

miniature icebergs, slowly drifted downwards against wind and tide, by the surface current of fresh water (Fig. 15). This process is called "calving" by the natives, and so great is the commotion sometimes produced that, according to the information collected by Von Buch, the Lapp huts along the margin of the fjord are sometimes inundated by the waves propagated outwards from the falling masses. The floating fragments of ice look like little models of Arctic bergs, with forms often singularly fantastic. They may be seen shifting their position, and even capsizing, as their submerged parts melt away; some of them carry stones and earth on their surface, while many, aground

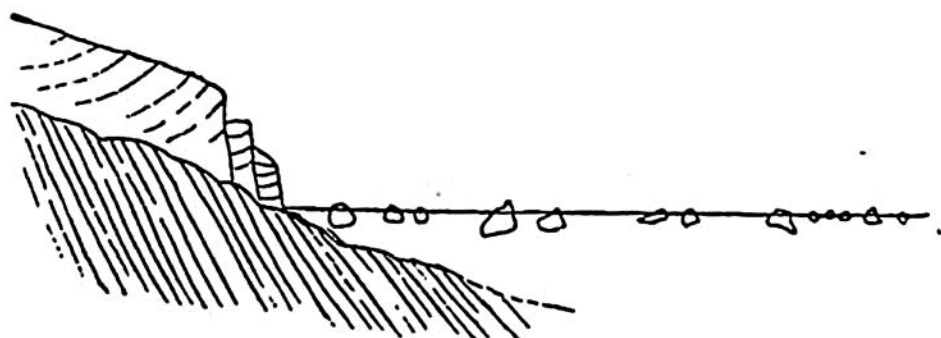


Fig. 15.—Section of Foot of Jökuls Fjord Glacier.

along the margin of the fjord, rise and fall with the tide or with the ripple of the waves. We passed two or three which were from 8 to 10 feet long, and rose from 3 to 4 feet out of the fjord. Our boat grated against several which seemed only a foot or two in size, yet the shock of the collision showed how much larger was the portion concealed under water.

To the east of the upper glacier the snow-field sends another icy stream down the face of the shelving precipices which descend into a higher valley. We could hear the roar of the avalanches even when the glacier itself was hidden behind the intervening mountain-spur. From the