

death. Of the lectures Koenigsberger says: "(Sie) bilden jetzt die ausgezeichnetsten Lehrbücher einzelner Theile der mathematischen Physik." Nothing could be truer. And may we not in all seriousness ask the question whether these live works of a master genius may not be more inspiring and really better text-books for the student than the work of some lesser person, no matter how careful and industrious he be? Of the biography let us add that it ends with consummate inspiration in the words which Helmholtz himself applied to Goethe and Beethoven: "Wir verehren in ihnen einen Genius, einen Funken göttlicher Schöpferkraft, welcher über die Grenzen unseres verständig und selbstbewusst rechnenden Denkens hinausgeht. Und doch ist der Künstler wieder ein Mensch, wie wir, in welchem dieselben Geisteskräfte wirken wie in uns selbst, nur in ihrer eigenthümlichen Richtung reiner, geklärt, in ungestörtem Gleichgewichte, und indem wir selbst mehr oder weniger schnell und vollkommen die Sprache des Künstlers verstehen, fühlen wir, dass wir selbst Teil haben an diesen Kräften, die so Wunderbares hervorbrachten."

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YALE UNIVERSITY, NEW HAVEN, CONN.,  
October 8, 1906.

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## PIERPONT'S THEORY OF FUNCTIONS.

*The Theory of Functions of Real Variables*, Volume I. By JAMES PIERPONT, Professor of Mathematics in Yale University. Boston, Ginn and Company, 1905. xii + 560 pp.

SINCE the time of Weierstrass the so-called rigorous style in mathematical writing has increased constantly in favor until in recent years it has become a commonplace instead of a rarity. Such myriads of microscopic  $\epsilon$ 's and  $\delta$ 's have penetrated our mathematical thinking that it would be impossible to rid the system of them entirely even if it were desirable to do so. A return to the externals of the intuitive style of writing would, however, enable any one individual to obtain a conception of a much wider range of investigations, and it seems possible that such a return may be made after mathematicians have come to an understanding acknowledged by all of the precise meaning