

portions of the Scriptures were written more than 3000 years ago, and that the latest of them were written between 1700 and 1800 years ago, it would have been very remarkable had we lost sight of none of those customs and none of those events on which the figures of Scripture are founded.

*Secondly.* The difference between the scene and climate in which the sacred writers lived, and our own, forms another barrier to the right understanding of their figurative terms. This prevents us often from perceiving the full force of a passage even when its beauty, nevertheless, powerfully affects the mind. Thus when the Psalmist says, "*As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God,*" It is impossible not to be affected by the combination of chaste elegance of expression with vehement ardour of feeling. Yet in our temperate clime, where water is scarcely ever known to fail, where the sun scarcely ever pours his sickening ray upon our heads, we are not prepared to enter into all the beauty of the figure, as an inhabitant of Judea would have done. Again, the hart is not with us a wild animal, subject to the various privations which it was compelled to endure in regions where the sun had burned up its food, and dried the streams at which it was accustomed to slake its thirst. It would be no unusual thing, however, for an Israelite to see this inoffensive animal exhausted and fatigued, and panting for a drop of water; and, consequently, the application of the figure to the Psalmist's desire after God would convey an impression far more forcible than can be produced by it on our minds.

In the forty-ninth chapter of Jeremiah, we have another figure still more peculiar to the land of Judea.—*He shall come up like a lion from the swelling*