Isaacus Vossius Encyclopedia Article

Isaacus Vossius

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Contents

Isaacus Vossius Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Isaacus Vossius.....3

Isaacus Vossius

1618-1669

Dutch physicist whose *De lucis natura proprietate* (1662) contains many bold conjectures about light, including the assertion that light is not a corporeal body, as well as commentary on Willebrord Snell's unpublished law of light refraction. Vossius also claimed comets were real bodies, not specters or illusions; that a vacuum existed above Earth's atmosphere; and that sea water could not rise through subterranean channels to form mountain rivers, maintaining instead that all rivers come from rain-water (1666).