

lateral pressure of the waters on their banks ; so that human industry is often forced to guard against floods and inundations by the erection of embankments and other artificial defences. A natural consequence of this strong pressure on the sides, as well as of the shifting character of the soil in level plains, is the frequent displacement of the lower course, as we see in the Po, the Ganges, the Nile, the Rhine, and other important streams. Bifurcations, and manifold embouchures

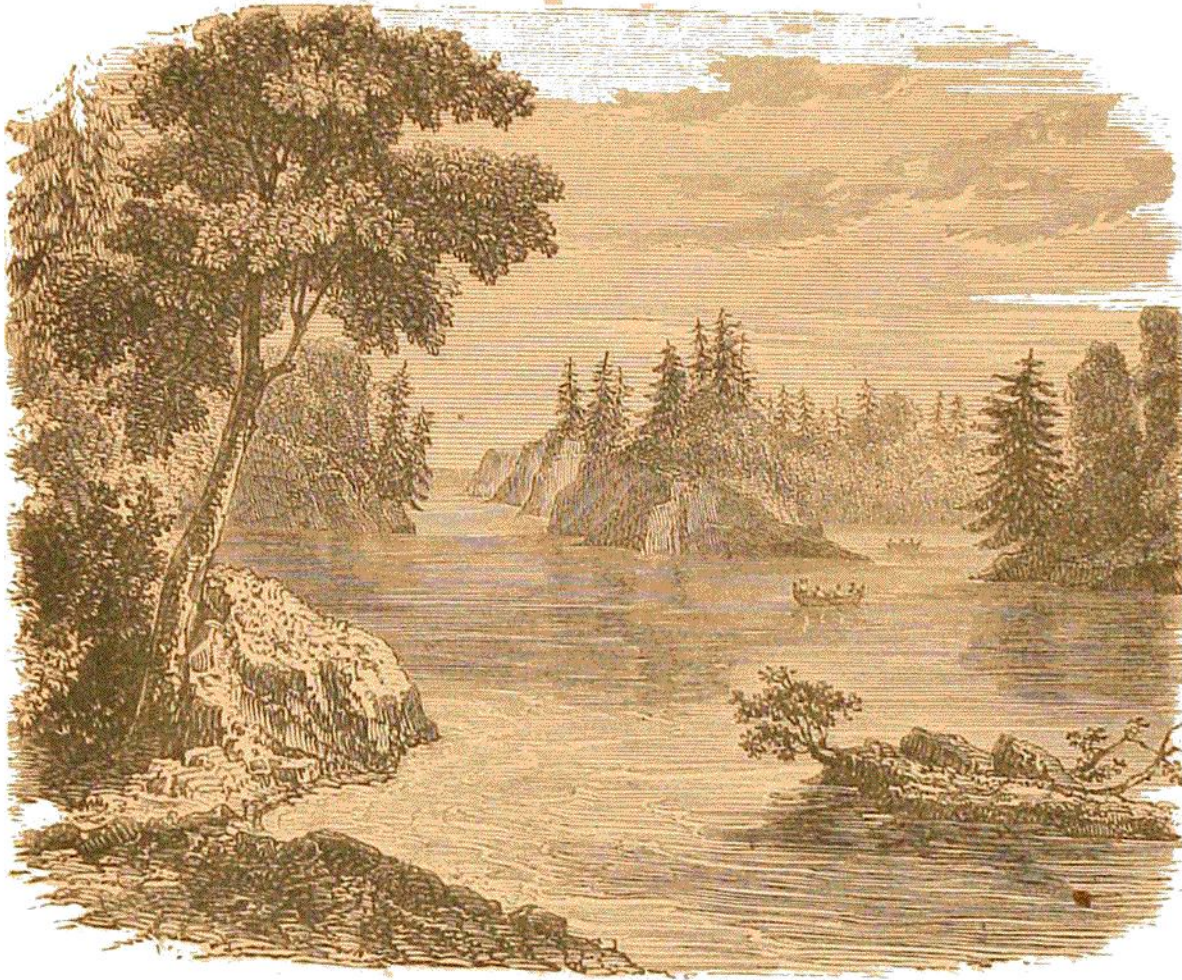


FIG. 187.—VIEW OF THE THOUSAND ISLES.

or mouths, also owe their origin to the tendency of the waters, choked up in their lower course, to seek expansion.

The injurious effects of this “choking-up”—this *engorgement*, as the French expressively call it—are particularly felt at the epoch of the yearly *floods*, to which many rivers are subject, and which proceed either from the melting of the snow and ice, or from continued storms of rain. In some districts these floods are only accidental, and occur after a heavy gale or incessant showers. The Arve, in Savoy, is the