

One well acquainted with Yorkshire finds it easy to picture to his mind the main features of its physical geography by reference to the lines of the rivers, for most of these, in their earlier courses, sweep through deep valleys, between ranges of elevated or mountainous land, and gather into fewer channels in one great central vale, which was in primæval times a channel of the sea.

We may with equal facility arrange our ideas of the physical geography of Yorkshire by reference to the ranges of its hills, which group themselves naturally into four assemblages, occupying the north-western and south-western, the north-eastern and south-eastern parts of the County. The two groups of western hills are separated from the two groups of eastern hills by the great central Vale of York, from which ramifications sweep round and run between the hilly districts of the east, constituting the low tracts of Cleveland, Vale of Pickering, and Holderness; and a less marked depression which proceeds westward to the pasture lands of Craven, and separates the north-western from the south-western hills. Thus we have the following natural districts marked out by their relative elevation and geographical position:—

NORTH-WESTERN HILLS.  Ribblesdale*.  SOUTH-WESTERN HILLS.	Vale of York.	Cleveland.  NORTH-EASTERN HILLS.  Vale of Pickering.  SOUTH-EASTERN HILLS.  Holderness.
---	---------------	---

The tracts thus distinguished have geological characters as strongly marked as their inequalities of elevation: great differences of climate, scenery, and natural productions correspond to these varied physical conditions; and there are important facts in the history of Man in this part of the island which acquire a

\* The comparatively low region between the hilly grounds above Settle, Skipton, Colne and Clitheroe,—of which Gisburn may be regarded as the centre,—is here meant.