Pearson

An Introduction to Practical Astronomy

Volume 2: Containing Descriptions of the Various Instruments That Have Been Usefully Employed in Determining

Although astronomical guides were available in the early nineteenth century, they tended to come from continental presses and were rarely in English. This two-volume work by the clergyman and astronomer William Pearson (1767-1847) aimed, with brilliant success, to compile data from extant sources into one of the first English practical guides to astronomy. Most of the tables were updated and improved versions, and some were wholly reconstructed to streamline the calculation processes. Sir John Herschel dubbed it 'one of the most important and extensive works on that subject which has ever issued from the press', and for his efforts Pearson was awarded the gold medal of the Astronomical Society. First published in 1829, Volume 2 provides full descriptions of a range of astronomical instruments, alongside instructions for their use and some pertinent equations and tables. In the history of science, Pearson's work reflects the contemporary challenges of celestial study.

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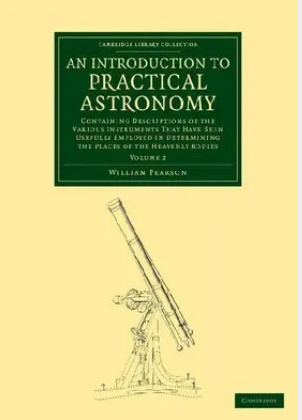

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