

science" in his address to the British Association, a high potential value as a 'shock-absorber'. This has been recognized in the United States, and is one of six reasons assigned by Dr. Floyd W. Reeves, professor of education in the University of Chicago, for the recent rapid expansion in adult education in the United States, the other reasons, less significant and compelling, being: activities of the American Association for Adult Education, organized in 1926; increased leisure; need for retraining for new occupations resulting from technological progress; Thorndike's exposure of the fallacy that adults rapidly lose ability to learn; and the success of a widespread drive to promote parent-education so as to facilitate the introduction of reforms in school-teaching methods, notably in methods of teaching how to read. Dr. Reeves is consultant and was director of personnel to the Tennessee Valley Authority, and he has contributed to *School and Society* (Aug. 29) a paper on adult education as related to the T.V.A. In the co-operative commonwealth administered by this body, its adult educational programme holds a key position. In the systematic employment in this field of four new instruments—the public library, radio, visual education and public affairs forums—the authority is pre-eminent among educational agencies. A three-weeks observational tour revealed great keenness among the learners, numbering more than 25,000, and a high standard of efficiency among the teachers, more than half of whom give their services without pay in their spare time. Concerning adult education in the country as a whole, Dr. Reeves quotes statistics indicating that the participants in 1934 numbered more than twenty-two million.

Science News a Century Ago

A Balloon Voyage from England to Germany

THERE were several notable balloon voyages in 1836, but none of them excited greater interest than that by Charles Green in the great Nassau balloon from the Vauxhall Gardens to Weilburg, in the Duchy of Nassau, on November 7–8, 1836. The balloon had a full equipment of scientific instruments, provisions for a fortnight and an apparatus with which it was hoped to be able to keep the balloon afloat if it was necessary to come down on the surface of the sea.

With two companions, Green ascended at 1.30 p.m. on Monday, November 7, and landed at Weilburg at 7.30 a.m. on Tuesday, November 8. When he passed over Dover, a message for the Mayor was sent down in a parachute. Writing of the episode in the *Athenæum*, "W. P." said: "We look forward with some anxiety to the receipt of a more detailed account of this interesting adventure, the perfect accomplishment of which must have realized the most sanguine expectations of the gentlemen who undertook it. It is no matter of wonder that it should have excited the public attention with such a lively interest, for to say the least of it, it has furnished a fact which is quite new in the history of man—that of his having travelled a distance of from four to five hundred miles in the short space of eighteen hours, or in other words, having travelled, in that period, a distance which is not usually accomplished in six times as many hours".

The Human Brain

IN a review in the *Athenæum* of November 12, 1836, of "The Human Brain, its Configuration, etc., illustrated by references to the Nervous System of the Lower Animals", by Samuel Solly, the writer said: "This is a scientific book by a scientific man, and written rather for the profession than the public. We hope, however, that every day will bring physiology more within the range of general education, and that future generations will know something more of themselves, physically as well as morally, than their ancestors did, in the ignorant past. . . . Hitherto as he himself firstly observes, the information conveyed of the anatomy of the brain, by systematic works, has amounted to little more than a vain catalogue of names, applied to parts, without reference to their structure, their functions, or even their analogies in the nervous system of the lower animals. . . . That Mr. Solly should have abandoned this method, and broken through a long night of ancient usage, to proceed in a truly scientific plan . . . is good *prima facie* evidence in favour of his mental qualifications for the task he has undertaken; and his perpetual reference to comparative anatomy shows an equal contempt for the spirit of routine, which has so long possessed the medical constituted *corps* of London. . . ."

Samuel Solly (1805–71), the author of the book, had been trained under Benjamin Travers (1783–1858), surgeon to St. Thomas's Hospital, London, and was elected a fellow of the Royal Society in 1837.

Identification of the Body of Charles I

IN a lecture on this subject delivered at the Aldersgate School of Medicine and reported in the *London Medical Gazette* of November 12, 1836, Dr. William Cummin gave the following account of the identification of the remains of Charles I, when a search conducted by Sir Henry Halford was made for them at St. George's Chapel, Windsor: "The particular vault in which the coffin was deposited had long remained unknown, though it was understood to be the one in which Henry VIII and one of his wives were laid. Accident led to its detection. A scroll with name and date served in some measure to authenticate the outer covering; but the examination of the head left not a doubt of the identity of the royal remains. Upon disengaging the face from the cere-cloth, which had been lined with an unctuous and resinous substance, apparently with a view to exclude the external air, the complexion of the skin was found to be dark and discoloured. The forehead and temples had lost little or nothing of their muscular substance; the cartilage of the nose was gone; but the left eye in the first moment of exposure was open and full, though it vanished almost immediately; and the pointed beard, so characteristic of the period of the reign of King Charles, was perfect. The shape of the face was a long oval; many of the teeth remained; and the left ear in consequence of the interposition of the unctuous matter between it and the cere-cloth was found entire. The countenance, in short, notwithstanding its disfigurement bore a strong resemblance to the coins, the busts and especially to the pictures of Charles the First by Vandyke. Finally the fourth cervical vertebra was found divided transversely—the corresponding surfaces being smooth, betokening that they had been separated by a heavy sharp instrument."