

ASTRONOMY

Pronouncing Star Names

After consultation, American Astronomical Society adopts standard pronunciation. Includes 88 constellations, 50 stars and nine planets.

► YEARS of confusion in pronouncing astronomical names may now come to an end. Often when referring to a star or constellation that he used in navigating his craft through the air or over the sea, the aviator or mariner has given the name such an unfamiliar twist that the astronomer has had to think twice to realize the object meant. Now, however, the American Astronomical Society has adopted officially a new list of pronunciations.

Prepared, after consultation with teachers and others interested, by a committee consisting of Dr. Samuel G. Barton, of the Flower Observatory of the University of Pennsylvania (chairman); George A. Davis, Jr., of the Buffalo Museum of Science, and Daniel J. McHugh, C.M., of De Paul University, Chicago, the complete list appears in the August number of *Popular Astronomy*. It includes the 88 constellations used by astronomers, fifty important special star names, the nine major planets, three clusters of stars and the letters of the Greek alphabet. The latter are often used by astronomers. Thus, the brightest star in the constellation of Orion is called alpha Orionis.

The special name for this star is "Betelgeuse," but it has had a variety of pronunciations, even in astronomical circles. One is *bet-el-gerz*, another *tell-gyou-eez* and another "beetle-juice." The committee decided on *bet-ul-juuz*. The first syllable is accented. The second syllable is pronounced like the el in "angel," and the u in the third syllable has the same sound as in "emulate."

The bright star Aldebaran in the constellation of Taurus the bull which, like Orion, is seen to the south on winter evenings, is often called *al-deh-ba-run* by navigators. The last two syllables are pronounced the same as "baron." Dr. Barton's committee adopted *al-deb-a-run*. The third syllable is pronounced like the a in "abound" and the last like the a in "sylvan."

For Cassiopeia, the W-shaped constellation seen in the northeast these August evenings, *kass-ee-ope-ee-yuh* has often been used, but they recommend

kass-ih-oh-pee-yuh. The a in the first syllable is like that in "hat," the i in the second as in "bit," the o in the third as in "anatomy," the e in the fourth as in "be" and the a at the end as in "sofa." The first and fourth syllables are accented.

Planet names are also covered. Most of these are familiar, but Uranus has been subject to variation. Thus, you-*ran-us* is sometimes used. Now, it has been decided, this should be *u-ra-nus*. The a in the second syllable is as in "abode" and the u in the last like that in "circus."

Science News Letter, August 22, 1942

PSYCHIATRY

Crime and Delinquency Prevented by Clinic

► PREVENTION of crime and delinquency, successful treatment of "problem" and backward school children, and the early detection and prevention of serious mental disorders have resulted from the pioneer work of the Suffolk County Health Department of New York, in setting up a mental hygiene program for rural areas.

An encouraging report of its first year's work is given by Dr. George M. Lott, Director of the Suffolk County Mental Hygiene Division, the first of its kind to be organized by a county health department. Dr. Lott's report appears in *Public Health Reports* of the U. S. Public Health Service.

In its work of prevention, the Suffolk County Mental Hygiene Clinic serves as a sort of classroom for parents and teachers, and a conference room, as well as a clinic. When a problem child is referred to the Clinic, for instance, his teachers, his family doctor, the school nurse, and anyone else interested in his welfare may all meet together and plan a cooperative program of treatment.

This method is not only valuable to insure cooperation among the various people and agencies involved in a case, but it provides a program of education in the principles of mental health. Relatives, teachers, physicians and clergymen who participate in these conferences with the psychiatric workers of the

Clinic have much to contribute to, and learn from such a many-sided discussion of each case.

Several cases of "delinquent" boys are reported by Dr. Lott where such prompt cooperation and treatment undoubtedly saved them from reform school or jail. One group of adolescent trouble-makers caught by the police were easily dealt with individually, once it was discovered that their leader belonged in a school for the feeble-minded. The others were given special educational or home-guidance attention.

The importance of re-educating parents is illustrated in several cases where a normally intelligent child was failing in school. One little girl was unable to read because she had been tutored at home by an over-ambitious strict and impatient father.


A seven-year old boy was failing in the first grade because of an abnormal amount of "babying" and spoiling at home, interspersed with unjust punishments. The mother, while not able to change her attitude without thorough-going psychiatric treatment, was nevertheless receptive to advice, and the situation was much improved.

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