

## MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

### HANS FREDERIK BLICHFELDT (1873 - 1945)

In the death on November 16, 1945 of Hans Frederik Blichfeldt, Professor of Mathematics, Emeritus, Stanford University has lost one of its most distinguished faculty members and alumni.

Professor Blichfeldt was born in Iller, Denmark, on January 9, 1873 and came to the United States in 1888. After residence in Nebraska, Oregon, and Washington, he entered Stanford University as an undergraduate student and received the A.B. degree in Mathematics in 1896 and the A.M. in 1897. He then went to the University of Leipzig where he was a student of the great mathematician, Sophus Lie, and where he took the Ph. D. degree in 1898. Returning to Stanford University, he joined the faculty as Instructor in Mathematics in 1898 and advanced to Assistant Professor in 1901, to Associate Professor in 1906, and to Professor in 1913. In 1927 he became Executive Head of the Department of Mathematics, a position he held until his retirement in 1938.

Professor Blichfeldt's work in the theory of groups and the geometry of numbers is of lasting and fundamental importance. Advancing over the work of mathematicians of such high standing as Klein and Jordan, he was able to solve the difficult problem of finding all finite collineation groups in four variables. In the geometry of numbers, by discovering a new principle, he opened new ways in this branch of mathematics created by Minkowski. The determination of precise limits for minima of definite quadratic forms in six, seven, and eight variables will always remain as a classical achievement. These results were published by him in a number of papers in various mathematical periodicals in the United States and in Europe. It is to be noted that many recent papers by other authors are based essentially on his work. In addition, Professor Blichfeldt published in 1916, in collaboration with L. E. Dickson and G. A. Miller, Theory and Application of Finite Groups, and in 1917, his book on Finite Collineation Groups.

He was a member for many years of the American Mathematical Society and of the Mathematical Association of America and took an active part in their meetings. He served as vice president of the former in 1912 as well as, from time to time, upon various of its committees. In 1920 he was elected to membership in the National Academy of Sciences. He served on the National Research Council from 1924 to 1927. In 1938 he was honored by the King of Denmark with the knighthood of the Order of Dannebrog.

He was always greatly interested in the possibilities for exchange of ideas between scientists and scholars of universities in this and other countries. He was influential in bringing to Stanford University visiting professors from both American and European Universities. He himself taught in the summers of 1911 at the University of Chicago and of 1924 and 1925 at Columbia University, and he served as official delegate of the United States to various international mathematical congresses.

Professor Blichfeldt was always keenly interested in students and in excellent teaching. He was the friend of any serious and hard working student, and he befriended many during his career. His colleagues join in tribute not only to his great scientific achievements, but also to his modesty, his consideration of others, and his friendliness. It can be said of him with unusual force: he was noted for his kindness.

Be it therefore resolved that the Academic Council of Stanford University extend its sympathy to his surviving relatives, that a copy of this memorial be sent to them and to the Board of Trustees of the University, and that this memorial be included in its minutes.

Harold Bacon, Chairman  
Lydik Jacobsen  
David L. Webster