

and entirely natural loamy silt, somewhat of the same character, follows the course of the Ouse, and, to a great extent, covering the fertile vale of York, passes out to sea in the plains that border the Tees.

On the west coast the wide plains of the Fylde in Lancashire, north and south of the estuary of the Ribble, in some respects resemble those of the Wash.

Such is a very imperfect sketch of the general nature of the soils of Great Britain, and of their relation to the underlying rocks. We have seen that throughout large areas, the character of the soil is directly and powerfully influenced by that of the rock-masses lying below. *It must be borne in mind, however, that the abrading agencies of the Glacial period have done a great deal towards commingling the detritus of the different geological formations, producing widespread drift soils of varied composition.* This detritus is far from being uniformly spread over the island. In some districts it is absent, while in others it forms a thick mantle, obscuring all the hard rocks, and giving rise to a soil sometimes nearly identical with that produced by the waste of the underlying formation, and sometimes of mixed clay and stones, as in Holderness. Thus the Boulder-clay, though often poor, sometimes forms soils of the most fertile description, as for instance in certain upper members of the formation in parts of the Lothians, and in the chalky Boulder-clay of Norfolk and Suffolk.