

ic capacity, which was the same among former generations, as, for instance, the Greeks and Romans, as at the present day. The Pleiades prove that several thousand years ago, even as now, stars which astronomers regard as of the seventh magnitude, were invisible to the naked eye of average visual power. The group of the Pleiades consists of one star of the third magnitude, Alcyone; of two of the fourth, Electra and Atlas; of three of the fifth, Merope, Maia, and Taygeta; of two between the sixth and the seventh magnitudes, Pleione and Celæno; of one between the seventh and the eighth, Asterope; and of many very minute telescopic stars. I make use of the nomenclature and order of succession at present adopted, as the same names were among the ancients in part applied to other stars. The six first-named stars of the third, fourth, and fifth magnitudes were the only ones which could be readily distinguished.\* Of these Ovid says (*Fast.*, iv., 170),

“Quæ septem dici, sex tamen esse solent.”

One of the daughters of Atlas, Merope, the only one who was wedded to a mortal, was said to have veiled herself for very shame, or even to have wholly disappeared. This is probably the star of about the seventh magnitude, which we call Celæno; for Hipparchus, in his commentary on Aratus, observes that on clear moonless nights seven stars may actually be seen. Celæno, therefore, must have been seen, for Pleione, which is of equal brightness, is too near to Atlas, a star of the fourth magnitude.

The little star Alcor, which, according to Triesnecker, is situated in the tail of the Great Bear, at a distance of 11'

\* Hipparchus says (*ad Arati Phæn.*, 1, p. 190, in *Uranologio Petavii*), in refutation of the assertion of Aratus that there were only six stars visible in the Pleiades: “One star escaped the attention of Aratus. For when the eye is attentively fixed on this constellation on a *serene and moonless night*, seven stars are visible, and it therefore seems strange that Attalus, in his description of the Pleiades, should have neglected to notice this oversight on the part of Aratus, as though he regarded the statement as correct.” Merope is called the *invisible* (*παραφανής*) in the *Catasterisms* (XXIII.) ascribed to Eratosthenes. On a supposed connection between the name of the *veiled* (the daughter of Atlas) with the geographical myths in the *Meropis* of Theopompus, as well as with the great *Saturnian* Continent of Plutarch and the Atlantis, see my *Examen Crit. de l'Hist. de la Géographie*, t. i., p. 170. Compare also Ideler *Untersuchungen über den Ursprung und die Bedeutung der Sternnamen*, 1809, p. 145; and in reference to astronomical determination of place, consult Mädler, *Untersuch. über die Fixstern-Systeme*, th. ii., 1848, s. 36 and 166; also Baily in the *Mem. of the Astr. Soc.*, vol. xiii., p. 33.