

even eight hundred years, are as little elevated above the sea as at the era of their foundation, being now close to the water's edge. The lowest part of Dantzic was no higher than the mean level of the sea in the year 1000; and after eight centuries its relative position remains exactly the same.*

Several of the examples of the gain of land and shallowing of the sea pointed out by Celsius, and afterwards by Linnæus, who embraced the same opinions, were ascribed by others to the deposition of sediment at points where rivers entered; and, undoubtedly, Celsius had not sufficiently distinguished between changes due to these causes and such as would arise if the waters of the ocean itself were diminishing. Many large rivers descending from a mountainous country, at the head of the Gulf of Bothnia, enter the sea charged with sand, mud, and pebbles; and it was said that in these places the low land had advanced rapidly, especially near Torneo. At Piteo also, half a mile had been gained in forty-five years; at Luleo †, no less than a mile in twenty-eight years; facts which might all be admitted consistently with the assumption that the level of the Baltic has remained unchanged, like that of the Adriatic, during a period when the plains of the Po and the Adige have greatly extended their area.

It was also alleged that certain insular rocks, once entirely covered with water, had at length protruded themselves above the waves, and grown, in the course of a century and a half, to be eight feet high. The following attempt was made to explain away this phenomenon:—In the Baltic, large erratic blocks, as well as sand and smaller stones which lie on shoals, are liable every year to be frozen into the ice, where the sea freezes to the depth of five or six feet. On the melting of the snow in spring, when the sea rises about half a fathom, numerous ice-islands float away, bearing up these rocky fragments so as to convey them to a distance; and if they are driven by the waves upon shoals, they may convert them into islands by depositing the blocks; if stranded upon low islands, they may considerably augment their height.

Browallius, also, and some other Swedish naturalists, affirmed that some islands were lower than formerly; and that, by reference to this kind of evidence, there was equally good reason for contending that the level of the Baltic was gradually rising. They also added another curious proof of the permanency of the water-level, at some points at least, for many centuries. On the Finland coast were some large pines, growing close to the water's edge; these were cut down, and, by counting the concentric rings of annual growth, as seen in a transverse section of the trunk, it was demonstrated that they had stood there for four hundred years. Now, according to the Celsiusian hypothesis, the sea had sunk about fifteen feet during that period, in which case the germination and early growth of these pines must

* For a full account of the Celsiusian controversy, we may refer our readers to Von Hoff, *Geschichte*, &c. vol. i. p. 439.

† Petio, Luleo, and Obo are spelt, in many English maps, Pitea, Lulea, Abo; the *a* is not sounded in the Swedish diphthong *ao* or *å*.