

makes its wood unfit for shaping into the flat-sided bats used in the great British sport.

The disease is due to a swarming bacterium, which was described before the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science by Dr. W. J. Dowson, specialist in fungi at Cambridge University. The cause of the disease had been identified by an earlier worker, and Dr. Dowson confirmed his results, against which doubts had been raised later.

Watermark disease afflicts 25,000 cricket-bat willows in one English willow-raising region alone, Dr. Dowson

said. The dead trees, left standing, spread the epidemic among those still living.

When watermark disease attacks a willow, the leaves wither and turn brown prematurely, and then drop off. Volunteer shoots sprout from the living tissue below the dead wood. After two or three years, the tree dies completely, and a bacterial ooze comes out of chance small wounds.

The wood has a water-soaked appearance, and is darkly marked in streaks and patches. Masses of bacteria are crowded in its water-conducting vessels. It is utterly unfit for use.

Science News Letter, September 21, 1935

ASTRONOMY

New Asteroid Takes 7 Years For Journey Around the Sun

DEFINITELY an asteroid, but a most peculiar one, is astronomy's verdict on the strange celestial object imaged on a photographic plate at the Mount Wilson Observatory, California. The photographic record of its appearance was discovered by Dr. Edwin P. Hubble, and measured by Dr. Seth B. Nicholson.

The newly discovered asteroid is remarkable for two things: the large eccentricity and the high angle of its orbit, which has just been calculated independently by two astronomers, Prof. Harlow Shapley, director of the Harvard College Observatory, informed Science Service. One of the computations was made by L. E. Cunningham, of Harvard, and the other by Dr. Paul Herget of the University of California. Both were reported to the clearing-house for astronomical information maintained at the Harvard College Observatory.

These two preliminary orbit-calculations show the new asteroid to have a period of revolution around the sun of seven years. The orbit is a long ellipse, with the sun well to one side of center. It is, moreover, inclined at an angle of forty degrees to the ecliptic, or path of the planets. Its position, far outside the zodiacal belt in which the great majority of asteroids move, first attracted attention to it as something really unusual.

At present the asteroid, which is too small to be seen without a telescope, is in the constellation Cassiopeia. Cassiopeia is a W-shaped group of stars in the northern sky, on the opposite side of the Pole Star from the Great Dipper.

Additional observations have been made at Harvard College Observatory, which will permit the more accurate determination of the orbit.

Science News Letter, September 21, 1935

MEDICINE

Claims Electricity Better Than Malaria for Fever Treatment

ELECTRICAL methods of inducing fever are better than malaria for the treatment of the mental disease resulting from syphilitic infection, Dr. Ralph H. Kuhns of the University of Illinois College of Medicine told members of the American Congress of Physical Therapy.

Dr. Kuhns based his opinion on experience with both forms of treatment of

dementia paralytica in the state hospitals of Illinois.

Most important for the success of fever treatment, regardless of the method used to induce the fever, is starting the treatment early before serious mental deterioration has set in, Dr. Kuhns emphasized.

"In producing remissions and possible cures in many patients who were former-

ly given up as hopeless, we have effected a tremendous saving for the taxpayers of the state of Illinois, in addition to ameliorating the ravages of this dread disease," he said.

One of his objections to infecting the patients with malaria in order to produce the curative fever is the high death rate among patients treated with malaria. In the Elgin State Hospital this was 12 per cent., higher than for any other form of treatment. In addition to the danger to the patient, there is the possible danger of introducing malaria into the rest of the hospital population or possibly into the community outside the hospital. Dr. Kuhns quoted a recent statement of Dr. H. J. Shaughnessy, of the Illinois state health department, calling attention to this danger.

Of the various electrical methods of inducing high curative fever in the patients, Dr. Kuhns reported that he and his associates found the electric blanket safest and simplest. The blanket is about six feet square and is plugged by a connecting cord into an electric socket in the wall. The patient is first wrapped in blankets and then covered by the electrically heated blanket.

Three hundred patients have been treated by this method during the last five years at the Elgin State Hospital and the State Psychopathic Institute. Nearly three-fourths of these were definitely improved, one-tenth remained stationary, 7 per cent. deteriorated and 11 per cent. died. Nearly one-third of the improved patients were discharged by the Elgin State Hospital and 14 per cent. are now on parole.

Science News Letter, September 21, 1935

GENERAL SCIENCE

Plea for Linguistic Mercy Made to Soviet Scientists

RUSSIAN language, in its baffling Cyrillic alphabet, is too much of a hurdle for Western scientists who need to know what is in Russian scientific publications; wherefore Russian researchers are asked if they will not kindly announce their discoveries in English, German or French, by Prof. Horace Elmer Wood, 2d, of Dana College, Newark, N. J. (*Science*, Aug. 30).

The older scientific literature of Russia, Prof. Wood states, was usually published in one of the three languages most widely used among scientists. But even before the War and the Revolution, beginning about with the present century, Russian scientists began printing in their own vernacular, often giving exceedingly