

Father Costelli, who has written very sensibly on this subject, remarks, that the height of the banks made to confine the Po from overflowing diminishes as they advance towards the sea ; so that at Ferrara, which is 50 or 60 miles from the sea, they are near 20 feet high above the common surface of the Po, but that at 10 or 12 miles from it they are not above 12 feet, although the channel of the river is as narrow there as at Ferrara*.

On the whole, the theory of the motion of running waters is still subject to many difficulties, nor is it easy to lay down rules which might be applied to every particular case. Experience is here more useful than speculation. We must not only know the general effects of rivers, but we must also know in particular the river we have to do with, if we would reason justly, make useful observations, and draw stable conclusions. The remarks I have above given are mostly new ; it is to be wished that others may be collected, and then, possibly, in time, we may obtain a sufficient knowledge of the subject to lay down certain rules to confine and direct rivers, and prevent the ruin
of

* See Racolta d'autori che trattano del motto dell' acque, vol. 1, page 123.