

entries as the 'modes' of music, or the 'orders' of architecture. To complete the usefulness of this new dictionary, appendices of Emperors, Popes, Counties of the United Kingdom, the Chemical Elements, and much else besides, provide a useful source for reference.

It is hard to fault this handsome book on any count, and it should be quite specially valuable for the growing number of foreign students of English. Its excellent arrangement and helpful illustrations give a new dimension to dictionaries, and once more the Oxford imprint adds distinction to a brilliant piece of book production.

A.I.

THE EXPLANATION OF CRIMINALITY, by Gordon Trasler; Routledge; 20s.

This is an attempt to show that a small group of psychological principles can be used to construct a basic theoretical framework into which may be fitted some of the most important discoveries of 'sociological criminology' and the study of personality. This involves the extension of modern learning theory into the field of social behaviour, so any criticisms which have been levelled at this theory may also be levelled at Dr Trasler's book. This is not the place to deal with all these criticisms. I must content myself here with a reminder that Eysinck's view of human nature (to which Dr Trasler acknowledges his indebtedness) is incredibly naive and that many experiments indicate that human behaviour is far more complex than he would have us believe. It is also worth noting that the relationship of even the simplest laboratory response to general qualities of behaviour is as yet very far from being understood. A basic assumption throughout is that the tendency to refrain from crime is to a considerable extent the consequence of the possession of conditional anxiety reactions, and that these reactions owe their potency to the fact that they are acquired in early childhood.

The theory of social learning is stated quite simply and clearly in the form of a group of postulates, but to this reviewer the postulates hardly seem adequate to account for some of the empirical information which we already have about the personality of criminals. Moreover, the usefulness of these postulates as integrating hypotheses when applied to sociological data is not very well established. In fact the general use of sociological data leaves a great deal to be desired; in places the treatment is highly selective and the theoretical deductions are not particularly convincing.

In many ways this is a plea for more theory. No one would deny the importance of theory, and I hope that most readers would agree with Dr Trasler when he says that it is better to state one's theoretical assumptions than to leave them unrecognized (lack of recognition in this direction is far too common in social science). However, whether or not theory is our most urgent need and deserves number one priority is a different matter. Theoretical assumptions are, of