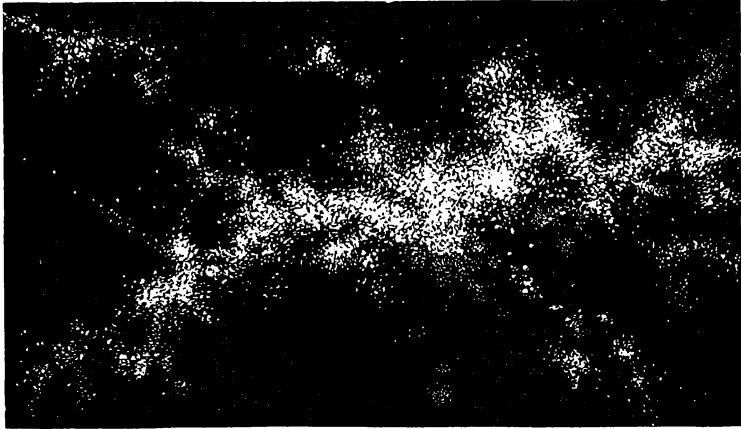


## The Sky and The Stars



**Y**OU are now acquainted with a number of groups of stars or constellations.

Go out on moonless nights and locate some of them. Turn to the north. Can you point to the North Star or Polaris? If you are not sure which it is, locate the Big Dipper. The two stars forming the side of the dipper opposite the handle point to the pole star.

Have you been attracted by a wide strip of whitish light that encircles the sky? This is called the Milky Way. It is more magnificent if you can gaze at it on a dark night far from the glare of city lights. It is caused by the light of great numbers of stars that seem to be close together.

Have you not often wondered what stars could be? Astronomers, or men who study the stars, believe that they are suns like our own. Our sun is much larger than our

earth, but many stars are much larger than the sun. The stars are of different colors. Some are blue, some white, and some orange. They differ in color because they differ in temperature or heat. Stars as hot as the sun are white, those that are hotter blue, and those that are cooler, orange.

Stars differ also in brightness. Some are more brilliant because they are nearer to us, but many are brighter because of their great size. Stars have been graded according to the brightness. The brightest stars are called first magnitude, others not so bright, second magnitude, and so on up. There are only twenty stars of the first magnitude and about sixty of the second magnitude. The star that forms the head of the Northern Cross is of first magnitude. It is called Deneb. In January, you can see the Northern Cross in the north western horizon.