

two expert geometricians, even then all that these people knew might have been discovered in a few centuries.

We may learn, that since the Chaldeans, real astronomy has had only two epochs, that of the Alexandrian school, which lasted four hundred years, and our own, which has not lasted so long. The age of the Arabs scarcely added any thing to it. The other ages have been mere nullities with respect to it. Only three hundred years have intervened between Copernicus and the author of *La Mécanique Celeste* (Laplace,) and yet did the Indians require thousands of years to arrive at their crude theories. (1)

THE ASTRONOMICAL MONUMENTS LEFT BY THE ANCIENTS HAVE NOT THE EXCESSIVELY REMOTE DATES GENERALLY ATTRIBUTED TO THEM.

Recourse has been had to another species of argument. It is pretended, that, independently of the knowledge which these nations might have attained, they have left monuments which bear, by the state of the heavens which they represent, a certain and remote date; and the zodiacs engraved in two temples of Upper Egypt, have appeared for some years to afford, on this point, most perfectly conclusive proofs. They present the same zodiacal

(1) The English translator of this Discourse (Jameson) quotes, on this point, the example of the celebrated James Ferguson, who was a shepherd in his youth, and who, whilst watching his flocks at night, had conceived the idea of a chart of the heavens, and drew it, perhaps, more correctly than any Chaldean astronomer. A similar account is given of Jamerey Duval.