



◊ * ○ • SYMBOLS FOR STARS IN ORDER OF BRIGHTNESS

from the earth, and hence for part of the time were practically invisible, even through a telescope. Now they are opening up again and the planet will become a most interesting object for observatory visitors to view.

Venus, which also is now a morning star rising about three hours ahead of the sun and shining more brilliantly than any other star or planet, will disappear behind the sun by late spring. By the beginning of autumn, it will become visible in the early evening. From then on its visibility will improve until it becomes a very prominent object in the evening in the spring of 1953.

Though Mercury will swing to the east of the sun, and remain above the western horizon for a while after sunset on three occasions in 1952, it is when this happens on March 18 that one will have the best opportunity of seeing this elusive little planet. For a few days before and after that date it should be easy to locate in the west as twilight is falling. Around Dec. 18, 1952, will be the best time for seeing it in the eastern sky, just before sunrise. However, it will similarly be a morning star

early in January, for it will also be farthest west of the sun on the sixth.

Celestial Time Table for January

Jan.	EST	
2	9:57 p.m.	Algol (variable star in Perseus) at minimum brightness
3	3:15 p.m.	Moon passes Jupiter
	11:42 p.m.	Moon at first quarter
4	4:00 p.m.	Earth nearest sun, distance 91,449,500 miles
5	6:46 p.m.	Algol at minimum
6	3:00 p.m.	Mercury farthest west of sun
11	11:55 p.m.	Full moon
12	1:00 a.m.	Moon farthest, distance 252,500 miles
19	3:48 a.m.	Moon passes Saturn
20	1:09 a.m.	Moon in last quarter
	7:29 a.m.	Moon passes Mars
23	11:41 p.m.	Algol at minimum
24	2:24 a.m.	Moon passes Venus
26	7:00 a.m.	Moon nearest, distance 227,100 miles
	5:26 p.m.	New moon
	8:30 p.m.	Algol at minimum
31	6:54 a.m.	Moon passes Jupiter

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

Science News Letter, December 29, 1951

METEOROLOGY

Jet Stream Brought Storms

► A 150 TO 200 miles-an-hour jet stream of wind 30,000 to 40,000 feet up over the United States and a "wrong way" ridge moving westward out over the Pacific 10,000 to 20,000 feet up were responsible for the recent series of winter storms.

This is the opinion of Jerome Namias, the Weather Bureau's extended forecast expert. The "wrong way" ridge was a south-pointing indentation in the broad current of air which circles the northern hemisphere 10,000 to 40,000 feet up, traveling from west to east. Only this ridge had been traveling westward, in the opposite direction.

It was first responsible for the movement of warm moist air from the Gulf of Mexico

up to the mid-western United States. Then it moved out over the Pacific, where the warm moist air over that ocean was moving northward. In both instances cold Arctic air moved down the ridge to meet the warm moist air, thus setting up the conditions for the storms and snow.

The pattern of alternating cold waves and snowstorms across the country was a by-product of both the jet stream and the ridge, according to Mr. Namias. It is his theory that jet streams are formed through the meeting of warm air from the south and cold Arctic air. This jet stream is the force that is responsible for the fast movement of the storms across the United States.

Science News Letter, December 29, 1951

MEDICINE

Greater Cold Risk If Children Are Under 10

► PARENTS OF children under 10 years old run a greater risk of getting colds, sore throats and the other respiratory diseases than parents of older children.

This has long been suspected by parents and now it is presented as a fact established through studies of 1,000 families in Pleasantville and Mt. Kisco, Westchester County, N. Y. The studies were made by Miss Jane E. Coulter and Miss Doris Tucker of the Milbank Memorial Fund in New York.

Fathers having only children under 10 had from 17% to 88% more colds, sore throats, etc., than fathers of children aged 10 to 18. Mothers of the young children had 36% to 61% more colds and respiratory illness than mothers of older children.

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TECHNOLOGY

Colored Lights Help to Sort Fruits and Vegetables

► BETTER QUALITY fruits and vegetables are foreseen through the use of colored lights in sorting defective food from good material.

G. M. Peterson and W. M. Carleton of Michigan State College's Agricultural Experiment Station, East Lansing, find that the problem of spotting small defects is much simpler when background and lighting colors are carefully chosen.

Besides changing the lighting color, they suggest that inspection belts be given the right color either by making the rubber the required shade or by using a transparent belt with the right color placed underneath. Rubber conveyor belts can not be painted because of sanitary reasons.

This new approach to detecting small but important defects in fruits and vegetables increased the efficiency of workers as much as 64%, their recently completed tests with cherries in 13 Michigan processing plants showed.

Science News Letter, December 29, 1951

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