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"In the fifteen years since the author published his first book on soil mechanics interest in this subject has spread over the whole globe and both our theoretical and our practical knowledge of the subject have expanded rapidly. The Proceedings of the First International Conference on Soil Mechanics (Cambridge 1936) alone contains a greater amount of quantitative information regarding soils and foundations than the entire engineering literature prior to 1910. Yet, as in every other field of engineering, the first presentation of the theoretical principles has been followed by a period of transition characterized by a tendency toward indiscriminate application of theory and by unwarranted generalizations. Hence, when the author began work on a new textbook on soil mechanics he considered it advisable to separate theory completely from practical application. This volume deals exclusively with the theoretical principles. Theoretical soil mechanics is one of the many divisions of applied mechanics. In every field of applied mechanics the investigator operates with ideal materials only. The theories of reinforced concrete, for instance, do not deal with real reinforced concrete. They operate with an ideal material, whose assumed properties have been derived from those of the real reinforced concrete by a process of radical simplification. This statement also applies to every theory of soil behavior. The magnitude of the difference between the performance of real soils under field conditions and the performance predicted on the basis of theory can only be ascertained by field experience. The contents of this volume has been limited to theories which have stood the test of experience and which are applicable, under certain conditions and restrictions, to the approximate solution of practical problems. Besides providing the reader with a working....." [from preface by Karl Terzaghi, Graduate School of Engineering, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., December 1942.]

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