
The Treasury of Mathematics; a collection of source material in mathematics edited and presented with introductory biographical and historical sketches. *Henrietta O. Midonick* ed. Philosophical Library, New York, 1965. xxiv+820 p. \$15.00.

The editor has, in her words, "collected significant contributions to the development of mathematics, selecting such as changed and influenced the course of human action, paying special attention to those whose lasting effect is discernible today." The selections, translated into English when necessary, are taken from over fifty sources, from the Moscow papyrus of 1850 B.C., the Rhind papyrus, Wan Wang, and Chou Kung, through Euclid, Archimedes, Brahmagupta, the Mayans, Chaucer (on the astrolabe), Newton, Leibniz, and Gauss, to Cantor, Frege, and C. S. Peirce, ending at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The audience for this book (at such a price!) is rather limited. Nearly all of the selections are available in books or journal articles published since 1880. Many of the classic works (by Plato, Euclid, Archimedes, Descartes, Boole, Cantor, etc.) have been recently reprinted in their entirety in inexpensive editions. The editor has, however, presented one new translation (G. Cramer), and has used fifteen pages from a microfilm of Robert Recorde's *The Whetstone of Witte*.

While some of the selections are self-contained, and may be read with profit and enjoyment by a person with a reasonable background in elementary mathematics, quite a few of the selections (especially the ancient ones) can be appreciated only by persons familiar with ancient mathematical styles of exposition; but for such persons the selections offered are insufficient.

The type in which the book is set is large and clear. However, the press did not have sufficient facilities for composing mathematical material. Hence some symbols (such as fractional exponents) had to be written in, and many formulas, footnotes, and even whole pages were reproduced photographically from the sources. This is especially noticeable on pages 190-191. A book to be used as a reference work should have clearly marked page headings and an index. This book has neither.

LEROY F. MEYERS