unhampered by fund-eating buildings, or the clamor of students, or the demands of the public, or the contentions of rivals—might well serve as an exemplar by determining its measures in the larger spirit of academic welfare? In benighted Germany professors are actually summoned to councils of state; in enlightened America they are not granted a single representative on the council of an institution founded exclusively for their own interests. . . .

We have said more of the Carnegie Foundation and less of the value of pensions for the learned professions than was our intention. But the concrete ever engages the attention; and it is often the more urgent and useful measure to set right the faulty steering in the short tack of the moment on the skiff upon which we are embarked, than to chart the future course of the great ship of state that must eventually carry our ventures. Human highways, moreover, are not like the broad open sea; they get clogged with tradition, and littered with the débris of precedent, and the retracing of steps is often peculiarly troublesome. But the two phases of the theme are of one nature. It is an underlying distrust of the man of learning, the hesitant recognition of his value for the intellectual resources of the nation, that makes public interests dilatory in providing such honorable recognition as the pension stands for, and as well leads to weak and floundering consideration and operation of the measures adopted. Born of the same feeble confidence is the emphasis placed upon administrative restrictions and the exaltation of near-sighted business prudence. All this makes for an exaggerated intolerance of the minor disadvantages or even abuses inherent in every good movement, and for a tragic disregard of the great lost opportunities. We believe in higher education, in the value of the learned professions; we should like a goodly share of the great contributions to science

and invention, to art and literature, to noble thoughts and human endeavors, to emanate from Americans; but we are chary or stupid in providing the free and effective play of forces, the favoring environment which gives these blossoms their nurture. We see no reason why roses should not be grown like cabbages, and orchids like peas—and we want the roses thornless. We insist that the business methods that make the one crop flourish must be efficacious for the other. Foreign example is unconvincing, too heavily laden with conditions condemned by a triumphant democracy as out-of-date. And so our statesmanship in politics carries the flavor of the market-place and the outlook and insight of the “boss”; and the guidance of cultural interests, reflecting a kindred narrowness of perspective, fails or imperfectly succeeds by reason of the absence of just that superadded but indispensable touch of intellectual integrity and spiritual vision, that at that level divides the worthy from the unworthy results. Such is the law of the upper ranges of human quality and human standards. Defections wholly pardonable and not over-serious in their consequences for the ordinary interests of life, become fatal for the extraordinary ones. When we shall have learned this lesson and rendered to each of the learned classes the tribute that is its due, and shall entrust their interests to those imbued with the spirit thereof, we shall institute more liberal provisions for their welfare and administer more liberally those that favoring circumstances permit us to establish. Meanwhile the learned classes may accept the imposed or self-imposed burden of appreciatively though critically proclaiming the merit of good measures, while maintaining the struggle and the hope for the advent and survival of the best.—*The Dial*.

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

Leonhardi Euleri, Opera Omnia. Sub auspiciis Societatis Scientiarum Naturalium Helveticae edenda curaverunt FERDINAND RUDIO, ADOLF KRAZER, PAUL STÄCKEL.