

Part III.—Epitome of Current Literature.

1. Psychology and Psycho-pathology.

Psychology and Industry. (*Brit. Journ. of Psychol.*, March, 1920.)
Myers, C. S.

The experimental approach to psychology is distinguished from the observational methods by having a most complete freedom from metaphysical preconceptions and aims, and by a more perfect control of attendant conditions. It enables us to study *individual* mental differences, *racial* mental differences, *generic* mental differences, and the relation of unconscious processes to consciousness. The results obtained and the methods themselves are now being applied to education, medicine and industry. Experimental psychology can be applied to fatigue, movement study, and vocational guidance and management in the study of industrial problems.

Fatigue.—The psychologist has studied the problem of mental as well as muscular fatigue, of the effects of drugs, and of rest pauses of different lengths.

Movement study.—The present methods of approach are largely empirical and guess-work. In many occupations there are seemingly needless movements. Time may be saved by “shorthand” methods, but experiments must be devised to establish the question of whether there is any increase, no increase, or decrease of fatigue. More work is needed to yield information in regard to the optimal load and posture, the optimal rate and frequency of lift, etc., in persons of different muscular power, age and sex. The study of *vocational guidance* is founded on that of individual differences. In a certain bicycle-ball factory it was found that after the selection of the best workers as indicated by reaction tests, 35 individuals could do the work of the previous 120, and that the accuracy of the work was increased by two-thirds. Hearing, vision, speech, memory for figures, memory for the order of instruction received, accuracy, neatness, distractibility, powers of observation, of accuracy and speed of reasoning are capable of experimental estimation. By the aid of properly devised tests applied by trained persons those leaving school could be helped and usefully advised in their choice of a suitable vocation, and by their application to industrial candidates the fittest could be speedily selected. Information in regard to the “character”—perseverance, honesty, courage, etc.—of the subject is incidentally gained from tests systematically and individually applied. Under the application of psychology to *management* the writer includes the consideration of the psychological causes of industrial discontent and restricted output, the psychological advantages of different methods of payment and supervision, and other conditions which affect the efficiency and happiness of the workers. We understand now more fully the importance of the emotions, how they give rise to worry, anxiety, rationalisation, and by the mechanism of “projection” to delusions of suspicion and even persecution. The importance of the application of these new advances to the problems of industrial unrest is obvious.

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