

line· so that the three hills taken together form a chain of eminences, which run diagonally, for some four or five miles, into the middle of the coal-basin ; and which, rising high from the surrounding level, resemble steep-sided islets in an Alpine lake. It is a somewhat curious circumstance, that while the enclosing shores of the basin are formed of the Lower New Red Sandstone, and the basin itself of the Upper and Lower Coal Measures, these three islets are all Silurian; the first,—that of Sedgley,—which I had just quitted, presenting in succession the Upper Ludlow Rock and Aymestry Limestone, with some of the inferior deposits on which these rest ; and the second and third the Wenlock Shale and Wenlock Limestone. The “Wren’s Nest,” as I approached it this day along green lanes and over quiet fields, fringed with trees, presented the appearance of some bold sea-promontory, crowned atop with stunted wood, and flanked by a tall, pale-gray precipice, continuous as a rampart for a full half-mile. But, to borrow from one of Byron’s descriptions,

“There is no sea to lave its base,
But a most living landscape, and the wave
Of woods and corn-fields, and the abodes of men
Scattered at intervals, and wreathing smoke
Rising from rustic roofs.”

Such is the profile of the hill on both sides. Seen in front, it presents the appearance of a truncated dome ; while atop we find it occupied by an elliptical, crater-like hollow, that has been grooved deep, by the hand of Nature, along the flat summit, so as to form a huge nest, into which the gigantic roc of eastern story might drop a hundred such eggs as the one familiar to the students of the great voyager Sinbad. And hence the name of the eminence. John Bull, making merry, in one of his humorous moods, with its imposing greatness,