BOOK REVIEWS


The first Encyclopedia of Elementary Mathematics was the popular three-volume work of H. M. Weber (1842–1913) and J. Wellstein (1869–1919), Encyklopädie der Elementar-Mathematik, first published in 1903–1907; it went through several editions.

Already in a 1909 session of the Society Mathesis there were advocates for the preparation and publication of an Italian Encyclopedia of Mathematics, but it was nearly a score of years later before the project actually took tangible form. One may, however, regard as a sort of preliminary presentation of Encyclopedia topics the remarkably successful work edited by F. Enriques (1871–1946), Questioni riguardanti le matematiche elementari, in two large volumes, 1912–1914. The volumes, in which numerous specialists wrote on the various topics, were appreciably enlarged in the third edition, a dozen years later.

But finally, in 1930, under the editorship of Luigi Berzolari (1863–1949), Giulio Vivanti (1859–1949), and Duilio Gigli (1878–1933), appeared the first part of the first volume of Enciclopedia delle matematiche elementari; the second part was published in 1932, both parts (each with its own author index) making a volume of nearly 1100 pages. This volume, devoted to arithmetic, computation, algebra, and analysis, by 9 authors, was the only one of the Enciclopedia previously reviewed in this Bulletin (vol. 38 (1932) pp. 156–157). The general editorial plan of this volume was also carried out in the second. Only the more fundamental theorems were proved, but there is a constant wealth of bibliographic references where further information may be gleaned.

The second volume, in two parts, 1937–1938, of over 1200 pages and by 16 authors, was devoted to topics in geometry. Gigli had then died and it was the last one in which Vivanti appeared as joint editor.

Of the third volume, 1947–1950, Berzolari was the sole editor, but he died before the final printing of the great second part of the volume was published. In this part is a brief biographical sketch of the editor and the frontispiece is his portrait. The volume is dedicated to varied
applications of mathematics, pure and applied, to their history, and to didactic questions. The bibliographic references are not quite as full as in the earlier volumes, especially in connection with some of the monographs, but they are still valuable.


To the completion of the *Enciclopedia* 49 authors—all of them distinguished specialists—contributed during the 20 years of its publication, and it is indeed most worthy of a place on a shelf of every university library. Almost every mathematician would be sure to find something of interest in this admirably edited work.

R. C. Archibald