BOOK REVIEWS

English by Brill in 1923. Apart from the fact that the translation is not a very happy one, the book has by now changed so greatly that the English translation is of no more than historical interest.


This textbook is unusual in two respects. First, it takes seriously the problem of teaching experimental psychology as opposed to the mere imparting of selected information; and secondly, it makes no attempt to cover the whole field of contemporary inquiry. The first part is concerned mainly with general methods; a good deal of attention is given to the design and conduct of experiments, the nature of psychological measurement, and the relation of observation to theory. (Even the writing of research reports finds mention, though here it is a pity that greater stress is not laid on good and simple English.) The second part deals with some selected areas of investigation, including sensory processes, perception, association, and learning. On the whole, this book is informed and thoughtful though it fails to transcend the conventional limits of American psychology and can hardly be said to imbue the student with a sense of adventure. Although addressed to university teachers of psychology and their students, it might prove useful to neurologists and others seeking guidance on methodological issues.


Recent experimental work on human volunteers and animals has shown that normal brain and thought processes become disorganized (often with hallucinations) if the normal afferent bombardment of the central nervous system from skin, eyes, and ears is prevented. Such deprivation in animals from birth has even more startling effects for it prevents the development of a great variety of normal reactions. This is an important new field of research and its presentation in this volume will arouse great interest.


This symposium was held in 1959 and is concerned with biological problems which are of increasing interest at the present time. A scholarly introduction by H. W. Magoun provides a vivid setting for the papers which follow. These include contributions from R. W. Gerard, D. O. Hebb, W. H. Thorpe, J. Konorski, J. C. Eccles, W. R. Adey, C. Estable, and many others.

The main problems discussed are concerned with the physical changes which must take place in nerve cells when they are involved in establishing a simple memory mechanism, and in order to investigate this there are studies of surprising diversity. Thus the tail half of a flatworm that is cut in two not only grows a new head but retains a pattern of directional behaviour which had been taught to the intact worm. A chaffinch requires to hear the correct song of the species during its first Spring in order to perform correctly, and many other aspects of animal behaviour generally thought to be inborn are in fact acquired after birth. Nerve cells may communicate with each other in several different ways but the precise mechanism of the potentiation at synaptic connexions which has been demonstrated in monosynaptic responses remains very uncertain. Yet synaptic potentiation in response to repetitive activity provides the most probable physiological background to memory and learning processes.

Fear and Depression: Their Causes and Self-Treatment. By Allan Worsley. (Pp. 84, plus Foreword and Index. 8s. 6d.) London: George Allen and Unwin. 1961.

This little book first appeared in 1939 and is now in its eighth edition. Its author has since 'turned over wholly to gynae-psychology, that is, the whole-time study and specialized speciality of the feminine mind and its troubles'. His aim is to provide methods based on modern knowledge of psychology for dealing with the exacerbation of fear and depression consequent upon the upheavals of World War II, and is in line with the many popular treatises for those distressed in mind which have appeared since English books started to be printed in the vernacular in the sixteenth century.

BOOKS RECEIVED
(Review in a later issue is not precluded by notice here of books recently received.)

Drugs in the Treatment of Disease. Specially commissioned articles from the British Medical Journal, 1961 (35s.).


The Neoplastic Process and the Nervous System. P.S.T. Cat. No. 203 (63s.): The Control of Immunogenesis by the Nervous System. P.S.T. Cat. No. 124 (60s.): Works of the Institute of Higher Nervous Activity Physiological Series, Vols. 1 and 2. Cat. No. 69 (74s.) and No. 71 (64s.): Pathophysiological Series, Vols. 1, 2, and 3. Cat. Nos. 70, 72, and 74 (78s. each). Program for Scientific Translations, P. O. B. 7145, 14 Shammal Street, Jerusalem.

Book Reviews


The August (1961) Issue

The August (1961) issue contains the following papers:—

Epilepsy Due to Small Focal Temporal Lesions with Bilateral Independent Spike-discharging Feci: A Study of Seven Cases Relieved by Operation. Murray A. Falconer and Walter A. Kennedy

Mental Deterioration in Epileptic Children. M. R. Chaudhry and D. A. Pond

The Diagnostic Use of the McGill Picture Anomaly Test in Temporal Lobe Epilepsy. Denis C. Shalman

Histological and Chemical Findings in Krabbe’s Leucodystrophy. R. M. Norman, D. R. Oppenheim, and A. H. Tingley

Infantile Metachromatic Leucodystrophy. J. W. Black and J. N. Cumings

The Effects of Hemispherectomy on Intellectual Functioning in Cases of Infantile Hemiplegia. John McFie

Four Cases of Carotid-basilar Anastomosis Associated with Central Nervous System Dysfunction. Robert L. Campbell and Mark L. Dyken

Defects in indentifying Objects Visually in a Patient with Cerebrovascular Disease. E. Ettlinger and Maria Wyke

Flicker Fusion in Multiple Sclerosis. A. F. Titcombe and R. G. Willison

The Effect of Anxiety on Time Judgment and Time Experience in Normal Persons. Samuel I. Cohen and Alexander G. Mezey

The Effect of Depressive Illness on Time Judgment and Time Experience. Alexander G. Mezey and Samuel I. Cohen


A Case of ‘Pure’ Word Blindness. A. Kreindler and V. Ionășescu

Ophthalmodynamometry in Carotid Artery Disease. R. W. Ross Russell and W. I. Cranston


Suppurative Lesions of the Brain-stem. Allan Hulme

The Society of British Neurological Surgeons: 63rd Meeting

Book Reviews

A number of copies are still available and may be obtained from the Publishing Manager, British Medical Association, Tavistock Square, W.C.1, price 17s. 6d.