

LIGHTS ALL ASKEW IN THE HEAVENS

Men of Science More or Less Agog Over Results of Eclipse Observations.

EINSTEIN THEORY TRIUMPHS

Stars Not Where They Seemed or Were Calculated to be, but Nobody Need Worry.

A BOOK FOR 12 WISE MEN

No More in All the World Could Comprehend It, Said Einstein When His Daring Publishers Accepted It.

Special Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

LONDON, Nov. 9.—Efforts made to put in words intelligible to the non-scientific public the Einstein theory of light proved by the eclipse expedition so far have not been very successful. The new theory was discussed at a recent meeting of the Royal Society and Royal Astronomical Society, Sir Joseph Thomson, President of the Royal Society, declares it is not possible to put Einstein's theory into really intelligible words, yet at the same time Thomson adds:

"The results of the eclipse expedition demonstrating that the rays of light from the stars are bent or deflected from their normal course by other aerial bodies acting upon them and consequently the inference that light has weight form a most important contribution to the laws of gravity given us since Newton laid down his principles."

Thompson states that the difference between theories of Newton and those of Einstein are infinitesimal in a popular sense, and as they are purely mathematical and can only be expressed in strictly scientific terms it is useless to endeavor to detail them for the man in the street.

"What is easily understandable," he continued, "is that Einstein predicted the deflection of the starlight when it passed the sun, and the recent eclipse has provided a demonstration of the correctness of the prediction."

"His second theory as to the anomalous motion of the planet Mercury has also been verified, but his third prediction, which dealt with certain sun lines, is still indefinite."

Asked if recent discoveries meant a reversal of the laws of gravity as defined by Newton, Sir Joseph said they held good for ordinary purposes, but in highly mathematical problems the new conceptions of Einstein, whereby space became warped or curled under certain circumstances, would have to be taken into account.

Vastly different conceptions which are involved in this discovery and the necessity for taking Einstein's theory more into account were voiced by a member of the expedition, who pointed out that it meant, among other things, that two lines normally known as parallel do meet eventually, that a circle is not really circular, that three angles of a triangle do not necessarily make the sum total of two right angles.

"Enough has been said to show the importance of Einstein's theory, even if it cannot be expressed clearly in words," laughed this astronomer.

Dr. W. J. S. Lockyer, another astronomer, said:

"The discoveries, while very important, did not, however, affect anything on this earth. They do not personally concern ordinary human beings; only astronomers are affected. It has hitherto been understood that light traveled in a straight line. Now we find it travels in a curve. It therefore follows that any object, such as a star, is not necessarily in the direction in which it appears to be astronomically.

"This is very important, of course. For one thing, a star may be a considerable distance further away than we have hitherto counted it. This will not affect navigation, but it means corrections will have to be made."

One of the speakers at the Royal Society's meeting suggested that Euclid was knocked out. Schoolboys should not rejoice prematurely, for it is pointed out that Euclid laid down the axiom that parallel straight lines, if produced ever so far, would not meet. He said nothing about light lines.

Some cynics suggest that the Einstein theory is only a scientific version of the well-known phenomenon that a coin in a basin of water is not on the spot where it seems to be and ask what is new in the refraction of light.

Albert Einstein is a Swiss citizen, about 50 years of age. After occupying a position as Professor of Mathematical Physics at the Zurich Polytechnic School and afterward at Prague University, he was elected a member of Emperor William's Scientific Academy in Berlin at the outbreak of the war. Dr. Einstein protested against the German professors' manifesto approving of Germany's participation in the war, and at its conclusion he welcomed the revolution. He has been living in Berlin for about six years.

When he offered his last important work to the publishers he warned them there were not more than twelve persons in the whole world who would understand it, but the publishers took the risk.

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