

THE FIRST CARUS MONOGRAPH

Calculus of Variations. By Gilbert Ames Bliss. Carus Mathematical Monographs, No. 1. Published for the Mathematical Association of America by the Open Court Publishing Company, Chicago, 1925. 13+189 pp.

One of the important concepts introduced into mathematical thought by E. H. Moore is that of the "Extensional Attainability" of properties (see New Haven Colloquium Lectures, p. 53). This concept, apart from its technical significance in the theory of properties of classes, admits of another interpretation of perhaps broader applicability, one suggestive of conquest. So, an infant reaching out for its playthings might be said to be experimenting with the extensional attainability of satisfaction for its desires; explorers illustrate the extensional attainability of man's control over the globe; other instances will occur to the reader.

The Carus Mathematical Monographs, of which Professor Bliss's book is the first, are intended "to contribute to the dissemination of mathematical knowledge by making accessible at nominal cost a series of expository presentations of the best thoughts and keenest researches in pure and applied mathematics," "in a manner comprehensible not only to teachers and students specializing in mathematics, but also to scientific workers in other fields, and especially to the wide circle of thoughtful people who, having a moderate acquaintance with elementary mathematics, wish to extend their knowledge without prolonged and critical study of the mathematical journals and treatises." Is this not an exhibition of faith in the extensional attainability of a mathematically informed public? It certainly is most fitting that this series of monographs should have been conceived by a Chicago group and that its first number should come from the pen of one of the members of the Department of Mathematics at the University of Chicago.

To Mrs. Mary Hegeler Carus and to her son Dr. Edward Carus belongs the honor of having recognized the importance of such an undertaking and of having provided the necessary means. Through the publication of these books, the Open Court Publishing Company continues its fine service to mathematical education in this country.

To Professor H. E. Slaught belongs the credit for the inception of the idea which gave rise to the monographs and for having solicitously guided it to successful realization. This series of books will forever be a reminder of his farsighted and intelligent devotion to the cause of mathematical education and to his skill in leading it on into new and significant fields of conquest.

In how far the wider dissemination of knowledge contributes to the