

Row. In each instance, a powerful tidal current tends to keep the narrow channel open by sweeping fresh accumulations of sediment out to sea.

The eastern sea-board of the Highlands presents a striking contrast to that on the west side of the island. Instead of winding far into lochs and kyles, or beating round peninsulas and islands, the sea there rolls along a coast-line that runs mile after mile in a persistent course, interrupted merely by trifling indentations. It is only in the angle between the shores of Caithness and those of Elgin that inlets occur in any way comparable to those of the west. Beginning at Loch Fleet, on the margin of Sutherlandshire, we pass in southward succession the Firths of Dornoch, Cromarty, Beauly, Inverness, and Moray. These resemble in outline some of the narrow fjords of the west, Cromarty Firth approaching nearest to the western type; but they show many essential points of difference. Their shores, as a rule, are low and formed not of ice-worn rocks shelving down steeply below the water, but of raised beaches and slopes of boulder-clay. They have thus a smoothness and tameness of character which are wanting in the western sea-lochs. Moreover, they are, as a whole, shallow, the tide leaving wide flats at low water, and sometimes even forsaking the firth altogether. At Loch Fleet, for instance, advantage has been taken of this feature, and a strong mound having been built across the firth to keep back the salt water, the higher part of the loch has been turned into dry land. Nearly the whole of these firths are conspicuous for the sand-bars at their mouths, which have been thrown up by the tides above high-water mark, and run out from either bank, striving as it were to form a completed barrier against the sea outside. The mouth of the Inverness Firth is a notable example. From the east side, a long low sand-