

mistook them for Suhail, and the consequent arguments were the occasion of much profanity among the disputatious Arabs. As, however, it would seem impossible that Canopus could be mistaken for any neighboring star, this derivation is as absurd as the proper location of the Muhlifain was doubtful, for they have been assigned not only to the foregoing, but also to stars in Canis Major, Centaurus, and Columba.

$\gamma$  lies in the Vela subdivision, and is visible from all points south of  $42^{\circ}$  of north latitude. Like  $\beta$ , it seems to have been incorrectly laid down on the *Uranometria*, for Baily wrote that he could not find Bayer's  $\gamma$  in the sky.

This is the only conspicuous star that shows the Wolf-Rayet type of a continuous spectrum crossed with bright lines; and its superb beauty is the admiration of the spectroscopic observer. Eddie calls it the **Spectral Gem** of the southern skies.

$\delta$ ,  $2.2$ , and  $\omega$ , with stars in Canis Major, were the Chinese **Koo She**, the Bow and Arrow.

$\zeta$ ,  $2.5$ , at the southeastern extremity of the Egyptian **X**, is the **Suhail Haqar** of Al Sufi, and the **Naos**, or Ship, of Burritt's *Atlas*; while, with  $\gamma$  and  $\lambda$ , it was one of the Muhlifain.

Its south declination in 1880 was  $39^{\circ} 40'$ , and so it is plainly visible from the latitude of the State of Maine, coming to the meridian on the 3d of March.

$\eta$ , Irregularly variable,  $> 1$  to  $7.4$ , reddish,

lies in the Carina subdivision, but is invisible from north of the 30th parallel.

This is one of the most noted objects in the heavens, perhaps even so in almost prehistoric times, for Babylonian inscriptions seem to refer to a star, noticeable from occasional faintness in its light, that Jensen thinks was  $\eta$ . And he claims it as one of the temple stars associated with Ea, or Ia, of Eridhu,<sup>1</sup> the Lord of the Waves, otherwise known as Oannes,<sup>2</sup> the mysterious human fish and greatest god of the kingdom.

In China  $\eta$  was **Tseen She**, Heaven's Altars.

<sup>1</sup> Eridhu, or Eri-duga, the Holy City, Nunki, or Nunpe, one of the oldest cities in the world, even in ancient Babylonia, was that kingdom's flourishing port on the Persian Gulf, but, by the encroachments of the delta, its site is now one hundred miles inland. In its vicinity the Babylonians located their sacred Tree of Life.

<sup>2</sup> Berossós described Oannes as the teacher of early man in all knowledge; and in mythology he was even the creator of man and the father of Tammuz and Ishtar, themselves associated with other stars and sky figures. Jensen thinks Oannes connected with the stars of Capricorn; Lockyer finds his counterpart in the god Chnemu of Southern Egypt; and some have regarded him as the prototype of Noah.

The variations in its light are as remarkable in their irregularity as in their degree. The first recorded observation, said to have been by Halley in 1677, although it is not in his *Southern Catalogue*, made  $\eta$  a 4th-magnitude, but since that it has often varied either way, at longer or shorter intervals, from absolute invisibility by the naked eye to a brilliancy almost the equal of Sirius. Sir John Herschel saw it thus in December, 1837, as others did in 1843; but, gradually declining since then, it touched its lowest recorded magnitude of 7.6 in March, 1886. It is now, however, on the increase; for on the 13th of May, 1896, it was 5.1, or about a half-magnitude higher than its maximum of the preceding year.

The nebula, N. G. C. 3372, surrounding this star has been called the **Keyhole** from its characteristic features; but the most brilliant portion, as drawn by Sir John Herschel, seems to have disappeared at some time between 1837 and 1871. That great observer saw 1203 stars scattered over its surface.

Near  $\eta$  is a vacant space of irregular shape that Abbott has called the **Crooked Billet**; and there are two remarkable coarse clusters in its immediate vicinity.

$\iota$ , 2.9, pale yellow.

This was the Latins' **Scutulum**, or Little Shield, the Arabians' **Turaia**, probably referring to the ornamental Aplustre at the stern of the Ship in the subdivision Carina; but Hyde, quoting it as **Turyeish** from Tizini, said that the original was *verbum ignotum*, and suggested that some one else should make a guess at it and its meaning. Smyth wrote of it as "corresponding to the 'Ἀσπιδίσκη of Ptolemy"; but the latter described it as being in the 'Ἀκροστόλιον, Gunwale, and located  $\kappa$ ,  $\xi$ ,  $\omicron$ ,  $\pi$ ,  $\rho$ ,  $\sigma$ , and  $\tau$  in the 'Ἀσπιδίσκη, or Aplustre, where they are shown to-day. The *Century Atlas* follows Smyth in calling  $\iota$  **Aspidiske**. It is visible from the latitude of New York City.

$\kappa$ , 3.9, is **Markab** and **Markeb**, probably from the *Alfonsine Tables* of 1521, where this last word is found plainly applied to it as a proper name. This also is visible from the latitude of New York, culminating on the 25th of March.

$\lambda$ , 2.5, in Vela is Al Sufi's **Al Suhail al Wazn**, Suhail of the Weight; and, with  $\gamma$  and  $\zeta$ , one of the Muḥlifaîn.

$\xi$ , 3.4, has been called **Asmidiske** by an incorrect transliteration of the 'Ἀσπιδίσκη where it is located with the star  $\iota$ .

$\psi$ , 3.7, in Vela is given by Reeves as **Tseen Ke**, Heaven's Record; a star