

distance round, three sides of the great central tract of carboniferous or mountain limestone, in a figure resembling an horse-shoe. Tracing it from south-east to north, and thence round to south-west, it may be said to begin near the junction of the Derwent and Ecclesburn, about four miles north of Derby; it there occupies both banks of the Derwent; then keeps the west side of that river as far as Cromford; where having crossed, it ranges along the eastern bank for many miles, as far as its source in the high peak; all the way occupying a narrow band of country, between the superstrata of the coal-formation of Derbyshire and Yorkshire and the substrata of shale. From the northern angle of Derbyshire it bends again to the south by west; passes near Buxton, and thence pursues its course through Staffordshire in a line somewhat broken and irregular, which may be most clearly described as forming a narrow band round the several coal-fields in that district noticed in the preceding article. The hills formed by this rock usually present a bold escarpment, and are often crowned by rude piles of crags, exhibiting some of the wildest rock scenery of the district. The interval between this circling range of mountains and the central calcareous group is usually a lower district occupied by the shale; in which however, several insulated mountains appear, each bearing a cap of millstone-grit, while the shale may be traced all round their base. Mr. Farey has given a list of 20 instances of this circumstance, while, as he strongly observes, proved in the most convincing manner, that the surrounding vallies owe their origin to denudation. The principal of these insulated mountains is Kinder-Scout, the loftiest eminence in Derbyshire.

The beds of limestone subordinate in the shale, constitute the feature perhaps most worthy of attention in this tract. Some of these beds afford a beautiful black marble. The most considerable tracts of this limestone are situated near the extremity of the carboniferous limestone tract, on the south-west, where the shale limestone abuts against both sides of a vast promontory formed by the hills of the latter variety, extending on one side to Mixon-hay in Stafford, and including the copper mines of Ecton hill, and on the other side to Atlow in Derby. As these tracts are placed over the same line of bearing, Mr. Farey thinks they may have once been united, the strata having been continuous over the intervening limestone; which may, as he thinks, have been elevated into its present position, and been subsequently stripped of the superstrata in question by denudation. There is another considerable tract of this limestone near Bakewell.