

## SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATIONS.

"Where thou sowest thy seed and waterest it with thy foot as a garden of herbs." Deut. xi. 10.

Rain seldom falls in Egypt; the land being chiefly watered by the Nile. In order to water the grounds where the inundations do not extend, water is collected in ponds, and directed in streamlets to the different parts of the field, where irrigation is necessary. It is no unusual thing in the East, to see a man with a small mattock, making a little trench for the water to run into; and as he opens the passage the water following, he uses his foot to raise up the mould against the side of this little channel, to prevent the water from being shed unnecessarily before it reaches the place of its destination. Hence he may justly be said to water the ground with his foot.—Harmer.

Dr. Shaw, when speaking of the Egyptians, says,—"When their various sorts of pulse require to be refreshed, they strike out the plugs that are fixed in the bottom of the cisterns (wherein they preserve the water of the Nile;) and then the water gushing out, is conducted from one rill to another by the gardener, who is always ready, as occasion requires, to stop and divert the torrent, by turning the earth against it with his foot, and opening at the same time with his mattock, a new trench to receive it. This method of conveying moisture and nourishment to a land rarely or never refreshed with rain, is often alluded to in the Holy Scripture; where also it is made the distinguishing quality betwixt Egypt and the land of Canaan."—*Shaw's Travels*. p. 408.

"And with the sole of my feet I have dried up all rivers of the besieged places." Isaiah xxxvii. 25.

But how with the sole of his foot? Vitringa is of opinion, that the Prophet here, as in other places, alludes to the practice of the Egyptians, among whom where very commonly used certain hydraulic machines, called by him *helices*, which being worked and turned round by the sole of the foot, served to draw up water from canals or rivers for the supply of their fields and gardens, or to empty ditches. These *helices* appear to have been large wheels furnished on the outside with steps, (like our water mills,) by means of which, the labourer turns the machine round with the sole of his foot, in order to draw up the water; whilst in the mean time he lays hold on a stay fixed in the upper part of the machine, and so supports himself, and thus uses his hands instead of feet; and his feet instead of hands, as Philo cited by Vitringa expresses himself.—*Parkhurst*.

"And behold seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk." Gen. xli. 5.

This remarkable emblem, which appear to us an unusual and monstrous production, has always been considered as a liberty taken with nature, by way of furnishing a symbol; whereas the fact is, that a species of wheat which grows in Egypt, does actually bear, when perfect, this number of ears on one stalk, as its natural conformation. It differs from ours in having a solid stem, or at least a stem full of pith, in order to yield sufficient nourishment and support to

so great a weight as the ears which it bears.—*Comprehensive Bible*.

"There is a species of wheat called Egyptian, which, having had some of it in my own garden, I have often seen and examined, and which bears six or seven ears, shooting from the main ear in the middle."—*Parkhurst*.

LIVE.—O, how many ties there are to bind the soul to earth! When the strongest are cut asunder, and the spirit feels cast loose from every bond which connects it with mortality, how imperceptibly does one little tendril after another become entwined about it, and draw it back with gentle violence! He who thinks he has but one love is always mistaken. The heart may have one overmastering affection, more powerful than all the rest, which, like the main root of the tree, is that which supports it; but if that be cut away, it will find a thousand minute fibres still clinging to the soil of humanity. An absorbing passion may fill up the soul, and, while it lasts, may throw a shade over the various obligations, and the infinite multitude of kindnesses and tender associations that bind us to mankind; but when that shade is removed, these are seen to twinkle in the firmament of life, as the stars shine after the sun has gone down. Even the brute, and the lilies of the field, that neither toil nor spin, put in their silent claims; and the heart that would have spurned the world settles quietly down again upon its bosom.

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