



panion came in front of the bright one, causing a partial eclipse that dimmed its light. At first it was supposed that the companion had no light at all. As more accurate measurements were made it was found that half-way between the principal dimmings, there was another, very much smaller. This occurs when the bright star eclipses the fainter one, and shows that the latter is not completely dark.

From a careful analysis of the changes that occur in Algol, astronomers have learned a surprisingly large amount of information about it. The bright star is believed to be about 2,660,000 miles in diameter, about three times that of the sun, and to have a surface temperature of about 12,000 degrees, a little hotter than the sun.

Dark Star Relatively Cool

The darker star is about 6,500,000 miles from the bright one and a little larger—about 3,000,000 miles in diameter—but with a surface temperature of only 3,000 degrees. Despite its larger size, its mass is a little less than that of the sun, while that of the bright star is about 4.3 times as massive as the sun. And there is a third star, farther away, which revolves around the close pair every 1.75 years, but does not take part in the eclipse!

The variations of Algol, typical of a group of several hundred "eclipsing binary" stars, are interesting to watch, since it can be detected with the naked eye. That is why, when Algol is visible in the evening, the times of its minimum brightness that occur in evening hours are included in the "Celestial Time Table" at the end of each of these articles.

Celestial Time Table for November

Nov.	EST	
2	9:20 p.m.	Algol at minimum.
3	2:28 p.m.	Moon passes Mars.
	3:55 p.m.	Moon in first quarter.
4	8:00 p.m.	Saturn behind sun.
5	6:09 p.m.	Algol at minimum.
10	8:00 a.m.	Moon nearest, distance 221,500 miles.
	9:29 a.m.	Full moon.
14	7:00 p.m.	Mercury farthest west of sun.

- 15 2:00 a.m. Venus between sun and earth.
 - 8:50 a.m. Moon passes Jupiter.
 - 16 early a.m. Meteors visible apparently radiating from constellation of Leo, the lion.
 - 17 4:32 a.m. Moon in last quarter.
 - 22 11:02 p.m. Algol at minimum.
 - 23 7:00 p.m. Moon farthest, distance 252,600 miles.
 - 25 7:30 a.m. New moon.
 - 7:51 p.m. Algol at minimum.
 - 28 4:40 p.m. Algol at minimum.
- Subtract one hour for CST, two hours for MST, and three for PST.

Science News Letter, October 30, 1954

ETHNOLOGY

Odd Diet, Ancient Rites Customs of African Tribe

➤ DRINKING OF cow's blood and banana beer and practice of the ancient rites of circumcision still exist among a little-known East African tribe.

Dr. Walter Goldschmidt, a University of California at Los Angeles anthropologist, has just returned to the United States after studying the tribe under a Fulbright Grant.

With his wife and eight-year-old son, he lived for six months in a native mud-and-thatch hut among the Sebei tribe of Uganda. The 35,000-member tribe inhabits the northern slopes of 14,000-foot Mount Elgon, an extinct volcano.

Circumcision is a test of fortitude which both sexes must undergo before they are eligible for marriage. A youth or maid who shows any sign of fear is marked for life. A girl who cries may never become the first wife of any man. She may be a second wife in the polygamous tribe.

The Sebei live chiefly on corn and bananas. Bananas are cooked green and taste something like boiled potatoes. Native beer is made from the fruit, and the Sebei drink it from earthen pots through six-foot straws.

Some cattle are raised, and milk is an important part of the diet. Fresh cow blood, once a popular beverage, is still relished by tribal oldsters. Beef is available only when a cow is slaughtered for some ceremony or because it is crippled or old.

Science News Letter, October 30, 1954

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