

was forgotten. That tower, the structure of which has caused so much criticism, was at that time without any affectation of mystery, called the *Labyrinth*, that is, the Tower, the Palace.

Now if we would in a reasonable manner unriddle some of the most useful of the Egyptian symbols, we ought to consult the wants of the Egyptian colony. It is there we are naturally to look for the meaning of the figures which were exposed to the eyes of the whole nation assembled.

The hawk and the hoop were the names and the symbolical figures given to the winds, the return whereof the Egyptians were most concerned to observe. The hawk signified the Etesian northerly winds, which in the beginning of the summer drives the vapors towards the south, and which covering Ethiopia with thick clouds, there resolves them into rain which makes the Nile swell along its course. The hoop, on the contrary, signified the southerly wind, which promoted the draining of the waters, and the return of which proclaimed the measuring of the lands and the time for sowing. The analogy and peculiar resemblance between a hawk and a northerly wind, and between a hoop and a southerly wind may be explained in the following manner:—

Naturalists observe that the hawk delights in the north, but that at the return of the mild weather and when she casts her feathers, she makes southward with her wings spread, and looks towards a place whence a warm air comes, which may assist the falling of her own feathers and restore her to the beauties of youth. This bird, then, on account of the direction of its flight, at the return of the heats, was the most natural emblem of the annual wind which blew from north to south about the summer solstice, and which on account of the effects of this direction was of so great importance to the Egyptians.

The hoop, on the contrary, makes her way from south to north. She lives upon the small worms, an infinite number of which is hatched in the mud of the Nile. She takes her flight from Ethiopia into Higher Egypt, and from thence towards Memphis, where the Nile divides. She always follows the course of the Nile, as it retires within its banks, quite down to the sea. From this method of hers she was perfectly fit to characterize the direction of the southerly wind.

The warning given by the dog-star being their most important concern, the Egyptians from its rising anciently dated the beginning of their year, and the whole series of their feasts. Wherefore instead of representing it under the form of a star, which might not distinguish it from another, they delineated it under the figure relative to its function and name.

The Egyptians expressed the several increases of their swelling river by a column marked with one, two, or three lines in the form of a cross.