

Geschichte der Mathematik. Teil I: Von den Anfängen bis zum Auftreten von Fermat und Descartes. By Joseph E. Hofmann. (Sammlung Göschen Band 226/226a) 2., verbesserte und vermehrte Auflage. Walter de Gruyter and Co., Berlin, 1963. 251 pages. 5. 80 DM.

This second edition of part I of Prof. Hofmann's successful History of Mathematics has been augmented, apart from minor corrections and additions, by the incorporation of new results of historical research on the discovery of irrational numbers and on Babylonian, Chinese, Arabic and Byzantine mathematics.

The unmatched 50-page index of mathematicians (stating the dates, major publications and editions of each as well as secondary reference sources) has been brought up to date; the subject index, enlarged from 2 to 10 pages, guides very well when information on any particular topic is sought.

The text of the first edition had been published in an English translation, but the indispensable bibliographies and indices had been omitted. It is to be hoped that the second German edition will soon be made available in a complete English translation which does not suppress these very essential parts that make the little volume a mine of information for the student as well as for the research worker in the history of mathematics.

C. J. Scriba, Oxford

Interpolation and Approximation, by Philip J. Davis. Blaisdell Publishing Company, New York-Toronto-London, 1963. xiv + 393 pages. \$12. 50.

This is an introductory book on approximation, which appears in Blaisdell's series of text, "designed for use in upper undergraduate courses and in the early years of graduate study". The selection of material shows a good taste. A wide field is covered, functions of real and of complex variables are treated. Considerable attention is paid to the point of view of Functional Analysis. In spite of the author's distinguished carrier in Computation, questions of numerical analysis are not discussed. The style is leisurely; the author does not spare effort to make the details clear to the reader. Of course, not all important subjects could be represented. This is not always a loss, for things like the inverse theorems of approximation, divergence and convergence of interpolation processes for functions of a real variable, may be found elsewhere. A comparison with another excellent introductory book, I. P. Natanson, Konstruktive Funktionentheorie, Berlin, 1955 (Russian edition 1949) presents itself at this place. The book of Davis covers a wider field, has a great number