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by

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MEDICINE

Fight Against Drug Addiction Is Launched by Doctors

Study of Narcotic Drug Problem Including Substitution Of Non-Habit-Forming Drugs Is Part of Campaign

A CAMPAIGN to limit the use of narcotic drugs to legitimate medicinal needs has been launched by the organized medical profession of the country. The campaign has as its object the two-fold purpose of reducing the extent of drug addiction and of forestalling legislative restriction of the individual physician's use of narcotic drugs.

Beginning with the issue for March 14, the American Medical Association will issue in its journal articles dealing with various phases of the narcotic drug problem. The effect of such drugs on the body, methods of treating drug addiction, indispensable uses of narcotics in medicine and surgery, substitution of non-habit-forming drugs for ones with addiction properties, and progress of research for a non-habit-forming substitute for morphine are the subjects of the series planned.

"It is the purpose of this series of articles to indicate to the medical profession the relatively few instances demanding the administration of opium or cocaine derivatives and the many

substitutes therefor that may be available," states the editor of the Journal.

"Something under 25 per cent. of narcotic addiction, it is estimated, results from the beginning of the habit through previous use of drugs in medical treatment. This is after all only an estimate, based largely on evidence derived from the addicts themselves, who are notoriously an unsafe source of evidence.

"Nevertheless, the physician must strive to limit his prescribing of narcotics absolutely to those situations in which the narcotic may be considered indispensable. Thus he will avoid the possibility of unfavorable criticism."

In addition, the American Medical Association declares itself ready to aid in every possible way state medical licensing boards in their efforts to purge the medical profession of those who have any conscious part in the creation and maintenance of narcotic addiction.

"Their activities reflect unfavorably on a profession of high standing and it will not tolerate them in its midst," the American Medical Association states.

Science News Letter, March 21, 1931

ASTRONOMY

New Minor Planet Reported By Italian Is One of 1500

THE NEW planet reported discovered at Pino Torinese Observatory, Turin, Italy, is not a major member of the sun's family, like the earth, Mars or even Pluto, the ninth planet, discovered last year. It is one of the minor planets or asteroids, considered by astronomers to be fragments of a now disintegrated planet that once may have existed between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter.

There are some 1,500 asteroids capable of being observed by present telescopes, and the discovery of new

asteroids is not an uncommon occurrence at observatories equipped for their study and giving attention to observing them. Most asteroids are now discovered by photographic exposures through a telescope guided to compensate for the earth's movement so that stars are photographed as small dots while asteroids appear as streaks on the plate.

Eros, the tiny planet which has just made an extremely close approach to the earth, is one of the most famous of the asteroids. Ceres was the first asteroid discovered on the first night of the