

October Skies.

If you have a few minutes to spare on any clear October evening get a few of your oldest scholars together in some place, early in the evening, where you can command a view of the skies. If you know a few of the chief constellations and some of the brightest stars, which of course you do, you can make the minutes so interesting to those young people that they will want to meet again, and will be anxious to tell other people what you and they found out about starland. If you can obtain the loan of a field or opera glass, it will be an advantage, although it will be better to depend on the unaided eye in nearly all cases.

Double Stars.

Do you know any double stars? The middle star, Mizar, in the handle of the Great Dipper has a minute companion, named Alcor, almost touching it. This can readily be seen by the naked eye.

Pick out the bright bluish star called Lyra in the constellation of the same name, now sloping from the zenith in the early evening, towards the west. Above it are two faint stars forming with Lyra an equilateral triangle. The one just above Lyra, on the right, is a beautiful double, but it will require a glass to see it.

From Lyra draw a line through Altair (you know the bright star Altair which lies nearly equidistant from two stars, one above and one below it), and continue it twenty-three degrees farther to the two stars in the head of the constellation Capricornus, (you know that the distance between the two pointers in the Dipper is five degrees, so that there will be no difficulty in measuring about four and a half times that space, or twenty-three degrees.) Of the two faint stars one is double. The double star can be seen by the unaided eye, though not with the same ease as the double in the handle of the Dipper.

When you have found these you may look for other double stars, and perhaps someone will tell the REVIEW where they may be found.

The Planets.

Where are the planets that we see sometimes in the West? Saturn is in the South-east, in the evening sky, but nearly all of the others are in the East and you need to get up before daylight to see them. It will repay you to do so. Venus is a morning star, rising more than three hours before the Sun, and so

brilliant that it may be seen during the daytime, if we can catch it before sunrise and keep trace of it. Jupiter is also a morning star, not so bright as Venus. On October 13th these two planets will be about half a degree apart. After that date they rapidly separate, Venus passing to the east of Jupiter, to disappear after a few months in the rays of the sun, afterwards to reappear in late winter as evening star. Mars, the red planet, that we were talking about last season when it was evening star and wondering whether it is inhabited, as some astronomers think, is now a morning star, rising about two hours before the sun.

Lessons in English Literature.

BY ELEANOR ROBINSON

At the time when the poet Caedmon lived, the English people who had come over the North Sea were firmly settled in England and were learning Christianity. Many good men went about to the wildest and most distant parts of the island as missionaries, teaching those who were still heathens. Others went to live in monasteries or abbeys, where they could give their time to prayer, and study of holy things. In the monasteries also, the monks busied themselves in making copies of the scriptures, for in those days, as you know, there was no printing. These written books were very precious, but as they were nearly all in Latin, only learned people could read them. Indeed very few people, except the clergy, could read at all, even their own language, and they had to be taught in other ways than from books.

One of the most celebrated of the monasteries was the Abbey at Whitby, on the high rocky shore of the North Sea. The Abbess, Hilda, was a niece of King Edwin, and so learned and good that even princes and bishops went to her for advice. She ruled her abbey wisely, and the scriptures were so diligently studied there that it was a training place for good men and women who wished to give themselves to teaching and good works.

But the most famous man who lived at Whitby was not a priest or a scholar, but only a cowherd. His name was Caedmon, and he took care of the cattle on one of the farms belonging to the monastery. Most of the people there knew how to make verses, and sing them to the music of a harp, but Caedmon had never learned this art; so when