

gang of coiners were suspected at the time of harboring among its concealments; and the conflagration is said to have been the work of an incendiary connected with the gang. An unfinished stanza, spelt amiss, and carved rudely on one of the soft sandstone lintels, used to be pointed out as the work of the felon; but, though distinctly legible till within the last few years, it can now be pointed out no longer: —

“Water went round it, to garde it from the Fooe :
The fire shall burn it ———”

Can the reader complete the couplet? If not, he may be perhaps apt to suspect the man who first filled up the gap with sense and rhyme as the original author, and, of course, the incendiary. But though every boy and girl in Dudley has learned to add the missing portion, no one seems to know who the individual was who supplied it first.

“Water went round it, to garde it from the Fooe :
The fire shall burn it, *and lay its towers low.*”

Some of the dells and caverns of the castle-hill I found exceedingly picturesque. Its limestone is extensively employed in the smelting furnaces as a flux. Every ton of clay ironstone must be mixed up with half a ton of lime, to facilitate the separation of the metal from the argillaceous dross; and so, from the earliest beginnings of the iron-trade, the work of excavation has been going on in the Hill of Dudley. The first smelter who dug up a barrowful of ironstone to make a sword must have come to the hill for half a barrowful of lime, to mix up with the brown mass, ere he committed it to the fire. And so some of the caverns are very vast, and, for caverns of man's making, very old; and some of the open dells, deserted by the quarrier for centuries, bear amid their precipices trees of large