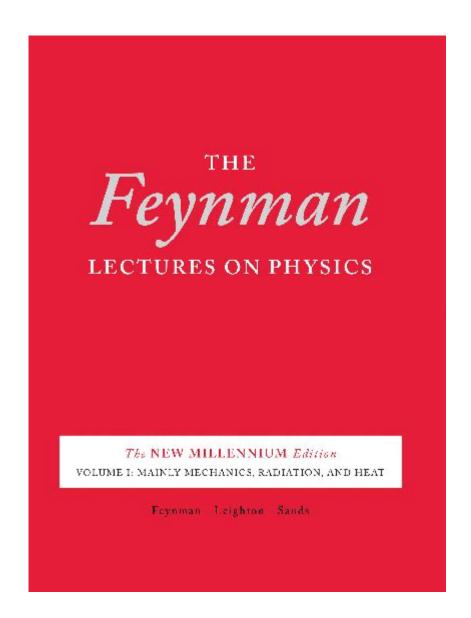
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letters not only allow us to better grasp the how and why of Feynman's enduring appeal, but also to see the virtues of an inquiring eye in spectacular fashion. Whether discussing the Manhattan Project or developments in quantum physics, the Challenger investigation or grade-school textbooks, the love of his wife or the best way to approach a problem, his dedication to clarity, grace, humor, and optimism is everywhere evident..

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on the atomic bomb at Los Alamos. We are also given a fascinating narrative of the investigation of the space shuttle Challenger's explosion in 1986, and we relive the moment when Feynman revealed the disaster's cause by an elegant experiment: dropping a ring of rubber into a glass of cold water and pulling it out, misshapen.

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development of dye lasers brought the pulse width down from picoseconds to femtoseconds. The breakthrough in solid state laser pulse generation provided the current reliable table-top laser systems capable of average power of about 1 watt, and peak power density of easily watts per square centimeter, with pulse widths in the range of four to eight femtoseconds. Pulses with peak power density reaching watts per square centimeter have been achieved in laboratory settings and, more recently, pulses of sub-femtosecond duration have been successfully generated. As concepts and methodologies have evolved over the past two decades, the realm of ultrafast science has become vast and exciting and has impacted many areas of chemistry, biology and physics, and other fields such as materials science, electrical engineering, and optical communication. In molecular science the explosive growth of this research is for fundamental reasons. In femtochemistry and femtobiology chemical bonds form and break on the femtosecond time scale, and on this scale of time we can freeze the transition states at configurations never before seen. Even for n- reactive physical changes one is observing the most elementary of molecular processes. On a time scale shorter than the vibrational and rotational periods the ensemble behaves coherently as a single-molecule trajectory.

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