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Insights and discoveries in mathematics are seldom superseded or replaced in the course of further development. Our understanding of a certain mathematical concept or theory may increase with time, and may even undergo significant reformulation, yet the objects and relations remain, in most cases, unchanged. In contrast, the objects to which theories in the natural sciences refer have changed significantly over time. Even more, the discovery of a new object in modern physics is now a statement of statistics, a reference to a set of observations with a very small  $p$ -value. As G. H. Hardy observed, the difference appears to be that “the mathematician is in much more direct contact with reality.” This talk will consider the implications of this difference between mathematics and the natural sciences, and then consider one significant exception: how early insights on the nature of a linear continuum, from Aristotle to Bradwardine, have given way to the modern view of the real line, and what may have been lost in the process. (Received September 02, 2014)