

The Heavens in February

By Prof. Eric Doolittle, of the University of Pennsylvania.

The most notable change in the early evening sky is the appearance this month of the bright planet Jupiter, which shines out in the north-east with a steady, yellowish radiance, almost in the exact centre of the constellation Leo.

Interval of a little less than three days it suddenly diminishes very greatly in brightness. The reader may observe its partial eclipse by a dark companion on February 6th, midnight; February 9th, 9 p. m., and February 12th, 6 p. m., Eastern time.

Another remarkable variable star is that at F, which 200 years ago nearly disappeared and a century later was more than twice as bright as now.

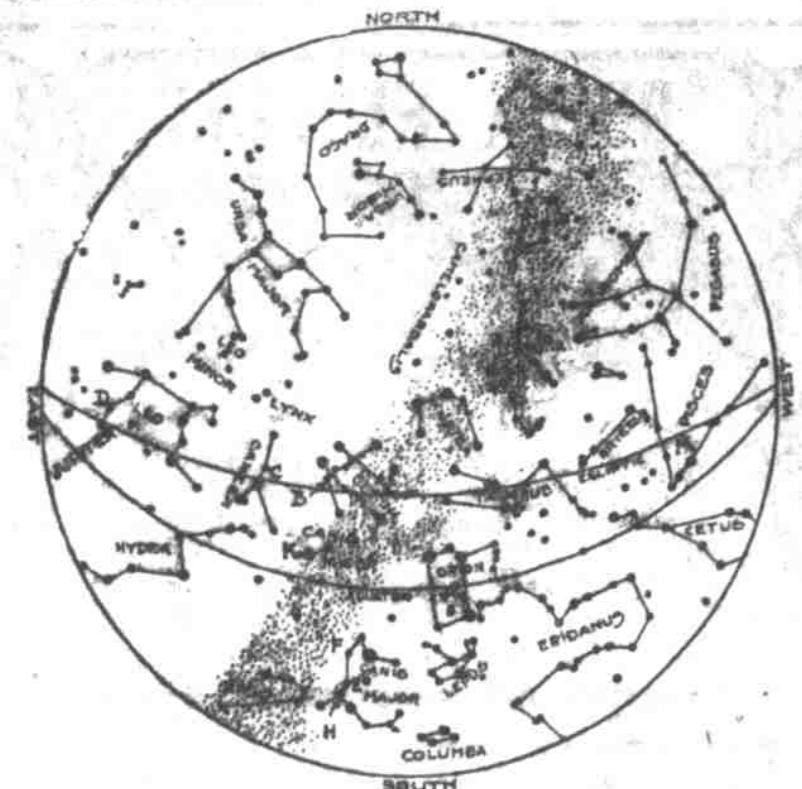


Fig. 1. The Constellations at 9 p. m., February 1st.

of August 12th. At that time the southwestern sky will be most beautiful, with the two very brilliant planets only one-fifth of a degree apart, and the red planet Mars shining out further toward the east.

THE WINTER STARS

The brilliant stars of winter are still all with us, although the great groups of Taurus and Orion have passed their highest positions, and are beginning their descent toward the west.



Fig. 2. The southeastern sky just before sunrise.

like our own sun, and yet more than 200 times brighter, while in the south the bluish Sirius, the brightest of all, has now reached its highest position in the heavens.

It will prove interesting and not difficult for the reader to trace out all the constellations lying along the winter branch of the Milky Way.

First, just above the ground in the south we see a few stars, which form the prow of the ship Argo, a great southern constellation, most of which never rise above the ground in our latitude.

This figure contains two remarkable stars, of which the first is the second brightest of all stars in the sky and the second is a wonderful variable, but neither of these objects can be seen by observers north of the thirty-seventh parallel.

Above Argo is the Lesser Dog, with its bright Procyon, or Lesser Dog star, at K, while the faint stars between this group and Argo form the Unicorn, the equator running lengthwise of the body of this animal, which stands with its head toward Orion.

Above the Lesser Dog come the Twins and the Wagoner, and then the Champion Perseus, speeding to the rescue of Andromeda, near by, the last group noteworthy because of its wonderful variable star at L, and because it includes so many objects of interest to the possessor of a small telescope.

Below Perseus is the bright group Cassiopeia, and below this the extreme top of the Northern Cross may be seen just above the ground.

Could we go farther, we would come next to the Eagle, and then to the striking summer group of the Scorpion, while near this and almost exactly in the centre of the stream of stars forming the Milky Way there would now be found the planet Mars.

stars are arranged in curving streams.

THE PATH OF THE MOON

It will prove of interest to watch the motion of the moon among the bright winter stars as the month goes by. At the beginning of the month the nearly full moon is just entering Gemini; on February 2d, at 2 a. m., it passes just below the star at A, and the next morning at 5 o'clock it passes below the star B.

Observers in the Southern Hemisphere will see the moon pass over both of these stars. On February 4th, at 8 a. m., the star at C will be occulted; but to observers in the Eastern States the moon will then have set.

By February 7th, at 5 p. m., the moon will have reached the star at D, and by February 15th, at 3:30 p. m., it will reach the summer branch of the Milky Way, and its edge will almost graze the planet Mars; observers near the equator will see the most interesting occultation of the planet. Unfortunately, by 5 a. m., at which time the planet rises to us, the two bodies will have drawn apart, but even at this time the contrast in color will be most striking.

The observer can also compare the planet with the red star Antares, or Rival of Mars, at A, Fig. 2, while the planet is so faint as to present the name of the star does not seem inappropriate. Finally the new crescent moon will pass over the star at M on February 23d at about 7 p. m., the star as seen from Washington disappearing at B, 55 minutes later.

THE NEW COMET

The brilliant new comet has now passed out from behind the sun and will remain visible to observers in the Southern Hemisphere until next autumn. The path pursued by this body is an open parabolic curve, shown at N R, Fig. 4. When first discovered, on September 1st, the comet was at D, and the earth at A; while the earth passed along the arc AB the comet was moving from D to E, and hence was seen to mount above the plane of the earth's orbit, and reached the point of its path, P, nearest the sun on December 26th. On January 1st the earth was at B and the comet at E, just about to pass below the plane of the earth's orbit, and by February 7th, the earth will have moved to C and the comet have reached the point F, far below the plane of the earth's orbit, so that it will be seen in the direction C P. It is to be regretted that this wonderful

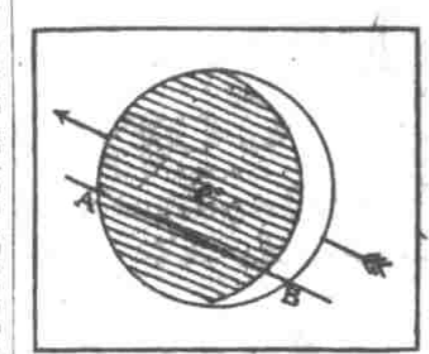


Fig. 3. Occultation of M Pictoris.

object did not appear six months earlier or later, in which case the earth and comet would have arrived at E at almost the same time and the object would have been strikingly large and brilliant even to the naked eye. Even as it is the astronomers have secured a more complete series of photographs, showing the wonderful changes in the tail of this truly remarkable comet and have made a more thorough study of its light than it has ever been possible for them to do with any similar body before.

When on the fervid air there came A strain—now rich now tender; The music seemed itself aflame With days departing splendor.

A Federal band, which eve and morn, Played measures brave and simple Had just struck up, with flute and horn And lively clash of cymbal.

Howe! Eureka! the soldiers to the banks, Till, marbled by its pebbles One wondrous shore was blue with 'Yanks.'

Then all was still, and then the band, With movement light and tricky Made stream and forest, hill and strand, Reverberate with 'Dixie.'

Famous Poems of the Civil War

Have you ever witnessed the reunion of a band of the survivors of the Lost Cause? Did you notice the bent shoulders, the stiffened limbs and lagging gait of these 'Old Boys in Gray,' as the former in ranks for their parade? And while you with hundreds of others stood reverently silent, gazing almost tearfully, the band began to play. Like magic the stooped forms straightened, the stiffened limbs regained the elasticity that characterized them a half century back—the column formed and they marched again to Dixie.

Dixie, the beautiful, the soul-inspiring—the battle hymn of the Southern Republic. The Dixie that to the rebel soldier on the battlefield meant a cottage or a mansion somewhere South, about whose porch his wife, the roses and wisteria grew in riotous profusion, and in whose tangled branches the mocking bird came at evening to pour his trilling music in the ears of a once happy and care-free people.

That same Dixie to the same rebel again awoke memories—memories of a battlefield, an endless march, the roar of cannon and the smell of smoke.

In the van of the Confederate army, bearing proudly the rank of Brigadier General, Albert Pike, a yankee born, but Southern by adoption and rearing, had his patriotic soul moved by inspiration and wrote another Dixie. 'Southern, hear your country call you! Up! lest worse than death befall you! To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie!'

Lo! the beacon fires are lighted, Let all hearts be now united, To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie! Advance the flag of Dixie! Hurrah! hurrah!

For Dixie's land we'll take our stand, To give or die for Dixie To arms! to arms! And conquer peace for Dixie.

Hear the Northern thunders mutter! Northern flags in South winds flutter! To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie! To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie! Advance the flag of Dixie! etc.

Fear no danger! shun no labor! Lift up rifle, pike and sabre. Dixie! Shoulder pressing close to shoulder! Let the odds make each heart bolder! To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie! Advance the flag of Dixie! etc.

How the South's great heart rejoices At your cannon's ringing voices! To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie! For faith betrayed and pledges broken; Wrong inflicted, insults spoken. To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie! Advance the flag of Dixie! etc.

Strong as lions, swift as eagles, Back to their kennels hunt these beagles! To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie! Cut the unequal bonds asunder! Let them hence each other plunder! To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie! Advance the flag of Dixie! etc.

Swear upon your country's altar Never to submit or falter. To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie! Till the contrast in color will be most striking. To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie! Advance the flag of Dixie! etc.

Hail not till our federation Secures to each earth's powers its station! To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie! Then at peace, and crowned with glory, Hear your children tell the story! To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie! Advance the flag of Dixie! etc.

If the loved ones weep in sadness, Victory soon shall bring them gladness; To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie! Exultant pride soon banish sorrow; Smiles chase tears away to-morrow. To arms! to arms! to arms! in Dixie! Advance the flag of Dixie! etc.

Just beyond the din of the city's noise and bustle, just in sight of the dark waters of the James, in beautiful Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond, alongside the rich and great of the nation, John Reuben Thompson sleeps his everlasting sleep.

The holly trees cast long shadows at eventide o'er his grave, a Confederate banner bids the passer-by remember and the breeze sing a requiem to him and the other Confederate dead. 'That gifted Virginian,' was born in the city where he now lies buried, eighty-six years ago. In 1847 he was editor of The Southern Literary Messenger, published in Richmond, Va. He sustained the reputation of a great magazine. He had just made after the battle of Manassas he wrote a poem, entitled 'On the Battle of Manassas.'

The keen satire of the production combined with its admirable literary qualities, was much appreciated and welcomed by Southerners and Southern sympathizers everywhere. Probably the best known of the writer's poems is

MUSIC IN CAMP. Two armies covered hill and plain, Where Rappahannock's waters Ran deeply crimsoned with the stain Of battle's recent slaughters.

The summer clouds lay pitched like tents In meads of heavenly azure; And each dream-gun of the elements Slept in its embrasure.

The breeze so softly blew, it made No forest leaf to quiver, And the smoke of the random cannon—side Rolled slowly from the river.

And now, where circling hills looked down With caution grimly planted, O'er listless camp and silent town The golden sunset slanted.

When on the fervid air there came A strain—now rich now tender; The music seemed itself aflame With days departing splendor.

A Federal band, which eve and morn, Played measures brave and simple Had just struck up, with flute and horn And lively clash of cymbal.

Howe! Eureka! the soldiers to the banks, Till, marbled by its pebbles One wondrous shore was blue with 'Yanks.'

Then all was still, and then the band, With movement light and tricky Made stream and forest, hill and strand, Reverberate with 'Dixie.'

Again a pause, and then again The trumpet raised anon; And 'Yankee Doodle' was the strain To which the shere gave chorus.

The laughing ripple shoreward flew, To kiss the shining pebbles; Loud shrieked the swarming Boys in Blue—

Defiance to the Rebels. And yet once more the bugle sang, Above the stormy riot; No shout upon the evening rang— There reigned a holy quiet.

The sad, slow stream its noiseless food Poured o'er the glistening pebbles; All silent now the Yankees stood, All silent stood the Rebels.

No unresponsive soul had heard, That plaintive note's appealing, So deeply, 'Home, Sweet Home' had stirred The hidden founts of feeling.

Or Blue, or Gray, the soldier sees As by the wand of fairy, The cottage 'neath the live-oak trees, The cabin by the prairie.

Or cold, or warm, his native skies Breathe in their beauty o'er him; Seen through the tear-mist in his eyes His loved ones stand before him.

As fades the iris after rain In April's tearful weather, The vision vanishes as the strain And daylight died together.

But memory, waked by music's art, Expressed in simplest numbers Subdued the sternest Yankee's heart, Made light the Rebel's slumbers.

And fair the form of music shines That bright celestial creature Who still, mid war's embattled lines, Gave this one touch of nature."

Among the poems of Francis Orrery Ticknor, of Columbus, Ga., collected by his friends and published after his death, was found "Little Griffin"—the true story of a wounded Rebel boy that was nursed back to health and strength at "Porch Hill," the suburban home of Dr. Ticknor.

LITTLE GIFFEN.

Out of the focal and foremost fire— Out of the hospital walls as fire— Smitten of grape-shot and gangrene— Eighteenth battle and he, sixteen— Spectre, such as you seldom see, Little Griffin, of Tennessee.

"Take him and welcome," the surgeon said, "Not the doctor can help the dead!" So we took him and brought him where The balm was sweet in our summer air; And we laid him down on a wholesome Utter Lazarus, heel to head!

And we watched the war with abated breath, Skeleton boy against skeleton death— Months of torture, how many such! Weary weeks of the sick and crutch— And still a glint in the steel-blue eye Told of a spirit that wouldn't die.

And didn't—nay! more! in death's de- spite— The crippled skeleton learned to write— "Dear mother!" at first, of course, and then "Dear captain" enquiring about the men— Captain's answer: "Of eighty and five Giffen and I are left alive."

"Johnston pressed at the front," they say— Little Giffen was up and away! A tear, his first, as he bade good-bye Dimmed the glint of his steel-blue eye; "But write, if spared!" There was news of fight.

But none of Giffen! he did not write! I sometimes fancy that were I king Of the courtly Knights of Arthur's ring, With the voice of the minstrel in mine And the tender legend that trembles here— I'd give the best of his bened knee— The whitest soul of my chivalry— For Little Giffen of Tennessee.

To Lamar Fontaine, one of the un- rewarded heroes of the South, has been attributed the authorship of the beautiful poem, "All Quiet Along the Potomac To-Night," though as far back as '63, there was much controversy as to whether the poem belonged to the North or South; some claiming an Ohioan rather than Fontaine as the real author. It is said that there was no occasion to incite such a poem along the Potomac were rarely if ever shot. One Southern editor at the time, commenting on the discussion said, "A brave man—a hero, if you will, Fontaine has yet to prove that he is a poet."

Another gifted Rebel—Henry Alexander, firm in his belief that the little masterpiece belongs to Fontaine, dedicated the following lines to him: Heroic youth, may heaven defend Thy brow from harm, thy heart from care, And long thy clarion deeds alarm The slumbering souls that do and dare!

'Tis said, (on one of Rome's red days,) That two celestial youths appeared On milk-white steeds, to curse the foe, With glancing helm and crest upreared, And garments like untrodden snow.

But who, amongst the striplings tall, Who crowd with life that stern array, Whose banners bear no earthly stain, Whose courage bleaches night nor day, Is peer to thee, Lamar Fontaine!

At morn—at noon—where danger called, And battle thundered in the van, Thy form, firm, weary, bleeding, spent, A meteor through the legions ran, While cheers pursue from tent to tent.

Or when—these notes of tumult stilled— The moonbeams slept upon the tide, And the lone picket in the wood Receives the bullet in his side, Like bronze, our dauntless sentry stood, Whose courage bleaches night nor day, Is peer to thee, Lamar Fontaine!

All quiet on Potomac's stream! Immortal boy, not this the doom, To slumber in an unknown-grass, Where no fond roses bind the urn, Nor melancholy cypress wave, And grieving pilgrims oft return!

Posterior to these shall read, (When war's fierce drums have ceased to roll, To drown the minstrel's pensive strain) Full high on glory's crimson scroll, That name of thee, Lamar Fontaine!

Just after Lee surrendered a black- robed priest of the Catholic Church— Father Ryan wrote that immortal poem, "The Conquered Banner." As a

chaplain in the Confederate army, with his tender heart sympathizing with the disappointments and anguish of his conquered people, he was well in a condition to write the beautifully pathetic poem that will continue to find an abiding place in the memory of every Southerner here.

CONQUERED BANNER. Furl that banner, 'tis weary; Round its staff 'tis drooping dreary. Furl it, fold it, it is best; For there's not a man to wave it, And there's not one left to care it. In the blood which heroes gave it: Furl it, hide it—let it rest!

Take that banner down! 'tis tattered; Broken is its staff and shattered; And the banner is so stained, O'er whom it floated high, Oh! 'tis hard for us to fold it; Hard to think there's none to hold it; Hard that these who once unrolled it Now must furl it with a sigh.

Furl that banner! furl it sadly! Once ten thousands hurled it gladly And ten thousands wildly, madly Swore it should forever wave; Swore that foeman's sword should never Hear its tattered, tattered ravel, Till that banner should float forever O'er their freedom or their grave!

Furl it! for the hands that grasped it And the hearts that fondly clasped it Cold and dead are lying low; And the banner is so stained, O'er whom it sounded the warning Of its people in their woe.

For, though conquered, they adore it! Fold the cold, dead hands that bore it! Weep for those who fell before it! Pardon those who trailed and tore it! But oh! wildly they deplore it, Now who furl and fold it.

Furl that banner! True 'tis sorry, Yet 'tis wreathed around with glory, And 'twill live in song and story Though its folds are in the dust For its fame on brightest pages, Penned by poets and by sages, Shall go sounding down the ages— Furl its folds though now we must.

Furl that banner, softly, slowly! Treat it gently—it is holy— For it droops above the dead; Touch it not—unfold it never! Let drop there, furl'd forever, For its people's hopes are dead!

UNIFORM GRADING OF COTTON.

Chief Galloway Believes Acceptable Standards Will Be Established, Washington Special to New York Journal of Commerce.

Chief Galloway, of the Bureau of Plant Industry in the Department of Agriculture, has written to several Congressmen inviting them to attend the conference on the grading of cotton which is to be held at the Department of Agriculture during the first week in February.

Dr. Galloway declares that the proposed cotton conference and the scheme to establish uniform grades for the article is being watched with strong interest, not only in the United States, but also in European countries which are dependent upon this country for their chief supplies of cotton. He believes that it will be possible at this conference to establish standards for cotton that will be generally accepted not only in the United States, but throughout the world, provided that the trade will assist in the movement by accepting the standards and making them the basis of contracts so far as is practicable.

The interest and apparent confidence which is being shown in the conference is proving an assistance to those who are anxious of having Congress make the new cotton standards compulsory in some one of the ways that have been suggested. Representative Burleson, who has been more prominently identified than any other man in Congress with the legislation, has received within the past few days a large number of letters on the subject, nearly all favorable to the idea of compulsory grading.

Of these letters a number have come from conservative figures on the New York cotton exchange, such as the president of the exchange, who are not only in favor of the agricultural appropriation bill, owing to the advanced stage of development already reached by that measure and in the judgment of the best observers it is too late in the session to permit of the introduction of an independent bill, with all the incidental debate and opposition which such a measure would undoubtedly encounter, but the movement is assuming a form that will probably require it to be reckoned with later.

THE AUSTRALIAN BALLOT.

It Would Prevent Corruption and Otherwise Purify the Ballot, But It Should Therefore Be Condemned, Chattanooga Times.

The retiring message of Governor Glenn, of North Carolina, contained a strong recommendation for the adoption of the Australian ballot method, and it appears that people generally are being signed, in which it is declared that "by this method the individual ballot can be more freely cast in elections for officers and upon issues of vital importance."

That this is true, however, is a question which is not so clear as it appears. It is true, wherever it has been adopted, under its operation the citizen can exercise his individual preferences without fear of the party whip and with perfect freedom from fanatical or other intimidating influences, and for that reason the Charlotte Observer believes it will not become the vogue in North Carolina for some years to come.

Who supposes, says our Charlotte contemporary, "that State-wide prohibition would have carried North Carolina last May under the operation of the Australian ballot? Who supposes that under its operation Bryan's majority in November would have been the half of \$2,000?"

Feeling that way about it of course The Observer is justified in saying that if the Australian ballot is adopted, it will be a shame if people should vote intelligently and in accordance with their real convictions when they are influenced by bribery and ought to be controlled by bigotry and intolerance and by hysteria and temporary emotion.

Still the Australian ballot prevents corruption at the polls, enlarges the functions and the citizenship, and tends to the stimulation of literacy, veracity and corruption from the ballot-box, and that ought to count for much in civilized communities.

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