

ASTRONOMY

Clefts or "Canals" Are Now Discovered on the Moon

See Front Cover

"DITCHLIKE," straight line depressions on the surface of the moon are exciting the interest of astronomers. "Canals," some observers have been tempted to call them, by analogy with the famous and oft-disputed markings on the planet Mars.

The *Journal of the British Astronomical Association* has brought some newly recorded markings on the moon to the attention of European scientists through the publication of drawings by L. F. Ball, fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society. Mr. Ball has made the drawings available to America through Science Service. One of them is shown on the cover of this week's SCIENCE NEWS LETTER.

Some of the moon "ditches" are so straight and regular that uninformed observers might believe they were dug by the hands of a lost race of moon-men. Astronomers call the regular markings "clefts."

In the region of Weigel four great moon craters are shown, illuminated just at what would be sunset on the earth, when the sun is low on the moon's horizon and the shadows are long. Into two of the craters runs the ditchlike cleft with the forked end.

The origin of the clefts discovered on the moon is a matter of conjecture. Astronomers place no faith in any belief that they are the work of "moon-men."

One theory says that the clefts are geological faults in the moon's surface, that is, a place where the land suddenly sank or rose to form a cliff like the Palisades of the Hudson River.

Many of the clefts on the moon, which have been referred to as ditchlike depressions because of their appearance, are really towering cliffs. The black, dark area that looks like a ditch is the shadow of the cliff on the neighboring moon countryside.

Science News Letter, September 8, 1934

PUBLIC HEALTH

Public Health Leader Urges Teaching of Birth Control

MARRIAGE advice bureaus operated by public health departments to give advice on all problems of health in marriage, including the teaching of birth control, were advocated by Prof. Haven Emerson of Columbia University in his presidential address at the meeting of the American Public Health Association.

"Let us teach for the sake of women the knowledge which will permit them to choose the time and circumstance of their own childbearing," Prof. Emerson declared.

"Whatever may be one's intuitive, traditional, social, religious or medical preference in the use of contraceptive information as a proper application of knowledge for the protection and integrity of the family and to reduce the evidence of inherited and congenital disease and defect, the almost universal

familiarity with half-truths on this subject and the evident effect of their wide application in the falling birthrate makes it incumbent on physicians and health officers to familiarize themselves with organized efforts in this direction at home and abroad."

Prof. Emerson sees the marriage advice station as a suitable outgrowth of the prenatal clinics and child welfare stations at present conducted by health departments and private health agencies. Rather than let these marriage advice centers grow in a disorderly, amateur and more or less irresponsible way, as is the present tendency, he urged their development through such channels as health departments and hospitals.

Health officers should confer with medical schools, hospitals, outpatient and social agencies of their communities in order to develop such centers with-

HARNESSING SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES

an address by

Dr. P. G. Agnew

Secretary of the American Standards Association

Wednesday, Sept. 12, at 3:30 p. m., Eastern Standard Time, over Stations of the Columbia Broadcasting System. Each week a prominent scientist speaks over the Columbia System under the auspices of Science Service.

out offense to church or other social groups which may still hesitate to lend their influence or approval to this movement.

"Both mental hygiene and social hygiene should benefit by the official inclusion of a marriage advice service under the health department or in connection with the outpatient service of a general hospital," he said.

The clientele of these stations falls into the groups of those planning marriages, of those seeking advice on premarital problems, on uncertainties and difficulties related to childbearing in marriage and on sex and other problems in and out of wedlock. These stations can be of great service in preventing venereal disease and pelvic cancer as well as in giving competent professional education in birth control, he pointed out.

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SEISMOLOGY

Baffin Bay Region Shaken by Quake

THE REGION of Baffin Bay was shaken by a strong earthquake that occurred three minutes after midnight on Friday, Aug. 31, and recorded itself on American seismographs. The location was determined by the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey from reports wired Science Service by seismological observatories at Ottawa, Ann Arbor, Tucson, Ariz., Pasadena and Berkeley, Calif., St. Louis, Mo., Chicago, and Washington, D. C. This quake was in the same region as one that occurred last fall.

Science News Letter, September 8, 1934

Roman and Semitic noses are believed to have appeared late in racial evolution in southwest Asia.