

the river is straight for 15 or 20 leagues, they know themselves to be a great distance from the coast; but, on the contrary, if the river winds, and often changes its direction, they are certain of not being far from the sea. M. Fabry himself verified this remark in his travels over that unknown and almost uninhabited country. In large rivers there is a considerable eddy along the banks, which is so much the more considerable as the river is less remote from the sea, which may also serve as a guide to judge whether we are at a great or short distance from the mouth; and as the windings of rivers increase in proportion as they approach the sea, it is not surprising that some of them should give way to the water, and be one reason why great rivers generally divide into many arms before they gain the sea.

The motion of the waters in rivers is quite different from that supposed by authors who attempt to give mathematical theories on this subject; the surface of a river in motion is not level when taken from one bank to the other, but according to circumstances the current in the middle is considerably higher or lower than the water close to the banks; when a river swells by a sudden melting of snow, or when
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