

The Star Sirius. By DAVID TROWBRIDGE, WATERBURY, N. Y. On a clear night when the atmosphere is free from smoke and haze, we sometimes have it in winter, we have presented to us the most sublime spectacle that offers for our contemplation. Turn the eyes in any direction above the horizon, and we see stars innumerable, from those of the first magnitude to others so small that we catch only a glimpse of them by means of a side view, the stars disappearing when we turn the eyes and the attention directly on them.

Those stars which we distinctly see on any night, leaving the planets out of consideration, appear to occupy the same relative positions with respect to one another night after night, year after year. We see them all appear to move toward the west each night, and we notice after a suitable lapse of time that they set a little earlier each night, so that at the end of a year they all come back to the place of starting. When we reflect that all these stars are as free to move as the clouds of the moon, how wonderful it is that they thus appear to retain their relative positions so exactly, even for centuries. We must conclude that their real motions are very slow, or the stars are very far from us. We are now sure (but the ancient astronomer was not) that in many instances the stars are really moving.

But we did not commence to write about all the stars, but only one of them, Sirius, or the Dog-Star; this star shines during the evening, and it may be easily recognized by its great brilliancy, and its magnitude which is greater than that of any other fixed star. It has received the name of Dog-Star, from the constellation or collection of stars which it occupies. For convenience of recognition and reference the ancient astronomers divided the starry heavens into constellations, each one having a somewhat definite outline which could be traced by means of the stars. The name *Canis Major*, or the Greater Dog, was given to the constellation containing the star Sirius; and since this is the principal star in the constellation, it is often called the Dog-Star. This star, has played a somewhat important part in the history of mankind. It was to a certain extent the almanac of the Ancient Egyptians.

The present position of Sirius is in right ascension 99 deg. 55 min. 30 sec. and in south declination 16 deg. 32 min. 28 sec. This position is subject both to an apparent and a real variation. The apparent variation is due to a gyratory motion of the earth, which causes the poles of the heavens (the north pole is now near the north star) to revolve around the pole of the ecliptic, or the vaulting points of a straight line drawn through the center of the earth, and perpendicular to the plane of the earth's apparent orbit. This revolution is completed in about 25,000 years, and it gives rise to the precession of the equinoxes. Since the star's right ascension is reckoned from the spring or vernal equinox, the precession causes it to increase at a slow rate. The declination will also vary from the same cause.

The real variation of the position of Sirius is due to its proper motion, as it is called. Though the stars are called fixed stars, yet they really are not so, but each one has an independent motion of its own, by which it is carried through space with greater or less rapidity. This motion of the stars is owing to the attractive influence which they exert on one another. The whole proper motion, however, is not real, but a part of it is apparent and due to the real, or proper motion of the sun, carrying with him the planetary system. The proper motion of Sirius is subject to some irregularity, but the matter has been pretty thoroughly discussed by Dr. Auwers, so that it is now very well understood.

WIT AND HUMOR. Don't despise a woman because she can't drive nails or hang pictures; if you want to discover your own weak points, just carry a 6x4 mattress down a narrow, winding stair.

When a woman tells her husband to bring home a dozen or more needed trinkets, and he returns without them, she realizes that in domestic life as well as in politics, instructions do not instruct.

To educate young ladies is to let them know all about the ogles, the omies, the ifes, the ties and the omies; but nothing about the ings, such as sewing, darning, washing, baking, and making pudding.

A bride of a month went to a married lady of a quarter of a year, and said: "My darling says that women are fools." "Never mind," said the other; "he is only studying nouns; wait until he reaches adjectives."

"I am an independent voter, and I can't support you until I've seen your platform," she said as he finished proposing. A couple of hours later it dawned upon the young man's mind that she wanted to know the amount of his salary.

Not one American woman in twenty-five can walk five miles," says an English physician. See here, Doc, you just show an American woman a street five miles long, with bonnet stores every ten rods, and see if she can't walk the whole distance.

Some admiring poet said of his best girl: "Upon her face a thousand dimples smile for me; but in her eyes, only dimples more emphasize to the angels, 'Love is blind.'" How like the mischief a girl would look with a thousand dimples on her face. The poet must have meant freckles.

"My daughter, never tell any one your private affairs," said a mother in sending her daughter away upon her first journey. "Monsieur, a third-class ticket, if you please," said the daughter, at the ticket office. "For where?" asked the employe. "Is that any of your business?" answered mademoiselle indignantly, remembering her mother's advice.

Lafayette's Tomb. American (Cary) writes: All Americans should make a pilgrimage to the last resting-place of the great Lafayette at the cemetery of Picpus. It has been said that it became necessary to abandon this cemetery because it was overgrown with dead. This is an error; the room was not lacking, but the place of interment had been situated in the middle of a quarter thirly populated, but rich; it was beside the subject of the diatribes of the aristocrats and of the contre revolutionists. The result was its removal. During the early part of the Reign of Terror a cemetery being needed, choice was made of a sort of desert, which backing up the hill symmetrically. The American woman is as unquiet in her thoughts and enslaved by her duties, however light as the man. Even when she is at home she has no air of repose. Her conversation is not thoughtful, but actual. She tells you what she does or suffers, not what she thinks or feels. There is no reverie about her, no suggestion of that brooding spirit which indicates a capacity for impassioned affection, a capacity which to ladies is always ideally seductive, however little the man may appreciate or return it. Yet, generally speaking, undemonstrative as the American girl may be, she will wear her life out in working for the man she loves. She forgets all about being him in that merciless energy which always drives her into going for him.

There is, again, another reason why the American girl seems cold to the superficial observer. It is because she is free. She is educated to repress outwardly her feelings, her moods, her movements expose her to contact with men of all classes, among whom there are many very "vile persons." Her outward behavior, therefore, is her armor against impudence or even worse things. She passes, Diana-like, through crowds of men every day, not one of whom for an instant suspects her of being other than she is, because her manner shows her at once to be a free-born, dressless American woman! They never dream that because no one is watching her she means to go astray.

The defects of the American girl may be done away with by giving less prominence to the purely intellectual or purely practical side of her education. For while one class of men is striving to solve the problem of life by educating women intellectually, there is another class which is striving for education in domestic matters. While the professors at Harvard are rejoicing over some girl who can take in their philosophies in their mathematics, the newspaper editor sings the praises of her who can roast a turkey, bake bread, or make her own dresses. Neither gives the poor girl a chance to exist, but only to work, with either hand or brain. No one says to her, "You are not only yourself, but possibly the future mother of other beings. Do not therefore allow yourself to be driven by either schools of apostles beyond what you may do easily, comfortably, or pleasantly.

The healthy balance of your nervous system is the most important thing to you and your future family relations than all the mathematics or dress-making, or even roasting of turkeys. Occupy yourself steadily, but without hurry, and without emulation. As the apostle said (and it must have been meant expressly for Americans), "avoid emulation." Find out what you can do best, and even if it does not come up to somebody else's standard, learn to content yourself with that."

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A colored preacher of Cobb county, Georgia, has a novel way of collecting his salary. When his members haven't the money he puts them to work on his farm until they work out their assessments.

Every child should wear a waist of strong muslin, with a stout band well supplied with buttons, which all the under-garments are buttoned, thus bearing the weight of them upon the shoulders, and leaving the person free to grow as nature intended it should. As the child develops into the young man, the waist can be slipped, and attain the dignity of whalebones as a sort of semi-corset. The gradual training of the human body is as necessary as the training of a vine.

The broad-brim hat, worn somewhat on the back of the head, and slightly on the side, is still the fashion of the day. The face-protecting and protecting Director form vies with the coquette's toque for the second place. Large, flat collars are decidedly stylish.

Fancy colors in dress fabrics, such as pink, light blue, etc., are not worn in the street. Velvet and satin are less used for trimming children's outdoor garments than formerly. Dark blues, browns, and Russian green, trimmed with plush of the same shades, are the prevailing styles.

Dark navy trimmings, with handsome white lace, are much in vogue for little boys under five years of age. Nothing about a little girl displays as much her peculiar taste more than the way the hair is arranged. The severely neat mother will comb the hair smoothly back from the brow; the woman who is "cute and smart" will let the elegant mother will "bang" a pretty fringe of hair over her child's intellectual brow, brush the rest back, slightly braid it, leaving an end free to knot or curl, with a pretty-colored ribbon bow that holds the hair in place.

Sunday-school scholar (to the teacher): "Did you say that the hairs of my head were all numbered?" Teacher: "Yes, my dear." Sunday-school scholar: "Well, then, (pulling out a hair and presenting it) 'what's the number of that one?"

"Elder, will you have a drink of cider?" inquired a farmer of an old temperance man who was spending an evening in his house. "Ah—hum—no, thank you," said the old man; "I never drink any liquor of any kind—especially cider; but if you will call it apple-licon, I'll take a drop."

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