



A History of Physics: In Its Elementary Branches (Classic Reprint)

Florian Cajori

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Excerpt from A History of Physics: In Its Elementary Branches

This history is intended mainly for the use of students and teachers of physics. The writer is convinced that some attention to the history of a science helps to make it attractive, and that the general view of the development of the human intellect, obtained by reading the history of science, is in itself stimulating and liberalizing.

In the announcement of Ostwald's *Klassiker der Exakten Wissenschaften* is the following significant statement: "While, by the present methods of teaching, a knowledge of science in its present state of advancement is imparted very successfully, eminent and far-sighted men have repeatedly been obliged to point out a defect which too often attaches to the present scientific education of our youth. It is the absence of the historical sense and the want of knowledge of the great researches upon which the edifice of science rests.

It is hoped that the survey of the progress of physics here presented may assist in remedying this defect so clearly pointed out by Professor Ostwald.

As it seems best not to increase the size of the book beyond the limit originally intended, it is necessary to omit a few subjects which properly belong to elementary physics.

It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge my obligations to Mr. S. J. Barnett, Ph.D., and Mr. P. E. Doudna, A.M., of Colorado College, for assistance in proof-reading and for important suggestions and criticisms.

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