

my, and particularly the figures of the zodiac, should in some sort have preceded all other human institutions, has sought another climate, to find other explanations for the emblems, and to deduce for them another epoch. If, taking Libra always as the equinoctial sign, but suppressing it at the vernal equinox, it be asserted that the zodiac was invented in Egypt, we shall find other proofs equally plausible for the climate of this country. (1) Capricornus, or the animal with a fish's tail, will mark the commencement of the elevation of the Nile at the summer solstice; Aquarius and Pisces the increase and decrease of the inundation; Taurus, the period of labour; Virgo, the gathering in of the harvest; and they will mark them at the precise seasons when these operations actually did take place. According to this hypothesis, the zodiac would have 15,000(2) years for a sun supposed at the first degree of each sign; more than 16,000 for the middle; and only 4000, in supposing that the emblem was given to the sign, opposite to which the sun was. (3) Dupuis has attached himself to 15,000 years, and on this date has founded the whole system of his celebrated work.

There were not wanting, however, persons who, admitting that the zodiac was invented in Egypt, have imagined allegories applicable to subsequent periods. Thus, according to Mr. Hamilton, Virgo would represent the land of Egypt when it is not

(1) See the Memoir on the Origin of the Constellations, in Dupuis' Origin of Worships, vol. iii. pp. 324, et seq.

(2) See the Memoir referred to in the note above, vol. iii. p. 267.

(3) Dupuis himself suggested this second hypothesis, *ibid.* p. 340.