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Sommario/riassunto

The 250 years from the second half of the 17th century saw the birth of modern physics and its growth into one of the most successful of the sciences. The reader will find here the lives of 55 of the most remarkable physicists from that era described in brief biographies. All the characters profiled have made important contributions to physics, either through their ideas, through their teaching or in other ways. The emphasis is on their varied life-stories, not on the details of their achievements, but when read in sequence the biographies, which are organised chronologically, convey in human terms something of the way in which physics was created. Scientific and mathematical detail is kept to a minimum, so the reader who is interested in physics, but perhaps lacks the background to follow technical accounts, will find this collection an inviting and easy path through the subject's modern development.
