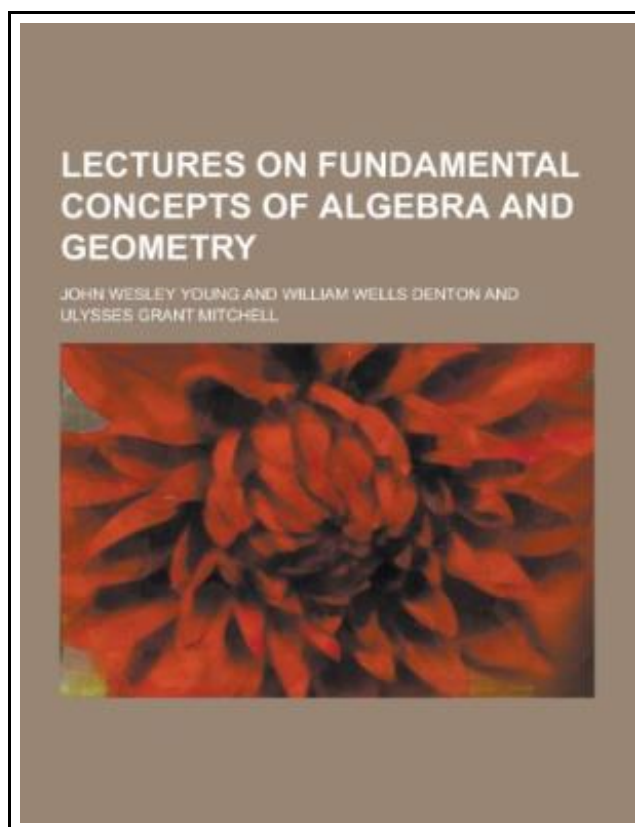


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Theclassics.Us, United States, 2013. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 246 x 189 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can usually download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1911 edition. Excerpt: . THE GROWTH OF ALGEBRAIC SYMBOLISM By U. G. Mitchell Three Stages in Algebraic Notation. -- About seventy years ago Nesselman¹ characterized the historical development of algebraic notation as marked by three stages. (1) Rhetorical algebra, in which problems are solved by a course of logical reasoning expressed entirely in words without the use of abbreviations or algebraic symbols. (2) Syncopated algebra, in which abbreviations are used for some of the operations and quantities which recur most often. (3) Symbolic algebra, in which arbitrary symbols having no apparent connection with the things they represent are employed for all forms and operations. This characterization has proved so helpful and convenient that the terms have gained considerable currency in subsequent writings on the subject. Rhetorical Algebra. -- Although signs for addition, subtraction, and equality are found in the old manuscript of the Egyptian scribe Ahmes² (cf. note on p. 101) and Aristotle¹ represented quantities by letters in stating problems (but not in equations), it is sufficiently accurate for a general classification to characterize as rhetorical all algebra previous to the time of Diophantus of Alexandria, who probably lived in the second half of the third or first part of the fourth century of our era. 1 G. H. F. Nesselman, *Die Algebra der Griechen* (Berlin, 1842), pp. 302-306. 2 Cantor, *Vorlesungen ueber Geschichte der Mathematik*, vol. I (1894 edition), p. 87. V, Among writers of rhetorical algebra whose works appeared after the time of Diophantus...



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