

from the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, P.O. Box 8018, Wellington, New Zealand, or through the High Commissioner for New Zealand, 415 Strand, London, W.C.2, or through any bookseller.

Metallurgist

THE papers included in this publication (*Metallurgist*, No. 1; January 1957. Monthly Industrial Technical Journal of the Ministry of Iron and Steel of the U.S.S.R. In English translation. Pp. ii+69. Annual subscription: 95 dollars; single issues: 20 dollars. New York: Consultants Bureau, Inc., 1957) are mainly short, and of widely differing degrees of importance. All deal with the iron and steel industry and are of a severely practical character, in some cases little more than instructions to foremen. The subjects dealt with range over the whole industry, from the charging of the blast furnace to refractories for open-hearth furnaces and regenerators, tube production, galvanizing and the handling of frozen ore. There are, however, one or two contributions of a more substantial nature, of which that on the use of magnesium as a deoxidant in the production of basic Bessemer rail steel may perhaps be particularly cited. Added to the steel in the ladle in the form of a silico-magnesium alloy containing 64 per cent silicon and 12 per cent magnesium, experimental melts are reported in which 2 and 6 lb. of this alloy per ton of steel have been added, together with ferro-manganese and a small amount of aluminium. The mechanical properties of the steel so treated appear to be satisfactory, and it is claimed that the quantity of non-metallic inclusions is appreciably reduced. Perhaps the most interesting feature is, however, the increased toughness, as measured by some form of impact test: at 0° C. the steel treated with the magnesium alloy had a 'resilience' of about 1.7 kgm./cm.², as compared with about 0.8 for the material treated in the normal way. It may well be that among the practical papers points of interest will be found, but the general impression obtained is of a standard of technique lower than that which is normal in the West.

Technical Change and Industrial Relations

IN the first of a new series of booklets, intended to present briefly and simply the results of current research into the social, economic and technical problems of industrial progress, which the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research is commissioning and editing, Olive Banks and Dr. W. M. Scott have summarized the intensive study of technical change in a large British steel-works made by the Industrial Research Section of the Department of Social Science at the University of Liverpool and published under the title "Technical Change and Industrial Relations" (cf. *Nature*, 179, 331; 1957). The booklet (Problems of Progress in Industry, No. 1: Men, Steel and Technical Change. Pp. 36. London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1957. 2s.) first outlines the technical changes concerned and their effects on the labour force. Next the problems of management involved and the relations between trade unions and management are described. The attitudes to technical change are summarized and a case study of the melting shop is described before the conclusions reached are outlined and the implications for industry in general indicated. Like the rest of the series, the booklet is planned to assist responsible officials on both sides to digest and use

new material, but it is no disparagement of an excellent summary to suggest that no responsible official is likely to stop short of the lucid conclusions of the main report itself.

Domestic Pets

A BRIEF survey by Political and Economic Planning shows that the attractions of domestic pets for British people are undiminished ("Economics of Domestic Pets," 2s. 6d.). Fifteen million homes in Britain have many domestic pets: dogs, cats, pet mice, hamsters and guinea pigs, rabbits, fish and birds of many kinds. In earlier days the status of pets was in many ways marginal, in that they were often regarded as eaters and snappers up of unconsidered trifles. The position is very different to-day. Total expenditure on pets is more than £50 million a year. The provision of special foods and equipment for pet animals and birds has developed into a considerable activity. Sales of prepared foods for cats and dogs amount to about £10 million a year and now form part of an important industry. Large sums are spent on advertising pet foods of various kinds, while puppies and kittens often rival female charms as suitable material for advertising copy. The Zoological Society of London has received so many requests for advice that it now issues a booklet ("Advice on Pets," 1s. 3d.) on how to feed, house and care for a wide variety of pets, ranging from foxes and monkeys to chameleons.

Manchester Public Libraries

THE annual report of the Manchester Public Libraries Committee for the year ended March 31, 1957 (105th Annual Report of the Libraries Committee, 1956-1957. Pp. 27. Manchester Public Libraries, 1957), records an increase of 75,728 in books consulted in the reference libraries (977,496), and of 89,454 in those lent by the lending libraries (5,632,747). Of the grand total of 1,137,732 volumes, 458,814 are in the reference libraries, where the catalogues now contain 823,987 cards. Increased use was made of the microfilm reader and there was a steady growth in the use of the photocopying services. Readers in the Technical Library increased from 187,465 to 221,351, photocopies from 2,787 to 3,139, special loans to industry from 717 to 1,208, and telephone inquiries from 3,849 to 5,976, while the part played by the Technical Library in education is stressed equally with its services to industry. During the year it was agreed that the Technical Library should also be a depository for open reports on nuclear energy to be issued by the European Atomic Energy Project. The Commercial Library, which received 9,324 telephone inquiries compared with 5,453 in 1953, has compiled an index to statistical publications available in the reference libraries. Two reading lists on the European Common Market were issued, and the Commercial Library now holds 2,243 current directories and takes 574 periodicals.

The Sixteenth-Century Pokom-Maya

THE Pokom are a Maya group with two closely related subdivisions, the Pokomchi and the Pokoman. The former hold a small territory in the Alta Verapaz, Guatemala; the latter formerly occupied the eastern highlands of Guatemala, including the present-day Guatemala City, and adjacent parts of El Salvador. Pokom-speaking enclaves still exist, but much of their original culture has been lost. To reconstruct