



Represented by Pisces and Cetus, these two creatures join with Taurus, the bull, Pegasus, the horse, Canis Major and Canis Minor, the big and little dogs, and Aries, the ram, in making the southern skies a sort of heavenly zoological garden.

Orion, mighty warrior of the sky. As you see him this evening, he is on his back. The three stars of his belt are vertical; to the right is Rigel, in one of his legs, to the left can be seen Betelgeuse, in one shoulder. Above him is ruddy Aldebaran, the eye of Taurus, the bull, which is charging on the hunter. Directly above Aldebaran, in the bull's shoulders, appear the Pleiades, a little cluster of six faint stars, which are famous in song and story.

Heavenly Twins

As high as Orion, to the northeast, is the constellation of Gemini, the twins, with Castor above, and Pollux, the brighter, below. Directly above them is Auriga, the charioteer, with Capella as the brightest star. All of these are shown on the accompanying maps, which picture the December skies as seen at 10 p. m. on the first of the month, 9 p. m. on the fifteenth and 8 p. m. on the thirty-first. Two other bright winter stars appear nearer the eastern horizon. One is Sirius, the dog star, in Canis Major, the greater dog, which is just below Orion when it rises. This is the most brilliant star in the sky, so it is easy to find. Incidentally, it is also the nearest star that can be seen from the United States with the unaided eye. Its light reaches the earth in the astronomically short time of nine years, though travelling every second a distance equal to seven times the circumference of the earth.

The maps show other conspicuous star groups which have been with us in the evening for the last few months.

Low in the southwest can be seen Saturn, not a star at all, but one of the planets, including the earth, that encir-

cle the sun. Its steady brilliance is very different from the twinkling stars, and can readily be located.

High in the western sky, resting on one corner, is the Great Square of Pegasus. This is really a misnomer, because one of the stars, Alpheratz, the topmost as now seen, is not in Pegasus at all but in the neighboring constellation of Andromeda. Just north of this group in the inverted W-shaped figure of Cassiopeia, the queen, seated on her throne. Quite low, (too low to show on the maps) and directly west, is Altair, marking the eagle, Aquila, while farther north is Vega, in Lyra, the lyre. Between them and a little higher, standing erect, is the northern cross, or Cygnus, the swan. At the top of the cross is Deneb, the swan's tail. Albireo marks the foot of the cross, or the beak of the swan.

Christmas Moonlight

During December, the moon can be seen in the evening sky from about the tenth, when it will be a well developed crescent in the west, until about the 24th, when it will rise between eight and nine o'clock, in a gibbous phase, a few days past full. On December 9 at 3:00 a. m. eastern standard time, the moon will be at its closest for the month, 226,620 miles from the earth; on the 25th, at 5:00 a. m., eastern standard time, it will be at its farthest. Then 251,920 miles will separate us from our satellite. The new moon is on December 6 at 12:25 p. m., E.S.T.; it is at First Quarter on December 13 at 5:52 a. m.; Full on December 20 at 3:53 p. m.; and at Last Quarter on December 28 at 9:08 p. m.

Science News Letter, November 24, 1934

ENTOMOLOGY

Stinging Bees Do Not Always Die

THE widely held belief that the bee can only sting once, and must die afterwards, is denied by Dr. J. G. Myers of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, Trinidad. Dr. Myers carried out experiments with bees under various conditions, inducing them to sting handkerchiefs, insects, and frogs. Even after stinging several times, the bee usually recovered. (See SNL, June 2, p. 350)

Dr. Myer's zeal was not sufficiently great to withstand the bee's sting, for he remarks: (*Nature*, Aug. 25) "I was stung on the thumb and, perhaps because it was unexpected and I acted more violently than our other subjects, the sting was left in the wound."

Science News Letter, November 24, 1934

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