

was found to correspond with the twenty-ninth of August of the Julian year, and continued ever since to correspond. It is only from this epoch that the Egyptian months began from fixed days of the Julian year, at Alexandria only; and Ptolemæus himself did not discontinue to employ in his *Almagest* the ancient Egyptian year, with its indefinite months.(1)

Why may not, at some epoch, the names of the signs, have been given to the months, or the names of the months to the signs in as arbitrary a manner as the Indians have given to their twenty-seven months twelve names, chosen from amongst those of their lunar houses, for reasons now impossible to ascertain or account for?(2)

The absurdity of preserving for fifteen thousand years in the constellations, the figures and symbolic names which no longer bore any relation to their respective situations, would have been much more evident if it had been carried so far as to preserve to the months those same names which were incessantly in the mouths of the people, and the irrelevancy of which would be perceptible at every instant.

What then would become of all those other systems, if the figures and names of the zodiacal constellations had been given to them, without at all relating to the course of the sun, as their inequality, the extent of many of them beyond the zodiac, and

(1) See Ideler's 'Researches on the Astronomical Observations of the Ancients,' a translation of which has been inserted by M. Halma, in the third volume of his *Ptolemæus*; and particularly the Memoir of Freret on the opinion of Lanauze, relative to the establishing of the Alexandrian year, in the Memoir of the Academy of Belles Lettres, vol. xvi. p. 308.

(2) See Sir William Jones's Memoir on the Antiquity of the Indian Zodiac, Mem. de Calcutta, vol. ii. ]