

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON AID TO DEVASTATED LIBRARIES

A Committee on Aid to Devastated Libraries was appointed by the Council of the American Mathematical Society in May, 1945 (Garrett Birkhoff, H. S. Bray, William Feller, Gabor Szegő, A. W. Tucker, Arnold Dresden), for the purpose of gathering information as to the needs of foreign libraries and formulating plans for meeting their needs. In August, 1946, the Committee was reorganized (P. A. Smith, Leo Zippin, Arnold Dresden), for the task of distributing the material that had been received.

The Trustees of the Society put at the disposal of the Committee available publications of the Society to a value not exceeding \$1500, as well as an amount not exceeding \$300, for operating expenses. This generous aid was supplemented by many gifts in kind and in cash, from the Mathematical Association of America, American Philosophical Society, National Bureau of Standards, the Annals of Mathematics, the Duke Journal, and a considerable number of individuals including groups of students at Mount Holyoke College, Long Island University, and Swarthmore College. The Committee takes this opportunity to express their appreciation to all these contributors.

The distribution of the material thus obtained would not have been possible without the aid of the American Book Center. Thanks are due to former and present officers of this organization, in particular to Mr. Kenneth R. Shaffner, Mr. Lawrence J. Kipp, and to Miss Alice D. Ball. Through their cooperation it has been possible to send packages of periodicals and of books to thirty-five institutions in fifteen countries in Europe and Asia.

That this material has been gratefully received is evidenced by the letters of appreciation which have been received by the Committee. But what has been sent does not begin to fill the great needs which exist in many places, and which are emphasized by the remarkable upsurge of mathematical activity in many parts of the world. A great deal of aid has been given by other groups, such as the University of California (especially to the University of the Philippines), the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton University, and a group for Aid to Polish mathematicians, and so on. But legitimate requests continue to reach the Committee.

A report presented to the Council and approved at the Annual Meeting of the Society at Columbus, Ohio on December 28, 1948.

Since this Committee has now completed the task given it by the Council of the American Mathematical Society, such requests have to be referred to other agencies. Among them the most active is the United States Book Exchange, Incorporated (Miss Alice D. Ball, Executive Director), Library of Congress Building, Washington 25, D. C., which carries forward and extends the work begun by the American Book Center. The Committee directs therefore the attention of American mathematicians to this organization, in the hope that they will keep in mind the tremendous need for books and periodicals which continues to exist in many countries, and that they will communicate with the United States Book Exchange in all cases in which it is not feasible for them to forward their gifts abroad directly.

It is hoped that it will be possible to publish in the *BULLETIN OF THE AMERICAN MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY* from time to time the specific requests which are made known to the undersigned. Only a short time ago a request came from Professor Threlfall in Heidelberg for the following books:

Lectures on topology, University of Michigan, 1941

Duke Mathematical Journal, vol. 5, except Nos. 1, 4; vol. 6, except No. 3; vol. 7 and following

Mathematical Reviews, vol. 1, except No. 1; vol. 2, except No. 11; vol. 7 and following

Wintner, *The analytical foundations of celestial mechanics*

von Kármán, *Mathematical methods in engineering*

Courant, *What is mathematics?*

Courant, *Differential and integral calculus*

For the Committee
ARNOLD DRESDEN