

unification would have to start. The following pages contain the result of this survey. Like every survey, it can claim to be merely an approximation. It gives outlines which closer scrutiny will have to correct and fill up.

My original intention was to complete this survey in three volumes, corresponding to the three divisions of the subject set out in the Introduction.

Some of my friends, who desired that the publication of the book should not be unduly delayed, considered that the Introduction and the earlier chapters of the work would give something intelligible in themselves, and urged the advantage of smaller volumes. I therefore decided to complete the first part of the history, which deals with scientific thought, in two volumes instead of in one.

For the information of my readers, I mention here that the two last chapters of this volume, which treat of the astronomical and of the atomic views of Nature, will be followed in the second volume by similar chapters on the mechanical, the physical, the biological, the statistical, and the psychophysical views of Nature, and that it is my intention to close the first part of my subject by an attempt to trace concisely the development of mathematical thought in this century.

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