

menor that seems to depend on a certain state of the atmosphere, cannot be denied. The shelves of rock are full of very narrow and deep crevices. They are heated during the day to 48° or 50° . I several times found their temperature at the surface, during the night, at 39° , the surrounding atmosphere being at 28° . It may easily be conceived, that the difference of temperature between the subterranean and the external air attains its maximum about sunrise, or at that moment which is at the same time farthest from the period of the maximum of the heat of the preceding day. May not these organ-like sounds, which are heard when a person lays his ear in contact with the stone, be the effect of a current of air that issues out through the crevices? Does not the impulse of the air against the elastic spangles of mica that intercept the crevices, contribute to modify the sounds? May we not admit that the ancient inhabitants of Egypt, in passing incessantly up and down the Nile, had made the same observation on some rock of the Thebaid; and that the 'music of the rocks' there led to the jugglery of the priests in the statue of Memnon? Perhaps, when 'the rosy-fingered Aurora rendered her son, the glorious Memnon, vocal,'* the voice was that of a man hidden beneath the pedestal of the statue; but the observation of the natives of the Orinoco, which we relate, seems to explain in a natural manner what gave rise to the Egyptian belief of a stone that poured forth rounds at sunrise.

Almost at the same period at which I communicated these conjectures to some of the learned of Europe, three French travellers, MM. Jomard, Joilois, and Devilliers, were led to analogous ideas. They heard, at sunrise, in a monument of granite, at the centre of the spot on which stands the palace of Karnak, a noise resembling that of a string breaking. Now this comparison is precisely that which the ancients employed in speaking of the voice of Memnon. The French travellers thought, like me, that the passage of

* These are the words of an inscription, which attests that sounds were heard on the 13th of the month Pachon, in the tenth year of the reign of Antoninus. See *Monuments de l'Egypte Ancienne*.