

As to the Indians, it is well known that Bailly, thinking that the epoch which is used as a period of departure in some of their astronomical tables, had been really observed, has attempted thence to deduce a proof of the remote antiquity of this science amongst this people, or at least in the nation which had bequeathed its knowledge to them. But the whole of this system so laboriously conceived, falls to the ground of itself, now that it is proved that this epoch was subsequently adopted on calculations made backwards, and the result of which was incorrect.(1)

M. Bentley has discovered that the tables of Tirvalour, on which, particularly, the assertion of Bailly was founded, must have been calculated about 1281 after Christ (540 years since;) and that the Surya-Siddhanta, which the Brahmins regard as the most ancient and scientific treatise on astronomy, and which they pretend was revealed more than twenty millions of years ago, could not have been composed until about 760 years since.(2)

The solstices and equinoxes marked in the Pauranas, and calculated, according to the positions which were assigned to them in the signs of the Indian zodiac, have had a very remote antiquity assigned to them. A more exact study of these signs or nacchatrons, has lately shown M. de Paravey, that reference is only made to solstices of twelve centuries before Christ. This writer, at the same

(1) See Laplace's *Exposé du Systeme du Monde*, p. 330; and the *Memoir of M. Davis on the Astronomical Calculations of the Indians*. *Mem. de Calcutta*, v. 2, p. 225, 8vo. edit.

(2) See *Mem. of Bentley, on the Antiquity of Surya-Siddhanta*. *Mem. de Calcutta*, v. vi. p. 540; and on the *Astronomical Systems of the Indians*, *ib.* v. viii. p. 165, of the 8vo. edit.