

relationship between mental age and cranial capacity, is misleading. The correlation between these two variates is weak and many mental defectives of imbecile and idiot grades have heads of normal dimensions.

One of the new papers gives a detailed analysis of cellular changes found in the brains of three defectives. It is concluded that the more severe the grade of defect, the more disorganised is the histological picture of the cerebral cortex. Another original article, by R. M. Norman, seeks to demonstrate a relationship between these cellular deficiencies in the cortex and neurological abnormalities which are to be found among mentally defective patients.

In a short paper, published for the first time, R. M. Bates describes three rare developmental abnormalities which have been found in association with mental retardation. This article is particularly good and it is well illustrated. It records a case of anomalous cervical vertebræ, a case of bilateral facial palsy with club-feet and an example of what is clearly acrocephalo-syndactyly.

Though there are many statements in this book concerning which research workers in mental deficiency and related problems will disagree, they will find it convenient to have the essays collected in a single and well-printed volume.

Short Reviews

Edwardian England A.D. 1901-1910: a Series of Lectures delivered at King's College, University of London, during the Session 1932-3. Edited by Prof. F. J. C. Hearnshaw. Pp. 285. (London: Ernest Benn, Ltd., 1933.) 10s. 6d. net.

THIS book contains the latest of the well-known series of public lectures arranged by the History Department of King's College, London. "Edwardian England" may be said to include the first decade of the century, but there would be only a verbal incorrectness in extending it to the outbreak of the War. Edward VII's two main interests were society and foreign policy. With regard to these two aspects of public life in England, there really was an Edwardian period. But the same remark can scarcely be made of, for example, literature and science.

Still, as Prof. H. Levy shows, in his illuminating lecture on the advance of science during the period, any link in the chain may be isolated for special study. He rightly insists that it was appropriate in this lecture to regard science, not merely in an abstract sense, but also as permeating the social life of the time. It was the Edwardian period, for example, which saw the transition from dimly to brilliantly lighted streets and buildings, with consequent changes, on a great scale, in the uses of leisure. Passing from the effects of applied science upon social practice, Prof. Levy refers at some length to the experimental and theoretical investigations that were maturing during the period. Here, what he has to say about relativity seems to us as clear as any popular explanation that we have encountered. Naturally Prof. Levy's references to biology are briefer, but he explains how during the Edwardian period evolutionary theory advanced from a qualitative to a quantitative and measurable stage. Both in scope and in treatment the lecture is a fitting contribution to the volume in which it now appears.

Annals of the Royal Botanic Garden, Calcutta. Vol. 13: Asiatic Palms—Corypheæ. Posthumous Work by Dr. Odoardo Beccari. Revised and edited by Prof. Ugolino Martelli. Pp. vii + 356. 50 rupees; 75s. Plates. Pp. v + 102 plates. 26.8 rupees; 40s. 6d. (Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Book Depot, 1931.)

Few groups of plants are more difficult to comprehend systematically than the palms, and this is mainly due to the bulkiness of adequate specimens causing them to be largely neglected by explorers, so that we welcome the continuation of this great work on Asiatic palms by the late Prof. O. Beccari, published posthumously by Prof. U. Martelli. No eastern botanist ever possessed the knowledge of Asiatic palms which Beccari in his travels in Malaya, one of the richest palm areas in the world, had accumulated. The Corypheæ are especially interesting as they appear to be the oldest known group occurring in the Eocene, and almost the only palms found in temperate regions, the unique European palm *Chamærops* being one of them.

Besides full descriptions of the Asiatic species, illustrated by photographs of specimens, the author has added a very useful list with localities and diagnoses of those of the New World, with anatomical drawings of flowers and fruits. All that now remains of Beccari's manuscripts in the capable hands of Prof. Martelli and awaiting publication, are those dealing with the Arecineæ, for the Lepidocaryinæ and Borassineæ were published in the Calcutta *Annals* before Beccari's death and the Phœnicineæ (dates) in Malasia. With the publication of the remaining portion the whole work will stand for ever as a worthy monument to one of Italy's greatest botanists, and this we hope will be carried out by Prof. Martelli, who is much to be congratulated on the work of revision and publication of the present volume.

H. N. R.