

imperfect coal; for in its chemical properties it holds an intermediate place between peat and coal. It is generally deposited among the newer strata, and is found in the most recent as well as in the oldest tertiary formations; it is not unfrequent in some of the ancient secondary deposits, and may occur in the earliest sedimentary rocks which contain organic remains.

The newer deposits of brown or wood-coal, are commonly situated in depressions or basins, as if they had been produced by the submergence of woods and forests, beneath a swamp or morass. Specimens often exhibit the carbonized ligneous structure passing into a pure black coal, differing in no respect from true coal, except that it is less dense. One of the most instructive deposits of brown coal in England, is that of Bovey Heathfield, near Chudleigh in Devonshire, which is of considerable thickness and extent, and presents all the characters of a true coal-field; namely, beds of carbonized vegetables, alternating with clay and marl.

The Bovey coal is in the state of bituminized wood, the vascular tissue (which is coniferous in the specimens that have come under my notice) being very apparent. It is easily chipped or split, and it leaves a considerable quantity of white ashes after combustion. The layers of coal vary in thickness from one foot, to three feet; and there are eighteen or twenty in a depth of about 120 feet; this coal-field extends seven or eight miles. No