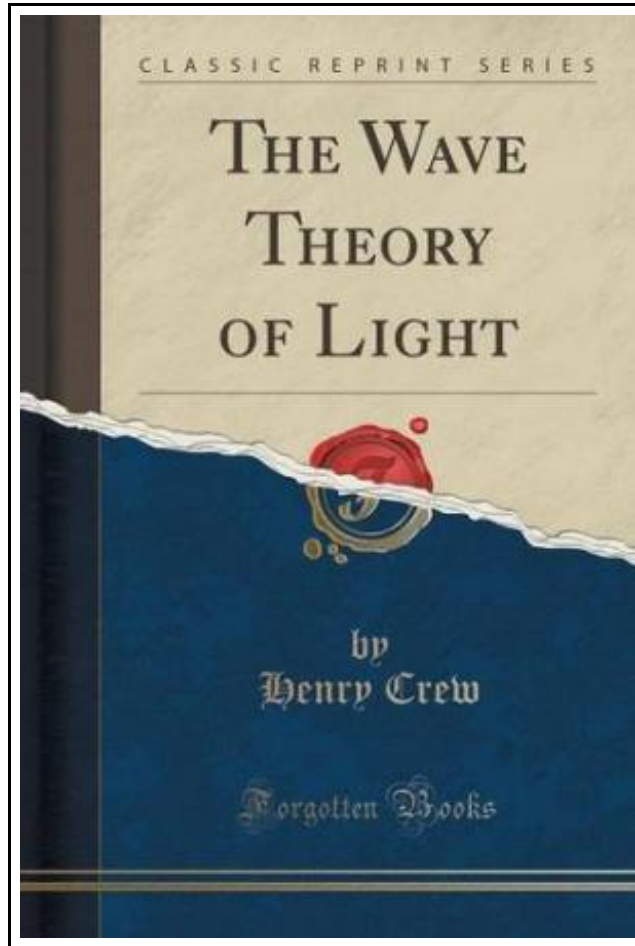


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Forgotten Books, United States, 2015. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 229 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book \*\*\*\*\* Print on Demand \*\*\*\*\*.Excerpt from The Wave Theory of Light Thanks to the labors of Kirchhoff, Kelvin, Huxley, and others, there is now a widespread opinion that any physical phenomenon is explained only when some one has devised a dynamical model which will duplicate the phenomenon. The completeness of the explanation is to be measured by the completeness with which the model will duplicate the phenomenon. Thus, for instance, a refraction model which, like that of Airy, describes only the path of the refracted ray when the incident ray is given, does not in any true sense explain how the refracted ray comes to take one path rather than another. Such a model illustrates Snell's law, but does not explain the phenomenon. If, however, we take a large and shallow tank of water, the floor of the tank being partly covered with a false bottom, so as to give two, and only two, different depths of water, we shall find that the speed of the waves in the deeper portion of the tank bears to the speed in the shallower portion a constant ratio; hence, in passing from one depth to the other, these waves are refracted according to the sine law. Such a model may be said to be a partial explanation of refraction in so far as it refers the phenomenon to change of speed which accompanies change of medium. It represents, however, only the kinematics of refraction. If, now, we could go one step further, and make a model in which the wave-producing forces were duplicated - in other words, if we could make a model of the medium and of the disturbing forces - we...

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