

with no clear conception of the real purposes of university education is a sure way to frustration and to waste national resources and talent, rather than to achieve the return on investment urged by the Robbins Committee. Even though expansion is already beginning, we would do well to look at our real objectives and think deeply about the human needs of society, including the potential students, before committing irrevocably limited resources on a scale and in ways that are ill-judged to serve effectively the long-term needs of individuals or society, even of industry itself.

EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

Traité de Psychologie Expérimentale

Sous la direction de Paul Fraisse et Jean Piaget. Fascicule 1: Histoire et Méthode. Par Jean Piaget, Paul Fraisse et Maurice Reuchlin. Pp. 191. 12 francs. Fascicule 2: Sensation et Motricité. Par Henri Piéron, René Chocholle et Jacques Leplat. Pp. 161. 12 francs. Fascicule 5: Motivation, Émotion et Personnalité. Par Joseph Nuttin, Paul Fraisse et Richard Meili. Pp. iv+226. 15 francs. Fascicule 6: La Perception. Par Jean Piaget, Paul Fraisse, Éliane Vurpillot et Robert Francès. Pp. 231. 15 francs. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1963.)

TRAITÉ de Psychologie Expérimentale is the first treatise of its kind since the Harvard *Handbook of Experimental Psychology*, edited by S. S. Stevens and published in 1951. In a way, it is a little odd that it should come from France, for although there has been a distinguished French psychological tradition, experimental psychology has never held a central place in it. Nor has the output of the French psychological laboratories been large or, for that matter, particularly important. It might seem, however, that interest in experimental psychology is rapidly growing in the French-speaking countries and this treatise will undoubtedly do much to shape its development.

The complete work is to comprise nine volumes, covering the experimental psychology of sensation and perception, learning and memory, the psychophysiology of behaviour, intelligence, communication and decision processes, motivation and personality, and experimental social psychology. Inevitably, the choice of topics reflects both contemporary fashion and the special interests of the Editors. It also reflects in some degree the availability of contributors, all of whom appear to have been drawn from France, Belgium and Switzerland. Whether this geographical limitation was altogether wise is debatable: in cultural as in economic matters national pride can be a potent source of inflation.

The first volume, *Histoire et Méthode*, starts with an account of the evolution of experimental psychology by Prof. Paul Fraisse. Although perfectly adequate, it leans heavily on secondary sources (particularly Boring's *History of Experimental Psychology*) and the judgments expressed are for the most part conventional. It is followed by chapters on experimental method by the same author and on psychological measurement by Dr. M. Reuchlin. These are quite well done, if unexceptionable. More exciting, however, is Prof. Piaget's discussion of explanation in psychology and the problem of psychophysical parallelism. This is both lucid and original and it is interesting to note that the author expresses hope in the possibilities of a sophisticated isomorphism. This chapter will interest philosophers of science as well as experimental psychologists, and should be widely read.

The second volume, entitled *Sensation et Motricité*, opens with a long and detailed account of psychophysics by Prof. Henri Piéron, whose grasp has clearly been in no way impaired by age. Indeed, the author passes from

classical Fechnerian psychophysics to modern decision theory with masterly ease and detachment. Dr. R. Chocholle writes on reaction times, showing himself to be well acquainted with the ways in which information theory has been applied to their measurement. Dr. J. Leplat considers human sensori-motor performance; recent British work is particularly well represented in his survey. This whole volume is altogether of much interest to British experimental psychologists and can be warmly recommended to their attention.

The fifth volume, *Motivation, Émotion et Personnalité*, is inevitably less satisfactory. As is well known, the topics with which it deals are fraught with snags, conceptual, linguistic and methodological, and have on the whole proved resistant to experimental analysis. However, Dr. J. Nuttin surveys experimental investigations of drives and incentives with commendable balance, covering both animal and human enquiries. His knowledge of recent American work is particularly impressive. Prof. Fraisse writes on emotion; if he has rather little to say, this is due largely to the paucity of convincing experimental data. Finally, Dr. R. Meili outlines investigations of personality structure, mainly the large-scale, statistical variety which Prof. Eysenck and others have made their special province. (But he does have a kind word or two for psychoanalysis.) Although little positive emerges, the author concludes that thirty years' work on personality has at all events led to a clearer conception of the problems and of the methods which might lead to their solution. Possibly.

The sixth volume is concerned with perception. As might be anticipated, Prof. Piaget leads off with an account of the genetic development of perception, much of the material being derived from the work of his own laboratory. Prof. Fraisse writes on time perception, a topic to which he has himself devoted much study. Dr. E. Vurpillot writes on space perception; this chapter is impressive and might well justify translation as a monograph. Finally, Dr. R. Francès discusses form and object perception. This is a bit limited, no consideration being given to recent investigations of form perception in animals, which have given new impetus to the whole field of enquiry. Oddly, too, auditory perception is little discussed and tactual perception scarcely at all, but perhaps these omissions will be remedied in later volumes. Nor do neurophysiological aspects of perception receive their due.

This treatise is comprehensive, scholarly and well balanced. Although drawing heavily on American (and to a lesser extent British) sources, it certainly cannot be regarded merely as an attempt to market Anglo-American psychology in a form appropriate for Continental consumption. It does distil a flavour of its own, critical, at times ironic, and above all lucid. It will have both impact and influence, and the Editors deserve congratulation on their enterprise. Psychologists everywhere will await the forthcoming five volumes with lively anticipation.

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SOCIAL MISBEHAVIOUR

Crime and the Social Structure

By Dr. John Barron Mays. (Society Today and Tomorrow.) Pp. 256. (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1963.) 30s. net.

DR. J. B. MAYS has in recent years made a significant contribution towards our understanding of some of the intractable problems of juvenile delinquency, notably in his investigation, published in 1959, appropriately called *On the Threshold of Delinquency*. It was, therefore, with keen anticipation that I looked forward to his latest book *Crime and the Social Structure*.