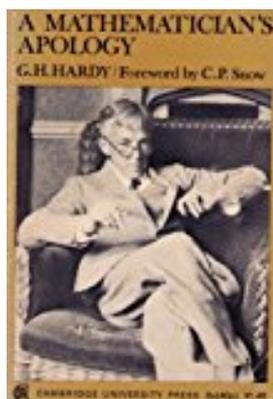


[PDF] A Mathematician's Apology

G. H. Hardy - pdf download free book



Books Details:

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Author: G. H. Hardy
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Description:

A Mathematician's Apology is a profoundly sad book, the memoir of a man who has reached the end of his ambition, who can no longer effectively practice the art that has consumed him since he was a boy. But at the same time, it is a joyful celebration of the subject--and a stern lecture to those who would sully it by dilettantism or attempts to make it merely useful. "The mathematician's patterns," G.H. Hardy declares, "like the painter's or the poet's, must be *beautiful*; the ideas, like the colours or the words, must fit together in a harmonious way. Beauty is the first test: there is no permanent place in the world for ugly mathematics."

Hardy was, in his own words, "for a short time the fifth best pure mathematician in the world" and knew full well that "no mathematician should ever allow himself to forget that mathematics, more than any other art or science, is a young man's game." In a long biographical foreword to *Apology*, C.P. Snow (now best known for *The Two Cultures*) offers invaluable background and a context for his friend's occasionally brusque tone: "His life remained the life of a brilliant young man until he was old; so did his spirit: his games, his interests, kept the lightness of a young don's. And, like many men who keep a young man's interests into their sixties, his last years were the darker for it." Reading Snow's recollections of Hardy's Cambridge University years only makes *Apology* more poignant. Hardy was popular, a terrific conversationalist, and a notoriously good cricket player.

When summer came, it was taken for granted that we should meet at the cricket ground.... He used to walk round the cinderpath with a long, loping, clumping-footed stride (he was a slight spare man, physically active even in his late fifties, still playing real tennis), head down, hair, tie, sweaters, papers all flowing, a figure that caught everyone's eyes. "There goes a Greek poet, I'll be bound," once said some cheerful farmer as Hardy passed the score-board.

G.H. Hardy's elegant 1940 memoir has provided generations of mathematicians with pithy quotes and examples for their office walls, and plenty of inspiration to either be great or find something else to do. He is a worthy mentor, a man who understood deeply and profoundly the rewards and losses of true devotion. --*Therese Littleton* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Review 'A classic tale of retrospection considering wider, powerful themes in mathematics.'
Mathematics Today --This text refers to an alternate edition.

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