

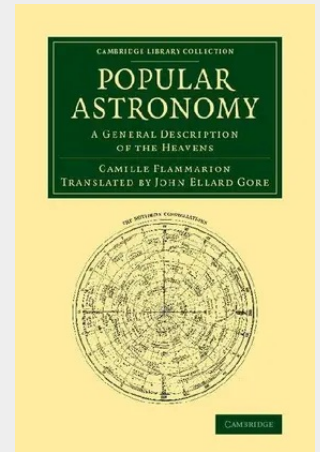
Flammarion

Popular Astronomy

A General Description of the Heavens

French astronomer Camille Flammarion (1842–1925) called the study of the heavens 'the science which concerns us most'. He believed that learning 'what place we occupy in the infinite' could delight and instruct, and might even promote an end to war and strife. Flammarion dedicated the present work to François Arago (1786–1853), author of earlier work on popular astronomy. Since Arago's time, the capabilities of telescopes and other instruments had vastly improved, advancing understanding in areas such as the composition of stars. Flammarion sought to bring this new knowledge to the public in a charming yet 'scrupulously exact' style. His highly illustrated introduction to astronomy succeeded in reaching a wide readership, selling over 100,000 French copies before this English translation appeared in 1894. The 1881 French version and Flammarion's work on the origins of the Earth, *Le Monde avant la création de l'homme* (1886), are also reissued in this series.

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