

improvement under the distractions seems, however, to decrease with increased duration of the distractions. While the distractions appear to produce greater effort, and, consequently, to increase the actual amount of work done, they also tend to increase the number of errors. M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

*The Differential Limen for Matching Spectral Colours by Subjects with Normal Colour Vision.* (*Journ. Compar. Psychol.*, vol. xviii, p. 437, Dec., 1934.) Benedict, A. A., Gorham, J. E., Higgins, G. C., and Lauer, A. R.

Two series of experiments, using 21 subjects, were made to ascertain the amount of error made in matching colours. Different points in the spectrum were chosen as stimulus bands. A marked tendency to under-estimate green was found at lowered intensities. In the longer wave-lengths the reverse holds true. M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

*Visual Acuity and its Relation to Brightness in Chimpanzee and Man.* (*Journ. Compar. Psychol.*, vol. xviii, p. 333, Dec., 1934.) Spence, K. W.

The chimpanzee has about the same order of visual acuity as that of man. The acuity of one of the two animals tested was about the same as that of the human adult control, and definitely superior to that of a five-year-old child control. In both human and chimpanzee subjects the visual acuity varied directly as the logarithm of the brightness of the test objects. Chimpanzees do not appear to be definitely superior in visual acuity to monkeys. M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

*Auditory Perceptibility: Acuity and Dominance.* (*Psychol. Clinic*, vol. xxii, p. 220, 1933-34.) Twitmyer, E. B., and Nathanson, Y.

It is necessary for the clinical psychologist to determine the degree of auditory perceptibility, if he is to make a correct diagnosis. The methods usually employed are unsatisfactory. An improved method is described in this article. With regard to vocational guidance, it is pointed out that impaired hearing is not always a disability; it may be an asset. Many of the difficulties experienced by the deaf are social and psychological rather than vocational. M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

*Capacity of Monkeys to Solve Patterned String Tests.* (*Journ. Compar. Psychol.*, vol. xviii, p. 423, Dec., 1934.) Harlow, H. F., and Settlage, P. H.

Monkeys are capable of solving complicated pattern string tests, but marked individual differences exist. Specific and generic differences are not proved by this investigation. Monkeys are markedly superior in these tests to all non-primate animals. There is no evidence that anthropoid apes are superior to monkeys in this respect. There is no demonstrable correlation within the primate order, excluding man, of the level of cortical development with the capacity to solve these tests. M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

*Sex Behaviour of the Rat after Removal of the Uterus and Vagina.* (*Journ. Compar. Psychol.*, vol. xviii, p. 419, Dec., 1934.) Ball, J.

The sex tract, exclusive of ovaries and Fallopian tubes, was removed from six rats between the ages of 26 and 36 days. Four of the animals exhibited typical sex activity when subsequently placed with males. It is plain that these organs are not essential in the production of the condition known as "heat". This does not exclude the possibility that these organs may play some part in the psycho-biological mating of the intact animal. But it is apparent that the hormone responsible for the "heat" behaviour pattern affects some other part of the organism in producing this changed reactive condition. M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

*The Effect of Verbal Suggestion on Output and Variability of Muscular Work.* (*Psychol. Clinic*, vol. xxii, p. 248, 1933-34.) Manzer, C. W.

The problem studied was the effect of telling the subject that his task was "easy", "medium" or "hard", when the task was, actually, of uniform difficulty.

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.