Test Types — Testimony

Test Types: Ger. Bockatistumproben; Schweden: Fr. épitôyes, caracterizes pour le savant de l'oeil comme; Ital. testata o prova attinta, modo di studiata. Quadrangular letters and numerals are used for the determination of the range of distinct vision. The "standard" eye (Schicklein) sees two black objects on a white ground as discrete when the space between them exceeds a visual angle of 't'. The test types in regular use are so chosen that the smallest can be read, by the normal eye, at a distance of 6m. Acuity of vision is in this case expressed as 2/3. If only the largest types on the sheet can be read at 6m, we say that the patient can read at 6m, what he would, with a normal eye, read at 60m.

Literature: Jacob Schicklein (1857); Soto, Gaz. Fr. Zahn und Täth. 1872; Fr. Zahn und Täth. 1872; Huxley, Optics (1860); 544; R. H. Rivers, Reports of Cambridge Anthrop. 1885, Ed. by White, 1897. 12 ff.

Testament (in law) [Lat. testamentum]: Ger. Testament; Fr. testament; It. testamento. A voluntary disposition of all of part of a man's property, or rights, to take effect only upon his death; a will.

In the placae "will and testament," the last two words are mere surplusage. In an early English law, the term testament was specially appropriated to wills of personal property, which came under the probate jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts; but for centuries "will" and "testament" have been synonymous (Dean's Abbeville, Will, A).

"Testamentum est voluntate nostrae testatoris instituta de quod quidque post mortuem suum ferat velatur. [Dig. 25, 3, 1, Qua testamentos fuerint testamento, etc., 1]. The soul of the Roman testament was the naming of a universal successor, or "heir." See Will (in law).

Testament (The Old and the New): Ger. Testament; Fr. Testament; It. Testamento. Names applied to the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. The terms signify their character as a testament or will sealed in the blood of the testator, symbolically in the coroners of the Old Dispensation, really in the sacrifice of Christ in the New Dispensation.

Testimony [Lat. testis, a witness]: Ger. Zeugnis; Fr. témoignage; It. testimonianza. The statement of a witness used as evidence, whether depositions or documentary.

Disposition is oral or written. All testimony either direct or circumstantial. Direct testimony is a statement of the very fact in question. Testimony is, further, either external or internal. Intentional testimony in a statement made for the purpose of persuading those before whom it is held to be the truth of the facts in question. Testimony is further either original or second-hand. Original testimony is testimony to perceive or personal judgments, of the witness. Second-hand testimony is testimony as to what the witness learned by testimony (strictly by original testimony, otherwise it would be third-hand, etc., testimony or rumor).

There is a general tendency to believe what one is told; and, as in the case of other such tendencies, it should be first followed, although cautiously and tentatively. Even when experience is wanting, as for example in examining a prisoner, although greater caution is required, the proper course is to begin with the presumption that the testimony is true, for unless we make such a presumption, no truth can ever be discovered. It is true that the unlikelihood of the matter of the testimony may cause immediate distrust or even disbelief of it, but no persons are so frequently arrived as those who stop to weigh likelihoods before accepting or rejecting testimony, and who then form a definite opinion as to the matter. Testimony should always be accepted as approximately correct, but always strictly on probation, as a subject of examination. In our legal proceedings, witnesses are subject to cross-examination. Everyone is agreed that this is an essential step in the inquiry, but in a historical inquiry so much is possible. Still the testimony can be tested in various ways, and this must be done. But in any case the rendering of the testimony is a fact which needs to be ascertained for; and by whatever theory it is proposed to account for it, that theory needs to be directed and tested. Properly handled, false testimony may often yield a great deal of information.

An experimental test may be readily performed by considering the least anticipated likely but necessary or highly probable consequence of the theory, which is acceptable of being confronted with observation direct or indirect. If this consequence is found, notwithstanding its unlikelihood, to be true, there is then some reason for believing in the theory proposed to account for the testimony.