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dynamical beginning. Mass is in the atomic sense the Newtonian quantity of matter.

The volume contains an appreciation of Hertz by his master, Helmholtz. Hertz was the Fermi of his time: brilliant experimenter, fertile theorist, dead of cancer at only 37. A short introductory essay prepared for this edition by Professor R. S. Cohen of Wesleyan is a meaty and provocative piece, setting the Hertz view into the context of the theory of knowledge, and into its place in the history of ideas. It deserves wide reading, even apart from Hertz's mechanical ideas.

Let the reader be warned that Hertz used p for the coordinate and q for its canonical momentum!

L'Origine des Planètes: Essai de Cosmogonie. By Alexandre Dauvillier. 221 pp. U. of France Press, Paris, France, 1956. Paperbound 800 fr. *Reviewed by S. A. Korff, New York University.*

In his book *L'Origine des Planètes*, the French physicist and astronomer Dauvillier faithfully carries out the promise of the title. He discusses at length all the various theories, and gives an excellent critique of each. The book would make excellent supplementary reading in a course in astronomy. He shows how each of the theories, popular in its turn, eventually has come to be discarded since each one fails in some important respect.

The author starts by reviewing what is known about the planets; their sizes, masses, and distances, and what may be inferred about their atmospheres from spectral studies. He includes comets and asteroids. Next, he starts systematically on the theories of origin, and first sets forth the accretion theory, then the Laplacian theory, the tidal wave calculations of Kant and later of Jeans, and of Russell and Lyttleton; the collision theory, and the twin-planet picture. He discusses the retrograde cases, and the rings of Saturn.

The book is excellently written, well documented, and is a good and a scholarly account of this difficult problem. This reviewer found it stimulating and thought-provoking. It is especially recommended to anyone who would like an intelligent, critical appraisal and résumé of all the various theories. It would be especially good if the enthusiasts for one or another of the hypotheses were to consider seriously whether his pet model meets the objection cited, for there appear to be serious difficulties for each one which some persons happily ignore.

Electron-Emission; Gas Discharges I. Vol. 21 of *Handbuch der Physik*. Edited by S. Flügge. 683 pp. Springer-Verlag, Berlin, Germany, 1956. DM 132.00 (if part of series DM 105.60). *Reviewed by L. Marton, National Bureau of Standards.*

There are enough volumes of the new *Encyclopedia of Physics* on hand now to show that on the whole this is a very successful undertaking. It is remarkable both from the point of view of its size and the quality of the individual volumes. The present volume is no exception and it is a pleasure to report on its contents.