

blem of the sun, considered in some one of its effects or of its general phenomena, and without reference to the months when it passes, whether into the sign, or to its opposite?

Lastly, What if the names had been given in an abstract manner to the divisions of space or time, as they are now given by astronomers to what they call the signs, and had not been applied to the constellations or groups of stars, but at a period determined by chance, so that nothing could be concluded from their signification*?

In these suggestions there is, without doubt, enough to give an ingenuous mind a distaste for seeking to find in astronomy proofs of the antiquity of the nations. But were these alleged proofs as certain as they are vague and destitute of any satisfactory result, what could be concluded from them against the great catastrophe, which has left monuments amply demonstrative in other

sed signa quoque universa zodiaci ad naturam solis jure referuntur; &c. It is only in the explanation of the Lion and Capricorn, that he has recourse to some phenomenon relative to the seasons; the Cancer itself is explained in a general point of view, and with reference to the obliquity of the sun's march.

* See the Memoir of M. Guignes on the Zodiacs of the Eastern Nations, in the Memoirs of the Academy of Belles Lettres, vol. xlvii.