



distance of but 36,000,000 miles—it is only visible when near one or the other elongation.

Venus, on the other hand, is at a mean distance from the sun of 67,000,000 miles, so it is visible over a much larger part of its orbit. Only near its inferior conjunction, which occurs April 15, or the superior conjunction, when it is on the far side of the sun, is it completely invisible. The greatest eastern elongation, such as recently brought it into view in the evening, comes about 72 days before inferior conjunction, and greatest western elongation about the same time afterwards. Then about 440 days elapse while it slowly creeps behind the sun, and again comes into view in the evening. About

this time next year it will come into the evening sky once more, gradually brightening until it attains the maximum brilliancy just before Christmas, 1946.

Celestial Time Table for April

| Apr. | EWT | |
|------|------------|---------------------------------------|
| 5 | 3:18 p.m. | Moon in last quarter |
| 9 | 3:07 p.m. | Moon passes Mars |
| 12 | 4:00 a.m. | Moon nearest, distance 221,800 miles |
| | 6:54 a.m. | Moon passes Mercury |
| | 8:29 a.m. | New moon |
| | 8:58 a.m. | Moon passes Venus |
| 15 | 1:00 p.m. | Venus between earth and sun |
| 17 | 8:52 a.m. | Moon passes Saturn |
| 19 | 3:46 a.m. | Moon in first quarter |
| 23 | 1:50 a.m. | Moon passes Jupiter |
| 25 | 11:00 a.m. | Moon farthest, distance 252,500 miles |
| 27 | 6:33 p.m. | Full moon |

Subtract one hour for CWT, two hours for MWT, and three for PWT.
Science News Letter, March 31, 1945

except Guam from Germany, who had bought them from Spain in 1889. Japan stole Guam from the United States soon after Pearl Harbor, and held it for about two and a half years.

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AERONAUTICS

Huge Steel Propellers In Quantity Production

➤ AMERICA'S largest four-bladed hollow steel propeller is now in quantity production for use on the huge flying boat Mars and army warplanes. The propeller measures 16 feet 8 inches from tip to tip, and is designed to absorb approximately 3,000 horsepower.

The new propeller was developed after three years of joint research by the Army Air Forces Materiel Command and the Curtiss-Wright Corporation.

The new propellers are full-feathering. That means that the blades can be turned to approximately a 90-degree angle of pitch, thereby preventing the propeller from windmilling and causing excessive vibration in the event of engine failure. With motion stopped, it presents a minimum amount of drag.

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No fungicide is known that arrests fungi in their early stages and prevents them from forming colonies, and is also non-corrosive, non-toxic to humans, permanent and colorless.

AERONAUTICS

World's Largest Airport

➤ WORLD'S largest airport is a B-29 base on Tinian Island in the Pacific, reports P. B. Taylor, acting general manager of Wright Aeronautical Corporation, who recently completed a 25,000-mile journey of key points in the South Pacific theater. Several 8,000-foot runways for the Superfortresses were cut right out of the jungle, and the whole installation completed in eight weeks, he stated.

Tinian, along with Saipan and Guam, now form the principal air bases for attacks on Japan. The shape of the island closely resembles Manhattan. It is about ten miles from north to south and four miles wide at its center. U. S. troops stationed there have named parts of the island for familiar New York City areas, including the Bowery, Broadway, and Columbus Circle.

Unlike airports in the United States which have a number of runways crisscrossing each other so that planes may

take off into the wind, and land with the wind, there are no cross strips on the Tinian field. Pilots take the winds as they find them, coming in fast for landings and relying on the steel mats used to surface the runways to stop the plane short, Mr. Taylor pointed out.

When U. S. forces seized Tinian from the Japanese, they found only one landing strip on the heavily fortified island. This landing strip was so inadequate and poorly built that our Army and Navy built the new larger landing strips right over the top of it, he commented.

The climate on Tinian is comparable to that of the Philippines, although the heat is not as intense. It is a low coralline limestone island without prominent elevations.

Tinian is one of the Mariana group that stretches northward from Guam about 550 miles. The group was named in 1688 in honor of Maria Anna of Austria. In 1914, the Japs took all of them



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