

of limestone into the kilns, and keep up the supply of coal. The deep pits in which the rock was calcined sent up an intolerable heat, and gave out a thick, white, stifling smoke, that curled and drifted about with every veering of the wind. Creeping cautiously to within a short way of the edge of these fiery abysses, we could mark the red-hot rock cracking, and the coal flaming up from below it. The Irishmen, however, would march round the brink without a trace of fear or hesitation, and then, after the firing of the kilns, would squat themselves in the lee of a wall, an uncouth, sooty-faced company, each with a pipe, or else an oath, in his mouth. We never cultivated very closely the acquaintance of the kiln-men, an uneasy apprehension constantly arising that, on the slightest provocation, one of us might be tumbled into the pit, and never more be seen or heard of.

Very different in the nature of their work, and equally different in their disposition, were the men who tended the waggons which the engine drew up from the quarry. They had once worked below ground, but had now an easier post, their sole duty being to wheel off the full waggons as these came up, and to put empty ones on the rails to be let down the slope into the mouth of the excavation. One of them had lost a leg in his subterranean service, and was therefore somewhat slow in his movements. He had built himself a rude hut, with a fireplace and a wooden bench: and there I have often sat with him, and listened to his elucidation of the fossils, and his ideas of cosmogony in general. He was never at a loss for an explanation of any of the numerous fossils which he picked out of the limestone blocks that came up from the quarry. Some of his fellow-workmen maintained that rock and fossil were all created together, but my friend was a long way ahead of