

There are rivers which lose themselves in the sands, and others which seem to precipitate into the bowels of the earth: the Guadalquiver in Spain, the river Gottenburg in Sweden, and the Rhine itself, lose themselves in the earth. It is asserted, that in the west part of the island of St. Domingo there is a mountain of a considerable height, at the foot of which are many caverns, into which the rivers and rivulets fall with so much noise, as to be heard at the distance of seven or eight leagues.*

The number of rivers which lose themselves in the earth is very few, and there is no appearance that they descend very low; it is more probable that they lose themselves, like the Rhine, by dividing among the quantity of sand; this is very common to small rivers that run through dry and sandy soils, of which we have several examples in Africa, Persia, Arabia, &c.

The rivers of the north transport into the sea prodigious quantities of ice, which accumulating, form those enormous masses so destructive to mariners. These masses are the most abundant in the Strait of Waigat, which is entirely frozen over the greatest part of the year, and

* See Varenii Geograph. gen. page 49.