

Stourbridge, is about seven or eight miles in length and four in breadth. It is advantageously distinguished from the former by the occurrence throughout, of a coal-bed of the enormous thickness of 30 feet. This is considered as lying above the Cannock Chase beds, and cropping out round Bilston and Darlaston.

No satisfactory account has yet been published of the northern portions of this district; but the southern has been fully illustrated by a very able memoir of Mr. Keirs, published in Shaw's History of Staffordshire, and by a paper of Dr. Thomson's in the Annals of Philosophy.

To the spectator viewing this district, it appears to be traversed from north-west to south-east by a line of hills, not absolutely continuous indeed, but yet having an uniform general direction in the interval, near the centre of which stands the town of Dudley. On examination, however, the hills on the north, and those on the south of that town, will be found to differ entirely in their constitution, although they agree in their line of bearing. The northern chain (composed of three insulated oblong hills) is entirely constituted of limestone, disposed in highly inclined strata, rising on all sides from the base to the ridge of the hills, and forming on the summit an acute arch; or as the Wernerians would say, exhibiting a saddle-shaped stratification. Against the sides of these hills all the coal-measures (as reposing on the limestone) crop out at a considerable angle; but become more flat in proportion as they recede from these hills; which constitute, if the expression may be allowed, the centre of elevation. The other chain of hills on the south of Dudley, is entirely composed of one mass of basalt and amygdaloid; the relations of which to the coal-measures have not been clearly ascertained, further than that they preserve their usual level in approaching the chain; and evidently do not crop out round it, as round that of limestone. Two alternations remain with regard to this chain, it may be either the protruding edge of a vast basaltic dyke traversing the coal-field, or an over-lying mass; which latter is the opinion generally entertained on the spot. The particular description of this chain is of course reserved for the appended article on the trap rock of the coal districts.

On the west, near Wolverhampton, and south, near Stourbridge, the coal-measures appear to dip beneath the beds of the newer red sandstone formation; since therefore, we find the measures of this and the Warwickshire coal-field dipping in opposite directions beneath these superstrata, it seems probable that they may extend continuously below this.

On the eastern limit of the coal-field near Walsall, the same