

which the rivers had prepared for them, and which they are continually augmenting.

If the size which Herodotus attributes to the Sea of Asoph, which he makes equal to the Euxine \*, had been less vaguely indicated, and if we knew precisely what he meant by the Gerrhus †, we should there find strong additional proofs of the changes produced by rivers, and the rapidity with which they are made ; for the alluvial depositions of rivers alone have, since the time of Herodotus, that is to say, in the course of two thousand and two or three hundred years, reduced the Sea of Asoph ‡ to its present comparatively small size, shut up the course of the Gerrhus, or that branch of the Dnieper which had formerly joined the Hypacyris, and discharged its waters along with that river into the gulf called Carcinites,

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\* Melpom. lxxxvi.

† Ibid. lvi.

‡ This supposed diminution of the Black Sea and Sea of Asoph, has also been attributed to the rupture of the Bosphorus, which had taken place at the pretended period of the deluge of Deucalion ; and yet, in order to establish the fact itself, recourse is had to successive diminutions of the extent attributed to these seas by Herodotus, Strabo, and others. But it is very obvious, that, if this diminution had arisen from the rupture of the Bosphorus, it would necessarily have been completed long before the time of Herodotus, and even at the period at which Deucalion is supposed to have lived.