

M. de Prony having been employed by the government to examine what remedies could be applied to the devastations occasioned by the floods of the Po, ascertained that this river, since the time when dykes enclosed it, has elevated its bed so greatly, that the surface of its waters is now higher than the roofs of the houses of Ferrara; at the same time its alluvial deposits have advanced to the sea with so much rapidity, that on a comparison between the ancient charts and the present state, we find that the shore has gained more than six thousand fathoms since 1604, which is an average of one hundred and fifty or one hundred and eighty, and in some places, two hundred feet per annum. The Adige and Po are now more elevated than all the land which lies between them; and it is only by opening again new channels in the low lands which they formerly deposited, that we can avert the disasters with which they now threaten us.

The same causes have produced the same effects along the branches of the Rhine and the Meuse; and thus the richest districts of Holland have perpetually before them the frightful sight of their waters suspended above their soil at a height of twenty or thirty feet.

M. Wiebeking, director of the bridges and roads in the kingdom of Bavaria, has written a memoir on this progress of things, so important to be well understood by the people and the government, in which he shows that this property of elevating their beds belong more or less to all rivers.

The accumulations along the coasts of the North Sea are not less quickly formed than in Italy. We can easily trace them in Friesland and in Groningen, where the first dykes were constructed by the