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EDITOR'S NOTE

The Mathematical Association is concerned with the teaching and the uses of mathematics at all levels. The 5 articles which follow illustrate a variety of experiments, and readers of the *Gazette* are invited to submit accounts of a similar nature from their own experiences. Novel approaches to work among younger children will be particularly welcome, especially if the articles give some indication of how that work will be expected to link up with what follows as the pupils proceed to the next stages.

THE NEW "MATH" IN AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOLS

BY E. B. C. THORNTON

Revolutionary ideas about the teaching of high school "math" have been fermenting in the United States since the 1950s. Several major experimental courses have been pioneered and in addition unpublished courses on similar lines are being used in some of the 20,000 high schools and junior schools throughout the nation. In examining these ideas the Englishman needs to consider them in the context of American mathematical education, and this in turn needs to be viewed against the background of American education, which is different in detail, method and philosophy from the English system.

GENERAL

Roughly 35% of American children aged 12 go on to work for a first degree at "college" (college or university). Of these, 5-8%, corresponding to the proportion who go to university in England, go on to higher or professional degrees after their bachelor's degree. The six years before they reach college are catered for in various ways. Some go straight to High School, some spend three years at Junior High first, some spend two more years at elementary school