

MATHEMATICAL PROGRESS IN AMERICA.

*PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE AMERICAN
MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY AT ITS ELEVENTH AN-
NUAL MEETING DECEMBER 29, 1904.*

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IN the remarks that follow, I shall limit myself to a brief consideration of progress in pure mathematics. This I may do the more appropriately, inasmuch as one of my predecessors, Professor R. S. Woodward, at the annual meeting of 1899, gave an account of the advances made in applied mathematics during the nineteenth century. In his address, which was published in the *BULLETIN* for January, 1900,* is included a description of the more important advances made by Americans in the field of applied mathematics.

In tracing the development of pure mathematics in America, it seems convenient to recognize three periods. The first period extends from colonial days up to the establishment of the Johns Hopkins University in 1876; the second period extends from the establishment of the Johns Hopkins University up to 1891, when the New York Mathematical Society took on a national character and began the publication of its *BULLETIN*; the third period extends from 1891 up to the present time.

The most valuable source from which the general reader may secure information in regard to the first period, is a work entitled *The Teaching and History of Mathematics in the United States*.† This work, written by Professor Florian Cajori, was published in 1890 by the United States Bureau of Education.

Before the founding of Johns Hopkins University there was almost no attempt made to prosecute or even to stimulate in a systematic manner research in the field of pure mathematics. Such mathematical journals as were published were scientifically of little importance and as a rule lived but a year or two. The only exception that we need mention was the *Analyst*, edited by Dr. J. E. Hendricks and published at Des Moines, Ia., from 1874 to 1883; and the publication of this journal began practically at the close of the period referred to above.

* *BULLETIN*, series 2, vol. 6, pp. 133-163.

† U. S. Bureau of Education, Circular of Information No. 3, 1890.