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### SYMPOSIUM ON 'EINSTEIN—A HUNDRED YEARS'

To mark the birth centenary of Albert Einstein, the greatest scientist-philosopher of this century, an informal group of faculty members of Loyola College, styled as Forum for Academic Growth organised a one-day Symposium on 24th March 1979, where eminent physicists of India participated and brought out the life and achievements of Einstein, in popular language to a 300-strong audience of nonphysicists and physicists.

Professor Alladi Ramakrishnan (Director, Matscience Madras) in his presidential address explained how Einstein successfully gave shape to Newtonian principles. He called for a spirit of boldness, sincerity and investigation among the Indian students of science; the quality, he attributed, as a strong reason for the tremendous success of not only Einstein, but also of Raman and Bhabha.

Professor S. Ramaseshan (Jawaharlal Nehru Fellow, Raman Research Institute, Bangalore), in his keynote address 'Einstein the man' elaborated on the biography of Einstein, and touched upon his qualities as a 'man'. He gave a critical account of the famous letter Einstein wrote to President Roosevelt which made the latter decide in favour of the atom bomb. The speaker also drew an illuminating comparison between the two titans in the evolution of physics as a science, namely, Newton and Einstein. The talk was interspersed with many interesting anecdotes from Einstein's life and his idiosyncracies.

Professor P. M. Mathews, (Senior Professor of Theoretical Physics, University of Madras, Madras) while speaking on 'Einstein, relativity and space-time' expounded the concepts of special and general theories of relativity which involve (i) light and the equality of inertial and gravitational masses and (ii) gravitational effects as the manifestation of the curvature of space-time. Establishing an interesting continuum to Professor Mathews's talk, Professor R. Srinivasan, (Head of the Department of Physics, Indian Institute

of Technology, Madras) spoke on 'Einstein's Theories and Cosmology'. He said that the basic ideas behind the interpretation of gravitation as a distortion of the geometry of space-time are developed leading to Einstein's Gravitational Field Equations in empty space and the modification of these equations in the presence of matter and variation leads to the corresponding equations for the nonempty space. He analysed the relevance of these equations to cosmology and the various static and nonstatic models of the universe deduced therefrom. He also compared the models with the observational data available. Giving the concluding lecture, 'Post Einsteinian World—An Assessment', Dr. G. Venkatraman (Principal Physicist, Reactor Research Centre, Kalpakkam) dwelt at length on the sociological problems in relation to the impact of science and technology on modern society. He reinforced that the most important of these is the threat of a nuclear holocaust. He concluded with a brief reference to the type of education needed for the present society as also proposed by Einstein.

An exhibition displaying a few photographs and articles relating to Einstein was arranged by American Center, Madras and Albert R. Mann Library, New York.

By organising this programme, the Forum for Academic Growth celebrated the birth centenary of a great scientist who belonged to the whole world, in a unique way and it provided an opportunity to a number of young students to meet some of the leading scientists of India. Attempts are being made to bring out the proceedings of the Symposium.

The Forum thanks Rev. Fr. L. Correya, S.J., (Rector) and Rev. Fr. J. Kuriakose, S.J., (Principal) Loyola College, Madras, for their encouragement and the donors for their financial support.

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