author. Some of the remarks are given above. I do not quite share his opinion that the "methodologist" has only to describe the methods used by the physicists or the scientists in general. Even a non-expert may see sometimes, by general considerations, ways which the researchman should go. Plato and Aristotle were no mathematicians, Bacon no physicist in a proper sense, but, undoubtedly, they furthered the development of mathematics and physics. That Aristotle was an impediment to the development of physics was the fault of "experts" who adhered in a slavish way to his physical theories. The outsider *sometimes* sees more of the general landscape of science, where the scientific workers go the toilsome ways which lead to discoveries.

In his conclusions the author presents certain "indefeasible facts" of the scientific situation, for instance that in modern physics metaphysical explanatory theories are excluded. His last "conclusion" is somewhat metaphysical and not easily accepted, namely that science approaches "asymptotically" a perfectly adequate account of reality. And it is given as an "indefeasible fact of the human situation—that the Human Spirit is one and that the different activities in which it expresses itself must in the end arrive at the same conclusion." It is difficult for me to imagine common conclusions which will be reached "asymptotically" by the Human Spirit in its metaphysical, social and scientific activities.

Only one little critical remark: the mathematical reader will be astonished to find on page 94, quoted from Poincaré, an erroneous description of the method of mathematical induction.

M. DEHN

Transients in linear systems, studied by the Laplace transform. Vol. I. By M. F. Gardner and J. L. Barnes, New York, Wiley; London, Chapman and Hall, 1942. 9+389 pp. $5.00.

This book is remarkable in that it is perhaps the first serious attempt to present the theory of the Laplace transform to the mathematics or engineering student at an early stage of his studies. For the complete understanding of this transform it is necessary to have mastered the theory of functions of a complex variable. This fact has hitherto barred many a student from the use of a valuable analytic tool until rather late in his mathematical career. The present work shows conclusively that this delay is unnecessary.

The authors are able to place the fundamental idea of the method before the reader even in the first chapter. The essence of the matter consists in replacing by the Laplace transform one function space