

to the helps they borrowed therefrom. It warned them of the danger; whereupon they called it Thauut, or Thayaut, the Dog; they called it also the *barker*, the *monitor*, in Egyptian Anubis; in Phœnician, Hannabech, which, by-the-by, shows the analogy there was between these two languages, notwithstanding the diversity of many words though chiefly in pronunciation, which made them appear quite different. The connection of this star and the rising of the river, caused the people to call it commonly the Nile-Star; in Greek, Seirios; in Latin, Sirius. The Egyptians gave it, besides, but in latter times, the name of Sothis or Thotes, which is the same with his other name—Thot, the *dog*, with a different pronunciation.

The inhabitants, retiring into their towns on the warning of the northern wind and the dog-star, remained idle for two months or more, till the waters were perfectly drained. Therefore the *prudence* of the Egyptians, before the overflowing, chiefly consisted in observing the termination of the vernal winds, the return of the northerly, which began with the summer, and at last the *rising* of the *dog-star* which circumstance was to them the *most remarkable point of the heavens*.

During the inaction after the rising of the river beyond its banks, their attention was directed to the observance of the return of the southerly winds, more moderate than those of the spring, and which facilitated the flowing of the river towards the Mediterranean; by the conformity of their blowing with its direction, which is from south to north; also the measuring the depth of the river, in order to regulate their husbandry according to the quantity of mud, which was always proportioned to the degree of the increase.

The same necessity which rendered the Egyptians astronomers, made them also painters and writers. The inspection of the heavens had taught them at last how to regulate their tillage, so strangely crossed by the disposition which was peculiar to Egypt. The custom of giving symbolical names to the objects that served them as rules, most naturally led them to delineate in a rude manner figures of these symbols, in order to inform the nation of the works in common to be done, and of the annual events with regard to which it was dangerous to misreckon. This service was performed by a number of persons appointed for that purpose and maintained at the public expense, whose duty it was to study the revolutions and aspects of the heavenly bodies, and to communicate the necessary information to the people. Such is the origin of the *sacerdotal order* so ancient in Egypt: the chief functions of which always were the study of the heavens and the inspection of the motions of the air. Such is the origin of the famous tower where that company was lodged, and where the character of the several works and the symbols of the public regulations were carefully delineated. Which symbols appeared in time very mysterious when the meaning of them