

DEAR SIR,

Prof. Hill's question on page 281, vol. viii., seems irrelevant. Taking the example $9 - 6 \div 3 \times 2 + 4$, it is obvious that the presence of the 9- and the +4 have nothing whatever to do with the interpretation of $6 \div 3 \times 2$, so that Rule 1 may stand. I should vote for the retention of Rules 1 and 2 on the ground that, after using them, boys will be able to see more clearly why brackets become necessary. It is a valuable lesson for them to learn the difference between $3 + 4 \times 5$ and $(3 + 4) \times 5$; and I fail to see that any real effort of memory is required.

Rule 3, about "of," is new to me, and is ambiguous; surely $\frac{3}{4}$ of $4 + 5$ is never interpreted to mean $\frac{3}{4}$ of 9!

One word more about "of." The expressions $\frac{3}{4}$ of a cake, $\frac{3}{4}$ of 20, are soon understood by youngsters; but $20 \times \frac{3}{4}$ is a mystery. Yet hundreds of boys are allowed to write

$$\frac{3}{4} \text{ of } 20 = 20 \times \frac{3}{4} = 2^0 \times \frac{3}{4} = \text{etc.}$$

This, at the early stage, should be deprecated.—Yours faithfully,
R. W. GENESE.

REPORT OF SYDNEY BRANCH FOR 1916.

THE past year has been a very successful one. The membership now stands at 50, 14 of whom are members of the Mathematical Association. Three meetings have been held during the year, the attendances have been good and the addresses excellent. In November, 1915, F. G. Brown, B.A., B.Sc., formerly Director of Studies, Australian Royal Naval College, gave an address entitled, "Some Real Applications of Elementary Mechanics." In August, 1916, E. M. Wellisch, M.A., Lecturer in Applied Mathematics, University of Sydney, read a paper on "Some Famous Problems in Mathematics and Physics." In September, 1916, D. K. Picken, M.A., Master of Ormond College, University of Melbourne, gave an address entitled "A Modern Equivalent to Euclid," a plea for a modern, thoroughly commonsense statement of geometrical theory with all the merits of Euclidean presentation. One important feature of our work is the circulation of the *Mathematical Gazette* among the members of the Branch.

R. J. MIDDLETON, *Hon. Secretary.*

THE LIBRARY.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

THE Library is now at 9 Brunswick Square, W.C., the new premises of the Teachers' Guild.

The Librarian acknowledges, with thanks, the presentation, by the Clarendon Press, of a copy of *Statics: A First Course*. C. O. Tuckey and W. A. Naylor.

SCARCE BACK NUMBERS.

Reserves are kept of A.I.G.T. Reports and Gazettes, and, from time to time, orders come for sets of these. We are now unable to fulfil such orders for want of certain back numbers, which the Librarian will be glad to buy from any member who can spare them, or to exchange other back numbers for them:

Gazette No. 8 (very important).
A.I.G.T. Report No. 11 (very important).
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