

The work consisted of pairs of maximal contractions on a Smedley hand dynamometer. With men subjects, the suggestions "easy" and "medium" cause a reduction in output. The suggestion "hard" causes an increase in work. With women subjects, the suggestions "easy" and "medium" cause no significant reduction in output. The suggestion "hard" causes an increase. With subjects of both sexes, variability of output is increased by all three suggestions; "easy" increases variability most, while "hard" causes the smallest variability.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

*Psycho-physiology of Suicide [Psycho-physiologie du suicide]. (Ann. Méd. Psych., vol. xiv [ii], p. 384, Oct., 1934.) Courbon, P.*

Suicide, a defence reaction against a painful affective state, is fundamentally conditioned by an aggressive impulsiveness, a true suicidal temperament, depending upon the biological constitution of the subject.

Conscious elements of the affective state, which assist in setting in motion this reaction, are: a disgust of living, resulting from environmental frustration to the satisfaction of primordial desires, and an indifference to death, resulting from the representations which the individual has formed for himself of that state.

The pre-eminence of the above two tendencies over their antitheses, the love of life and fear of death, does not depend upon the nature of their objects, moral, altruistic or egoistic sentiments, but upon the biological constitution, which renders the individual more or less susceptible to moral, altruistic or egoistic inducements. Biologically, therefore, there is no difference whether the act is for ethical reasons, sacrifice or other motive.

The affective state, setting in motion the suicidal reaction, is often accompanied by anxiety, and in such cases physical distress is a somewhat obscure additional incitement. This is especially the case in persons of a psychasthenic or cyclothymic constitution. In such cases, however, suicide is not the consequence of a lucid choice. Irresolution, doubt and uncertainty, the essence of anxiety states, interdict the faculty of choice, and such a suicide is a pathological reaction.

In other cases the affective state is unaccompanied by any sign of anxiety or mental disorder. Suicide is the consequence of a lucid decision. But this decision, not being that made by the majority of people under similar conditions, is an abnormal, though non-pathological, reaction.

The social factor has no part in determining pathological suicide. It may perhaps count for much in non-pathological cases: firstly, if society condemns this tendency; again, according to the representation of death which it prescribes.

Between pathological and non-pathological suicide there is every gradation.

STANLEY M. COLEMAN.

*Education of Parents and Intelligence of Children. (Psychol. Clinic, vol. xxii, p. 263, 1933-34.) Nemzek, C. L., and Finch, F. H.*

Reports the result of a research conducted at the University of Minnesota. A positive relationship was found between the amount of parental education and the I.Q. of offspring. How these findings hold for the population in general is unknown since the cases examined were largely from the upper part of the scale, both in education and intelligence. There are some suggestions that the observed value may be below that typical of the general population. The correlations were consistently higher for the fathers than for the mothers; but there were differences in variability in education which must be taken into account.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

*Footnote to an Allegory of Bellini. (Psychoanal. Rev., vol. xxi, p. 361, Oct., 1934.) Goitein, P. L.*

In this paper the writer presents a further penetrating psycho-analytical study of an artistic creation—Bellini's allegorical picture in the Uffizi at Florence.