



just before the Crucifixion, the Christian Easter has always had a close connection with Passover. In the year 325 A.D. the Council of Nicaea met, and set the rules still used to determine Easter. Before that time there had been some controversy as to whether Easter should be celebrated at the same time as Passover, or on a Sunday, and the latter side won.

As the vernal equinox then came on March 21, it was decided that Easter should be the Sunday following the first full moon on or after March 21. Thus, the earliest that Easter can possibly occur is March 22, which happened last in 1818. Then the moon was full on March 21, which was a Saturday, so the next day was Easter Sunday. In 1845, 1856 and 1913, it came on March 23.

This year the sun actually crosses the equator on March 20 at 1:24 p.m., eastern standard time. That marks the official beginning of spring, but the ecclesiastical equinox comes, as always, on the 21st, which is Thursday. The moon is full on Saturday, the 23rd, so Easter Sunday is March 24, an unusually early date. Not again this century will it come so early, though in 1951 it will fall on the 25th of March.

Perhaps, by then, there will be a fixed Easter. With so many things depending on Easter, the shifting back and forth is very confusing, and it has been suggested that a fixed time, say the second Sunday in April, be set to celebrate it. There seems to be no essential religious objection, for the date of Christmas once wandered about until it was fixed a long time ago on December 25. In England, as a matter of fact, a law was passed by Parliament more than a decade ago fixing Easter, though it does not take effect until other nations have agreed to do likewise. We hope that, before many years have passed, it will be possible to get sufficient agreement between the na-

tions of the world that such a decision may be made.

Celestial Time Table for March

Friday, March 1, 9:22 p.m., Algal at minimum. **Monday, March 4,** 6:11 p.m., Algal at minimum. **Friday, March 8,** 9:00 a.m., Venus passes Saturn; 9:23 p.m., New moon; 12:00 p.m., Moon farthest: 252,600 miles away. **Monday, March 11,** 3:25 a.m., Moon passes Jupiter. **Tuesday, March 12,** 9:01 a.m., Moon passes Saturn; 5:47 p.m., Moon passes Venus. **Wednesday, March 13,** 6:41 p.m., Moon passes Mars; 10:06 p.m., Moon passes Uranus. **Thursday, March 14,** 4:00 p.m., Neptune nearest; 2,716,000,000 miles away. **Saturday, March 16,** 1:00 p.m., Mars passes Uranus; 10:25 p.m., Moon at first quarter. **Tuesday, March 19,** 2:17 a.m., Algal at minimum. **Wednesday, March 20,** 1:24 p.m., Sun crosses equator; spring commences. **Thursday, March 21,** 1:07 a.m., Algal at minimum. **Saturday, March 23,** 5:00 a.m., Moon nearest; 221,900 miles away; 1:33 p.m., Full moon. **Sunday, March 24,** 7:56 p.m., Algal at minimum. **Tuesday, March 26,** 9:00 a.m., Venus passes Uranus. **Saturday, March 30,** 11:20 a.m., Moon in last quarter.

Eastern Standard Time throughout.

Science News Letter, February 24, 1940

MEDICINE

Hail Reopening of Popular Medical Exhibits

THE REOPENING on May 11 of the popular medical and public health exhibits of the N. Y. World's Fair, announced by Dr. Louis I. Dublin, acting chairman of the American Museum of Health, is being hailed by lay people and medical and health authorities.

The exhibit last year "gave to several million people from the United States, Canada and elsewhere valuable, life-saving knowledge," Surgeon General Thomas Parran, U. S. Public Health Service, declared in a letter to Dr. Dublin.

The federal health service cooperated with the American Museum of Health in a visitor reaction study which showed that visitors to the medical and health

exhibits gained from them vitally useful knowledge of health and medical matters.

New exhibits, to be announced later, will be added to the Carrel-Lindbergh "heart," the Transparent Man and other dramatic exhibits which last year vied in popularity with such industrial features as the General Motors Futurama and the American Telephone and Telegraph Company's Voder. The medical and public health exhibits last year drew a record-breaking attendance of 7,500,000 visitors, approximately one out of every three World's Fair visitors, and more by 2,000,000 than the total attendance of any previous public exhibit of medicine and public health anywhere in the world.

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The world's smallest known flowering plant is watermeal, about one thirty-second of an inch in diameter.

A Chinese cast-iron stove more than 1,700 years old, exhibited at the Field Museum, has a chimney and five cooking holes on top.

Mr Tompkins in Wonderland

by G. GAMOW

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