

stretches of our country, the choicest roses cannot be grown successfully out of doors without the most elaborate kind of protection in winter. And summer drought is often just as unkind to them.

Fortunately, these lands of hard winter do not need to be without their roses. They have wild roses of their own, that are worthy of places in anybody's gar-

den; and there are simpler roses in cultivation, too, that can withstand even a Dakota winter. To many persons, these simpler roses have a stronger esthetic appeal than the richly doubled ones, because their flowers without stamens and carpels being diverted into extra petals, are more natural and normal.

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that place predicted by English astronomer Cripps (not Sir Stafford).

Amateur astronomers may want to look for comet Grigg-Skjellerup, which Kanda reported to be 10th magnitude on May 9. It is moving rapidly through the southeastern part of Gemini in a northeasterly direction. Predicted position is:

June 2. right ascension 8 hours 53 minutes, declination 25 degrees 15 minutes north.

*Science News Letter, May 30, 1942*

## ASTRONOMY

## International Cooperation In Reporting Returning Comet

By CHARLES A. FEDERER, Jr.

Harvard College Observatory

A COMET whose terrestrial history is more significant than its celestial record has returned to our evening skies, bringing with it an example of the results of international coordination among scientists in spite of wartime hates and horrors.

"Pure science knows no international barriers" is a statement made by modern scientists, but often its truth is belied by the serious facts of war.

But the heavens are still free hunting-grounds for all men, and friend and foe alike coordinate their efforts in tracking down its vagabonds, chief of which are the ever-mysterious comets. Latest wanderer into our embroiled part of the solar system is what astronomers prosaically call "periodic comet Grigg-Skjellerup."

According to Dr. Harlow Shapley, director of Harvard College Observatory, the new visitor might well be called the international salesman of the sky, for it represents first New Zealand, then Finland, then England, Belgium, the United States, Sweden, Denmark, and last, but not least, Japan. No two countries figure twice in its history, which begins with its discovery by New Zealander Grigg in 1902.

The latest re-discovery of comet Grigg-Skjellerup has been made by a Japanese astronomer, S. Kanda, our information coming in the form of a cable from Lund, Sweden, where it had been received from Copenhagen, Denmark, which had gotten the news from Japan. (In the past year, Lund has replaced Copenhagen as a clearing house for European and Asiatic information.)

However, Kanda's observation was no news to American astronomers, as the Belgian-American, Dr. George Van Biesbroeck, at the University of Chi-

cago's Yerkes Observatory, had already seen the comet on April 11. Dr. Shapley stated that announcement of this failed to reach Lund, as cablegrams and radiograms cannot go through, and Harvard's regular announcement cards, sent by mail, are apparently still in transit.

Finland enters this comet's history in 1922, when Skjellerup re-discovered it; after that it was seen in 1927 and at five-year intervals. Its return this year was therefore expected, and the position reported by Kanda is almost exactly at

## PUBLIC HEALTH

## Pellagra, Disease of South, Found in the North

PELLAGRA, dread vitamin-deficiency disease once thought limited to the South, has been found in Northern communities, and probably exists throughout the world. One to two out of a hundred patients admitted to two Ohio hospitals had this illness. This is the conclusion of Dr. William Bennett Bean, Dr. Tom Douglas Spies and Dr. Marion A. Blankenhorn of Cincinnati (*Journal, American Medical Association*, April 4).

The three Ohio physicians found 111 victims of pellagra in Lakeside Hospital, Cleveland, and 128 in Cincinnati Gen-



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earl Hospital. Their studies covered the period 1930-35 and 7,186 admissions in the Lakeside Hospital, and also the period 1933-39 and 13,557 admissions in the Cincinnati General Hospital. No re-admission of pellagra cases was included.

Another study, this in far-off India, revealed that 0.65% of all cases admitted to the medical wards of a general hospital in the Province of Madras, suffered from pellagra.

The three American physicians conclude: "This is only an indication of the worldwide prevalence of pellagra. Whenever this disease is sought, it is found among the debilitated patients of large hospitals."

"... Furthermore, it is at once apparent that the disease is by no means confined to certain regions of the American Southern states but is found in areas where it is not generally thought of as an important problem."

The disease pellagra is characterized by dermatitis, diarrhea, and mental disturbances. It is caused by lack of a vitamin known as nicotinic acid or Niacin. Once thought hopeless, the disease is now effectively cured by treatment with Niacin, and proper diet.

Food fads or ill-advised reducing diets, addiction to alcohol where the victim does not eat properly, are frequently causes of pellagra.

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## New Machines And Gadgets

### Novel Things for War-Time Living

A match with every cigaret is insured by a recent patent. The object is accomplished by the simple device of having a paper match attached to each cigaret in the process of manufacture. Underlying the match is a strip of igniting material. The lower end of the match is glued to this, and the strip is attached to the end of the cigaret. Both are thus easily detached.

Plastic spacers, each of a different color by which the desired thickness can at once be selected without the making of measurements, will speed up milling machine operations. Being made of plastic, cellulose acetate, they will also save the brass and steel formerly employed.

Old documents can be restored and preserved in the following way. The paper is first immersed in lime water to remove discoloration, dust and grease. Next it is placed in a calcium carbonate solution and dried. Then it is placed between two thin sheets of cellulose acetate foil, covered in turn by sheets of tracing cloth. The whole is then put in a special press where heat and pressure fuse them into practically one sheet which will last indefinitely without deterioration. This method is used at the Maryland Hall of Records.



The guard in the picture is reporting "All's Well" to a central guard station in one of our war factories, protected by an acoustic fence. This fence is all ears. If tampered with anywhere, sounds are heard at the central station and an annunciator indicates where the disturbance took place. Even a dog crawling under the fence sets off the alarm. Although the guard in the picture is talking to a detector, he may send a message from any point along the fence by tapping it out in code.

Bowling is good exercise, but may be a bit too strenuous for some. To relieve the latter, a projector has been invented and patented which starts the ball rolling. You only have to aim it. In another patent, the inventor even provides a loading machine, so that you don't have to handle the balls, personally, at all. It appears the whole game could be played from a wheel chair.

Coffee flakes may be added to your morning menu when peace brings back the blessings of all the coffee you want (and double sugar, too, if you like it). But you will not eat it as a cereal. You will brew your morning beverage with it in the usual way. A patent has just

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