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Rene Descartes

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This is an unabridged republication of the definitive English translation of one of the very greatest classics of science. Originally published in 1637, it has been characterized as "the greatest single step ever made in the progress of the exact sciences" (John Stuart Mill); as a book which "remade geometry and made modern geometry possible" (Eric Temple Bell). It "revolutionized the entire conception of the object of mathematical science" (J. Hadamard).

With this volume Descartes founded modern analytical geometry. Reducing geometry to algebra and analysis and, conversely, showing that analysis may be translated into geometry, it opened the way for modern mathematics. Descartes was the first to classify curves systematically and to demonstrate algebraic solution of geometric curves. His geometric interpretation of negative quantities led to later concepts of continuity and the theory of function. The third book contains important contributions to the theory of equations.

This edition contains the entire definitive Smith-Latham translation of Descartes' three books: *Problems the Construction of which Requires Only Straight Lines and Circles*; *On the Nature of Curved Lines*; and *On the Construction of Solid and Supersolid Problems*. Interleaved page by page with the translation is a complete facsimile of the 1637 French text, together with all Descartes' original illustrations; 248 footnotes explain the text and add further bibliography.

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