

the vicinity of coalfields. There iron furnaces glare and blow day and night, there are carried on vast manufactures in all kinds of metal, and there our textile fabrics are chiefly made. In these busy scenes a large part of the population of our island finds employment, and thence we send to the farthest parts of the earth those endless commodities which, while they have supplied the wants of other countries, have given rise in large measure to the wealth and commerce of our own.¹

There are some other geological formations which afford materials for manufactures other than coal and ores of metals. Thus, in the south-west of England, in the granitic districts of Devon and Cornwall, a great proportion of the finer kinds of clays occur, which are used in making stoneware and porcelain. In Devon and Cornwall the decomposition of granite affords the substance known by the name of Kaolin, from which all the finer porcelain clays are made. It is formed by the disintegration of the felspar of granite. This felspar consists of silicates of alumina, and soda or potash. The soda and potash are comparatively easily dissolved, chiefly through the influence of carbonic acid in the rain-water that falls upon the surface; and the result is that the granite decomposes to a considerable depth. In some cases I have seen granite, undisturbed by the hand of man, which for a depth of twenty feet or more might be easily dug out with a shovel. Owing to this decomposition, a portion of the felspar passes into kaolin, which is washed down by rain into the lower levels, where, more or less mixed with quartz

¹ At least it was so till lately, and there is no reason to suppose that the mining and manufacturing industry of Britain has declined except for a time.