Book Reviews

Man and his works: the science of cultural anthropology. Melville J. Herskovits. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948. Pp. xviii + 678 + xxxvii. (Illustrated.) $6.75.

The appearance of a new general textbook in anthropology is always an event, for there have been fewer than a dozen in the entire history of the science. Of these, it is noteworthy that the work under consideration is the third to be published during 1948. Since each of the three is excellent in its own way, teachers of the subject will no longer suffer from a limited choice, nor lay readers from the lack of a sound introduction to a complex and rapidly expanding discipline.

The volume by Herskovits far surpasses its rivals, old and new, in its range. There is scarcely a subject with which cultural anthropologists have dealt, scarcely a problem with which they have wrestled, that does not receive attention. This leads the author into some fields hitherto unexplored in textbooks—for example, the techniques of field research. Such thoroughness and enterprise deserve praise, and the book is to be recommended to anyone who wants to gain a bird's-eye view of the entire field of cultural anthropology or to discover what its practitioners have been up to all these years.

The treatment throughout is catholic as well as comprehensive. All theoretical positions are presented and discussed with admirable fairness. Every book has the defects of its virtues, and this one is no exception. Range and an eclectic point of view have not been achieved without sacrifice. Few topics receive the meticulous analysis that the specialist demands. Live issues are too often glossed over, as in the following typical quotation (p. 237): "We . . . accept the insights each position affords us, without fully accepting any of them." Almost never does the discussion penetrate to the actual frontiers at which the science is being pressed forward today, much less offer suggestive glimpses into the unknown. To the professional anthropologist, therefore, and to other social scientists already moderately familiar with anthropology, the volume will be less informative and challenging than to the novice and the interested general reader.

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Methods in medical research. (Vol. I.) Van R. Potter. (Ed.) Chicago: Year Book Publishers, 1948. Pp. xiii + 372. (Illustrated.) $8.00.

This volume is a critical evaluation of important methods of investigation in four biomedical fields: (1) assay of antibiotics, (2) blood-flow measurements, (3) selected methods in gastrointestinal research, and (4) cellular respiration.

Forty-nine competent research men have contributed to the text in this valuable and useful enterprise. Research methods dealing with complex factors in health and disease call for perpetual scrutiny and re-evaluation. When this is done from time to time by competent investigations, both freshmen and seniors in medical research are aided in their work. They will welcome this volume, and subsequent volumes if they measure up to the standard set in Volume I.

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Foundations of psychology. Edwin Garrigues Boring, Herbert Sidney Langfeld, and Harry Porter Weld. (Eds.) New York: John Wiley; London: Chapman & Hall, 1948. Pp. xv + 632. (Illustrated.) $4.00.

This book is a substantial contribution to the textbook literature in psychology. The third edition of a book which first appeared (under another title) in 1935, it has profited by the experience with the two earlier ones. Consisting of 25 chapters by 19 authors, it has now grown to over 600 large pages of double-column text, twice the length of its first edition. It is an excellent job of bookmaking from cover to cover.

The changes in arrangement, to which the editors have no doubt given much thought, are of less importance than the changes in content because the chapters are independent enough to be rearranged by groups at the discretion of the instructor. Succinct characterization of the content is difficult. It is a conservative and conventional book in some respects, in that all the old material remains. The 168 pages devoted to sensation and perception, for example, probably contain about the same number of words as in the first edition, when those topics constituted a much larger fraction of the book. But the book is also a modern one because new topics, with a decidedly contemporary flavor, have been added to the old. Personality, social functions, and related topics occupied less than one-tenth of the first edition but now occupy nearly one-third of the book. There is even a chapter on vocational selection, an "applied" topic which would certainly have been foreign to the earlier editions. The presence of this chapter and material incorporated in other chapters reflects the vigorous experiences of psychologists in making use of their science during the war.

Teachers of psychology may react either favorably or unfavorably to the increase in length. To the extent that psychology courses last no longer than they formerly did, it is not possible to keep adding topics without subtracting, unless the coverage of each is less thorough. One answer is to devote more time to the subject. Whereas the older course may have covered one term only, a book of this kind is suitable for a full-year course. The other answer is for the teacher to select