

the climate of that country. \* The Capricorn, an animal with the tail of a fish, would mark the commencement of the rise of the Nile at the summer solstice; the Aquarius and Fishes, the progress and diminution of the inundation; the Bull, the time of labouring; the Virgin, the time of reaping; and they would mark them at the periods when these operations actually took place. In this system, the zodiac would have 15,000 years † for a sun supposed at the first degree of each sign, more than 16,000 for the middle, and 4000 only, on supposing that the emblem has been given to the sign at the opposite of which the sun was ‡. It is to the 15,000 years that Dupuis has attached himself; and it is upon this date that he has founded the whole system of his celebrated work.

There are not wanting those, however, who, admitting that the zodiac has been invented in Egypt, have imagined allegories applicable to later times. Thus, according to Mr Hamilton, the Virgin would represent the land of Egypt when not yet fecundated by the inundation; the

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\* See the Memoir on the Origin of the Constellations, in Dupuis's *Origine des Cultes*, vol. iii. p. 324. *et seq.*

† *Id. ibid.* p. 267.

‡ Dupuis himself suggests this second hypothesis. *Ibid.* p. 340.