

with a paste as compact as that of the marbles, the sandstones, or even the coarse limestone (calcaire grossier) in which we see the shells of our strata enveloped. Still less do we any where find the sea depositing those more solid and more siliceous strata which have preceded the formation of the shelly strata.

In short, all these causes united, would not change, in an appreciable degree, the level of the sea ; nor raise a single stratum above its surface ; and still less would they produce the smallest hillock upon the surface of the earth.

It has been asserted that the sea has undergone a general diminution of level ; and proofs of this are said to have been discovered in some parts of the shores of the Baltic.* But whatever may be the causes of these appearances, we are certain that they are not general in their operation ; and that, in the greater number of harbours, where any alteration

* It is a common opinion in Sweden, that the level of the sea is becoming lower, and that many places may even be forded or passed dry-shod, which were formerly impracticable. Eminent philosophers have adopted this popular opinion ; and M. von Buch goes so far as to suppose that the whole of Sweden is gradually rising. But it is singular, that no one has made, or at least published, a series of accurate observations, calculated to confirm a fact that had been announced so long ago, and which would leave no doubt upon the mind, if, as Linnæus asserts, this difference of level were so much as four or five feet yearly. Note I.