Dr. Einstein's Visa

After a bit of a flurry Albert Einstein again has the permission of Uncle Sam to revisit the United States and is now on the high seas. There was a little excitement before the American consul in Berlin formally satisfied himself that no disqualifications were attached to the scientist who took the affair in rather a temper. The genius of Dr. Einstein is more than conceded. It is a popular legend in which he appears as considerably more than human, but the doctor has human frailties for which probably the rest of mankind should be grateful. There should not be too great a gulf between the norm and the genius.

Einstein has political opinions. Some of them are naive. In his own science he would not have such opinions because he would not find anything to base them upon. Like many other men of great particular achievement, when he walks out of his field he walks out of his character. In political opinion Einstein relies upon his own emotional responses. He hasn't taken the trouble to discover the elements with which his opinions are dealing.

The scrutiny which followed almost as a matter of course when a protest was made to the State Department against his visit to the United States was within the accustomed procedure of nations. The protest may have been silly, but Dr. Einstein's naivety had provoked it and he was not being subjected to a special indignity. He was merely discovering that it is a practice of nations to regard the admission of aliens as a privilege extended at pleasure by the host and that the guest may be required to answer for himself. If the great scientist had known how a state regards itself he would have found nothing unusual in the status of the visitor as it suddenly was disclosed to him.