the same time gains an impartial view of his own behaviour. The important point is made that "individual differences in ease and adequacy of shifting from one social role to another, in phantasy or discussion, seem to underline differences in individual susceptibility to some kinds of behaviour disorders".

Secondly, the nineteenth-century instinctual approach to the personality is discarded in favour of a system of "needs"; a need being defined as "a condition of unstable or disturbed equilibrium in an organism's behaviour, appearing typically as increase or protracted activity and tension". The point is made that because of conditions and traditions of group living, indirect or substitute satisfaction of needs plays a very prominent role in biosocial behaviour. The frustration of needs, by delay, thwarting or conflict, is the main stress which leads to behaviour disorders.

Thirdly, various mental mechanisms, as identification, rationalization, projection, etc., are treated as "basic adjustive techniques" and are linked with the frustration of needs. These basic adjustive techniques are defined as "those habitual methods which human beings in our society use in overcoming, avoiding, circumventing, escaping from, or ignoring, frustration and threats". The individual susceptibility to behaviour disorders is related to the kind of adjustive techniques he uses, the adequacy of these, and the ways in which he utilizes them.

The remaining two-thirds of the book are devoted to a description of the clinical behaviour disorders, and express the current dissatisfaction with the orthodox Kraepelinian system of classification. The plan for each chapter is the same: a clinical picture followed by aetiological considerations under two headings—"The biosocial basis", i.e. "from what characteristics of normal behaviour does the abnormal develop?"; and "The biosocial determinants", i.e. "what determinants are there which seem to favour the development of this particular abnormality in this individual?". It is the presence of these two questions which gives the book its particular flavour.

It is to be regretted that in support of many of the generalizations few objective data are given. Some of the concepts, e.g. "social maturity", need greater analysis and characterization. Further thought should be given to a more adequate system of "needs", particularly to those needs which are culturally determined. It is surprising to see so many pages devoted to hysteria (with little analysis of the factors producing the altered clinical picture of the last fifty years), and so few to the psychosomatic disorders which are surely biosocial disorders *par excellence*. In general, however, the author explains his point of view well and clearly. The attempt to place the patient in his total biosocial situation is successful. This book will undoubtedly help the student in his approach to the patient.

P.M.T.

Emotional Problems of Living. By O. Spurgeon English, M.D., and Gerald H. J. Pearson, M.D. Geo. Allen & Unwin. 1947. pp. 438. 16s.

This book is apparently a sequel to an earlier publication on *Common Neuroses of Adults and Children*. It purports to uncover the sources of neurotic behaviour so that "we may learn to avoid destructive emotional conflicts", and is based on the Freudian concept of character formation. Much of it is addressed to young physicians and students, but it is meant also for the laity. And, on the whole, the authors live up to the publishers' specifications.

There is, however, a certain elusiveness about the Freudian presentation. The references to "transference" are somewhat evasive and the account of the unconscious could have been more adequate. The Oedipus Complex, in particular, is dealt with in a superficial manner. The authors apparently believe that neuroses are becoming rarer and that their place has been taken by "character-neuroses". In this connection they quote the view that the alleged change in clinical manifestations is due to a change in parental attitudes from over-severity to over-indulgence. This is a questionable proposition which is in any case contradicted by their own observations of environmental influences.

The bulk of the book deals with the development of the personality during the successive periods of life up to maturity. And so long as the authors deal with infancy and early childhood, they take a sensible enough standpoint, allowing for a little overstress of environmental factors. Their view of American parents may, however, be true; what they relate of maternal callousness, cruelty, crazy fastidiousness, nagging, superstition and neglect of sexual instruction, certainly sounds Early Victorian.

When, however, they come to consider the later phases of childhood and youth, sexuality and marriage problems, the authors' views become just a little flatulent, as indeed do the views of most clinical psychologists when dealing with the everyday problems of adult life. As far as middle and old age is concerned, the position seems to be that the American has made his pile at 50 or 55 but doesn't know what to do with himself. He then talks too much, becomes a nuisance to his family and may have to be sent to an institution. Here doctors can help the family over any little hesitations, etc.

There is a curious section on the method of taking case histories, and it is not altogether a coincidence that the style of the book itself is unnecessarily prolix. Nevertheless, and despite the above comments, it is a good book of its kind, more suitable perhaps for the lay worker than the psychiatric student. Considering the number of unsatisfactory text books on characterology and the general haziness regarding psychological principles which characterizes them, this is high praise. E.G.