

**ELEMENTARY TREATISE ON
NATURAL PHILOSOPHY, IN FOUR
PARTS, PART I: MECHANICS,
HYDROSTATICS, AND
PNEUMATICS**

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Elementary Treatise on Natural Philosophy, in Four Parts, Part I: Mechanics, Hydrostatics, and Pneumatics by A. Privat Deschanel & J. D. Everett

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A. PRIVAT DESCHANEL & J. D. EVERETT

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HYDROSTATICS,
AND PNEUMATICS**

ELEMENTARY TREATISE
ON
NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

BY
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TRANSLATED AND EDITED, WITH EXTENSIVE ADDITIONS:

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IN FOUR PARTS.

PART I.
MECHANICS, HYDROSTATICS, AND PNEUMATICS,

ILLUSTRATED BY
151 ENGRAVINGS ON WOOD, AND ONE COLORED PLATE.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THE importance of the study of Physics is now generally acknowledged. Besides the interest of curiosity which attaches to the observation of nature, the experimental method furnishes one of the most salutary exercises for the mind—constituting in this respect a fitting supplement to the study of the mathematical sciences. The method of deduction employed in these latter, while eminently adapted to form the habit of strict reasoning, scarcely affords any exercise for the critical faculty which plays so important a part in the physical sciences. In Physics we are called upon, not to deduce rigorous consequences from an absolute principle, but to ascend from the particular consequences which alone are known to the general principle from which they flow. In this operation there is no absolutely certain method of procedure, and even relative certainty can only be attained by a discussion which calls into profitable exercise all the faculties of the mind.

Be this as it may, physical science has now taken an important place in education, and plays a prominent part in the examinations for the different university degrees. The present treatise is intended for the assistance of young men preparing for these degrees; but I trust that it may also be read with profit by those persons who, merely for purposes of self-instruction, wish to acquire accurate knowledge of natural phenomena. Having for nearly twenty years been charged with the duty of teaching from the chair of Physics in one of the lyceums of Paris, I have been under the necessity of making continual efforts to overcome the inherent difficulties of this branch of study. I have endeavoured to turn to account the experience thus acquired in the preparation of this volume, and I shall

be happy if I can thus contribute to advance the taste for a science which is at once useful and interesting.

For the convenience of candidates for the Bachelor's degree, I have appended to this treatise a number of problems, most of which have been taken from the examinations of the Faculty of Sciences of Paris or of the departments. With the same view I have made it my object to omit from the work none of the formulæ which are usually required for the solution of such questions. Beyond this point I have made very limited use of algebra. Though calculation is a precious and often indispensable auxiliary of physical science, the extent to which it can be advantageously employed varies greatly according to circumstances. There are in fact some phenomena which cannot be really understood without having recourse to measurement; but in a multitude of cases the explanation of phenomena can be rendered evident without resorting to numerical expression. In such cases calculation is of secondary importance, and may be said to be merely practical.

The physical sciences have of late years received very extensive developments. Facts have been multiplied indefinitely, and even theories have undergone great modifications. Hence arises considerable difficulty in selecting the most essential points and those which best represent the present state of science. I have done my best to cope with this difficulty, and I trust that the reader who attentively peruses my work, will be able to form a pretty accurate idea of the present position of physical science. I shall be happy in a second edition to avail myself of any observations which may be communicated to me on this or any other point.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE "TRAITÉ ÉLÉMENTAIRE DE PHYSIQUE" of Professor Deschanel, though only published in 1868, has already obtained a high reputation in France, and has been adopted by the Minister of Instruction as the text-book for Government Schools.

I did not consent to undertake the labour of translating and editing it till a careful examination had convinced me that it was better adapted to the requirements of my own class of Experimental Physics than any other work with which I was acquainted; and in executing the translation I have steadily kept this use in view, believing that I was thus adopting the surest means of meeting the wants of teachers generally.

The treatise of Professor Deschanel is remarkable for the vigour of its style, which specially commends it as a book for private reading. But its leading excellence, as compared with the best works at present in use, is the thoroughly rational character of the information which it presents. There is great danger in the present day lest science-teaching should degenerate into the accumulation of disconnected facts and unexplained formulæ, which burden the memory without cultivating the understanding. Professor Deschanel has been eminently successful in exhibiting facts in their mutual connection; and his applications of algebra are always judicious.

The peculiarly vigorous and idiomatic style of the original would be altogether unrepresentable in English; and I have not hesitated in numerous instances to sacrifice exactness of translation to effective rendering, my object being to make the book as useful as possible to English readers. For the same reason I have not scrupled to suppress or modify any statement, whether historical or philosophical, which I deemed erroneous or defective. In some instances I have endea-

voured to simplify the reasonings by which propositions are established or formulæ deduced.

As regards weights and measures, rough statements of quantity have generally been expressed in British units; but in many cases the numerical values given in the original, and belonging to the metrical system, have been retained, with or without their English equivalents; as it is desirable that all students of science should familiarize themselves with a system of weights and measures which affords peculiar facilities for scientific calculation, and is extensively employed by scientific men of all countries. For convenience of reference, a complete table of metrical and British equivalents has been annexed.

The additions, which have been very extensive, relate either to subjects generally considered essential in this country to a treatise on Natural Philosophy, or to topics which have in recent years occupied an important place in physical discussions, though as yet but little known to the general public.

The sections distinguished by a letter appended to a number are all new; as also are all foot-notes, except those which are signed with the Author's initial "D."

In many instances the new matter is so interwoven with the old that it could not conveniently be indicated; and I have aimed at giving unity to the book rather than at preserving careful distinctions of authorship.

Comparison with the original will however be easy, as the numbering of the original sections has been almost invariably followed.

The chief additions in Part I. (Chap. i.-xviii.) have been under the heads of Dynamics, Capillarity, and the Barometer. The chapter on Hydrometers has also been recast.

ADVERTISEMENT TO REPRINT OF PART I.

The first impression of Part I. having been exhausted, opportunity has been taken, in the present reprint, to extend the Table of Contents, and to make a few unimportant corrections and additions in the body of the work.

CONTENTS—PART I.

CHAPTER I. PRELIMINARY NOTIONS.

Origin of Natural Philosophy.—Early history.—Experimental method.—Observation and induction.—Phenomena.—Physical laws.—Necessity for experiment.—Calculation and verification of deductions.—Physical theory.—Particular laws often included in a general law.—Divisions of Physical Science.—Natural history and its subdivisions.—Geology.—Astronomy.—Chemistry.—Relation between physics and chemistry.—Mutual dependence of different branches of science, pp. 1-8.

CHAPTER II. MECHANICS.

Inertia.—Force.—Illustrations of inertia.—Mechanics.—Specification of forces.—Resultant and components.—Parallelogram of forces.—Gravesande's apparatus.—Composition of any number of forces acting at a point.—Parallelepiped of forces.—Composition of parallel forces.—Couple.—Arm and moment of couple.—Centre of parallel forces.—Resolution of forces.—Illustration from sailing vessel.—Work done by or against a force.—Principle of work and its relation to schemes for perpetual motion, pp. 9-20.

CHAPTER III. CONSTITUTION OF BODIES.

Solids, liquids, and gases.—Molecular constitution.—Illustrations of divisibility.—Atoms.—Porosity and permeability.—Compressibility of liquids and solids.—Cretet's piezometer.—Apparent and real compressibility.—Real compressibilities of glass and water.—Compressibility of gases.—Elasticity of solids.—Force proportional to distortion, within the limits of elasticity.—Young's modulus of elasticity.—Resistance to flexure and torsion.—Tempering.—Dynamometer and spring-balance.—Scales measure mass, a spring-balance measures force, pp. 21-30.

CHAPTER IV. GRAVITY.

Terrestrial gravitation affects all bodies.—Vertical.—Plumb-line.—Surface of liquid at rest.—Angle between verticals at different places.—Latitude defined.—Geocentric latitude.—Centre of gravity defined theoretically and practically.—Body supported on a point or an axis.—Body resting on a plane.—Stable, unstable, and neutral equilibrium.—Body resting on several points.—Experimental determination of centre of gravity, pp. 31-39.

CHAPTER V. LAWS OF FALLING BODIES.

All bodies fall alike in vacuo.—Galileo's experiments.—Inclined plane.—Attwood's machine.—Spaces.—Velocities.—Bourbouze's modification of Attwood's machine.—Morin's apparatus.—Formule for falling bodies.—Examples.—Upward and downward course in vacuo and in air.—Motion of projectiles.—Composition of motions.—Uniform acceleration.—Acceleration in general.—Proportional directly to force and inversely to mass.—Gauss's absolute unit of force.—The pound a standard of mass.—Masses which are equal by the acceleration test, are equal by the balance test, pp. 40-55.

CHAPTER VI. THE PENDULUM.

Construction of pendulum.—Simple pendulum.—Amplitude.—Period.—Formula for period.—Isochronism.—Discovered by Galileo.—Period independent of material.—Length of pendulum.—Equivalent simple pendulum.—Convertibility of axes of suspension and oscillation.—Kater's pendulum.—Determination of g .—Expression for g in terms of latitude.—Centrifugal force.—Centripetal acceleration.—Experiments in illustration.—Oblateness of the earth.—Effect of earth's rotation on gravity.—Universal gravitation.—Determination of earth's mean density.—Variation of gravity with height.—Simple vibrations.—Acceleration proportional to displacement.—Projection of uniform circular motion.—Proof that simple vibrations are isochronous.—Proof of formula for period.—Application to pendulum.—Reason of isochronism.—Cycloidal pendulum.—Centre of mass.—Movements of translation and rotation produced by force applied to a free body.—Motion of centre of mass never altered by mutual actions.—Moment of inertia.—Angular momentum.—Energy of rotation.—Fly-wheel.—Centre of percussion.—Momentum.—Kinetic energy.—Potential energy.—Work done equal to amount of potential energy transformed into kinetic energy.—Effect of friction.—Conservation of energy, pp. 56-79.

CHAPTER VII. THE BALANCE.

Description of balance.—Its correctness defined and tested.—Double weighing.—Sensibility, on what dependent.—Stability, instability, and indifference.—Bare stability secured by weighing with constant load.—Knife-edge suspensions.—Specimen of delicate balance.—Density and specific gravity.—Specific gravity flasks for solids and liquids.—Table of specific gravities, with memoranda connecting specific gravities and densities, pp. 80-82.

CHAPTER VIII. HYDROSTATICS.

Transmission of pressure in fluids.—Fluid pressure always normal.—Pascal's principle.—Principle of hydraulic press.—Pressure the same at the same depth.—Increase of pressure with depth.—Free surface horizontal.—Surface of liquid in rotating vessel.—Pressure on the bottoms of vessels.—Pascal's vases.—Experiment on upward pressure.—Total and resultant pressure.—Hydrostatic paradox.—Backward movement of vessel produced by discharge.—Hydraulic tourniquet and Barker's mill.—Centre of pressure.—Total pressure depends on depth of centre of gravity, pp. 90-103.

CHAPTER IX. PRINCIPLE OF ARCHIMEDES.

Resultant pressure on immersed body.—Equal to weight of displaced liquid.—Constitutes loss of apparent weight.—Centre of buoyancy.—Experimental demonstration of principle of Archimedes.—Body heavier or lighter than liquid.—Egg in fresh and salt water.—Cartesian diver.—Conditions of stability of floating bodies.—Metacentre.—Use of ballast.—Apparent exception to principle of Archimedes in case of small bodies.—Floating needles.—No real exception.—Arrangement of liquids which do not mix.—Phial of the four elements, pp. 104-112.

CHAPTER X. APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF ARCHIMEDES TO THE DETERMINATION OF SPECIFIC GRAVITIES.

Weighing in air and water.—Weighing in air, water, and the given liquid.—Hydrometers.—Two classes distinguished.—Hydrometers of constant immersion.—Nicholson's.—Fahrenheit's.—Hydrometers of variable immersion.—Investigation of general formulae.—Beaumé's and Twaddell's hydrometers.—Alcoholimeter.—Specific gravities of mixtures.—Graphical method of interpolating degrees, pp. 113-121.