

the basin of the Dudley coal-field, and the parallel line of trap hills that stretches away amid the New Red Sandstone. I have described the lines as parallel, but, like the outstretched sides of a parallel-ruler, not opposite. There joins on, however, to the Silurian line, — like a prolongation of one of the right lines of the mathematician indicated by dots, — an extension of the chain, not Silurian, which consists of eminences of a flatter and humbler character than either the Wren's Nest or the Castle Hill, and which runs opposite to the trap chain for several miles. One of these supplementary eminences — the one adjoining the Castle Hill — is composed of the trap to which the entire line owes its elevation; and a tall, cairn-like group of apparent boulders, that seem as if they had been piled up by giants, but are mere components of a partially disintegrated projection from the rock below, occupies its summit. In the flat hill directly beyond it, though the trap does not appear, it has tilted up the Lower Coal Measures, amid the surrounding New Red Sandstone, saddlewise on its back; the strata shelve downwards on both sides from the anticlinal line atop, like the opposite sides of a roof from the ridge; and the entire hill, to use a still humbler illustration, resembles a huge blister in new plaster, formed by the expansion of some fragment of unslaked lime in the ground-coating beneath. Now, it is with this hill of the Lower Coal Measures — this huge blister of millstone grit — that we have chiefly to do.

Let the reader imagine it of soft swelling outline, and ample base, with the singularly picturesque trap range full in front, some four miles away, and a fair rural valley lying between. Let him further imagine the side of the hill furrowed by a transverse valley, opening at right angles into the great front valley, and separating atop into two forks, or branches, that run up, shallowing as they go, to near the hill-top. Let him, in