

us a copy of the reproduction. Mr. Hewitt, in 1925, used Autochrome plates specially sensitized by himself, and his camera had a focal length of 3 ft. Dr. Gardner, in 1936, used Dufay colour plates and a camera of 19-ft. focal length. Owing to the greatly differing circumstances, any detailed comparison of the two pictures would be invidious. The picture Mr. Hewitt has sent us is about a tenfold enlargement of the original, and shows a yellow coronal image extending to about a fifth of a solar radius from the limb, so that on the original plate the coronal image can only have been about 0.6 mm. across, whereas Dr. Gardner's picture was reproduced at about actual size and showed a corona extending to about a solar radius or about 20 mm. on the original plate. In view of the low resolving power of colour plates, it would be absurd to expect much recognizable detail on the 1925 plates, and indeed there is only a suggestion of coronal form, and the colour is presumably in error, but the photographs had the value of demonstrating that colour plates could be made sensitive enough to photograph a total eclipse.

#### Plant Diseases and Pests of India

*Science and Culture* contains an interesting review of "Some Plant Diseases and Pests of India and their Control" by Amil Mitra (2, Nos. 8 and 9, Feb. and March 1937). The paper should serve the useful purpose of directing attention to the serious nature of plant disease, for it includes succinct references to the monetary or percentage losses occasioned by many fungi and insect pests. These are sufficiently convincing. The world's loss through the activities of various rust diseases of wheat is estimated at about £60,000,000, and India bears about £4,000,000 of this. A smut disease of the Jowar crop, caused by the fungus *Sphacelotheca sorghi*, causes a loss of 20-25 per cent, and in the Bombay Presidency alone, this means a cost of two crores of rupees (about £2,000,000). Sugar cane mosaic, caused by a virus, often lowers the yield of sugar by 30-35 per cent, whilst a wilt of the pea crop caused by the fungus *Fusarium Vasinfectum* seems to cause the highest percentage damage, for more than half the crop is often lost as a result of its depredations. The review mentions the particular methods of control for each disease or pest, which have been found most effective in practice. A few insect and eelworm enemies are mentioned, but the main emphasis of the paper is that of a mycologist.

#### Journal of Parapsychology

An introduction by Prof. Wm. McDougall gives reasons for the publication of a new journal, the *Journal of Parapsychology*, and making clear its object. Throughout the ages, people have asked: Are mental processes always and everywhere dependent upon material and physical organizations? What are the relations of mind and matter? Do the volitions and beliefs of men make any difference to the historical course of the events of the world? Is the physical co-extensive with the mental and the powers and potentialities of mind to be defined by

the laws of the physical sciences? For the most part, the psychology studied in the universities has not concerned itself experimentally with these problems, and such work as has been undertaken has generally been the leisure-time pursuit of interested amateurs. Prof. McDougall thinks that all those phenomena vaguely denoted by the phrase, 'psychical research', ought to be the study of trained scientific workers in the universities, both in the interests of the development of knowledge and of the public. A beginning was made at Duke University in 1930 to study what the researchers called 'extrasensory' perception. In order that the experiments made in one laboratory may be repeated by other workers, it seemed desirable that there should be a journal. The need for multiple repetitions by different observers of all experiments purporting to give positive results is greater in this field than in others. The word parapsychology is chosen to denote the more strictly experimental part of psychical research. The journal is published quarterly, and the first number is dated March 1937 (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press. Subscription 3 dollars a year).

#### Cist Burial at Blaydon-on-Tyne

AN interesting example of a cist burial is reported from Blaydon-on-Tyne (*The Times*, Aug. 6). The discovery was made by workmen digging in a sand-pit, who uncovered the broken upper slab of the chamber. The dimensions of the cist were 3 ft. 8 in. in length, 2 ft. 3 in. wide and about two feet in depth. The interior was filled with sand, but among the contents were found a human skull and bones of the skeleton. With them was a flint knife about two inches in length. The site was visited and the cist examined by Miss G. M. Scott, assistant curator of the Hancock Museum, Newcastle, Mr. W. Bulmer, of the Corbridge Museum, and other authorities of the locality, in whose opinion the find belongs to the Bronze Age and is to be assigned, notwithstanding the absence of the beaker which might be expected, to a date at about 1500 B.C. A burial with skeletal remains of a somewhat earlier date was found on Summerhill, not far away, seven years ago and is on view as reconstructed in the Hancock Museum.

#### National Museums of Natural History

FREQUENT visits from, and even interchange of, the staffs of the larger museums of the British commonwealth of nations, as referred to in an article in *NATURE* of January 9, has evidently the strong approval of Mr. Frederick Chapman, the well-known authority on the Foraminifera, who has written to us from Melbourne on the subject. The 'Australian Museum' is situated at Sydney and there is the 'Melbourne National Museum', which from the wealth of its collections, especially palaeontological, must be regarded as also of the highest rank. It is immaterial that one museum may be richer than the other in some sides of biology, for such must always be the case. The important matter is that tightening of the bonds between all the museums in question, which has the approval of the Museum Association