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It may be proper, on this occasion, to explain the somewhat anomalous—perhaps I should say, *incongruous* form in which this Book is presented.

The ORIGINAL PUBLICATION was a pioneer effort, prompted by a hope of being able to do something toward supplying an important desideratum.

It is believed that no previous attempt had been successfully made, to reduce *Truss-Bridge* construction to its simplest elements, and to determine by exact calculation, the forces acting upon the various parts of such structures; & to deduce thence, the proper sizes and proportions of such parts, upon known and reliable principles.

This was the purpose & object of the author's undertaking; and the result, which was tolerably satisfactory to himself, met as favorably a reception as could have been expected.