

There was a close relationship between the optic experiments of the authors and the results of mescaline intoxication described by Beringer.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

*Relation of the Male Avian Gonad to Responses Pertinent to Reproductive Phenomena.* (*Psychological Bulletin*, vol. xxix, July, 1932.) Carpenter, C. R.

Some hormone produced by the testis is fundamental to normal motivation of sex activity. Most investigators agree that castrates show a minimum of primary sexual behaviour, and do not engage in any sexual activity save under supernormal stimulation. But insufficient attention has been given to the question whether a fowl who has never had the effect of the gonads will engage in primary sexual activity. The possibility of some portion of the gonadal tissue being left after the operation has to be considered; an improvement in the technique of experimental operations is required.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

*Effects of Castration on the Behaviour of Mammals.* (*Psychological Bulletin*, vol. xxix, July, 1932.) Commins, W. D., and Stone, C. P.

Most observers have reported a lowering of the rate of basal metabolism after gonadectomy, but other factors play a greater part in this than does the castration itself. Changes occur in the electrical excitability of the peripheral nervous system. Greater fatigability supervenes upon castration. In most male cases loss of sexual desire or impotency gradually follows, but this rule is not universal, and this latter fact has to be considered in weighing proposals for the castration of anti-social persons. Knowledge of the pre-operation libido is essential for the correct interpretation of post-operative effects in females. Observations on sex reversal after castration have largely been vitiated by lack of control statistics. The whole question is dependent upon the basis of unidentified factors which underlie the affective life.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

*Retention after Intervals of Sleep and of Waking.* (*Arch. of Psychol.*, No. 137, 1932.) Van Ormer, E. B.

From his experimental work, the author finds that, assuming that there is no decrease in learning efficiency during the late evening hours, the advantage of night study is evident. The retention of verbal material after from 4-8 hours' sleep is greater than after the same time of waking. The author thinks it quite possible that forgetting is a function of the nature of the interpolated experience, the altered environmental context and the organic state of the individual during and subsequent to learning, rather than intrinsically a function of the period of disuse.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

*The Learning and Retention of Pleasant and Unpleasant Activities.* (*Arch. of Psychol.*, No. 134, 1932.) Cason, H.

The author, after summarizing the views of various writers, describes a considerable amount of experimental work of his own. He puts forward the following conclusions and propositions which appear to him to be justified by experimental and observational data.

(1) There is an optimism in judgment and an optimism of memory for

affective activities. There is a general tendency to over-estimate the number, duration and strength of the pleasant activities and to under-estimate the number, etc., of the unpleasant activities.

(2) Pleasant activities are positively correlated with optimistic temperaments, and unpleasant activities are positively correlated with pessimistic temperaments.

(3) Unpleasant activities and experiences are stronger and have a more positive character than pleasant activities and experiences. Probably pleasant and unpleasant activities and experiences are not located on exactly the same psychological plane.

(4) There is further learning and a later relative improvement in the retention and reproduction of pleasant activities. This conclusion does not hold for every affective activity or experience, and is more applicable to life-like situations and activities than to laboratory experiments.

(5) There is little difference in the efficiency with which pleasant and unpleasant activities can be learned.

(6) Under the ordinary conditions of everyday life, the unpleasant activities are more numerous and of longer average duration than the pleasant activities.

(7) The efficiency of learning is greater when the affective factor is present.

(8) The feelings which are present on reproducing or recalling past activities and experiences tend to change with the passage of time.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

*The Journal of Comparative Psychology, vol. xiv, August, 1932.*

This number contains the following articles :

*The Influence of Ligating One of the Common Carotid Arteries upon Handedness in the Rat. Peterson, G. M.*

The dominance of one cerebral hemisphere in the rat is not due to unequal blood supplies coming from the two carotid arteries. Until positive evidence is forthcoming, the explanation of cerebral dominance in man in terms of difference in the mode of origin in the two carotids must be regarded sceptically.

*The Order of Eliminating Blinds in Maze Learning by the Rat. Spence, K. W.*

There is evidence of some backward order principle of learning in the maze operation. Another factor is an absolute direction orientation on the part of the animal to the goal.

*The Effect of Castration at Various Ages upon the Learning Ability of Male Albino Rats. Commins, W. D.*

Castration does not render the rats inferior in learning ability. The testicular hormone has no demonstrable influence upon the development of this ability.

*On the Supposed Visual Function of the Nictitating Membrane in the Domestic Pigeon. Friedmann, H.*

Nictitation is primarily a type of reflex protection to the eye during jerky movements.