

the point where the sun rose each day, and through ignorance identified with the heliacal year of Sirius; so that it would be mere chance which had fixed with so much accuracy the duration of this latter for the period of which we speak.\*

Perhaps it will also be judged, that men capable of making observations so exact, and which they had continued during so long a period, would not have attributed so much importance to Sirius, as to pay him religious homage; for they would have seen that the relations of the rising of this star with the tropical year, and with the inundation of the Nile, were merely temporary, and took place only in a determinate latitude. In fact, according to M. Ideler's calculations, in the year 2782 before Christ, Sirius appeared in Upper Egypt, on the second day after the solstice; in 1322, on the third; and in the year 139 after Christ, on the twenty-sixth.† At the present day, its heliacal rising is more than a month after the solstice. The Egyptians would therefore set themselves by preference to finding the period, which would bring about the coincidence

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\* Delambre, Report upon M. de Paravey's Memoir regarding the Sphere, in the 8th vol. of the *Nouvelles Annales des Voyages*.

† Ideler, loc. cit. p. 38.