

Westbury the carboniferous limestone mantles round this older sandstone, extending by Blaze castle (where another of those abrupt dells, which form so beautiful a characteristic of this formation, occurs) to King's Weston park. Thus the disposition of the ground immediately on the north of the Avon resembles that of the Mendips; exhibiting a central nucleus of old red sandstone, skirted on either side by the strata of carboniferous limestone, dipping from it to the north-west and to the south-east. Near Blaze castle the strata are almost vertical: on the north of Westbury these calcareous ridges subside, and are concealed by the new sandstone and lias: the carboniferous limestone emerges again, however, after an interval of about three miles, near Almondsbury, and continues to form without further interruption the remainder of the western, and by the inflection of its course the whole of the northern and the north part of the eastern boundary of our coal-field; ranging by Thornbury to Tortworth its most northern point, and thence trending southwards to Wickwar and Chipping Sodbury. On the north-western edge of this calcareous chain, the old red sandstone may be traced underlying its strata; beneath which the yet more ancient beds of transition limestone may be seen in the same vicinity. Near Tortworth two parallel dykes of trap (an amygdaloid with calcareous nests) traverse these latter rocks, and produce some remarkable changes in them. On the east the horizontal strata of lias, &c. which (indeed throughout this tract occasion much embarrassment to the observer, by partially concealing its structure,) approach to close contact with the calcareous ridge, and finally entirely overlie it at Sodbury, overflowing, as it were, into the area of the coal-field; and no extended ridge of carboniferous limestone can be traced through the remainder of the eastern boundary of that area, till we arrive at its south extremity, and the Mendip hills. Occasional and short protrusions of this rock, however, appear in several points along this line; at Wapley, at the romantic defile of Wick rocks, and at Tracey park, and thus continue to indicate its extension beneath the superstrata which conceal it on the surface.

The usual minerals of the limestone tract bounding this coal-basin, are galena, blende, calamine, sulphate of barytes, &c., and its organic remains agree with those of the other carboniferous limestone tracts; but among the former, sulphate of strontian may be mentioned, which, though found in Gloucestershire, is elsewhere of rare occurrence in this rock; and among the latter, the palates of fishes found in St. Vincent's rocks, of which no other example has yet been noticed.