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Among the leading Egyptologists of his day, Sir William Matthew Flinders Petrie (1853–1942) excavated over fifty sites and trained a generation of archaeologists. As a young man, he demonstrated an aptitude for mathematics and used this skill to measure monuments across the south of England, including Stonehenge. Published in 1877, this work was based in part on these early surveys and provides great insight into the linear measurements used by ancient civilisations. Notably, Petrie establishes that accurate measurement was possible in societies without writing systems. His innovative approach to metrology draws comparisons between units of measurement used by peoples separated by great spans of time and distance, ranging from medieval Ireland to ancient Egypt. Petrie went on to write prolifically throughout his long career, and a great many of his other publications are also reissued in this series.

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Inductive Metrology

Or, The Recovery of Ancient Measures from the Monuments

W.M. FLINDERS PETRIE





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INDUCTIVE METROLOGY.

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INDUCTIVE METROLOGY;

OR,

THE RECOVERY OF ANCIENT MEASURES FROM

THE MONUMENTS.

ВY

W. M. FLINDERS PETRIE.

LONDON: HARGROVE SAUNDERS, 24, TICHBORNE STREET, REGENT QUADRANT. 1877.

PREFACE.

THIS essay has resulted from an attempt to determine the ancient standards of measure from the monuments: at first supposing that such a course would merely supply details; but afterwards finding that all, or nearly all, the recognised data of metrology could be thus independently ascertained; besides recovering a large amount of additional information.

No allusions have been made to volumes and weights, but only to linear quantities, as they alone are shown by the architectural remains.

To Dr. Birch and C. T. Newton, Esq., of the British Museum, who kindly gave every facility for the measurement of the antiquities in their charge, my best thanks are due; as also to H. W. Chisholm, Esq., the Warden of the Standards, for his kindness in having carefully compared a standard scale of Kater's which I had employed.

W. M. FLINDERS PETRIE.

Bromley, Kent.

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