

# EINSTEIN

## Essays in Science

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# ESSAYS IN SCIENCE

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BY  
ALBERT EINSTEIN

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*New York*

*This book is the authorized English translation  
from the volume 'Mein Weltbild' by Albert Einstein*

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

ALAN HARRIS

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## PREFACE TO ABRIDGED EDITION

*The World as I See It* in its original form includes essays by Einstein on Judaism, Germany, Politics and Pacifism and sundry other topics. These have been omitted in the present abridged edition. The object of this reprint is simply to give the general reader an opportunity to examine some of the distinguished scholar's papers dealing with science.

## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

to the original edition, entitled  
"The World as I See It"

Albert Einstein is one of the most modest people in the world. In the letters and papers in this book he constantly refers to his "accidental" fame and his "unearned popularity." So deep-rooted is this feeling that he has merely tilled his own row, albeit that row was an inconceivably fertile one, that for many years his friends and intimates were unable to prevail upon him to publish his letters, papers and speeches, although opportunities and requests were showered on him. Even his scientific articles he would release to none save academic journals that do not reach the general public. The imagination of the world is stirred by the name of Albert Einstein, and yet hitherto it has had only the scantiest material to feed upon. Occasional, all-too-brief interviews; a few instances where Einstein suppressed his modesty for the sake of some great humanitarian cause; and the famous four-page pamphlet on the special theory of relativity.

The publishers do not know what good fortune at last prompted Albert Einstein to relax his attitude

a little. Perhaps he felt that in times like these each man must sacrifice himself if he can help but a little to alleviate the horrible conditions which have fallen upon the world. If anything could break Einstein's silence, it was the threat of war in Europe. Perhaps, too, it was the persecution of his people, the Jews. Perhaps it was, in some small degree, a further extension of his modesty in a desire to show how much his scientific work has been prepared for, supported, and amplified by less heralded collaborators, as he explains in his articles and speeches on Kepler, Newton, Maxwell, Planck, Niels Bohr and others. Whatever the cause, he at last gave permission to one of his intimates, who prefers to conceal his identity beneath the initials J.H., because his was a labor of love, to collect and publish certain of his writings.

These papers were originally published by the Querido Verlag in Amsterdam. In fairness to Professor Einstein, his American publishers would like to make it clear that although they have his full authorization to translate the German text as published in Holland, and although the documents from which the original publication was made have his authentication, there has been no further collaboration by him. Because of this, the publishers have taken extra and unusual care to check every detail of the translation. An expert has gone over the work to make sure that it represents the exact meaning of Professor Einstein. Thus, the responsibility for the accuracy of the translation, though every attempt

has been made to insure it, must not be placed with Professor Einstein.

There is a saying that only twelve people in the world can understand Einstein's theory of relativity. The difficulties of reaching such an understanding have heretofore been heightened by lack in print of anything but the abstract mathematical formulation of the theory. The papers and speeches published for the first time in this volume will be comprehensible to any well-educated person. They deal only in part with the central core of the theory; but the very fact that they carry its elaborations somewhat afield to particular applications and examples will help the scientific-minded layman to achieve a more complete comprehension of the theory itself. This book presents to the world at large for the first time what Einstein has really accomplished in the field of abstract physics. We cannot help but feel that its publication is an event of historical importance.

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