

**The April Skies.**

Venus is the centre of attraction for the star gazers every clear evening, and is so bright that she can be seen in broad daylight. Have any clear-eyed observers picked her out as described in the last month's REVIEW? During the past few months the two planets, Mars and Venus, have been approaching each other, and about the first few days of April they are close together. In what direction is each planet moving? Have those who have been watching the two and Jupiter been able to decide that they are planets by comparing them with the fixed stars near them? Mars and Venus have been in the constellation Aries for some weeks, and are slowly moving into Taurus, the constellation which contains the Pleiades and Hyades, the latter being the V-shaped cluster with the red star Aldebaran blazing in the eye of the bull as he charges down upon Orion.

The Pleiades are just above the planets Venus and Mars, and a little further up in the same direction is Auriga (Charioteer) which may be recognized by the bright yellow star Capella (the Goat) in the upper right hand corner. (See illustration in February REVIEW). Below the Goat are the Kids, three little stars that make a small triangle. See if the boys and girls who are trying to pick out the constellations these clear evenings can form the five-sided figure which outlines Auriga.

Capella and Arcturus are stars excelled only by Sirius in brightness. Can you find Arcturus? After picking out Capella in the north-west sky between eight and nine o'clock in the evening, look over to the north-east side, find the Dipper, extend the curve formed by the three stars in the handle until they reach a star of a bright ruddy hue. That is Arcturus, and he is in the fine constellation of Boötes (pr. bo-ö-tez, accent on the middle syllable), which means a Herdsman. Arcturus, means bearward, or in the direction of the Great Bear. So that with the Goat and the Kids in the sky it is well that there is a Herdsman, and that he is close to and keeps watch on the Great Bear.

Let us now turn to Jupiter, which is nearly overhead at eight o'clock on these bright evenings. His brilliancy has been eclipsed in no small measure by the greater glory of Venus, but after the latter sets, between ten and eleven, he is the monarch of the skies for the rest of the night. Sloping to the west just in front of him are the two bright stars Castor and Pollux in the constellation of the heavenly

Twins (Gemini), and further down, Orion, Sirius and Procyon, the latter in the constellation of the Little Dog. Betelgeuse, the bright red star in Orion, Procyon and Sirius, form an equilateral triangle, one of the most remarkable figures in the sky.

To the right of the Pleiades and just below (nearer the horizon) the Goat and Kids is the constellation Perseus, which contains the variable star Algol. This star regularly loses about three-quarters of its light at intervals of two days, twenty hours and forty-nine minutes, and it is known that this loss of light, which lasts about eight hours altogether, is caused by a dark companion star which revolves about and very near to it, and eclipses it at the intervals above named. This star, which is directly to the right of the Pleiades, and about three-fourths of the distance between the latter and Capella, should be easily picked out by sharp-eyed gazers, who will always be interested in watching its variations of light. Algol and a few small stars near it form the cluster called "Medusa's Head." Medusa was the monster Gorgon whose hair was turned into serpents, and who turned into stone all those who looked at her.

To the right of Algol and about double the distance of that star from the Pleiades, is Cassiopeia's Chair lying on the opposite side of the pole from the Dipper, and about the same distance from the North Star as the "pointers." It is easily recognized by the zig-zag, "rail-fence" form of the five or six bright stars that mark it; or it is like a spreading W, with one V shallow and the other deeper.

**Clean Copybooks.**

In my second grade, copy books were used for the first time. All primary teachers know how difficult it is to have copy books without blots. I used the following plan with excellent results.

On every perfect page, that is, a page well written and without a blot, I placed a silver star. After the children had five silver stars, I gave them a gold one.

Our copy books were always neat, and the task of teaching penmanship in that grade became a pleasure.—*Teacher's Magazine.*

[Teachers can obtain from The Hendry Company, Toronto, little boxes of gold and silver stars, price ten cents a box.]