

NOTE ON THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE POTENTIAL FUNCTIONS. By A. S. HATHAWAY.

This is to call attention to an injustice that has been done by Todhunter in his "History of the Theory of Attractions" in assigning to Laplace instead of Lagrange the honor of the introduction of the potential function into dynamics. This injustice has been perpetuated by various encyclopedias, notably the Encyclopedia Britannica, and by leading text books, such as Thompson and Tait's Natural Philosophy, and Maxwell's Electricity and Magnetism. In an article in Vol. 1 No. 3 of the Bulletin of the New York Mathematical Society (Dec. 1891) I have shown conclusively that Lagrange anticipated Laplace by at least ten years in investigations on the potential. Laplace's first announcement is fixed by Todhunter as between 1783 and 1785, and this was merely through the paper of another, Legendre. Lagrange on the other hand, wrote distinctly upon that subject in 1773, 1777 and 1780; and in the last paper the notation is the same as that used by Laplace three or four years later. There is also evidence that Lagrange had begun to develop the idea of the potential as early as 1763, in connection with his celebrated generalized equations of motion.

---

SOME GEOMETRICAL PROPOSITIONS. By C. A. WALDO.

---

NOTES ON NUMERICAL RADICES. By C. A. WALDO.

---

SOME SUGGESTED CHANGES IN NOTATION. By R. L. GREEN.

---

AN ADJUSTMENT FOR THE CONTROL MAGNET ON A MIRROR GALVANOMETER. By J. P. NAYLOR.

---

A COMBINED WHEATSTONE'S BRIDGE AND POTENTIOMETER. By J. P. NAYLOR.

---

HISTERESIS CURVES FOR MITIS AND OTHER CAST IRON. By J. E. MOORE and E. M. TINGLEY.