

CHAPTER II.

*Coal district north of Trent, or Grand Penine Chain.**Introductory view of the general features of this district.*

Having in the preceding chapter sketched the general structure and arrangement common to all our coal-fields, we may now proceed to consider the disposition of the several component series of rocks in the various particular districts; following the division before suggested, which will lead us to begin with the great northern coal district, including all the coal-fields north of the rivers Trent and Mersey, as far as the Scotch border.

This district is traversed longitudinally by a grand central chain of mountains, extending north and south from the borders of Scotland to the centre of Derbyshire; the different portions of this chain are at present known under various local names, but the Roman Colonists of Britain, whose attention so prominent a feature in the physical geography of the island could not escape, denominated them the PENINE ALPS, as appears from the following passage in Richard of Cirencester's description of the Roman state of Britain; he is treating of the Roman province MAXIMA, which includes all the northern counties of present England. "Totam in æquales fere partes provinciam dividunt montes Alpes Penini dicti. Hi ad fluviam Trivonam (*The TRENT*) surgentes, continuâ serie per 150 milliaria septentrionem versus decurrunt." This appellation was probably derived from the British term PEN, head or summit, which enters so commonly into the composition of the names of the hills amidst which that language is still spoken, and which may be traced in some names even in this chain, e. g. Penygent, Pendle hill, &c. though usually superseded by more recent Saxon terms, as Fell, &c. This appellation was also familiar to the Romans, as the crest of the Alps near Mount St. Bernard was anciently designated Alpes Peninæ; however this may be, it will be useful to distinguish this ridge of mountains by some collective appellation; and as they have clearly a title to this, as their earliest known, if not their original designation, we shall therefore henceforth call them the PENINE CHAIN. The particular names of the principal summits of this chain will be enumerated in the list of heights; its general extent and range has been already indicated. It