

diminished force, as far eastward as the vicinity of Dantzic.* Accounts written during the last ten centuries attest the wearing down of promontories on the Danish coast, the deepening of gulfs, the severing of peninsulas from the mainland, and the waste of islands, while in several cases marsh land, defended for centuries by dikes, has at last been overflowed, and thousands of the inhabitants whelmed in the waves.

Thus the island Barsoe, on the coast of Sleswick, has lost, year after year, an acre at a time. (See map, plate 5.) The island Alsen suffers in like manner. The peninsula Zingst was converted into an island in 1625. There is a tradition that the Isle of Rugen was originally torn by a storm from the mainland of Pomerania; and it is known, in later times, to have lost ground, as in the year 1625, when a tract of land was carried away. Some of these islands consist of ancient alluvial accumulations, containing blocks of granite, which are also spread over the neighbouring mainland.

Cimbrian Deluge. — As we have already seen that during the flood before mentioned, 6000 men and 50,000 head of cattle perished on Northstrand on the western coast of Jutland, we are well prepared to find that this peninsula, the Cimbrica Chersonesus of the ancients, has from a remote period been the theatre of like catastrophes. Accordingly, Strabo records a story, although he treats it as an incredible fiction, that during a high tide, the ocean rose upon this coast so rapidly, that men on horseback were scarcely able to escape.† Florus, alluding to the same tradition, says, “Cimbri, Theutoni, atque Tigurini, ab extremis Gallix profugi, cum terras eorum inundasset Oceanus, novas sedes toto orbe querebant.”‡ This event, commonly called the “Cimbrian Deluge,” is supposed to have happened about three centuries before the Christian era; but it is not improbable that the principal catastrophe was preceded and followed by many devastations like those experienced in modern times on the islands and shores of Jutland, and such calamities may well be conceived to have forced on the migration of some maritime tribes.

Inroads of the sea on the eastern shores of North America.—After so many authentic details respecting the destruction of the coast in parts of Europe best known, it will be unnecessary to multiply examples of analogous changes in more distant regions of the world. It must not, however, be imagined that our own seas form any exception to the general rule. Thus, for example, if we pass over to the eastern coast of North America, where the tides rise to a great elevation, we find many facts attesting the incessant demolition of land. At Cape May, for example, on the north side of Delaware Bay, in the United States, the encroachment of the sea was shown by observations made consecutively for sixteen years, from 1804 to 1820, to average about nine feet a year §; and at Sullivan’s Island, which lies on the north side of the entrance of the harbour of

* See examples in Von Hoff, vol. i. p. 73., who cites Pisansky.

† Book vii. Cimbri.

‡ Lib. iii. cap. 3.

§ New Monthly Mag. vol. vi. p. 69.