

SYNÆSTHESIA

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Though contributing little, if any, new material to aid in the understanding of synæsthesias, Marinesco (1) presents an unusually rich assemblage of facts. First, a case of colored hearing is described with particular wealth of detail. The subject is a Roumanian woman of thirty-five. It is remarked incidentally that her heredity is bad. All spoken or written words and sounds are colored, the endless variety of color and shading being the special feature of the case. The colors are always seen hovering in space; and ordinarily in the form of a strip or patch, usually brilliant, and in all grades of transparency. Sometimes the letter or word is seen dimly outlined on this colored background. The color of a word is generally determined by the colors of prominent vowels and consonants. Many details are given, and two excellent colored plates reproduce concrete instances. Reading is accompanied by very vivid auditory imagery, and the usual color experiences are evoked.

From a collection made before his death by Edouard Grüber (of Jassy) the author cites a considerable number of cases of colored hearing, schematized forms, etc. A table, representing the reports of 23 individuals, is drawn up for a comparison of the colors given the letters of the alphabet and the notes of the musical scale. The main result is to emphasize the wide range of individual variation.

Analyzing his material, the author concludes: (1) that no generalizations can be established as to sound and color correlations; (2) that the color of words is sometimes that of a prominent constituent, sometimes that produced by a mixture of the colors of the components; (3) that synæsthesias are not indicative of pathological conditions; and, finally, (4) that their existence points to an individual predisposition the main features of which are a special impressionability of the visual and the word-hearing centers, and an unusual diminution of inhibitory influences of these centers upon each other.

A condensed historical summary and a bibliography of the less commonly cited titles add to the value of the article.

REFERENCES

1. MARINESCO, G. Contribution à l'étude des synæsthésies, particulièrement de l'audition colorée. *J. de psychol. norm. et path.*, 1912, 9, 385-421.

SPECIAL REVIEWS

*Leçons de Philosophie. I. Psychologie.* D. ROUSTAN. Paris: Librairie Ch. Delagrave, 1911. Pp. 520.

The first volume of Roustan's *Leçons de Philosophie* is devoted to psychology. The author has taken much of his material from Wundt, Ribot and James. In fact he has been greatly influenced by the latter and the book is modelled rather after the *Principles* than after more recent treatises. The emphasis is placed upon those subjects which we are accustomed to find of most interest to the French school of psychologists. Experimental psychology is practically ignored and physiology is entirely omitted. The part on sensations occupies only eighteen pages and mentions only those facts which are of the most general interest to students of the intellectual functions, such as the value of the different senses for the mental life and the possibility of improving them by education.

Throughout the book special attention is given to the important theories and the reader is guided, often with keen judgment, to a final choice. The older theories receive more attention than the modern ones, so that the book gains in historical perspective to the neglect of contemporaneous thought. With the exception of Wundt, Höffding, Bergson and other more or less important French writers, few living men are mentioned. For example under attention the only references made are to Condillac, Wundt, Höffding, Ribot, James, Bergson and Nagrac.

The volume is divided into four parts, treating respectively of general problems, which include a discussion of the purpose and limits of psychology, the subconscious, attention, personality, etc.; of the effective life, that is, pleasure and pain, the emotions, inclinations, and the passions; the intellectual life, which includes sensations, space perceptions, memory and association, generalization, judgment and language; and finally of the active life, embracing instinct, habit and will. Each chapter is preceded by a minute summary and is closed by a very incomplete bibliography.

The book is neither a text-book nor is it sufficiently up to date or inclusive to justify referring the student to it for collateral reading. The manner of treatment, however, is interesting and the style is very pleasing. One can follow the writer with profit as he illuminates