

or, lastly, to that which was opposite to him, and which rose at night; or according as the invention of these allegories is placed in a different climate, must the date of the zodiac also be changed. The possible variations in this respect might comprehend so much as the half of the revolution of the fixed stars, that is to say, 13,000 years, and even more.

In this manner Pluche, generalizing some indications of the ancients, has imagined, that the Ram announces the commencement of the sun's elevation, and the vernal equinox; that the Cancer indicates his retrogradation to the summer solstice; that the Balance, the sign of equality, marks the autumnal equinox*; and that the Capricorn, a climbing animal, indicates the winter solstice, after which the sun returns to us. According to this method, by placing the inventors of the zodiac in a temperate climate, we should have rains under Aquarius, the dropping of lambs and kids under the Gemini, violent heats under the Lion, gathering of the harvest under the Virgin, the time of hunting under the Sagittary, &c.; and the emblems would be appro-

* Varro, de Ling. Lat. lib. vi. Signa, quod aliquid significant, ut libra æquinoctium; Macrobianus, Sat. lib. i. cap. xxi. Capricornus ab infernis partibus ad superas solem reducens Capræ naturam videtur imitari.