

**New Times, New Methods and New Men**

By V. M. Clarke. Pp. 149. (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1950.) 10s. 6d. net.

MRS. V. M. CLARKE is the personnel and administrative advisor to a large industrial undertaking and, in her book, sets out the principles on which she believes modern industry should be organised. These, she says, should be the basic principles of life—co-operation for service to the individual and to the community. This would entail a complete change of heart in which old prejudices will be swept away and, through inspired leadership, men would work for the common good in a spirit of selfless devotion. As a result industry, besides becoming more efficient, would not only enable men and women to live more abundantly but would also provide the conditions through which well-integrated and responsible communities could evolve.

Such is the theme of the book, and with it few will take exception. Where Mrs. Clarke may lose support, however, is that in her zeal the theme is too recurrent; instead of so much good advice about what needs to be done, industrial management would have welcomed some information about how it is proposed to bring about the changes of heart which would usher in the new industrial age. Instead of a plea for new leadership, for example, one would have preferred an analysis of the qualities of leadership and a statement of where and how leaders are to be found and developed. It is more than probable that the generalizations in this book will momentarily fan up the enthusiasm of the believer, but, with little added to his knowledge or understanding, leave him somewhat flat at the end; with the unbeliever they will leave him where he was before except, possibly, a little more suspicious and unbelieving. In many ways the style of this book belongs to a Tractarian age and would probably have gone nearer to fulfilling its purpose if it had been published in pamphlet form.

T. H. HAWKINS

**Lezioni di geometria moderna**

Per Beniamino Segre. Vol. 1: Fondamenti di geometria sopra un corpo qualsiasi. Pp. iv+195. (Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli, 1948.) 1200 lire.

IT is impossible to read this volume without comparing it with that of Hodge and Pedoe on the "Methods of Algebraic Geometry", and indeed the two make excellent companion volumes, each amplifying the other. B. Segre presents a somewhat broader account of various fields and processes; but his discussion of the basic algebra and of details is less deep.

While Hodge and Pedoe do suggest that there is another point of view for the fundamentals of algebraic geometry, the treatment of Segre admits only the one which renders the subject a handmaiden of modern algebra rather than that which renders algebra a handmaiden of geometry. To me, who regards the attitudes of such writers as Baker and Mathews with particular respect, this absence in a book on fundamentals of the possibility of correlation between the various basic points of view is felt as regrettable. To one whose normal attitude is fundamentally projective, the volume would have been easier to read if the author had at an early stage made a specific definition of his concept of geometry as a whole, and algebraic geometry in particular, instead of leaving it to be gradually assimilated from the development of the text.

In his introduction the author expresses needless modesty in referring to his index. The indexes and bibliography can well stand as a model to many authors.

H. GWYNEDD GREEN

**A List of British Scientific Publications reporting Original Work or Critical Reviews**

(Royal Society Information Services Committee.) Pp. 95. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1950.) 2s. 6d. net.

THIS booklet, issued under the imprimatur of the Information Services Committee of the Royal Society, lists scientific periodicals published in the United Kingdom containing a substantial proportion of original work or critical reviews, and includes also a number of the technological journals publishing original work. The extent to which the latter field is covered is rather indefinite, and there are a number of surprising omissions; for example, the *Journal of the Society of Dyers and Colourists*, the *Transactions of the Institution of the Rubber Industry* and the *Structural Engineer*; on the scientific side, the omission of the *Memoirs of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society* is doubtless an oversight. These omissions could be rectified in a second edition, when the principle of selection on the technological side might perhaps be made clearer.

The chief criticism to be made of the list in its present form is that an arrangement in alphabetical order under publishing organisations is not the most useful or convenient form for users, in spite of the inclusion of an index to the names of journals and a general subject index. The publishers' names would more appropriately have been collected in a separate index, and the periodicals would more usefully have been arranged alphabetically by title.

R. BRIGHTMAN

**Synthetic Petrol**

By Dr. S. L. Bhatia. (Indian Science News, 3.) Pp. xv+92. (Delhi: The Author, University of Delhi, 1950.) 2 rupees.

THE underlying theme of this booklet is that India is, like Great Britain, largely dependent on foreign countries for supplies of petrol, in her case Burma, Iraq, Iran, Arabia and Indonesia. Since the National Government of India was formed and "with the attainment of freedom", demand for petrol has increased. The object the author has in presenting the facts about synthetic petrol is to arouse the interest of laymen, manufacturers, chemists and engineers, to say nothing of the Government of India itself, to the vital importance of building up a key industry on national lines comparable with what has already been done in America, Britain, Germany and Japan.

The subject is dealt with by giving a brief history of the development of processes for producing synthetic petrol in the countries mentioned, discussing raw material involved (coal and hydrogen) and their chemistry, outlining the principal methods of manufacture of synthetic petrol (hydrogenation of coal and the Fischer-Tropsch process), concluding with a chapter on antiknock materials and knock rating of motor fuels, and also a bibliography. As a contribution to the "India at Work" series of publications, this little book will undoubtedly fulfil its author's intentions, but it is not exactly easy reading for the layman, perhaps others too, for whom it was written; it also suffers from being untidily printed.