

years, which brings back the eclipses of the moon in the same order ; a piece of knowledge which the mere inspection of their registers would promptly afford them ; but it is certain that they could neither explain nor predict eclipses of the sun.

It is from not having sufficiently understood a passage of Josephus, that Cassini, and after him Bailly, have imagined that they discovered in it a luni-solar period of 600 years, which had been known from the time of the first patriarchs *.

Thus every thing leads us to believe that the great reputation of the Chaldeans was given them at a more recent period, by their unworthy successors, who, under the same name, sold their horoscopes and predictions throughout the whole Roman empire, and who, in order to procure themselves more credit, attributed to their rude ancestors the honour of the discoveries of the Greeks.

With regard to the Indians, every body knows that Bailly, believing that the epoch which is used as a period of departure in some of their astronomical tables had been actually observed, has attempted to draw from thence a proof of the great antiquity of the science among this people,

* See Bailly, *History of Ancient Astronomy* ; and M. Delambre, in his work on the same subject, vol. i. p. 3.