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PROFESSOR L. NICOLAI (1844–1908)
AS A HISTORIAN OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
Summary

Leopold Fedorovich Nikolai (1844-1908) is a railway engineer, scientist in the sphere of building mechanics and bridge construction, professor. He was the director (rector) of the St. Petersburg Institute for Railway Engineers in 1901-1905. His scientific works deal with the issues of tunnels facing, calculation theory on bridges design, hydraulic processes, bridge crossings, standards of water runoff for small basins, history of bridge construction. He is the author of the book “Brief historical data on the development of bridge matter in Russia”. There was established a medal named after Nicholai for engineers.

This article highlights the historical-scientific direction of L. F. Nikolai’s researches. The author concludes that though L. F. Nikolai came into the national science as the founder of many directions in building mechanics and bridge construction, a certain place in his scientific heritage from the very beginning of historically scientific activity dealt with the history of individual scientific and educational institutions. His historical work on the history of bridge construction it is particularly interesting for the present time. Leopold Fedorovich carried interest to this history throughout his life. He did much to promote historical-scientific and historical-technical knowledge.