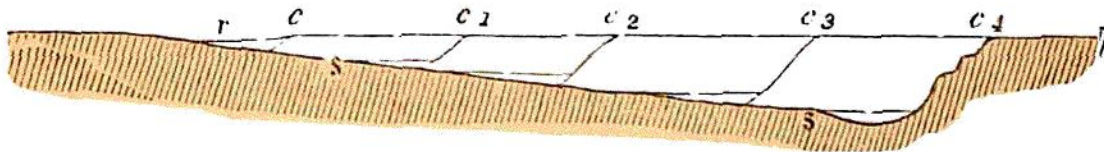


When we think of the meaning of this, it at once explains the whole history of these constantly recurring forms, in all winding rivers that flow between rocky banks higher than broad alluvial plains and deltas. Take the history of the curve, fig. 107, as an example. On a high tableland the river, *r*, at an early period of its history, flowed where it is marked in fig. 110, the beginning of the curve, *c*, fig. 107, having already been established, but without any high cliffs. Then the stream, being driven with force against the concave curve, *c*, by degrees cut it back, we shall suppose, to *c*¹, at the same time deepening its channel. A

FIG. 110.



cliff was thus commenced at *c*¹, and, as the river was changing its bed by constant encroachment in the same direction, a gentle slope, *s*, began to be established, facing the cliff *c*¹, and so, on and on, through long ages, to *c*², *c*³, and *c*⁴, where the present cliff stands, itself as temporary as its smaller predecessors. This is the reason why in river curves, the concave side of the curve is so often opposed by a high rocky bank, while the convex side so generally presents a long gentle slope, *s s*, often more or less covered with alluvial detritus. In countries free of glacial débris, these effects are often best seen in their perfect simplicity; and in this way the Moselle, and the Seine near Rouen are, so to speak, model rivers. In many a British river it is clearly seen—on the Wye in South Wales, in many a river and