

planets are always close to it, and the zodiac is a band seven degrees either side.

Usually it is stated that there are 12 constellations in the zodiac. In addition to the six shown on the maps, there are Libra, the scales (in which Jupiter is seen when it rises about midnight); Scorpio, the scorpion; Sagittarius, the archer; Capricornus, the sea-goat; Aquarius, the water carrier and Pisces, the fishes. One way of remembering these is from a verse written by Dr. Isaac Watts, famous writer of hymns such as "Oh God, our help in ages past." He wrote a book on astronomy, first published in 1725, containing this rhyme, which is usually misquoted:

"The Ram, the Bull, the heavenly Twins,
And next the Crab, the Lion shines,
The Virgin, and the Scales.
The Scorpion, Archer, and Sea-Goat,
The Man that holds the Water-Pot,
And Fish with glittering tails."

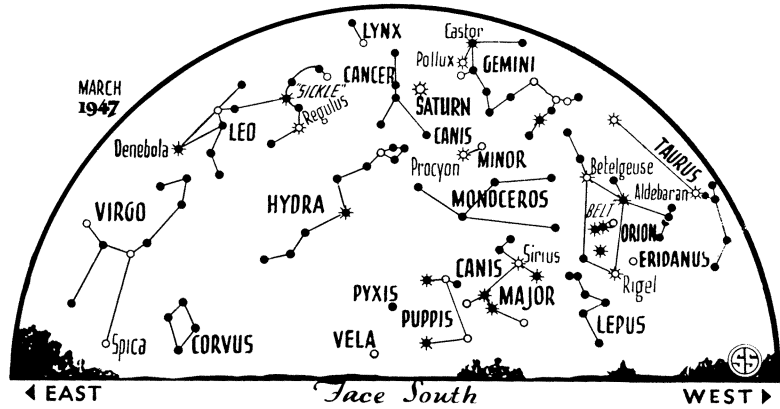
Actually, however, there are more than these 12 groups through which the moon and planets travel. For example, on March 14, when the moon is at last quarter, it will stand in the constellation of Ophiuchus, the serpent bearer. Not considered a zodiacal group, this figure really comprises more of that band than does the scorpion, which is next to it. Also parts of Cetus, the whale; Auriga, the charioteer; Orion; Sextans, the sextant and Corvus, the crow, come into the zodiac.

Celestial Time Table for March

March	EST	
3	3:00 p.m.	Moon nearest, 227,800 miles
	9:15 p.m.	Moon passes Saturn
6	10:15 p.m.	Full moon
8	5:00 p.m.	Mercury toward sun
12	9:56 a.m.	Moon passes Jupiter
14	1:28 p.m.	Moon in last quarter
15	12:01 a.m.	Algol at minimum
	12:00 noon	Moon farthest, 251,000 miles
17	8:50 p.m.	Algol at minimum
18	8:08 p.m.	Moon passes Venus
20	5:39 p.m.	Algol at minimum
21	6:13 a.m.	Sun crosses equator, Spring commences
22	11:34 a.m.	New moon
29	8:00 a.m.	Moon nearest, 230,000 miles
	11:15 a.m.	Moon in first quarter
30	7:00 p.m.	Neptune nearest, 2,721,000,000 miles
31	2:16 a.m.	Moon passes Saturn

Subtract one hour for CST, two hours for MST, and three for PST.

Science News Letter, February 22, 1947



◄ EAST Face South WEST ►
* * ◦ • SYMBOLS FOR STARS IN ORDER OF BRIGHTNESS

AERONAUTICS

Plastic Radar Dome Has Fiber Glass Base

► A NEW PLASTIC substance with great impact resistance, stronger than any other yet made and lighter than aluminum, has been developed by the Cornell Aeronautical Laboratory to house radar and increase its efficiency in high-speed aircraft.

A radar dome made of this new fiber-glass reinforced plastic, developed by the laboratory's wood and plastic section under the direction of Norman E. Wahl, will be installed in the nose of an AT-126 plane around new radar equipment.

Mr. Wahl said the new plastic has special electrical properties which cut absorption of radar waves to only 3%, increasing radar efficiency in flight more than 10%. With earlier plastic radar domes as much as 18% of radar waves was lost.

This new and as yet unnamed plastic is 20% to 30% stronger than aluminum and is 4% lighter, Mr. Wahl said. It has 30 times the impact strength of other plastics and is slightly more resilient.

The new material, he explained, is a significant step in the development of a plastic suitable for aircraft construction. The biggest drawback now is its price but he believes it will be widely used to build both planes and automobiles when costs are lowered through mass production.

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America, which in early days was a tea-drinking nation, can now be said to be a coffee-drinking country; England, on the other hand, switched from coffee, and its famed coffee houses, to tea about three centuries ago.

INVENTION

Throttle Valve Keeps Car From Stalling on Red Light

► HAVE YOU EVER STALLED your car, on trying to start after waiting through a red light with your not-fully-warmed-up engine idling? If you have ever had this embarrassing experience (and who hasn't?) you will appreciate a new gadget invented by L. E. Perrine of Detroit, which he calls a thermostatic throttle stop.

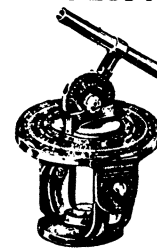
The stop on your throttle, which lets just enough fuel through to idle a warm engine, isn't set right for a cold one. To remedy this, the inventor adds to the carburetor a cam-controlled throttle valve, the position of the cam being determined by the expansion or contraction of a heat-responsive bimetallic strip actuated by the heat of the engine. It is adjusted to let more fuel through when the engine has not had time to warm up properly.

Rights in the patent, No. 2,415,529, have been assigned to the General Motors Corporation.

Science News Letter, February 22, 1947

Oil from flaxseed, with melted amber added, was used by ancient Egyptians as a varnish.

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