

EARLE RAYMOND HEDRICK—IN MEMORIAM

On the morning of February 3, 1943, the announcement was made from the Rhode Island Hospital at Providence that Dr. Hedrick had just died. He had been a patient with an infected lung since early in November.

When he retired from the office of Provost and the Vice President of the University of California at Los Angeles he accepted a position as Visiting Professor of Mathematics at Brown University, and had just begun his duties there when he was stricken. The shock to the University can well be understood; it was felt throughout the academic world.

It is fitting that we pause to meditate on the life and work of this remarkable man.

Earle Raymond Hedrick was born at Union City, Indiana, September 27, 1876 of Dutch and German ancestry (Hetrig was the earlier spelling). The family migrated to Pennsylvania about 1670.

The principal biographical facts are given adequately in the *Semi-centennial history of the American Mathematical Society, 1888–1938, with biographies and bibliographies of the past presidents*, by Professor R. C. Archibald, for 21 years librarian of the Society. This volume contains a complete list of his mathematical writings to that time, and much of the history of his contribution to the development of mathematics in America. The following statements are taken from it.

When the late Frank Nelson Cole retired from his various offices in the Society in 1921 an opportunity was afforded to make numerous fundamental changes in the organization and administration of the Society.

Hedrick was appointed editor-in-chief of the BULLETIN. This office he held until his appointment to that of Provost and Vice President of the University of California at Los Angeles in 1937. It was a period of unparalleled mathematical development in America, and with it were evolved many details in arrangement, style of type, etc., that have contributed in no small degree to the usefulness of the periodical, such as the listings of New Publications, and differentiating in the contents of odd and even numbers. In this process the size of each volume was practically doubled.

Simultaneously with this development in the make-up of the BULLETIN the standard for the acceptance of material became necessarily high, and the effective presentation of the complex material notable. All this required an enormous amount of personal attention

to detail. The total effects of these efforts on the place and the tone of mathematics in America can hardly be overestimated.

In appreciation of this service the Council of the American Mathematical Society directed that volume 44 (1938) of the BULLETIN be dedicated to him. The frontispiece of the volume bears his portrait.

From his earliest years Dr. Hedrick always showed a keen interest in teaching mathematics from the preparatory school to the graduate school. His translation of Goursat's *Cours d'analyse* and (in collaboration with the late C. A. Noble) of the first third of Klein's *Elementarmathematik vom höheren Standpunkte aus* rendered great service to students and college teachers. In 1916 the Mathematical Association of America was founded and Hedrick was elected as its first president.

The effort to improve the quality of teaching was always in the foreground during his professorship at the University of Missouri. A notable contribution is the Series of Mathematical Texts, about forty volumes, of which he was general editor. In addition to secondary school and elementary college texts, this series includes several important works of a more advanced nature.

His interest in mechanics early resulted (1909) in the publication (with the late O. D. Kellogg) of the *Applications of the calculus to mechanics* which proved to be a particularly useful book for those teaching calculus to engineers. Besides his own contributions, he has also been editor of 34 volumes by various authors in the notable Engineering Science Series. Moreover, for five years he was secretary of Section A of A.A.A.S.

His services as administrative officer of the University of California at Los Angeles will be fittingly treated on another occasion.

During the last year he was active in the affairs of the School of Mechanics at Brown University.

In all his numerous and exacting duties, each performed with great patience and consummate skill, the main characteristic of this man was his consideration of human attributes. He was always interested, he was always sympathetic and he was always helpful. Probably no one has put a deeper imprint on the development of numerous lines mentioned here than he.

VIRGIL SNYDER