

ARATUS—"Phenomena," (5)

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プリンス散文譯——アラートの天象詩

If, and whenever, your admiration has been excited when contemplating a grand circle ornamenting the sky, or if any one standing near you points out *that constellation called the Milky Way*, bear in mind there is no other circle which exhibits a similar appearance as well as exceeding in magnitude the other four; nevertheless, two are much the same and two of lesser consequence. One of these latter is near the low down north and in it lie the two heads of the Twins.

On it are also placed the knees of Auriga; likewise the shin and left shoulder of Perseus; also it holds the right arm of Andromeda above the elbow, but the palm of the hand is placed more northerly, the elbow leaning to the southward.

The Horse's hoofs, the Swan's neck, the crown of the head and the bright shoulders of the Serpent-holder, revolve around this circle.

Still further to the south lies the Virgin, but not in contact, as the Lion and the Crab do; these two lie in order, but separate. One circle cuts the Lion under the breast, even to the lower part of the belly; the Crab beneath its shell follows on, where you may see it cut into two parts, the circle passing between two eyes. This, as near as may be, divides the Zone into eight parts, five of which daily revolve above the horizon and three beneath it, as obtains during the summer season. Thus it is fixed to the northward of the Crab, while another circle passes through the middle of the Goat, the feet of the Water-bearer and the tail of the Whale. Here also is found the Hare and a considerable portion of the Dog, not including the feet. Argo is also near and the huge shoulder of the Centaur, also the sting of the Scorpion and the bright bow of the Archer. Passing from the extreme north to the south, the Sun is met; in fact, here the winter comes on, and of the eight parts (or signs) three revolve above the horizon and five beneath it.

In the midst of both a girdle as large as the Milky Way revolves beneath the earth, bisecting, as it were, the sky, while there in both the days and the nights are equal, that is, towards the end of the summer and the commencement of the spring, and within this space the knees both of the Ram and Bull are placed. The Ram is stretched along the circle at full length and so much of the legs of the Bull as appears when kneeling. On it also appear the belt of magnificent Orion, and the folds of the great and shining Water-Serpent, as well as the less conspicuous Bowl; the Crow also is there, and the Scorpion's claws, not adorned, however, with many stars; likewise the knees of the Serpent-holder, but the Eagle is not within it. Not far off the great messenger of Jupiter lies along; also near him are the neck and head of the Horse. Holding all these in the midst the axis encloses them in rectangular fashion, but the fourth is fixed obliquely in both, while within lie the Tropics, bisected by the Equator. Not easily would any one, unassisted by Athena's hands, bind the

rolling spheres, for such and so many, revolving around, are all placed within the oblique circle, in etherial space, impelled from morning to night through all time. These rise and set on opposite sides and retain their respective positions; one of them rises and another sets, in due order; one of these rising obliquely also passes over so much of the horizon as is contained in the space between the rising of the Goat and the Crab, and setting just so far elsewhere as eye can follow. Six times as much will pass along the circle and each portion, equally measured, encloses two constellations. This circle is called the Zodiac, in which is the Crab, the Lion, the Virgin, the Claws, the body of the Scorpion, the Archer, the Goat, the Water-bearer, the Fishes, the Ram, the Bull and the Twins. In these twelve signs the Sun pursues his path throughout the year; also along this circle the several seasons of the year proceed. Of this so much as sets below the horizon so much remains above it. On every night six of the twelve divisions of the circle set and as many rise. But as night proceeds, so much of the longitude of each is elevated above the horizon as is equal to half the large circle; nor will any observer regret the time employed in watching when each sign rises, for the Sun himself always in one of these. You will best recognise them as they severally rise. If they should be obscured by clouds, or hidden by a hill, as they rise, pay great attention to other stars which may be rising; moreover, the horizon itself will continuously give you information by observing its angle on either side.

There are many stars which revolve around, while each sign is rising, in order from below, well known; for instance, when the Crab rises twinkling stars lie on all sides; some indeed setting while others rise from the eastward. Now sets the Crown, likewise the lower shoulder of the Fish, the upper half of which you see above the horizon, while half has already set closely adjoining the also setting Crown; but the Fish reversed still shows other stars, even to the lower part its belly, while the upper ones are lost in the darkness of the night. The Crab brings down upon his knees, even from his shoulder, the toiling Serpent-holder as well as the Snake even to its neck.

Not much more plainly will Arctophylax be seen in the twilight, but brighter at night, for then the horizon hides four other signs while he is setting, and he, weary of daylight, having continued busy more than half the night, finally sets with the Sun. These nights are called the *late setting* for thus they direct their course. Opposite, Orion, brilliant with his girdle and bright upon both shoulders, armed too, with his sword, is borne along the full stream and carried far in another direction.

Below comes the rising stars of the Lion which had set with the Crab; the Eagle also.

The Kneeler, while some parts of him are already set, turns his body beneath the surging waves, except his knee and left foot. The head of the Water-serpent now rises; the dusky Hare; Procyon and the fore feet of the brilliant Dog. The Virgin rising sends not a few stars below; the Kyllenian Lyre; the Dolphin and the Archer's well-wrought weapon set, with which are hid, near the head of the stream, the back feathers of the Swan even to her tail; also the head and neck of the Horse set. The Water-Serpent rises high even to the Bowl; the Dog, too, coming on, lifts his feet, drawing behind him the bright stern of Argo, which sets divided at the very mast when the Virgin's constellation rises above the horizon.