

American Scientist (42, 113; January 1954). The texts of the speeches made at the presentations of the Rumford Medals to Peter Debye, Norman F. Ramsey and Lars Onsager follow, and then the papers delivered at the three symposia on recent developments in thermodynamics, in atomic spectroscopy and in nuclear physics. These include articles by P. W. Bridgman on thermodynamics, Sir Alfred Egerton on the management of flame, Sir Francis Simon on helium and the range of stability of the solid state, E. M. Purcell on line spectra in radio astronomy, M. Siegbahn on nuclear spectroscopy, and V. F. Weisskopf on phase transitions in atomic nuclei.

National Central Library: Report for 1953-54

THE thirty-eighth annual report of the Executive Committee of the National Central Library, covering the year ended February 28, 1954 (pp. 28; from the Library, London), records an increase in the Treasury grant-in-aid from £31,250 to £32,000. In the reconstruction of the Library, of an expenditure of about £105,626, £95,495 had fallen on the War Damage Commission and the Board of Trade. The library stock increased during the year by 4,423 (of which 2,472 were by purchase) to about 141,000. Applications received for loans from or through the library decreased from 100,049 in 1952-53 to 93,653, of which 71.71 per cent were successfully handled (71.21 per cent in 1952-53); total issues were 95,626 volumes, of which 17,285 were to university libraries, 10,307 to special outlier libraries, 5,845 to government departments, 5,278 to industrial and research organizations, and 14,641 to adult classes, 10,658 of these last-named being issued through adult class organizations. In the regional library systems 395 municipal, 56 county, 20 university and 84 special libraries are now co-operating, and loans totalled 169,925 within the systems and 26,689 outside them. Taking the view that membership by every public and county library of a regional system is essential to the structure of national interlending, the Executive Committee has adopted the principle that no public or county library shall be able to use the inter-loan services of the Library except as a member of its appropriate regional system. Although loans to university libraries were 755 less than those of the previous year, 24,072 books were lent by university libraries compared with 23,905 in 1952-53. Loans to and from foreign libraries again increased: 2,531 volumes were lent to forty-one countries and 1,158 borrowed from nineteen countries, France continuing to be the only country lending considerably more than it borrows and coming second to Germany as a lender of books to Britain. The Outlier Union Catalogue of books expanded faster than in recent years, and considerable progress was made in compiling the Union Catalogue of printed material in the Russian language in the libraries of the United Kingdom.

Social Problems of Handicapped Children

ACCORDING to official estimates, there must be between 350,000 and 500,000 handicapped children of school age in England and Wales. All these children require special education or treatment because of some mental or physical disability. Partly because there is no awareness of the size of the problem, few members of the general public realize the difficulties that have to be faced by these children and their parents. They do not know that

there are many active voluntary organizations working in this field, while even these organizations themselves are sometimes unaware that their good work is perhaps being duplicated somewhere else. To present the problem of handicapped children as a whole, Mrs. Peggy Jay has written a pamphlet called "Making our Way", which is published by the National Committee for the Defence of Children, London (pp. 12; 1954; 6d.). Copies can be obtained from Dr. Simon Yudkin, 23 Tillingbourne Gardens, London, N.3). The booklet shows how much has still to be done before every handicapped child can be said to be receiving all the medical attention and special education that will enable it to develop as fully and happily as its disability will allow.

Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science: Brisbane Meeting

THE report of the twenty-eighth meeting of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science, held in Brisbane in May 1951, has only recently been received (Vol. 28; pp. 199. Brisbane: Government Printer, 1951). Besides Sir Kerr Grant's presidential address, "Old Questions and New Answers—Men Who Found Them", in which he reviews the contributions of Einstein, Minkowski, Planck, Rutherford, Bohr and Eddington to the concepts of space, time and atomic structure, it includes the presidential addresses to Sections, Dr. D. P. Mellor's Liversidge lecture, "Some Recent Developments in the Chemistry of Metal Complexes", and the addresses given by a Unesco delegation, which included Dr. E. B. Ford and Prof. C. H. Waddington, at two symposia on evolution. The longest of these latter addresses is that by Dr. Ford on the experimental study of evolution. Most of the presidential addresses are concerned with aspects of science of particular interest in Australia and New Zealand, though not necessarily to the extent of the review of Australian plant products given by Dr. L. H. Briggs to the Chemistry Section. Those of Dr. E. R. Walker on economic science and public policy, H. T. Parker on the scientific approach to the problems of teaching, Dr. B. J. Grieve on viruses and physiology of the host plant, Prof. R. H. Thorp on modern pharmacology and its influence on medicine and pharmacy, Dr. R. M. C. Gunn on cyclic changes in spermatogenesis in rams, and Dr. F. C. Courtice on extravascular protein and the lymphatics are at least of equal interest to scientific workers elsewhere. It is unfortunate, however, that there is not uniformity in format from year to year in reference volumes of such merit: the present volume is quarto, whereas the succeeding volume reverts to octavo. The inconvenience to the librarian and other users is obvious.

Rice Breeding and Genetics

IN a monograph under the above title, K. Ramiah and M. B. V. N. Rao have given a comprehensive account of the rice plant and its utilization in India and elsewhere (Sci. Monograph No. 19, Indian Council. Agric. Res.; pp. 360; 1953; Rs. 17.8 or 27s.). Although the central feature and aim of the monograph is to deal thoroughly with the breeding, genetics and cytology of rice, and to review in detail all relevant information, this volume also contains much of more general interest in that it touches upon such topics as the origin, antiquity and taxonomy of rice, the wild races and species, their botany and development, and so on. Special chapters are