

amplitude is increased to 180° the period will tend to infinity, since the system no longer behaves as a simple pendulum but rotates in a vertical circle.

From this it follows that if a graph of θ_{\max} against period is drawn, it will be symmetrical about the line $\theta_{\max} = 0$, and it will have asymptotes at $\pm 180^\circ$. Apart from this the graph is rather like a parabola of the form $X^2 = Y - 3.22$ except, of course, that this does not have asymptotes.

P. J. B.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE GEOMETRY REPORT

To the Editor of the *Mathematical Gazette*.

DEAR SIR,—It has been pointed out to me that some of your readers have expressed surprise that in my Presidential Address to the Association last April I did not refer to the Association's *Report on the Teaching of Geometry*, and that the absence of any such reference might be taken to mean that I did not approve of the Report. May I be allowed some of your space to refute any such suggestion.

As the Report (p. 2) states, "The point of view of the main body of mathematicians, and of groups, such as the lecturers in a single university, is continually changing." Coming from one of our ancient universities which has a strong geometrical tradition, my sole intention was to try to give my audience some idea of the current views held by one group of contemporary geometers, and in particular to point out that geometry, instead of being the unwanted child it was for a number of years, is now the most prosperous member of the mathematical family. I did not mean to imply that recent developments called for any immediate change in school mathematics, and I merely wished to share the good news that geometry once more occupies a fundamental place in mathematical science with my audience, most of whom had studied geometry at a university.

I have re-read the Report, and find nothing in it which I wish to criticise; indeed, I am full of admiration for the way in which the Report reconciles the opposing needs of dealing on the one hand with the unwilling school boy and, on the other, of providing a sound foundation in the principles of geometry for the more gifted pupils. As I said in my Address, my experience does not qualify me to give advice to those who have laboured long in the training of school children. If I make any plea, it is that in sixth forms, and elsewhere, the emphasis should be on a few basic principles, and riders should only be used to illustrate these principles and to promote enjoyment of the subject, never as a penance.

Yours faithfully,

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