PSYCHOLOGY

Chairman: W. N. KELLOGG, Indiana University

Professor C. C. Josey, Butler University, was elected chairman of the Section for 1946.

Action potential measurements from the arms in the foreperiod of reaction time to visual stimuli. WILLIAM ARNOLD LIVINGSTON, Indiana University.—Evidence has been reported by other authors both for and against the existence of changes in action potentials during the warning-stimulus interval in the reaction time experiment. Data reported arise from investigation of action potential changes in the interval between the ready signal and stimulus presentation under conditions of simple and choice reaction time to visual stimuli. Work is a contribution to the physiological psychology of simple and complex set.

The relationship between perceptual span and rate of reading. JEAN SUTHERLAND, Butler University.—The purpose of this investigation was to determine (1) the relationship between perceptual span and rate of reading; and (2) the effect of systematic training in perceptual span upon rate of reading and upon improvability in rate of reading. A subsidiary objective of the investigation was to determine the relationship between perceptual span and rate of perception.

Perceptual span was determined by a test consisting of 228 words and phrases presented one word or phrase at a time by means of a tachistoscope. The exposure was 100ms. The reliability coefficient of the test was .93. Correlations obtained between perceptial span and rate of reading as measured by three tests ranged from .31 to .37. Perceptual span and rate of perception correlated to the extent of r=.73. The subjects were 125 college students.

Two groups of university freshmen (N=36) were given training in perceptual span by the same method as the testing procedure described above, although different words and phrases were used. As a result of training the subjects made significant improvement in span and subsequently showed a significant gain in rate of reading. Thereafter this group of subjects was given training in reading, chiefly by the use of the Harvard Reading Training Films. Their progress was more rapid, presumably because of their prior basic training in perceptual span, than that of control groups that did not have this basic training.