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[Rayleigh, The Lord \(1885\)](#). Address by the Rt. Hon. Lord Rayleigh. In: Report of the fifty-fourth meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science; held at Montreal in August and September 1884. London: John Murray: 3-23.

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REPORT
OF THE
FIFTY-FOURTH MEETING
OF THE
BRITISH ASSOCIATION
FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE;

HELD AT
MONTREAL IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 1884.



LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1885.

Office of the Association: 22 ALBEMARLE STREET, LONDON, W.

ADDRESS

BY

THE RIGHT HON. LORD RAYLEIGH,

M.A., D.C.L., F.R.S., F.R.A.S., F.R.G.S., *Professor of Experimental Physics in the
University of Cambridge,*

PRESIDENT.

If, as is sometimes supposed, science consisted in nothing but the laborious accumulation of facts, it would soon come to a stand-still, crushed, as it were, under its own weight. The suggestion of a new idea, or the detection of a law, supersedes much that had previously been a burden upon the memory, and by introducing order and coherence facilitates the retention of the remainder in an available form. Those who are acquainted with the writings of the older electricians will understand my meaning when I instance the discovery of Ohm's law as a step by which the science was rendered easier to understand and to remember. Two processes are thus at work side by side, the reception of new material and the digestion and assimilation of the old; and as both are essential, we may spare ourselves the discussion of their relative importance. One remark, however, should be made. The work which deserves, but I am afraid does not always receive, the most credit is that in which discovery and explanation go hand in hand, in which not only are new facts presented, but their relation to old ones is pointed out.

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