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Vol. 77	F'RIDAY, MAR	CH 17, 1933	No. 1994
In Honor of Professor Einstein: Greeting on Behalf of American Scientis DENT KARL T. COMPTON Address on "The Cosmic Parade": DE SHAPLEY Address by Professor Einstein Obituary: Olive S. Lammert: Professor Mary SAGUE. Recent Deaths Scientific Events: Boulder Canyon Lake Wild Life Refuge seums of Archeology and Geology at the of Kentucky; Requirements for the I Medical Students in New York State; Mexico Meeting of the Southwestern I the American Association for the Advan Science Scientific Notes and News Discussion:	271 HARLOW 272 274 LANDON 275 .; The Mu- University License of The New Division of Locement of	Special Correspondence: The Sixth Mendeleev Congress Victor Copman Scientific Apparatus and Laborat Improving the Staining Actio toxylin: Dr. Robert T. Han Mounting Anatomical Prepe Schoenborn and Dr. C. P. I Special Articles: The Particle Size of the Virus of lomyelitis: Professor A. P. K. and Virginia Zellor. A New Synthesis of Phenanthrene an Derivatives: Professor Marst The Formation of Semi-trans from Cultures of Slime-produisms: Dr. J. R. Sanborn Science News	ory Methods: n of Iron Haema- CE. A Device for- arations: H. W. HICKMAN 287 of Equine Encepha- RUEGER, B. HOWITT W Process for the d of Phenanthrene ON TAYLOR BOGERT. parent Membranes ucing Micro-organ- 288
Nature Sanctuaries—a Means of Saving Natural Biotic Communities: Dr. Victor E. Shelford. The Water Content of Medusae: Professor Ross Aiken Gortner. The Physiological Basis of the Twisting Habit in Plant Growth: C. P. Haskins and C. N. Moore. An Unusual Cretaceous Cirriped: Dr. H. A. Pilsbry. Stream Double Refraction Exhibited by Juice from Both Healthy and Mosaic Tobacco Plants: Dr. William N. Takahashi and Dr. T. E. Rawlins Scientific Books: Sinnott and Dunn's Principles of Genetics and Sansome and Philp's Recent Advances in Plant Computing. Dr. Alpher E. Blakesire		SCIENCE: A Weekly Journal of ment of Science, edited by J. McI lished every Friday by THE SCIENCE New York City: Grand Control Contr	FRESS Sentral Terminal Garrison, N. Y. Single Copies, 15 Cts. of the American Associate. Information regarding may be secured from ary, in the Smithsonian

IN HONOR OF PROFESSOR EINSTEIN¹

GREETING ON BEHALF OF AMERICAN SCIENTISTS BY DR. KARL T. COMPTON, PRESIDENT OF THE MASSACHU-SETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

It is a pleasure for me to have the privilege of greeting Professor Einstein on behalf of American scientists. There is first the pleasure of renewing a personal contact made with Professor Einstein on the occasion of his first visit to America shortly after the war, when he delivered a series of lectures on relativity at Princeton University. Going farther back, there is a second personal connection which Professor

¹ Address at a dinner under the auspices of the American Friends of the Hebrew University in Palestine, given at the Hotel Commodore, New York City, on March 15. Besides Professor Einstein, Dr. Compton and Dr. Shapley, the speakers included Dr. O. C. Kiep, German consul general; Dr. Solomon Lowenstein, executive director of the Federation for the Support of Jewish Philanthropic Societies in New York City; James Marshall, a vice-president of the American Friends of the Hebrew University in Palestine, and Dr. Nathan Ratnoff, director of Beth Israel Hospital, in New York City. Sol M. Stroock, chairman of the board of the Jewish Theological Seminary, presided. Professor Einstein spoke in German, his address being translated at its close.

Einstein knows nothing about, but which I venture to say has been duplicated by many of my fellow American scientists in some such way as the following.

Some years ago, when my fiancée was debating with herself as to whether she was doing wisely in joining me in the great adventure, we were being entertained in the home of her most admired and respected friend, the pastor of her Methodist church. After dinner this man, who was by nature a poet rather than a scientist, asked me to explain to him in simple language Einstein's theory of relativity, and listened with apparently absorbed interest to my efforts to present this in non-technical language. The next morning he said to my fiancée, "I approve of your young man in all but one respect: he has no sense of humor. I asked him to explain to me Einstein's theory of relativity and he really tried to do it. You are taking a long chance in marrying a man who has no sense of humor." So I suspect every American physicist or mathematician has at one time or another been in a quandary as to whether he should engage upon the hopeless task of an attempted explanation, or whether he should find wisdom in cowardice by stating that he

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