



Elementary Mathematics from an Advanced Standpoint - Arithmetic - Algebra - Analysis

Felix Klein

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FELIX KLEIN ELEMENTARY MATHEMATICS FROM AN ADVANCED STANDPOINT-
ARITHMETIC- ALGEBRA -ANALYSIS. TRANSLATED FROM THE THIRD GERMAN EDITION BY
E. R. HEDRICK AND C. A. NOBLE PROFESSOR OF MATHEMATICS PROFESSOR OF
MATHEMATICS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
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SPAMERSCHE BUCHDRUCKEREI LEIPZIG Preface to the First Edition. The new volume which I
herewith offer to the mathematical public, and especially to the teachers of mathematics in our secondary
schools, is to be looked upon as a first continuation of the lectures *Über den mathematischen Unterricht an
den höheren Schulen*, in particular, of those on *Die Organisation des mathematischen Unterrichts* by
Schimmack and me, which were published last year by Teubner. At that time our concern was with the
different ways in which the problem of instruction can be presented to the mathematician. At present my
concern is with developments in the subject matter of instruction. I shall endeavor to put before the teacher,
as well as the maturing student, from the view-point of modern science, but in a manner as simple,
stimulating, and convincing as possible, both the content and the foundations of the topics of instruction,
with due regard for the current methods of teaching. I shall not follow a systematically ordered presentation,
as do, for example, Weber and Wellstein, but I shall allow myself free excursions as the changing stimulus of
surroundings may lead me to do in the course of the actual lectures. The program thus indicated, which for
the present is to be carried out only for the fields of Arithmetic, Algebra, and Analysis, was indicated in the
preface to Klein-Schimmack April 1907. I had hoped then that Mr. Schimmack, in spite of many obstacles,
would still find the time to put my lectures into form suitable for printing. But I myself, in a way, prevented
his doing this by continuously claiming his time for work in another direction upon pedagogical questions
that interested us both. It soon became clear that the original plan could not be carried out, particularly if the
work was to be finished in a short time, which seemed desirable if it was to have any real influence upon
those problems of instruction which are just now in the foreground. As in previous years, then, I had recourse
to the more convenient method of lithographing my lectures, especially since my present assistant, Dr. Ernst
Hellinger, showed himself especially well qualified for this work. One should not underestimate the service
which Dr. Hellinger rendered. For it is a far cry from the spoken word of the teacher, influenced as it is by
accidental conditions, to the subsequently polished and readable record. On the teaching of mathematics in
the secondary schools. The organization of mathematical instruction. IV In precision of statement and in
uniformity of explanations, the lecturer stops short of what we are accustomed to consider necessary for a
printed publication. I hesitate to commit myself to still further publications on the teaching of mathematics,
at least for the field of geometry. I prefer to close with the wish that the present lithographed volume may
prove useful by inducing many of the teachers of our higher schools to renewed use of independent thought
in determining the best way of presenting the material of instruction. This book is designed solely as such a
mental spur, not as a detailed handbook. The preparation of the latter I leave to those actively engaged in the
schools. It is an error to assume, as some appear to have done, that my activity has ever had any other
purpose...

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