STAR PICTURES AND STAR LESSONS.

(From the Child's Companion.)

We began our lessons with finding out a bear or a part of it in the sky; we will end by finding a lion. Leo is the group and in it I shall show you a figure of a sickle with its handle. You have seen a rounded reaping-hook, and if you take six counters you can place them like those in the picture which resemble a small sickle. At the handle of the sickle is the brilliant white star called Regulus.



Fig. 18.

A line drawn from Castor to the lowest pointer of the Plough will make the base of a triangle, and when the side lines from the two points of this base line meet, they will point out Regulus; and from it you will easily trace the figure of a sickle (Fig. 19).

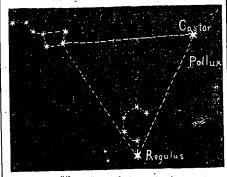


Fig. 19.

We have now gone through ten constellations and learned the names of several stars therein. Of the constellations we have named—Ursa Major, Cassiopeia, Auriga, Lyra, Cygnus, Corona, Taurus, Orion, Gemini, and Leo.

And now as I mention the stars I hope you will be able to say in what group each is to be found. Mizar, Vega, Capella, Aldebaran, Regulus, Castor and Pollux.

These lessons are but as one drop from a shoreless sea. Good old Sir Isaac Newton, at the close of his long life of study, said that he felt then only like a boy who had picked up a few pebbles on a sea-shore, while all the great unknown ocean lay yet

We see these things now as if "through glass, darkly." We know only in part; a glass, darkly." We know only in part; but hereafter, in the home beyond, we cannot doubt but that "our Father" who stretched out the heavens, and whose Spirit garnished them, will to his children answer the prayer which old Job prayed centuries ago, and which is the prayer of God's children still—"That which I see not teach thou me." (Job. xxxiv. 32.)

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

Thus spoke David thousands of years

When we compare ourselves with the vast space around us, occupied by heavenly bodies, of whose size we can form no idea, we must feel overwhelmed with awe at the power of God. How small we are! how small is even this earth on which we live, compared with the other mighty worlds of God's creation!

Is it not wonderful to think that the great Creator of the universe, who "spake and it was done," should feel an interest

sun, moon, and stars obey his commands; should not we, his children, render him loving obedience, and strive to do his will on earth, "as it is in heaven?"

ROOFS IN SYRIA.

What would you think of a house without a garret, cellar, or chimney ?-without a place in which to stow away old bonnets and dresses and trunks, where little girls can go and play on rainy days, and cats can chase funny little mice; without a cellar where boys can go on rainy days and build bridges, and railways, and work as carpenters; without a chimney into which to run a stove-pipe, or where the swallows

But I want to tell you something about roofs, and I must not wander too far from my text. The Syria of to-day is a poor land. The people are poor, and cannot send all over the earth to bring whatever they need from other lands. So they use very few nails in building houses, and almost no sawed lumber. Dirt is cheaper and easier to obtain than quarried stone so they use dirt in making the walls and

The ordinary way here in Zahleh is to build only one, or at most two, walls of stone, and all the rest of mud bricks. The reason for one or two stone walls is that the mud bricks will not stand the winter storms. They build the south and west walls of stone, since the heavy storms always come from the southand west. If you looked at Zahleh from the west, you would see a well-built town of stone houses; but when you came round to the east, you would see nearly all mud walls, which are much poorer and more untidy. Yet the people say the mud walls are safer when earthquakes come. Our house has only one stone wall. The room in which I am writing has four mud walls, and is badly crack-

ed in several places. When all things are ready, and the walls are up, they go about making the roof in this way. The long poplar beams are cut into proper lengths, and lifted up by many men to their places, being ranged about two feet apart. If the beams are long and the room large, they usually put a very large beam for a girder, and support this by a stone or wooden post in the centre of the room. After the beams are up, they fill in between the ends with mud and stones to keep them steady. Then they bring the branches, or split pieces, and ar range them as closely as possible, in order to keep the clay and dirt from falling down into the house. If the roof is to be a very good one, you must also bring thousands of dry reeds, and place them the opposite way of the small branches or split pieces, and these help to hold the pieces, and these help to hold the clay. Next comes the piling on of the thorns, and the trampling down to make them pack closely; and after this the root is ready for the clay and earth. The first layer is usually wet before being put on, so as to mat more closely with the thorns. I am sorry to say that people usually choose a Sunday to do the remaining work on the roof. People are then standing round with not much to do, so the man who is building the house invites all his friends to come and help to finish the roof. They come, fifteen or twenty of them, and, with great noise and singing, they carry or draw the clay up in baskets, and trample it down by dancing over it, all the while singing and shouting. When they have put on a foot of closely pressed clay, the roof is done, and it needs only the rain and the roller to make it ready for winter. The owner of the house buys a stone roller about two and a half feet long and a foot thick, and ago; and probably all who have studied the heavens at all, whether with the naked eye or with the aid of a telescope, have had feelings similar to those of the inspired every industrious by night and by day, and go up to trundle that roller back and forth many hundred times, pressing down the damp earth until it become very hard, and

Now, the passing of this roller over the roof is like thunder, and corresponding to the rain is a showering of dust and fine clay; and this continues for years in all except the very best roofs. In many cases water comes down also, but never very clean. For when the roofs are wet and soaking, if a cold night comes, and freezes in each one of us, and should allow and the water, it tears up the clay at a great

able to shed the water.

encourage us to call him our Father? The rate. When the sun softens the frost and ice, then the roller must be used ; and it is like squeezing water from a sponge.

This rolling must be done every time it rains, and it is a curious sight when the first shower comes after sunset. There is a noise of shouting, and on every roof is seen a lantern or lamp which looks like a firefly. The wooden handles creak and groan, and the people shout to each other in sport. This sometimes takes place at two o'clock after midnight, and then there is very little sleep for any one the remainder of the night.

These roofs require constant care all through the winter, and whenever the snow falls it must be shovelled off, and the roof given an extra rolling. The weight of the snow and the wet earth is enough to break timbers; and not a winter passes without such calamities, in which men, women, and children lose their lives.

Nearly every roof leaks. I have seen water dropping in fifty places at once in our bedroom, at three o'clock in the morning; so that at length, at great cost and trouble, we bought tiles and covered one side of our house, so that now four rooms are under tiles, and four rooms are not. In winter we live largely in the four tilecovered rooms, and leave the others to leak, having covered the furniture with quilts and rubber blankets.

Of course, such roofs are flat, with only slope enough to carry the water off. And the uses to which these roofs are put are varied. You can easily understand how they tore up the roof in the house where Christ was, to let the sick man down. All such houses have only one story, and there is always an easy way to reach the roof. If the house is on a hillside, there is a path leading up, and the roof is accessible to chickens, goats, sheep, and children. Boys go to the roofs to fly kites. When anything happens, like a wedding or funeral, people all run up to the roofs to see what is going on. In New York, a cat on the roof is confined to one block; but in a city like sidon a cat can go from one side of the city to the other on the roofs. The result is, many cats, many fights, many concerts, and many cats visiting your house. People use the roofs also for drying everything such as wheat, raisins, figs, onions, and whatever needs the sun. In summer they carry up their beds, and sleep there; and it is an amusing sight to look at the town at day-break on a warm summer morning.

Any one walking over a village roof sends down a shower of dust and mud. I lived two summers in a village named Jezzin, and one of my duties before sleep every night was to shake and brush the

dry mud out of my bed.

I had another experience in the same village which came near costing many dol-lars. I then owned a favorite horse named Rob Roy. He was a beauty, and very tractable and gentle; but he had one fault, -he would slip his halter and go wander ng away. One warm August day he rubbed his halter off, and went walking out of the yard, and before he knew it, was on the roof of a neighbor's house. I wonder if you ever saw a horse on the top of a nouse? Well this particular roof was very old and rotten, and before Mr. Rob had gone very far his hind legs went through, and he was in a bad plight. Little boys came running and shouting, and frightened him all the more.

No one came to tell me; and so poor Rob could only kick and plunge until he had made a hole so large that he dropped through into the man's house below. There never was a worse frightened horse than Rob Roy was that day. I came running to the rescue after he had disappeared, and when I ran-to the door I expected to find I came running to him with broken back or legs; but there he was, standing safe, and looking as ashamed and sheepish as any horse could, Fortunately for him, he landed on a pile of clippings of grape-vines, which the owner of the house had brought from his vineyard for winter fuel. Now, if a horse could so easily get up on a roof, and so easily and safely descend to the house below, we can see how easy it was for those who let the sick man down to where Jesus was.—Rev. F. E. Hoskins, in Sunday School Times.

THE MAN who goes around comparing himself to other people, to their disadvantage, is in small business.

SABBATH-KEEPING IN NEW GUINEA.

Some years ago a native teacher in New Guinea was greatly annoyed while preaching by the sound of hammering, which came from a small store near the church. It was a white man who had been desecrating the Sabbath. The teacher, a stalwart Rarotongan, could not read English, but knew enough to find chapter and verse of the Fourth Commandment in an English Bible. With the Bible open in his hand he strode up to the white man, and pointing to Ex. xx. 8, roared out, "Read that!" The white man tried to pass it off as a joke, but the teacher was terribly in earnest. The man saw he was very angry, and moreover a very muscular Christian. so he took the book and meekly read the long-forgotten words: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Then followed a short but very vigorous sermon in broken English. "Your country sent my country the Bible, and we learn to make Sunday, then I come here, and bring the Bible, teach New Guinea people Sunday, and you say he no good. What for you make me a liar?" Needless to say that there was no more hammering in that store on a Sunday afternoon.—Exchange.

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