



Celestial Time Table for September

Times are given in Eastern Standard. Subtract one hour for Central Standard, two hours for Mountain Standard, and three for Pacific Standard. Add one hour for the corresponding Daylight Saving time.

Sunday, Sept. 1, 11:15 p.m., new moon. **Tuesday, Sept. 3,** 1:00 a.m., moon nearest, 223,200 miles from earth. **Wednesday, Sept. 4,** 3:00 p.m., Jupiter changes direction, starts westerly motion. **Thursday, Sept. 5,** 8:00 a.m., Venus farthest west of sun. **Sunday, Sept. 8,** 2:32 p.m., moon in first quarter. **Monday, Sept. 16,** 9:41 a.m., full moon. **Wednesday, Sept. 18,** 3:00 a.m., moon farthest, 252,400 miles from earth. **Friday, Sept. 20,** 4:26 p.m., moon passes Saturn; 5:38 p.m., moon passes Jupiter. **Sunday, Sept. 22,** 11:46 p.m., sun crosses equator, autumn commences. **Tuesday, Sept. 24,** 12:47 p.m., moon in last quarter. **Saturday, Sept. 28,** 5:07 a.m., moon passes Venus.

Science News Letter, August 31, 1940

GENERAL SCIENCE

Noted Materialist States Articles of His Faith

CONFESSIONS of faith, to use a churchly phrase, may be of greater interest in disordered, dangerous days than in less troubled times. There may be more silent thinking about the destination of the human race and individuals.

One chapter of J. B. S. Haldane's new book, *Adventures of a Biologist*, is such a statement of personal philosophy. This collection of essays is good serious summer relief reading, by the way. Prof. Haldane, one of the most colorful figures in British science, tells why he is a materialist and why he wants to make others materialists.

When he says he is a materialist he means that he believes in the following statements:

1. Events occur which are not perceived by any mind.

2. There were unperceived events before there were any minds.

And he also believes, although not as necessary logical deduction from the former two, that:

3. When a man has died he is dead. When Prof. Haldane says "I believe" he does not mean it in the sense in which a fervent Christian uses it concerning the Virgin Mary. He means it in the ordinary sense in which, for example, he believes that dinner will be waiting for him when he goes home. He acts, and proposes to act, on the basis that materialism is true. Nevertheless he is prepared to consider evidence to the contrary and he does not get shocked or angry if someone criticizes or doubts the truth of materialism.

Materialistic thinking in the past has been revolutionary in its effects, Prof. Haldane observes. It has built up natural science and undermined religion. Our current ideas about society, which Prof. Haldane calls, "irrational traditions which stifle progress in the interests of a small minority," are being transformed by materialistic thinking about history as our ancestors' ideas were transformed by materialistic thinking about nature. He has no doubt but that the consequence will be revolutionary, as it was in the past.

Since our present society is working very badly, Prof. Haldane wants a rational society to come out of our present troubles.

The immediate future is going to be uncomfortable enough, whatever happens, Prof. Haldane wrote, even before the present tense days in England. His faith is a scientific materialism and he seeks converts because he believes the world will be a better place in which to live when dominated by scientific materialism.

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MEDICINE

Fewer Foreign Medical Journals Reaching U. S.

BLOCKADE, and the absorption of medical scientists into military occupations, are seriously cutting down the number of foreign medical publications received in the United States, it is noted in the issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* for Aug. 24. This of course has the adverse effect of depriving American physicians and surgeons of news of newest transatlantic developments in their field. Presumably their colleagues overseas are suffering similarly through lack of American medical journals.

A check-up has been made in the library of the American Medical Association and in the publication office of the *Quarterly Cumulative Index Medicus*. The last big shipment of Continental medical journals was received on May 27. Since that date only ten stray copies have come in, out of a list of some 1400 different periodicals on the Association's library subscription list. No Austrian or Italian publications have been received since June, and Polish and Czechoslovakian journals stopped coming many months ago.

British publications continue to arrive, though usually somewhat delayed.

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PLANT PHYSIOLOGY

Growth-Promoting Substance Sprouts Roots on Leaf Tips

A POSSIBLE new growth-promoting substance, that causes roots to sprout from begonia leaf tips instead of from their bases, is suggested by the result of researches conducted at Liege, Belgium, before the Nazi invasion. Published results, by Dr. P. C. Prevot, have been received in London.

Dr. Prevot had been experimenting

Books

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