

century. At Cairo, before it is judged sufficient for the purpose of irrigation, it must exceed, by three feet and a half, the height which was necessary in the ninth century. The ancient monuments of this celebrated land have all their bases more or less buried in the soil. The mud left by the river even covers, to a depth of several feet, the artificial mounds on which the ancient towns were built*.

The delta of the Rhone is not less remarkable for its increase. Astruc gives a detailed account of it in his Natural History of Languedoc; and proves, by a careful comparison of the descriptions of Mela, Strabo and Pliny, with the state of the places as they existed at the commencement of the eighteenth century, taking into account the statements of several writers of the middle age, that the arms of the Rhone have increased three leagues in length in the course of eighteen hundred years; that similar additions of land are made to the west of the Rhone; and that a num-

* See M. Girard's Observations on the valley of Egypt; and on the secular increase of the soil which covers it, in the great work upon Egypt, and Mod. Mem. t. ii. p. 343. On this subject we may further observe that Dolomieu, Shaw, and other respectable authors, have estimated these secular elevations much higher than M. Girard. It is to be lamented, that nowhere has it been tried to examine the depth of these deposits over the original soil, or the natural rock.