

SCIENCE

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1897.

LOUIS AGASSIZ.*

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It would be unnatural to have such an assemblage as this meet in the Museum and Faculty Room of this University and yet have no public word spoken in honor of a name which must be silently present to the minds of all our visitors.

At some near future day it is to be hoped some one of you who is well acquainted with Agassiz's scientific career will discourse here concerning it. I could not now, even if I would, speak to you of that of which you have far more intimate knowledge than I. On this social occasion it has seemed that what Agassiz stood for in the way of character and influence is the more fitting thing to commemorate, and to that agreeable task I have been called. He made an impression that was unrivalled. He left a sort of popular myth—the Agassiz legend, as one might say—behind him in the air about us; and life comes kindlier to all of us; we get more recognition from the world because we call ourselves naturalists—and that was the class to which he also belonged.

The secret of such an extraordinarily effective influence lay in the equally extraordinary mixture of the animal and social gifts, the intellectual powers and the desires and passions of the man. From his

* Words spoken at the reception of the American Society of Naturalists given by the President and Fellows of Harvard College at Cambridge on December 30, 1896.