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(*b*. Paris, France, 13 June 1891; *d*. Montpellier, France, 17 Noveber 1953)

mathematics, history of science.

Humbert was the son of the mathematician Georges Humbert and, like his father, attended the École Polytechnique, entering in 1910. He soon directed himself to scientific research and from 1913 to 1914 he was a member of the research class of the University of Edinburgh. The scientific and philosophical conceptions of Edmund Whittaker, the director of the class, were in accord with his own inclinations and made a deep impression on him throughout his career. Humbert's health was delicate and during World War I he was removed from combat after being wounded. He earned his doctorate i mathematics in 1918 and then began his academic career, which he spent almost entirely in the Faculty of Science at Montpellier, but which consumed only a portion of his energies.

Humberet combined his father's mathematical ability with the temperament of a humanist. He demonstrated a highly refined sensitivity to culture, devoting attention to literature and music as well as to science. Moreover, he was unsatisfied with the simple juxtaposition of knowledge and religious faith. A talented lecturer, he traveled a good deal in France and aboard. He also possessed remarkable ability for organization, which he displayed mainly in the French Association for the Advancement of Sciences and in the Joseph Lotte Association (a society of Catholic public school teachers).

The multiplicity of subjects in which Humbert was interested, and about which he contributed stimulating articles in the most diverse periodicals, is characteristic of his highly personal vocation: to promote the awakening of the intellect. In pursuit of this goal he was wiling to sacrifice a certain intellectual rigor in the interest of his wide-ranging curiosity. Thus Humbert's scientific work provides no definitive advances, although it remains a valuable reference source.

In the field of mathematics, Humbert, faithful to Whittaker, directed his efforts cheifly toward the development of symbolic calculus. He also began to undertake scholars research in the history of science, specializing in the study of seventeenth-century astronomy. He was partially influenced in this choice by his father-in-law, the astronomer Henri Andoyer. His articles on the Provençal school, whose members included Peiresc and Gassendi, revealed the resources held by the archives in Aix, Carpentras, Digne, and other localities in the south of France.

Beyond these two major areas, Humbert should be remembered for his other writings, numerous and highly varied, that remain capable of inspiring new investigations.

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Humbert wrote many other articles and memoirs which may be found in *Archives internationales d’histoire des sciences*, and *Revue d’histoire des sciences et de leurs applications*, two journals on which he collaborated.

II. Secondary Literature. For information on Humbert, see P. Sergescu, “Notice sur Pierre Humbert,” in *Archives internationales d’histoire des sciences*, **7** , no. 27 (1954), 181–183; B. Rochot, “Notice sur Pierre Humbert,” in *Revue d’histoire des sciences*, **7** no. 1, 79–80; and Jacques Devisme, *Sur l’équation de M. Pierre Humbert* (Paris–Toulouse, 1933), doctoral thesis.

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