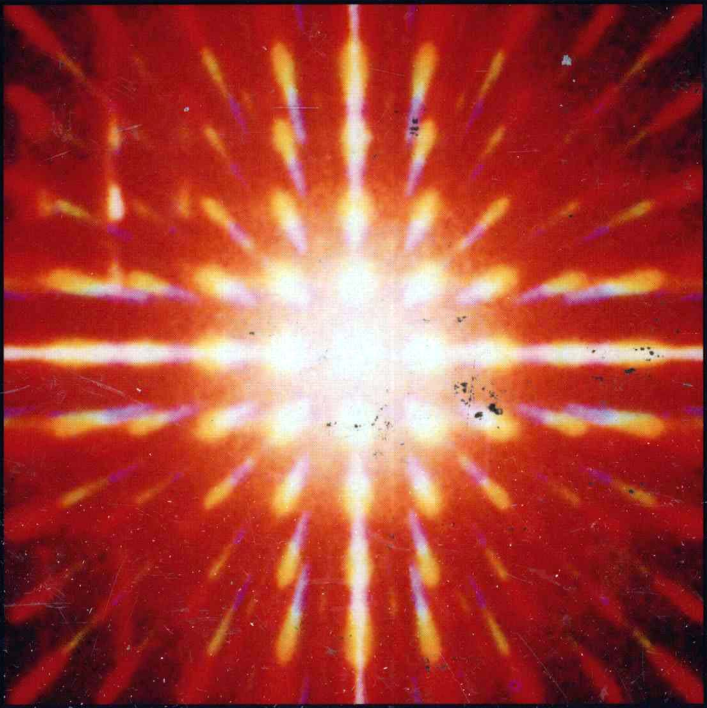
OPTICS

FOURTH EDITION



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4ed OPTICS

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Preface

To Ca, b. w. l.

As with previous revisions, this fourth edition has been guided by three distinct imperatives: to fine-tune the pedagogy, modernize the discourse, and update the content.

During the past several years, using the third edition in the classroom, a number of small but significant pedagogical refinements have evolved, and these have been incorporated throughout this revised text. For instance, all symbols representing vectors now have an arrow directly above them. The intent, as ever, is to be responsive to students' needs.

This edition continues the program of gradually modernizing the treatment. In this, there are several goals, vis-à-vis the student: to impart an appreciation of the central role of atomic scattering in almost every aspect of Optics; to provide an understanding, as early as possible, of the insightful perspective offered by Fourier Theory; and to make clear, from the outset, the underlying quantum-mechanical nature of light.

Technological advances have been made in a wide range of areas from lenses and lasers to telescopes and fiberoptics. This fourth edition treats (even if sometimes only in introductory fashion) many of the significant advances that today's students should be aware of.

At the request of users, I have added dozens of new problems throughout the text. Most of these were designed to develop needed analytic skills and are of the "easy-to-intermediate" variety. As in previous editions, the complete solutions to problems without asterisks can be found at the back of the book. It should be noted that the vast majority of the new problems are not provided with such solutions. This was done to increase the selection of potential homework questions.

Much effort was expended in redrawing well over a hundred pieces of existing art to make them clearer and the physics more readable. To further enhance the pedagogy, this edition also contains many new drawings and photographs.

Chapter 2 (*Wave Motion*), which lays the mathematical groundwork for wave theory, has been somewhat revised in order both to make the existing material clearer and to provide a broader foundation for what's to come. For instance, the discussion of the differential wave equation (p. 13) has been fleshed out a bit, with some of the previously missing steps now provided.

Chapter 3 (*Electromagnetic Theory, Photons, and Light*) has been extensively reworked. Nowadays many students studying Optics come to it with little more than the brief exposure to electromagnetic theory afforded by the traditional introductory course in physics. With them in mind, Section 3.1, *Basic Laws of Electromagnetic Theory* (p. 37), has been expanded, making the material far more accessible to these students. In keeping with the commitment to discuss modern applications of Optics, a new section called *Optical Cooling* examines this important technique (p. 65).

The Propagation of Light (Chapter 4) now contains a discussion of the historical origins of the concept of *index of refraction* (p. 88). This helps to make Snell's Law easier to really understand. The chapter is further enhanced with a more thorough treatment of *Fermat and Mirages* (p. 107). A new section, 4.11.2, called *Photons and the Laws of Reflection and Refraction* (p. 141) completes the chapter.

The treatment of *Geometrical Optics* (Chapter 5) was refined here and there (e.g., pp. 161, 164, 166, 178, and 215) to improve its clarity. The field of telecommunications is so important and so rapidly evolving that each edition of this book has had to treat several major technological advances. Accordingly, the discussion of fiberoptics was brought up to date with the consideration of such topics as erbium-doped fiber amplifiers (p. 197), wavelength division multiplexing, and optical switching via MOEMS (p. 200). Liquid mirrors are briefly considered on page 223. The chapter ends with a new section on *Gravitational Lensing* (p. 231).

The discussion of wavefront aberrations in Chapter 6 (*More on Geometrical Optics*) has been enlarged (p. 254). There is a new piece concerning the upgraded Arecibo Observatory (p. 258) because it beautifully illustrates an important contemporary approach to dealing with spherical aberration.

Chapter 7 (*The Superposition of Waves*) was reworked to make the material generally more accessible (e.g., p. 303). The phasor representation was used to illuminate the creation of both standing waves (p. 288) and partial standing waves (p. 289). Because of a very significant series of experiments published in the last several years, the discussion of *Group Velocity* (p. 296), Section 7.2.2, was enriched and new subsections on *Superluminal* and *Subluminal Light* were added.

In Chapter 8 (*Polarization*), as elsewhere, the prose was tightened and the analysis clarified, here and there. A few new photographs and several fresh diagrams were included. The section (8.7) on *Retarders* was extended, and the concepts of zero-ordered, multiple-ordered, and compound zero-ordered wave plates were introduced. A section on *Liquid Crystals* (8.12) was added, and the operation of both the liquid crystal variable retarder and liquid crystal display (LCD) were explained.

In addition to a few new photos and the occasional clarifying remark, Chapter 9 (*Interference*) now contains a section, 9.8.4, called *Radar Interferometry*.

Over the last two decades there's been some interesting work done on so-called nondiffracting beams. Accordingly, Chapter 10 (*Diffraction*) contains a new section (10.2.7) entitled *The Zeroth-Order Bessel Beam,* that deals with the phenomenon.

Chapters 11 (*Fourier Optics*), and 12 (*Basics of Coherence Theory*) have undergone a line-by-line fine tuning, but little or no overhaul.

Chapter 13, *Modern Optics: Lasers and Other Topics*, has been revised with the addition of a subsection on *Gaussian Laserbeams* and some updating as required (e.g., it now includes material on the Omega laser).

This fourth edition continues the agenda of unifying the discourse, as much as possible, within the framework of a few grand ideas. Thus the concept of interference, which is one of the premier notions in Optics (and not surprisingly in Quantum Mechanics, as well), is used qualitatively to understand propagation phenomena long before it's studied formally in Chapter 9. Among other benefits, this approach of presenting advanced concepts in simplified form early in the exposition allows the student to develop a cohesive perspective.

Over the years, I have received comments, articles, and photographs, from hundreds of colleagues, and I most sincerely thank them all. I am especially grateful to Professors P. J. Dolan of Northeastern Illinois University, W. A. Mendoza of Jacksonville University, M. W. Coffey of the University of Colorado and H. Fearn of California State University for their contributions and suggestions. Prof. J. R. Peverley of The George Washington University kindly donated several very nice problems on Jones matrices and I thank him for helping to freshen up this edition. Anyone else wishing to contribute their favorite problems, please fell free to do so. Indeed, if you are interested in the discipline and wish to exchange ideas you can contact me by mail at Adelphi University, Physics Department, Garden City, N.Y. 11530 or at genehecht@aol.com.

I'd like to thank the entire team at Addison Wesley, for all their help, without which this edition would never have seen the light of day, as it were. I am especially grateful to Adam Black whose enthusiasm for the project was sustaining, to Joan Marsh whose wise decisions made the whole thing manageable, and to Nancy Gee who handled the day-to-day operation with efficiency and good humor.

The book was produced by HRS Interactive, which did a brilliant job of getting it all together. Lorraine Burke watched over every aspect of the process with incredible patience and skill; Alan Wiener and Jennifer Burke cheerfully brought their production acumen to bear; Ed Burke designed a beautiful book and struggled mightily to maintain the highest standards; Hilda Espreo was the tireless compositor; and as ever, Pat Hannagan, with the able assistance of Chris Burke, produced incomparable art. All have my deepest respect and profound appreciation. Finally, I thank my dear friend, my wife, Carolyn Eisen Hecht for coping with one more edition of one more book.

Freeport, New York E.H.

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1

A Brief History

1.1 Prolegomenon

In chapters to come we will evolve a formal treatment of much of the science of Optics, with particular emphasis on aspects of contemporary interest. The subject embraces a vast body of knowledge accumulated over roughly three thousand years of the human scene. Before embarking on a study of the modern view of things optical, let's briefly trace the road that led us there, if for no other reason than to put it all in perspective.

1.2 In the Beginning

The origins of optical technology date back to remote antiquity. Exodus 38:8 (ca. 1200 B.C.E.) recounts how Bezaleel, while preparing the ark and tabernacle, recast "the looking-glasses of the women" into a brass laver (a ceremonial basin). Early mirrors were made of polished copper, bronze, and later on of speculum, a copper alloy rich in tin. Specimens have survived from ancient Egypt—a mirror in perfect condition was unearthed along with some tools from the workers' quarters near the pyramid of Sesostris II (ca. 1900 B.C.E.) in the Nile valley. The Greek philosophers Pythagoras, Democritus, Empedocles, Plato, Aristotle, and others developed several theories of the nature of light. The rectilinear propagation of light (p. 89) was known, as was the *Law of Reflection* (p. 97) enunciated by Euclid (300 B.C.E.) in his book *Catoptrics*. Hero of Alexandria attempted to explain both these phenomena by asserting that light traverses the shortest allowed path between two points. The burning glass (a positive lens used to start fires) was alluded to by Aristophanes in his comic play *The Clouds* (424 B.C.E.). The apparent bending of objects partly immersed in water (p. 102) is mentioned in Plato's *Republic*. Refraction was studied by Cleomedes (50 A.D.) and later by Claudius Ptolemy (130 A.D.) of Alexandria, who tabulated fairly precise measurements of the angles of incidence and refraction for several media (p. 101). It is clear from the accounts of the historian Pliny (23–79 A.D.) that the Romans also possessed burning glasses. Several glass and crystal spheres have been found among Roman ruins, and a planar convex lens was recovered in Pompeii. The Roman philosopher Seneca (3 B.C.E.–65 A.D.) pointed out that a glass globe filled with water could be used for magnifying purposes. And it is certainly possible that some Roman artisans may have used magnifying glasses to facilitate very fine detailed work.

After the fall of the Western Roman Empire (475 A.D.), which roughly marks the start of the Dark Ages, little or no scientific progress was made in Europe for a great while. The dominance of the Greco-Roman-Christian culture in the lands embracing the Mediterranean soon gave way by conquest to the rule of Allah. The center of scholarship shifted to the Arab world, and Optics was studied and extended, especially by Alhazen (ca. 1000 A.D.). He elaborated on the Law of Reflection, putting the angles of incidence and reflection in the same plane normal to the interface (p. 99); he studied spherical and parabolic mirrors and gave a detailed description of the human eye (p. 202).

By the latter part of the thirteenth century, Europe was only beginning to rouse from its intellectual stupor. Alhazen's work was translated into Latin, and it had a great effect on the writings of Robert Grosseteste (1175–1253), Bishop of Lincoln, and on the Polish mathematician Vitello (or Witelo), both of whom were influential in rekindling the study of Optics. Their works were known to the Franciscan Roger Bacon (1215–1294), who is considered by many to be the first scientist in the modern sense. He seems to have initiated the idea of using lenses for correcting vision and even hinted at the possibility of combining lenses to form a telescope. Bacon also had some understanding of the way in which rays traverse a lens. After his death, Optics again languished. Even so, by the mid-1300s, European paintings were depicting monks wearing eyeglasses. And alchemists had come up with a liquid amalgam of tin and mercury that was rubbed onto the back of glass plates to make mirrors. Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) described the *camera obscura* (p. 215), later popularized by the work of Giovanni Battista Della Porta (1535–1615), who discussed multiple mirrors and combinations of positive and negative lenses in his *Magia naturalis* (1589).

This, for the most part, modest array of events constitutes what might be called the first period of Optics. It was undoubtedly a beginning—but on the whole a humble one. The whirlwind of accomplishment and excitement was to come later, in the seventeenth century.

1.3 From the Seventeenth Century

It is not clear who actually invented the refracting telescope, but records in the archives at The Hague show that on October 2, 1608, Hans Lippershey (1587–1619), a Dutch spectacle maker, applied for a patent on the device. Galileo Galilei (1564–1642), in Padua, heard about the invention and within several months had built his own instrument (p. 170), grinding the lenses by hand. The compound microscope was invented at just about the same time, possibly by the Dutchman Zacharias Janssen (1588–1632). The microscope's concave eyepiece was replaced with a convex lens by Francisco Fontana (1580–1656) of Naples, and a similar change in the telescope was introduced by Johannes Kepler (1571–1630). In 1611, Kepler published his *Dioptrice*. He had discovered total internal reflection (p. 122) and arrived at the small angle approximation to the Law of Refraction, in which case the incident and transmission angles are proportional. He evolved a treatment of first-order Optics for thin-lens systems and in his book describes the detailed operation of both the Keplerian (positive eyepiece) and Galilean (negative eyepiece) telescopes. Willebrord Snel (1591–1626), professor at Leyden, empirically discovered the long-hidden *Law of Refraction* (p. 100) in 1621—this was one of the great moments in Optics. By learning precisely how rays of light are redirected on traversing a boundary between two media, Snell in one swoop swung open the door to modern applied Optics.

Johannes Kepler (1571–1630). (Burndy Library.)

René Descartes (1596–1650) was the first to publish the now familiar formulation of the Law of Refraction in terms of sines. Descartes deduced the law using a model in which light was viewed as a pressure transmitted by an elastic medium; as he put it in his *La Dioptrique* (1637)

> recall the nature that I have attributed to light, when I said that it is nothing other than a certain motion or an action conceived in a very subtle matter, which fills the pores of all other bodies....

The universe was a plenum. Pierre de Fermat (1601–1665), taking exception to Descartes's assumptions, rederived the Law of Reflection (p. 106) from his own *Principle of Least Time* (1657).

The phenomenon of diffraction, that is, the deviation from rectilinear propagation that occurs when light advances

René Descartes by Frans Hals (1596–1650). (© Musées Nationaux.)

Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727). (Burndy Library.)

beyond an obstruction (p. 443), was first noted by Professor Francesco Maria Grimaldi (1618–1663) at the Jesuit College in Bologna. He had observed bands of light within the shadow of a rod illuminated by a small source. Robert Hooke (1635–1703), curator of experiments for the Royal Society, London, later also observed diffraction effects. He was the first to study the colored interference patterns (p. 400) generated by thin films (*Micrographia*, 1665). He proposed the idea that light was a rapid vibratory motion of the medium propagating at a very great speed. Moreover, "every pulse or vibration of the luminous body will generate a sphere"—this was the beginning of the wave theory. Within a year of Galileo's death, Isaac Newton (1642–1727) was born. The thrust of Newton's scientific effort was to build on direct observation and avoid speculative hypotheses. Thus he remained ambivalent for a long while about the actual nature of light. Was it corpuscular—a stream of particles, as some maintained? Or was light a wave in an all-pervading medium, the aether? At the age of 23, he began his now famous experiments on dispersion.

> I procured me a triangular glass prism to try therewith the celebrated phenomena of colours.

Newton concluded that white light was composed of a mixture of a whole range of independent colors (p. 189). He maintained that the corpuscles of light associated with the various colors excited the aether into characteristic vibrations. Even though his work simultaneously embraced both the wave and emission (corpuscular) theories, he did become more committed to the latter as he grew older. His main reason for rejecting the wave theory as it stood then was the daunting problem of explaining rectilinear propagation in terms of waves that spread out in all directions.

After some all-too-limited experiments, Newton gave up trying to remove chromatic aberration from refracting telescope lenses. Erroneously concluding that it could not be done, he turned to the design of reflectors. Sir Isaac's first reflecting telescope, completed in 1668, was only 6 inches long and 1 inch in diameter, but it magnified some 30 times.

At about the same time that Newton was emphasizing the emission theory in England, Christiaan Huygens (1629–1695), on the continent, was greatly extending the wave theory. Unlike Descartes, Hooke, and Newton, Huygens correctly concluded that light effectively slowed down on entering more dense media. He was able to derive the Laws of Reflection and Refraction and even explained the double refraction of calcite (p. 337), using his wave theory. And it was while working with calcite that he discovered the phenomenon of *polarization* (p. 325).

> As there are two different refractions, I conceived also that there are two different emanations of the waves of light....

Thus light was either a stream of particles or a rapid undulation of aethereal matter. In any case, it was generally agreed that its speed was exceedingly large. Indeed, many believed that light propagated instantaneously, a notion that went back at least as far as Aristotle. The fact that it was finite was

Christiaan Huygens (1629–1695). (Rijksmuseum voor de geschiedenis der natuurwetenschappen, courtesy AIP Emilio Segré Visual Archives.)

determined by the Dane Ole Christensen Römer (1644–1710). Jupiter's nearest moon, Io, has an orbit about that planet that is nearly in the plane of Jupiter's own orbit around the Sun. Römer made a careful study of the eclipses of Io as it moved through the shadow behind Jupiter. In 1676 he predicted that on November 9th Io would emerge from the dark some 10 minutes later than would have been expected on the basis of its yearly averaged motion. Precisely on schedule, Io performed as predicted, a phenomenon Römer correctly explained as arising from the finite speed of light. He was able to determine that light took about 22 minutes to traverse the diameter of the Earth's orbit around the Sun—a distance of about 186 million miles. Huygens and Newton, among others, were quite convinced of the validity of Römer's work. Independently estimating the Earth's orbital diameter, they assigned values to c equivalent to 2.3×10^8 m/s and 2.4×10^8 m/s, respectively.*

The great weight of Newton's opinion hung like a shroud over the wave theory during the eighteenth century, all but stifling its advocates. Despite this, the prominent mathematician Leonhard Euler (1707–1783) was a devotee of the wave theory, even if an unheeded one. Euler proposed that the undesirable color effects seen in a lens were absent in the eye (which is an erroneous assumption) because the different media present negated dispersion. He suggested that achromatic lenses (p. 269) might be constructed in a similar way. Enthused by this work, Samuel Klingenstjerna (1698–1765), a professor at Upsala, reperformed Newton's experiments on achromatism and determined them to be in error. Klingenstjerna was in communication with a London optician, John Dollond (1706–1761), who was observing similar results. Dollond finally, in 1758, combined two elements, one of crown and the other of flint glass, to form a single achromatic lens. Incidentally, Dollond's invention was actually preceded by the unpublished work of the amateur scientist Chester Moor Hall (1703–1771) in Essex.

1.4 The Nineteenth Century

The wave theory of light was reborn at the hands of Dr. Thomas Young (1773–1829), one of the truly great minds of the century. In 1801, 1802, and 1803, he read papers before the Royal Society extolling the wave theory and adding to it a new fundamental concept, the so-called *Principle of Interference* (p. 385):

> When two undulations, from different origins, coincide either perfectly or very nearly in direction, their joint effect is a combination of the motions belonging to each.

He was able to explain the colored fringes of thin films and determined wavelengths of various colors using Newton's data. Even though Young, time and again, maintained that his conceptions had their very origins in the research of Newton, he was severely attacked. In a series of articles, probably written by Lord Brougham, in the *Edinburgh Review*, Young's papers were said to be "destitute of every species of merit."

Augustin Jean Fresnel (1788–1827). (Cultural Service of the French Embassy.)

Augustin Jean Fresnel (1788–1827), born in Broglie, Normandy, began his brilliant revival of the wave theory in France, unaware of the efforts of Young some 13 years earlier. Fresnel synthesized the concepts of Huygens's wave description and the interference principle (p. 444). The mode of propagation of a primary wave was viewed as a succession of spherical secondary wavelets, which overlapped and interfered to reform the advancing primary wave as it would appear an instant later. In Fresnel's words:

> The vibrations of a luminous wave in any one of its points may be considered as the sum of the elementary movements con-

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*A. Wróblewski, *Am. J. Phys.* **53,** 620 (1985).

> veyed to it at the same moment, from the separate action of all the portions of the unobstructed wave considered in any one of its anterior positions.

These waves were presumed to be longitudinal, in analogy with sound waves in air. Fresnel was able to calculate the diffraction patterns arising from various obstacles and apertures (p. 444) and satisfactorily accounted for rectilinear propagation in homogeneous isotropic media, thus dispelling Newton's main objection to the undulatory theory. When finally apprised of Young's priority to the interference principle, a somewhat disappointed Fresnel nonetheless wrote to Young telling him that he was consoled by finding himself in such good company—the two great men became allies.

Huygens was aware of the phenomenon of polarization arising in calcite crystals, as was Newton. Indeed, the latter in his *Opticks* stated,

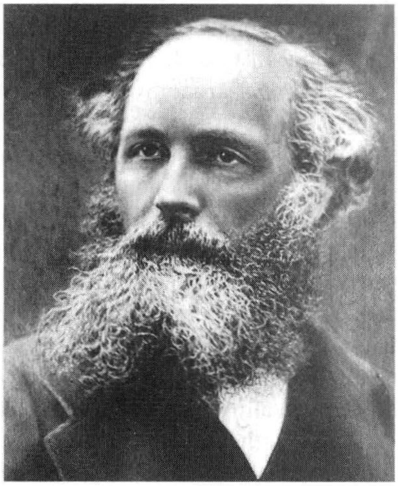
> Every Ray of Light has therefore two opposite Sides....

It was not until 1808 that Étienne Louis Malus (1775–1812) discovered that this two-sidedness of light also arose upon reflection (p. 348); the phenomenon was not inherent to crystalline media. Fresnel and Dominique François Arago (1786–1853) then conducted a series of experiments to determine the effect of polarization on interference, but the results were utterly inexplicable within the framework of their longitudinal wave picture. This was a dark hour indeed. For several years Young, Arago, and Fresnel wrestled with the problem until finally Young suggested that the aethereal vibration might be *transverse* as is a wave on a string. The two-sidedness of light was then simply a manifestation of the two orthogonal vibrations of the aether, transverse to the ray direction. Fresnel went on to evolve a mechanistic description of aether oscillations, which led to his now famous formulas for the amplitudes of reflected and transmitted light (p. 113). By 1825 the emission (or corpuscular) theory had only a few tenacious advocates.

The first terrestrial determination of the speed of light was performed by Armand Hippolyte Louis Fizeau (1819–1896) in 1849. His apparatus, consisting of a rotating toothed wheel and a distant mirror (8633 m), was set up in the suburbs of Paris from Suresnes to Montmartre. A pulse of light leaving an opening in the wheel struck the mirror and returned. By adjusting the known rotational speed of the wheel, the returning pulse could be made either to pass through an opening and be seen or to be obstructed by a tooth. Fizeau arrived at a value of the speed of light equal to 315 300 km/s. His colleague Jean Bernard Léon Foucault (1819–1868) was also involved in research on the speed of light. In 1834 Charles Wheatstone (1802–1875) had designed a rotating-mirror arrangement in order to measure the duration of an electric spark. Using this scheme, Arago had proposed to measure the speed of light in dense media but was never able to carry out the experiment. Foucault took up the work, which was later to provide material for his doctoral thesis. On May 6, 1850, he reported to the Academy of Sciences that the speed of light in water was *less* than that in air. This result was in direct conflict with Newton's formulation of the emission theory and a hard blow to its few remaining devotees.

While all of this was happening in Optics, quite independently, the study of electricity and magnetism was also bearing fruit. In 1845 the master experimentalist Michael Faraday (1791–1867) established an interrelationship between electromagnetism and light when he found that the polarization direction of a beam could be altered by a strong magnetic field applied to the medium. James Clerk Maxwell (1831–1879) brilliantly summarized and extended all the empirical knowledge on the subject in a single set of mathematical equations. Beginning with this remarkably succinct and beautifully symmetrical synthesis, he was able to show, purely theoretically, that the electromagnetic field could propagate as a transverse wave in the luminiferous aether (p. 44).

Solving for the speed of the wave, Maxwell arrived at an expression in terms of electric and magnetic properties of the



James Clerk Maxwell (1831–1879). (AIP Emilio Segré Visual Archives.)

medium ($c = 1/\sqrt{\epsilon_0\mu_0}$). Upon substituting known empirically determined values for these quantities, he obtained a numerical result equal to the measured speed of light! The conclusion was inescapable—*light was "an electromagnetic disturbance in the form of waves" propagated through the aether*. Maxwell died at the age of 48, eight years too soon to see the experimental confirmation of his insights and far too soon for physics. Heinrich Rudolf Hertz (1857–1894) verified the existence of long electromagnetic waves by generating and detecting them in an extensive series of experiments published in 1888.

The acceptance of the wave theory of light seemed to necessitate an equal acceptance of the existence of an all-pervading substratum, the luminiferous aether. If there were waves, it seemed obvious that there must be a supporting medium. Quite naturally, a great deal of scientific effort went into determining the physical nature of the aether, yet it would have to possess some rather strange properties. It had to be so tenuous as to allow an apparently unimpeded motion of celestial bodies. At the same time, it could support the exceedingly high-frequency ($\sim 10^{15}$ Hz) oscillations of light traveling at 186 000 miles per second. That implied remarkably strong restoring forces within the aethereal substance. The speed at which a wave advances through a medium is dependent on the characteristics of the disturbed substratum and not on any motion of the source. This is in contrast to the behavior of a stream of particles whose speed with respect to the source is the essential parameter.

Certain aspects of the nature of aether intrude when studying the optics of moving objects, and it was this area of research, evolving quietly on its own, that ultimately led to the next great turning point. In 1725 James Bradley (1693–1762), then Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford, attempted to measure the distance to a star by observing its orientation at two different times of the year. The position of the Earth changed as it orbited around the Sun and thereby provided a large baseline for triangulation on the star. To his surprise, Bradley found that the "fixed" stars displayed an apparent systematic movement related to the direction of motion of the Earth in orbit and not dependent, as had been anticipated, on the Earth's position in space. This so-called *stellar aberration* is analogous to the well-known falling-raindrop situation. A raindrop, although traveling vertically with respect to an observer at rest on the Earth, will appear to change its incident angle when the observer is in motion. Thus a corpuscular model of light could explain stellar aberration rather handily. Alternatively, the wave theory also offers a satisfactory explanation provided that *the aether remains totally undisturbed as the Earth plows through it*.

In response to speculation as to whether the Earth's motion through the aether might result in an observable difference between light from terrestrial and extraterrestrial sources, Arago set out to examine the problem experimentally. He found that there were no such observable differences. Light behaved just as if the Earth were at rest with respect to the aether. To explain these results, Fresnel suggested in effect that light was partially dragged along as it traversed a transparent medium in motion. Experiments by Fizeau, in which light beams passed down moving columns of water, and by Sir George Biddell Airy (1801–1892), who used a water-filled telescope in 1871 to examine stellar aberration, both seemed to confirm Fresnel's drag hypothesis. Assuming an aether at *absolute rest*, Hendrik Antoon Lorentz (1853–1928) derived a theory that encompassed Fresnel's ideas.

In 1879 in a letter to D. P. Todd of the U.S. Nautical Almanac Office, Maxwell suggested a scheme for measuring the speed at which the solar system moved with respect to the luminiferous aether. The American physicist Albert Abraham Michelson (1852–1931), then a naval instructor, took up the idea. Michelson, at the tender age of 26, had already established a favorable reputation by performing an extremely precise determination of the speed of light. A few years later, he began an experiment to measure the effect of the Earth's motion through the aether. Since the speed of light in aether is constant and the Earth, in turn, presumably moves in relation to the aether (orbital speed of 67 000 mi/h), the speed of light measured with respect to the Earth should be affected by the planet's motion. In 1881 he published his findings. There was no detectable motion of the Earth with respect to the aether—the aether was stationary. But the decisiveness of this surprising result was blunted somewhat when Lorentz pointed out an oversight in the calculation. Several years later Michelson, then professor of physics at Case School of Applied Science in Cleveland, Ohio, joined with Edward Williams Morley (1838–1923), a well-known professor of chemistry at Western Reserve, to redo the experiment with considerably greater precision. Amazingly enough, their results, published in 1887, once again were negative:

> It appears from all that precedes reasonably certain that if there be any relative motion between the earth and the luminiferous aether, it must be small; quite small enough entirely to refute Fresnel's explanation of aberration.

Thus, whereas an explanation of stellar aberration within the context of the wave theory required the existence of a relative motion between Earth and aether, the Michelson–Morley Experiment refuted that possibility. Moreover, the findings of Fizeau and Airy necessitated the inclusion of a partial drag of light due to motion of the medium.

1.5 Twentieth-Century Optics

Jules Henri Poincaré (1854–1912) was perhaps the first to grasp the significance of the experimental inability to observe any effects of motion relative to the aether. In 1899 he began to make his views known, and in 1900 he said:

> Our aether, does it really exist? I do not believe that more precise observations could ever reveal anything more than *relative* displacements.

In 1905 Albert Einstein (1879–1955) introduced his *Special Theory of Relativity*, in which he too, quite independently, rejected the aether hypothesis.

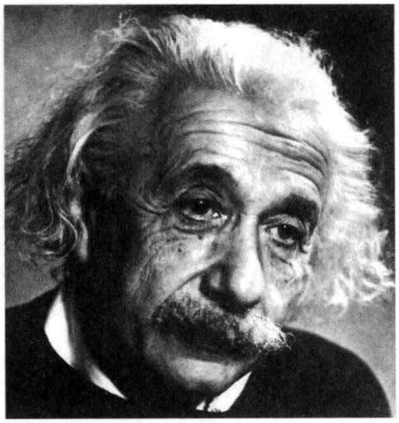
> The introduction of a "luminiferous aether" will prove to be superfluous inasmuch as the view here to be developed will not require an "absolutely stationary space."

He further postulated:

> light is always propagated in empty space with a definite velocity c which is independent of the state of motion of the emitting body.

The experiments of Fizeau, Airy, and Michelson–Morley were then explained quite naturally within the framework of Einstein's relativistic kinematics.* Deprived of the aether, physicists simply had to get used to the idea that electromagnetic waves could propagate through free space—there was no alternative. Light was now envisaged as a self-sustaining wave with the conceptual emphasis passing from aether to field. The electromagnetic wave became an entity in itself.

On October 19, 1900, Max Karl Ernst Ludwig Planck (1858–1947) read a paper before the German Physical Society in which he introduced the hesitant beginnings of what was to become yet another great revolution in scientific thought—*Quantum Mechanics*, a theory embracing submicroscopic phenomena (p. 51). In 1905, boldly building on these ideas, Einstein proposed a new form of corpuscular theory in which he asserted that light consisted of globs or "particles" of energy. Each such quantum of radiant energy or *photon*,* as it came to be called, had an energy proportional to its frequency ν, that is, $\mathscr{E} = h\nu$, where h is known as Planck's constant (Fig. 1.1). By the end of the 1920s, through the efforts of Bohr, Born, Heisenberg, Schrödinger, De Broglie, Pauli, Dirac, and others, Quantum Mechanics had become a well-verified theory. It gradually became evident that the concepts of particle and wave, which in the macroscopic world seem so obviously mutually exclusive, must be merged in the submicroscopic domain. The mental image of an atomic particle (e.g., electrons and neutrons) as a minute localized lump of matter would no longer suffice. Indeed, it was found that these "particles" could generate interference and diffraction patterns in precisely the same way as would light (p. 399). Thus photons, protons, electrons, neutrons, and so forth—the whole lot—have both particle and wave manifestations. Still, the matter was by no means settled. "Every physicist thinks that he knows what a photon is," wrote Einstein. "I spent my life to find out what a photon is and I still don't know it."



Albert Einstein (1879–1955).

Relativity liberated light from the aether and showed the kinship between mass and energy (via $\mathscr{E}_0 = mc^2$). What seemed to be two almost antithetical quantities now became interchangeable. Quantum Mechanics went on to establish that

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*See, for example, *Special Relativity* by French, Chapter 5.

*The word *photon* was coined by G. N. Lewis, *Nature*, December 18, 1926.

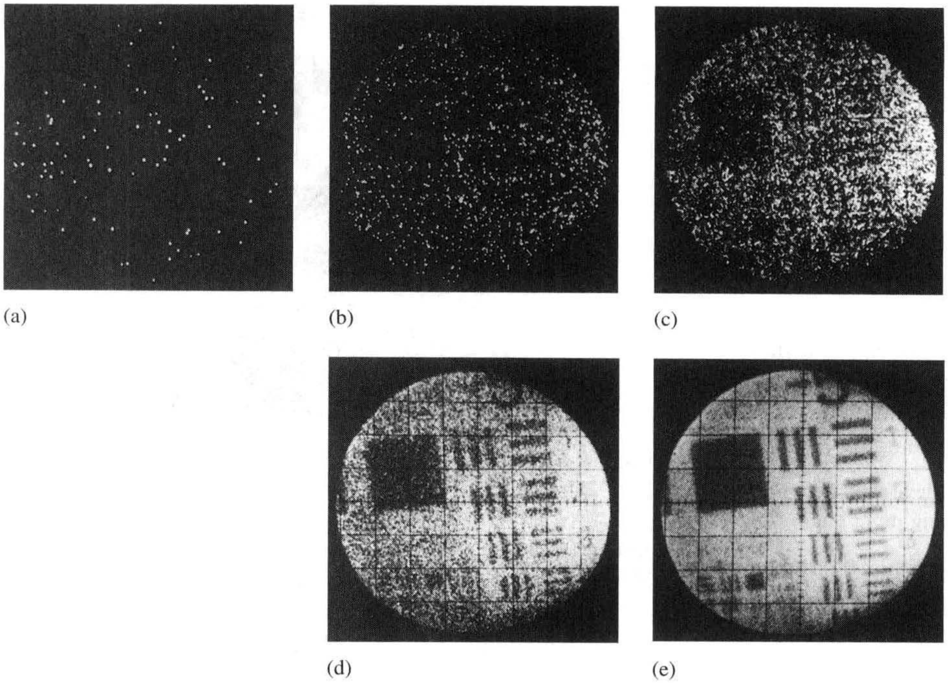

FIGURE 1.1 A rather convincing illustration of the particle nature of light. This sequence of photos was made using a position-sensing photomultiplier tube illuminated by an (8.5×10^3 count-per-second) image of a bar chart. The exposure times were (*a*) 8 ms, (*b*) 125 ms, (*c*) 1 s, (*d*) 10 s, and (*e*) 100 s. Each dot can be interpreted as the arrival of a single photon. (Photos courtesy of ITT Corporation, Electro-Optical Products Division, Tube and Sensor Laboratories, Fort Wayne, Indiana.)

a particle* of momentum p had an associated wavelength λ, such that $p = h/\lambda$. The neutrino, a neutral particle presumably having zero rest mass, was postulated for theoretical reasons in 1930 by Wolfgang Pauli (1900–1958) and verified experimentally in the 1950s. The easy images of submicroscopic specks of matter became untenable, and the wave-particle dichotomy dissolved into a duality.

Quantum Mechanics also treats the manner in which light is absorbed and emitted by atoms (p. 63). Suppose we cause a gas to glow by heating it or passing an electrical discharge through it. The light emitted is characteristic of the very structure of the atoms constituting the gas. Spectroscopy, which is the branch of Optics dealing with spectrum analysis (p. 73), developed from the research of Newton. William Hyde Wollaston (1766–1828) made the earliest observations of the dark lines in the solar spectrum (1802). Because of the slit-shaped aperture generally used in spectroscopes, the output consisted of narrow colored bands of light, the so-called *spectral lines*. Working independently, Joseph Fraunhofer (1787–1826) greatly extended the subject. After accidentally discovering the double line of sodium (p. 270), he went on to study sunlight and made the first wavelength determinations using diffraction gratings (p. 476). Gustav Robert Kirchhoff (1824–1887) and Robert Wilhelm Bunsen (1811–1899), working together at Heidelberg, established that each kind of atom had its own signature in a characteristic array of spectral lines. And in 1913 Niels Henrik David Bohr (1885–1962) set forth a precursory quantum theory of the hydrogen atom, which was able to predict the wavelengths of its emission spectrum. The light emitted by an atom is now understood to arise from its outermost electrons (p. 63). The process is the domain of modern quantum theory, which describes the most minute details with incredible precision and beauty.

The flourishing of applied Optics in the second half of the twentieth century represents a renaissance in itself. In the 1950s several workers began to inculcate Optics with the mathematical techniques and insights of communications theory. Just as the idea of momentum provides another dimension in which to visualize aspects of mechanics, the concept of spatial frequency offers a rich new way of appreciating a broad range of optical phenomena. Bound together by the mathe-

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*Perhaps it might help if we just called them all *wavicles*.

matical formalism of Fourier analysis (p. 302), the outgrowths of this contemporary emphasis have been far-reaching. Of particular interest are the theory of image formation and evaluation (p. 529), the *transfer functions* (p. 550), and the idea of *spatial filtering* (p. 318).

The advent of the high-speed digital computer brought with it a vast improvement in the design of complex optical systems. Aspherical lens elements (p. 150) took on renewed practical significance, and the *diffraction-limited* system with an appreciable field of view became a reality. The technique of ion bombardment polishing, in which one atom at a time is chipped away, was introduced to meet the need for extreme precision in the preparation of optical elements. The use of single and multilayer thin-film coatings (reflecting, antireflecting, etc.) became commonplace (p. 425). Fiberoptics evolved into a practical communications tool (p. 197), and thin-film light guides continued to be studied. A great deal of attention was paid to the infrared end of the spectrum (surveillance systems, missile guidance, etc.), and this in turn stimulated the development of infrared materials. Plastics began to be used extensively in Optics (lens elements, replica gratings, fibers, aspherics, etc.). A new class of partially vitrified glass ceramics with exceedingly low thermal expansion was developed. A resurgence in the construction of astronomical observatories (both terrestrial and extraterrestrial) operating across the whole spectrum was well under way by the end of the 1960s and vigorously sustained in the 1980s and 1990s (p. 222).

The first laser was built in 1960, and within a decade laserbeams spanned the range from infrared to ultraviolet. The availability of high-power coherent sources led to the discovery of a number of new optical effects (harmonic generation, frequency mixing, etc.) and thence to a panorama of marvelous new devices. The technology needed to produce a practicable optical communications system developed rapidly. The sophisticated use of crystals in devices such as second-harmonic generators (p. 641), electro-optic and acousto-optic modulators, and the like spurred a great deal of contemporary research in crystal optics. The wavefront reconstruction technique known as *holography* (p. 623), which produces magnificent three-dimensional images, was found to have numerous additional applications (nondestructive testing, data storage, etc.).

The military orientation of much of the developmental work in the 1960s continued in the 1970s, 1980s, and the 1990s with added vigor. That technological interest in Optics ranges across the spectrum from "smart bombs" and spy satellites to "death rays" and infrared gadgets that see in the dark. But economic considerations coupled with the need to improve the quality of life have brought products of the discipline into the consumer marketplace as never before. Today lasers are in use everywhere: reading videodiscs in living rooms, cutting steel in factories, scanning labels in supermarkets, and performing surgery in hospitals. Millions of optical display systems on clocks and calculators and computers are blinking all around the world. The almost exclusive use, for the last one hundred years, of electrical signals to handle and transmit data is now rapidly giving way to more efficient optical techniques. A far-reaching revolution in the methods of processing and communicating information is quietly taking place, a revolution that will continue to change our lives in the years ahead.

Profound insights are slow in coming. What few we have took over three thousand years to glean, even though the pace is ever quickening. It is marvelous indeed to watch the answer subtly change while the question immutably remains—*what is light*?*

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*For more reading on the history of Optics, see F. Cajori, *A History of Physics*, and V. Ronchi, *The Nature of Light*. Excerpts from a number of original papers can conveniently be found in W. F. Magie, *A Source Book in Physics*, and in M. H. Shamos, *Great Experiments in Physics*.

2 Wave Motion

The issue of the actual nature of light is central to a complete treatment of Optics, and we will struggle with it throughout this work. The straightforward question "Is light a wave phenomenon or a particle phenomenon?" is far more complicated than it might at first seem. For example, the essential feature of a particle is its localization; it exists in a well-defined, "small" region of space. Practically, we tend to take something familiar like a ball or a pebble and shrink it down in imagination until it becomes vanishingly small, and that's a "particle," or at least the basis for the concept of "particle." But a ball interacts with its environment; it has a gravitational field that interacts with the Earth (and the Moon, and Sun, etc.). This field, which spreads out into space—whatever *it* is—cannot be separated from the ball; it is an inextricable part of the ball just as it is an inextricable part of the definition of "particle." Real particles interact via fields, and, in a sense, the field is the particle and the particle is the field. That little conundrum is the domain of Quantum Field Theory, a discipline we'll talk more about later (p. 139). Suffice it to say now that if light is a stream of submicroscopic particles (photons), they are by no means "ordinary" miniball classical particles.

On the other hand, the essential feature of a wave is its nonlocalization. *A classical traveling wave is a self-sustaining disturbance of a medium, which moves through space transporting energy and momentum.* We tend to think of the ideal wave as a continuous entity that exists over an extended region. But when we look closely at real waves (such as waves on strings), we see composite phenomena comprised of vast numbers of particles moving in concert. The media supporting these waves are atomic (i.e., particulate), and so the waves are not continuous entities in and of themselves. The only possible exception might be the electromagnetic wave. Conceptually, the classical electromagnetic wave (p. 44) is supposed to be a continuous entity, and *it* serves as the model for the very notion of wave as distinct from particle. But in the past century we found that the energy of an electromagnetic wave is *not* distributed continuously. The classical formulation of the electromagnetic theory of light, however wonderful it is on a macroscopic level, is profoundly wanting on a microscopic level. Einstein was the first to suggest that the electromagnetic wave, which we perceive macroscopically, is the statistical manifestation of a fundamentally granular underlying microscopic phenomenon (p. 51). In the subatomic domain, the classical concept of a physical wave is an illusion. Still, in the large-scale regime in which we ordinarily work, electromagnetic waves seem real enough and classical theory applies superbly well.

Because both the classical and quantum-mechanical treatments of light make use of the mathematical description of waves, this chapter lays out the basics of what both formalisms will need. The ideas we develop here will apply to all physical waves from a surface tension ripple in a cup of tea to a pulse of light reaching us from some distant galaxy.

2.1 One-Dimensional Waves

An essential aspect of a traveling wave is that it is a self-sustaining disturbance of the medium through which it propagates. The most familiar waves, and the easiest to visualize (Fig. 2.1), are the mechanical waves, among which are waves on strings, surface waves on liquids, sound waves in the air, and compression waves in both solids and fluids. Sound waves are **longitudinal**—*the medium is displaced in the direction of motion of the wave*. Waves on a string (and electromagnetic waves) are **transverse**—*the medium is displaced in a direction perpendicular to that of the motion of the wave*. In all