

PREFACE

This series of physics problems and solutions which consists of seven parts – Mechanics, Electromagnetism, Optics, Atomic Nuclear and Particle Physics, Thermodynamics and Statistical Physics, Quantum Mechanics, Solid State Physics – contains a selection of 2550 problems from the graduate school entrance and qualifying examination papers of seven U.S. universities – California University Berkeley Campus, Columbia University, Chicago University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, New York State University Buffalo Campus, Princeton University, Wisconsin University – as well as the CUSPEA and C.C. Ting's papers for selection of Chinese students for further studies in U.S.A. and their solutions which represent the effort of more than 70 Chinese physicists.

The series is remarkable for its comprehensive coverage. In each area the problems span a wide spectrum of topics while many problems overlap several areas. The problems themselves are remarkable for their versatility in applying the physical laws and principles, their up-to-date realistic situations, and their scanty demand on mathematical skills. Many of the problems involve order of magnitude calculations which one often requires in an experimental situation for estimating a quantity from a simple model. In short, the exercises blend together the objectives of enhancement of one's understanding of the physical principles and practical applicability.

The solutions as presented generally just provide a guidance to solving the problems rather than step by step manipulation and leave much to the student to work out for him/herself, of whom much is demanded of the basic knowledge in physics. Thus the series would provide an invaluable complement to the textbooks.

In editing no attempt has been made to unify the physical terms and symbols. Rather, they are left to the setters' and solvers' own preferences so as to reflect the realistic situation of the usage today.

The present volume for Thermodynamics and Statistical Physics comprises 367 problems.

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