

some limited empirical maxim of weather-wisdom taken from the climate of Greece. "Libya," he said, "has neither rain nor ice, and therefore no snow; *for*, in five days after a fall of snow there must be a fall of rain; so that if it snowed in those regions it must rain too." I need not observe that Herodotus was not aware of the difference between the climate of high mountains and plains in a torrid region; but it is impossible not to be struck both with the activity and the coherency of thought displayed by the Greek mind in this primitive physical inquiry.

But I must not omit the hypothesis which Herodotus himself proposes, after rejecting those which have been already given. It does not appear to me easy to catch his exact meaning, but the statement will still be curious. "If," he says, "one who has condemned opinions previously promulgated may put forward his own opinion concerning so obscure a matter, I will state why it seems to me that the Nile is flooded in summer." This opinion he propounds at first with an oracular brevity, which it is difficult to suppose that he did not intend to be impressive. "In winter the sun is carried by the seasons away from his former course, and goes to the upper parts of Libya. And *there, in short, is the whole account*; for that region to which this divinity (the sun) is nearest, must naturally be most scant of water, and the river-sources of that country must be dried up."

But the lively and garrulous Ionian immediately relaxes from this apparent reserve. "To explain the matter more at length," he proceeds, "it is thus. The sun when he traverses the upper parts of Libya, does what he commonly does in summer;—he *draws* the water to him (*ἔλκει ἐπ' ἐωϋτὸν τὸ ὕδωρ*), and having thus drawn it, he pushes it to the upper regions (of the air probably), and then the winds take it and disperse it till they dissolve in moisture. And thus the winds which blow from those countries, Libs and Notus, are the most moist of all winds. Now when the winter relaxes and the sun returns to the north, he still draws water from all the rivers, but they are increased by showers and rain torrents so that they are in flood till the summer comes; and then, the rain failing and the sun still drawing them, they become small. But the Nile, not being fed by rains, yet being drawn by the sun, is, alone of all rivers, much more scanty in the winter than in the summer. For in summer it is drawn like all other rivers, but in winter it alone has its supplies shut up. And in this way, I have been led to think the sun is the cause of the occurrence in question." We may remark that the historian here appears to