

## SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

## THE PHYSICS OF MUSIC

*The Physics of Music.* By ALEXANDER WOOD. 255 + xii pp., 91 figs. 109 illustrations.  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ ". Cleveland, Ohio: The Sherwood Press. 1944. \$8.00 (special introductory price \$6.00, subject to cancellation without notice).

Dr. WOOD offers both the musician and the physicist a very stimulating review of the literature dealing with the newer research in the physical basis of music. With the rich experience gained in writing a number of texts in this interesting borderline field, the author approaches the subject on quite an unsophisticated level in the present volume. This is, no doubt, done to avoid discouraging the musician. Yet the physicist can also profit by the great number of references to situations beyond the stage of first approximations of the classical literature on the subject. Probably the most startling innovation from the point of view of the physicist is the inclusion of a considerable treatment of the psychology of music.

The bibliography is very representative of both the foreign as well as the American publications. Above all, the *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* can be justly proud of the many references made to its contributors. The author skilfully interweaves the diverse bits of research accomplished during the past decade or more into a well-integrated and meaningful pattern, nicely augmenting the classic experiments of the pioneers in this borderline field.

Even the despised musicologist (for the term seems to cover a multitude of sins) comes in for a share of glory in the very desirable consideration of the esthetic values in music. To cap the climax, notions of musical expression and interpretation are even suggested in the chapters on voice and orchestral instruments. There are, it must be admitted, a few naive confusions of terminology in these chapters on musical instruments which do not, however, detract materially from the good of the whole. The author's friends in the musical world will take keen delight in pointing out these errors to him, and future editions of the book can correct them. The hope of finding a few such mistakes should challenge the musician to read the text more carefully.

The "Acoustics of Auditoriums" is a chapter especially well treated. This particular chapter includes a wealth of illustrative material. In fact, the entire text is extraordinarily well supplied with diagrams and various types of illustrations. It is for this very reason, probably, that this volume costs as much as \$8.00. This is really too much to have to pay for a beginner's text-book, and it may unfortunately serve to limit the output to the chain of interested libraries. Yet it is a book well worth owning.

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ABE PEPINSKY

## PSYCHOPATHOLOGY

*Contemporary Psychopathology—a Source Book.* Edited by SILVAN S. TOMKINS. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1943. \$5.00.

THE volume consists of a group of forty-five articles collected from the general literature and reprinted in book form. In the editor's words, "This volume is designed for courses in abnormal psychology. Recent advances in research, while essential to a comprehensive understanding of the field, generally appear in journals not readily accessible to undergraduate readers." The value of this compilation of articles is, therefore, dependent upon the significance of the individual contributions and the integration of the forty-five subjects as representative of the current viewpoints of psychopathology.

In a short introduction Dr. Henry A. Murray says:

The attempt at comprehensiveness has been abandoned; a great many topics are utterly ignored. Only areas that have been illumined in recent years by clarifying hypotheses or the acquisition of new facts are given place, and these are treated with specialized attention.

Dr. Tomkins has been willing to let the authors of the several papers talk for themselves. He has not added any comment, criticism or explanation, but merely presented his choice of material.

The forty-five papers are divided into four groups: (1) Mental Disease in Childhood; (2) Psychoneuroses and Psychosomatic Medicine; (3) Schizophrenic Psychoses; (4) Experimental Psychopathology.

One is struck at once by the fact that the contributions are in large part related to medical problems. While this may be quite reasonable in considering a subject such as psychopathology, one nevertheless may wonder whether medical orientation is the most appropriate one for students in abnormal psychology, made up in very large part presumably of people of college undergraduate status. In fact, approximately two thirds of the articles are presented by members of the medical profession. Does this mean that there is a paucity of fine work being done by psychologists not possessors of the M.D. degree?

Remaining in a critical attitude, one can but regret the editor's decision: "Many recent developments in psychoanalysis, anthropology and sociology had to be excluded. Therapy in the psychoses other than schizophrenia has received scant attention."

Possibly another criticism might be leveled at the absence of any appended bibliography to the articles selected. This may be a criticism of some moment in view of the fact that many of the articles deal with subjects about which there is contention or dif-

ference of viewpoint, and therefore the presentation without either any discussion on the part of the editor, the presentation of another viewpoint in the form of an article differently oriented or bibliographic references may do an injustice to the subject-matter.

It is indeed no simple matter to select out of the enormous literature which the general subject-matter covers forty-five articles and say that these are the important contributions to psychopathology. In view of this difficulty the reviewer must give full-hearted appreciation of the articles selected. There is none that is not important, that is not stimulating and that does not make good reading.

It seems hardly reasonable to pick out any special

article either for commendation or in criticism of its selection, nor would it be profitable to attempt to discuss one or a few of the forty-five contributions.

The reviewer would, therefore, conclude that it is worth the time of any physician interested in psychopathology and medical students to read most, if not all the articles in this compilation. Graduate students of psychology and some mature undergraduates will also benefit from a study of the selections, but should realize that many of the articles need medical experience to be properly evaluated.

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## REPORTS

### OVER-THE-COUNTER SALE OF SULFONAMIDE DRUGS<sup>1</sup>

SECTION 118 of the Sanitary Code of the City of New York prohibits the sale of sulfonamide drugs, whether for internal or external use, without a prescription. Two groups of sulfonamide preparations are excepted, namely, sulfonamide nose drops containing not more than 2.5 per cent. of sulfa drugs and adhesive bandages containing sulfathiazole. (The usual concentration of the drug in these bandages is 6 to 12 mgms of sulfathiazole per inch of bandage.) These two exceptions have been allowed because (1) the Federal Food and Drug Administration permits the over-the-counter sale of these products, provided they bear proper precautionary labels and directions for use, and (2) at the time this ruling was made there was no actual proof that the external use of the sulfa drugs in small concentrations had caused any harm.

For advertising reasons sulfa drugs are now being added to various kinds of salves, tape bandages, shaving creams and similar products which are sold under well-established proprietary names. Of late, one of the drug concerns applied to the Health Department for permission to sell without prescription a suspension containing 5 per cent. of sulfathiazole. In view of this and in view of the fact that more and more reports appear in the literature to the effect that topical application of the sulfa drugs can arouse a hypersensitivity resembling an allergic phenomenon, the Commissioner of Health submitted to the committee the question of what action the Board of Health should take in this regard.

After looking into the matter carefully, your subcommittee has come to the conclusion that clinical experience bears out the fact that a small percentage

of people become sensitized to the sulfonamide drugs, that a severe systemic reaction may be produced in these persons when the drugs are administered a second time and that a minute amount of the sulfonamide drugs applied to the unbroken skin or to the mucous membranes can and does sensitize an individual even more quickly and with greater certainty than when such drugs are administered by mouth.

Because such sensitization is often dangerous and prevents the use of the sulfonamide drugs in treatment of conditions in which they are particularly indicated, because over-the-counter sale of preparations containing sulfonamides will expose many persons to the danger of sensitization, and because the wide use of the sulfonamide drugs in ineffective concentrations may result in an increase in organisms resistant to the sulfonamides, your subcommittee recommends that, until such time as clinical evidence may justify a contrary course of action, Section 118 of the Sanitary Code of the City of New York be so amended as to eliminate all exceptions from the clause which prohibits the over-the-counter sale of sulfonamide preparations.

The subcommittee wishes to suggest the desirability of making this recommendation known to the general public. The subcommittee likewise considers it desirable to issue a statement on the part of the Committee on Public Health Relations to the general profession warning against the unnecessary use of sulfonamide preparations for the treatment of minor conditions.

Respectfully submitted:

GEORGE MILLER MACKEE, *Chairman*  
MCKEEN CATTELL  
RUSSELL L. CECIL  
ROBERT A. COOKE  
E. H. L. CORWIN, *Secretary*

Approved by the Committee on Public Health Relations on March 5, 1945.

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Subcommittee of the Committee on Public Health Relations of the New York Academy of Medicine.