

Astrologers of course said that it was the most unfortunate, violent, and dangerous star in the heavens, and it certainly has been one of the best observed, as the most noteworthy variable in the northern sky. It "continues sensibly constant at 2.3 magnitude during $2\frac{1}{2}$ days, then decreases, at first gradually, and afterward with increasing rapidity, to 3.5 magnitude"; its light oscillations occupying about nine hours; its total period being stated as 2 days 20 hours 48 minutes 55 seconds. Al Sufi, a good observer for his day, yet strangely making no allusion to its variability, called it a 2d-magnitude; and the phenomenon was first scientifically noted by Montanari during several years preceding 1672. This was confirmed by Maraldi's observations of 1694, and, later, by those of the Saxon farmer Palitsch,¹ but its approximate period seems to have been first announced by Goodricke in 1782, who even then advanced the theory of a dark companion revolving around it with immense velocity, which periodically cut off its light. This, reaffirmed by Pickering in 1880, was made certain by the spectroscope in the hands of Vogel of Potsdam in 1889. Chandler thinks that there must exist another invisible body larger than either Algol or its companion, around which both revolve in a period of 130 years; but Tisserand has shown that the phenomenon on which Chandler bases this opinion can be explained in a different and simpler way. Its name is used for the type indicating short-period variables whose changes may be explained by this theory of "eclipses." Of these seventeen are now known.

Although classed among the white stars with a Sirian spectrum, Al Sufi wrote of it as red, which Schmidt confirmed as seen by him at Athens for a short time in 1841. It seems to be approaching us at the rate of about a mile a second; and is estimated as a little more than a million miles in diameter.

When on the meridian Algol is almost exactly in the zenith of New York City. This is at nine o'clock in the evening of the 23d of December.

♄, Double, 3.5 and 9, greenish white and lilac.

In China this, with the 4th-magnitude ν and some others, was **Keuen She**.

It has been suspected of variation in color as well as in light. The components are about $9''$ apart, at a position angle of 100° , and form an interesting object for a four-inch telescope.

¹ Palitsch also was famous for his discovery of Halley's comet on Christmas night, 1758.

η, Double, 5 and 8.5, orange and smalt blue,

is unnamed except in China, where, with γ, it was **Tien Chuen**, Heaven's Ship. But it is noticeable in having three small stars on one side nearly in line, and one on the other, forming a miniature representation of Jupiter and his satellites. The components are 28" apart, at a position angle of 300°.

λ and μ, 4th- to 5th-magnitude stars, were **Tseih Shwuy**, Piled-up Waters.

ξ, a 4½-magnitude, is the **Menkib** of Burritt, from **Mankib al Thurayya**, the Shoulder of—*i. e.* next to—the Pleiades in the Arabian figure, although on modern charts it marks the left ankle.

ο, a double star of 4th and 9th magnitudes, is **Ati** and **Atik**, from the word **Al 'Ātik** found on the Borgian globe, at the space between the shoulders, and applied to it by Ulug Beg; but it is now located near the left foot.

π, a 4½-magnitude, was **Gorgonea secunda**; and ρ, a variable from 3.4 to 4.2, orange in color, was **Gorgonea tertia**.

τ, a 4½-magnitude, with others in the constellation, was known by the Chinese as **Ta Ling**, the Great Mound.

υ, 3.8,

marking the tip of the weapon in Perseus' hand, bears many titles with Bayer, all referring to its location; but none of these—indeed, no name at all—is seen in modern lists. Bayer wrote of them:

In falce adamanthinā trium præcedens. Falx dicitur & curvus Harpes, Gladius falcatus, & incurvus, Arab. Nembus, Maroni Ensīs falcatus, & curvus Saturni dens.

The "*Arab.*" would seem erroneous, for **Nembus** is neither Arabic nor Latin, and if intended for *Nimbus*, is equally wrong, as there is no suspicion of nebulosity about the star. *Curvus Saturni dens* was Vergil's designation in the *Georgics* for a "pruning-hook," and the equivalent of *Falx* and *Ἀπ-η*, so well known in connection with Perseus.

χ, a multiple star, and the little *h* mark two clusters noticeable with the naked eye. Nos. 884 and 869 of the *New General Catalogue*, 30' and 15' in diameter, almost connected, and apparently a protuberant part of the Milky Way. They were the Arabians' **Misam al Thurayya**, the Wrist of—*i. e.* next to—the Pleiades.

Hipparchos seems to have been the first to record them, which he did as *νεφελοειδής*, a "cloudy spot"; Ptolemy, as *συστροφή*, a "dense mass"; and subsequent astronomers down to Galileo's day similarly considered them nebulous. The *Alfonsine Tables* said, *revolutio nebulosa*, and the *Almagest* of 1551, *girus ille in capulo ensis*, this *girus*—correctly *gyrus*—signifying a circle. They seem strangely to have escaped the notice of astrologers,