

RANDOM COMMENTS

By "PRO PATRIA"

THE HARVEST

Wherever life exists there is a variety of provision constantly going on to sustain it, and the higher forms can often take lessons of patience and diligence from the Ant and the Bee. The very "buzz" of this latter insect means "biz," and woe betide the curious idler who interferes with it.

Well, we are again spared to see the harvest. The results attained have depended much upon effort, but infinitely more upon a proper concentration of it. As we have sown so shall we reap in temporal as in spiritual life. It is said that anything badly done is never done, but a far worse condition would prevail from a failure to attempt the task. We cannot all be masters of the situation, for it is a generally conceded opinion that in the commercial, mechanical, political and professional occupations a good deal of experimenting is being done. But we cannot with the same confidence say that farmers and fishermen are putting the required experiment and speculative features into their vocation.

In this neighbourhood, through the past season, people have very successfully grown "vegetable marrow" and other new lines of produce. We believe the cucumber, squash, corn and other fairly hardy vegetable foods could be grown in places sheltered from the easterly and north-easterly winds. The potato crop is reported to be largely in excess of last year's, and cabbage has grown well also. But the progress of farming is slow, not so much because our soil is not rich and productive, as that the people are, from habit bent, only cultivating enough land to grow produce for their personal use. Perhaps the renewal of the "land bonus" would do much to encourage this industry.

Of course, the fishing industry is the Country's greatest asset, and the people are essentially of

the fishing class. Now that our fishermen are becoming fully alive to the commercial value of the various species a more successful prosecution of this industry will be possible as the years go by, and the venture will gradually lose all those elements of chance which formerly existed. This ought to be an inducement to those who have abandoned the fishery for other lines of employment to again work the lines and nets with greater energy and enterprise and surer chances of success.

In addition to this inducement comes the advent of higher prices for the staple article brought about by that colossal, social, political and commercial institution, the "Fishermen's Protective Union" under the skilful management of Pres. Coaker, who keeps the people correctly posted concerning foreign market-prices and demands. The wily manipulations of mercantile desperadoes to get back on winter supplies the money they are legitimately forced to pay for fish is being keenly watched by the "peoples sentinels," and we have no room to doubt that the best possible is being done to secure the just rewards of honest toil.

Of course anyone who has studied the history of events knows that it is not the work of a moment to uproot firmly grounded evils, and that they are many and complicated in this Country. They are so prolific and hard to destroy that when we think we are rid of them, like weeds they seem to again spring out of nothingness. If the Government can only keep them "thinned out" a reasoning people will consider themselves blessed beyond their most sanguine expectations. A country's greatness is her commerce, but when its principles are narrowed down to sordid personal gain, without a thought of universal prosperity, our Country's growth is dwarfed by "weeds, weeds, nothing but weeds, and bad weeds."

THE HEAVENS IN OCTOBER

By DR. C. S. BRAININ, of the Columbia University Staff

This month we wish to call particular attention to the opportunities presented to the amateur astronomer to become thoroughly familiar with the Earth's sister and brother planets. Next to the Sun and Moon, the planets are the most conspicuous and beautiful of the heavenly bodies. Not only in appearance, but also in their motions do these differ from the so-called fixed stars. Though the latter are not really fixed, that is, entirely motionless, their motions are so slow that it is difficult for the high-power telescope and of course hopeless for the naked eye to recognize them. On the other hand the motions of the planets are easily observable. If you have saved any of the preceding maps of this series you can easily obtain an idea of the amount of the motions shown by the different planets. But this is not necessary, note tonight where the planets are in regard to the surrounding fixed stars, and if you observe at intervals, you will find before long that the relative positions of the planets and fixed stars are slowly but surely changing. It will repay you well to attempt to follow the motions of the planet Jupiter, for example, from week to week.

Plot on a sheet of paper the positions of the brighter and more easily recognized stars in the field surrounding Jupiter's position; this makes it a far more easily observable object. In fact for many days during this year, Venus, when it is an evening star, sets after nine o'clock. At present it sets a little before nine and for that reason does not find place on our map; but it can be seen in all its beauty right after the Sun has set.

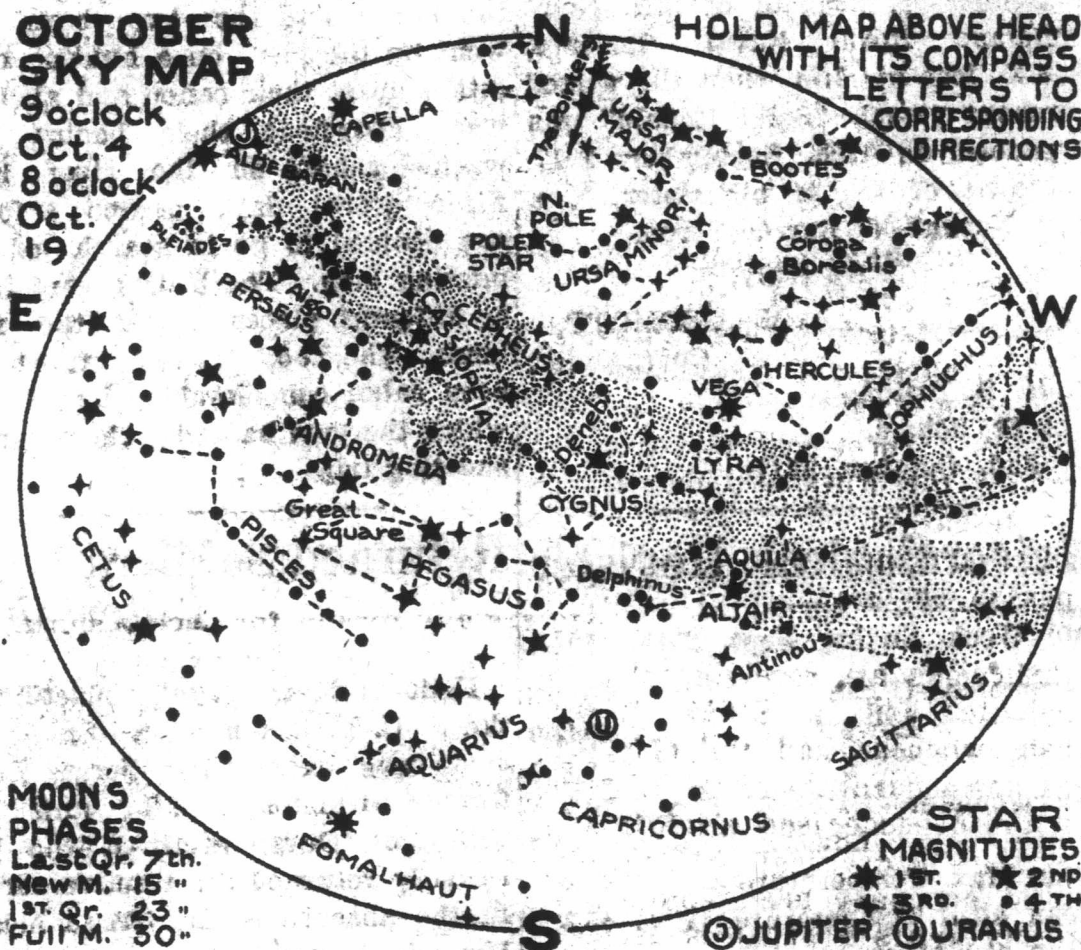
The Other Planets. Jupiter, the giant of our family, is now an evening star and just manages to creep over the edge of our map in the far northeast. Later in the month and next month it will get into good position for comfortable observation. It is in the constellation Taurus, not far from the Hyades and Aldebaran. If you follow the directions for the study of its motions as given above, you will notice that for a time its motions will be westward through the field of stars, and not eastward, as usual. This westward motion is called retrograde motion and it is due to the relative positions and motions of the planet and the Earth in their respective orbits. Of course the true orbital motion of the planet in its true orbit is, like that of all planets and of nearly all the other bodies of the solar system, from west to east.

Mars rises in the east at about two o'clock, just a short time before Saturn. On October 1, early in the morning, Mars and Saturn

will pass each other in the sky, or, as astronomers call it, will be in conjunction. Mars will be about two-thirds of a degree to the north of Saturn; this is a distance in the heavens a little larger than the diameter of the Moon, which is just about half a degree. The conjunction will occur about 5 A.M. Of the other two planets, Neptune is near Saturn, and Uranus is shown on the map, but neither is a good object for observation for either the naked-eye astronomer or the one equipped with opera glass or small telescope.

The Fixed Star Capella.

The far northeast presents a particularly fine spectacle this month in the early evenings, with Jupiter, already mentioned above, and the two first-magnitude stars, Capella and Aldebaran. The word Capella means she-goat; the male goat is also represented in the heavens by the group Capricornus. Perhaps this shows the importance of the goat family in the domestic economy of the ancients. At any rate, Capella is the fifth brightest star in the entire heavens, the third brightest seen from these northern latitudes and next to Vega, the brightest lying to the north of the celestial equator. Intrinsically, it is calculated to be nearly two hundred times as great a sun as ours. It is a double star which is speeding away from us at the rate of about twenty miles per second. The pure white lustre of Capella is unsurpassed in the firmament.



then mark carefully the position of the planet itself on your map, and note the date of your observation. If you continue this for some time at regular weekly intervals, the result will be a very satisfactory curve of the planet's path through the stars, which should be the source of no small amount of pleasure and instruction. A careful observer will also discover without any previous warning the striking difference between the fixed stars and the planets in appearance: the former twinkle continually, the latter very little, if at all.

Mercury and Venus.

Mercury is a morning star the first ten days of the month, and it is necessary to arise just before sunrise to get a glimpse of him, before the blinding rays of the Sun make observation impossible. This planet is the nearest to the Sun of all the planets of the solar system. Seen from the Earth, the apparent motion of Mercury is one of periodic oscillation from one side of the Sun to the other. It can never get very far away from the Sun in the heavens, and this is what makes it so difficult an object for observation. However, this chance to see Mercury is the best one that 1917 affords and should be taken advantage of. In general, the same conditions hold true for Venus, but, since this latter planet is a good deal farther out from the Sun than Mercury, it is able to get an appreciable angular distance farther from the Sun in the heavens.

and it is remarkable how proud they are of the difference between them and their comrades of the land service. The explanation is simple. In the old days of wooden vessels the deck above was perched high the head of a man even of average height, and in many cases, if an officer rose with any alacrity, he bumped his head against the ceiling of the cabin. So now, in ward-rooms and gun-rooms, the President of the Mess gives the toast of "The King," and it is honoured without anyone rising.

Drinking the King's Health

King George's recent visit to the Grand Fleet recalls to one's mind a custom, reminiscent of bygone days, which still holds good in the Navy.

Despite the vast changes in the type of ships, numerous old rules still obtain, and none of them is more surprising to a landman than that which forbids the health of the King to be drunk aboard ship unattended. Members of the senior service always sit whilst drinking the King's health.

The Man from Maggoty Cove

I did not always live in Maggoty Cove, I hail from an honest out-harbour, and though I am not so bad off, I might be better—had I been treated better in the days of yore. Of these days of yore, Mr. Printer, what a lot of bitter reflection-stuff they bring along for present thought and reading.

I think of that success in wealth and position which the outport man of the past certainly gained, but was never allowed to own. Then the second better thought comes to me—that if the poor man was a fool it was not expressed by lack of industry, hard work, and general ability, but in that paradoxical sense, "By his success he made others wealthy and kept them so."

I often, over a quiet pipe, meditate about this, "How better well off our fathers' sons would be to-day and a good many days ago too if some decent-minded man seeing our plight had started some such system as the F. P. U. today? You will note, Mr. Printer, that I style the F. P. U. a system, and I think I advisedly do so, for it is, the system of a business which gives "to every man his own"—and that is to my mind the whole quintessence of justice Divine and human.

This is a sample story; read it.

In the 70's and the 80's, and the 90's Isaac Cadum went into Goldum's store in Dory Cove and asked, Mr. Goldum for payment for 150 quintals of fish. You see Isaac Cadum had got the idea tucked away somewhere under his gansy-frock that, that fish was worth bright dough, NOT shoddy goods at exorbitant charges, and Isaac in homely language asked, for "tin." Mr. Goldum patted Isaac on the back (this is a true story, Mr. Printer) and said:—"Isaac me boy, look around you, see what you can see, flour, beef, tobacco, groceries, dry goods, and sundries—What do you want cash for? And Isaac me boy, let me whisper in yer ear—There is a bit of an account standing against yer on the books, bad scrian to 'em, a little total of ninety, or is it one hundred and ninety dollars? But we'll say nothing about that YET—help yourself, see what you can see, flour, beef, tobacco, groceries, dry goods, for a lengthy period, is at last rectified. This is temptation; it is more, it is fled," or to put it in a more trite and

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oppression. It is more again—it is a up to date fashion, "To every man his own." Today Isaac Cadum leaves Mr. Goldum alone, Isaac does not disturb that great man, does not intrude upon him, nor does Isaac lie awake at night thinking about that "Book of Fate" in Goldum's strong box, and the account that is against him, for Isaac's fish comes to town, and Isaac knows that if he wishes, the bright "tin" that his father sighed for, can be, and will be, his. He has a power behind his demand now—has Isaac—and the "Man from Maggoty Cove" tells Isaac, and Isaac's friends and relations from "up along" and "down along" that the F. P. U. is that power, and that if such a power had been in existence during these years which I have told you about, the fisher folk of to-day would be very much in that position which was held by the Goldums of the past—the get-rich-quick clique who had it all their own way, who found men poor and kept them so.

And the cycles of years passed, carrying along its pages of clever and merciless "bleeding of the poor." The fisherman found himself in a position—and anchored to it—from which there was no apparent escape, what could he do? As his father had lived, so lived he; what the older generation had borne could he depart from? It is almost impossible to break away from precedent—and if the wild thought ever entered his heart to do so, there was the "big house" to reckon with and to remind him that "there was something on the books against him—and that he could have flour, beef, tobacco and all the rest of it—merely for the asking—and his fish.

Aye 'tis a wonderful story this, and is going to be written one of these days. I read it somewhere a long, long time ago that "the mills of the gods grind slow—but exceedingly nothing about that YET—help yourself, see what you can see, flour, beef, tobacco, groceries, dry goods, for a lengthy period, is at last rectified. This is temptation; it is more, it is fled," or to put it in a more trite and

To lengthen life lessen thy meals.

Unkindly Comment

Millicent: "Do you know, Lucy, Mr. Wilkley paid me a great compliment last night?" Lucy: "What did he say?" Millicent: "He said I was among the prettiest girls at the party." Lucy: "Yes; I noticed you were among them!"

Our Brightest Star

It is 70 Billion Miles Away, and Moves About One Inch Every Century.

Our lads in the trenches, lying out in the open as they never did aforetime, and even, by virtue of Zepp, darkness, Londoners also, have lately had a chance of seeing the stars! Before the war a row of electric lights in front of a draper's shop was sufficient to extinguish Sirius the brightest star in our hemisphere, and yet more one learns more of that majestic star it seems a wonder that anything so paltry could shut out its shining.

Sirius, our bright star, is estimated by astronomers to be, in round numbers, seventy billion miles distant—that is 70 followed by twelve noughts. It is called a fixed star, but it moves about an inch a century. Yet that movement, so microscopical seen from the earth, to be visible at all must re-

present a movement or speed of \$1,000,000 miles a day!

If the sky is clear, look for Sirius tonight, and think that the light by which you see it left the star nearly thirty years ago, yet light travels 186,000 miles a second, and takes under eight minutes to pass from sun to earth.

But compared with Sirius our sun is a mere flicker, a candle to an arc light. If the two were to exchange places in the universe our sun would almost pop out of sight altogether, being barely visible to the naked eye, a star of the sixth magnitude. But this earth, and all its boasted power and wealth would be shrivelled up just like a bit of tin in a blast furnace, for Sirius would fill all the space represented by the orbit of the earth, being equal to four hundred of our suns! Let us be thankful, when we look at this gentle twinkler, it is so far away!

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