

the calcareous rocks through which it has passed; the carbonic acid is dissipated by the atmosphere, and the marble, slowly precipitated, assumes a crystalline form, and produces coherent stones. The acid originates in the action of volcanic fires on the calcareous rocks of which the Apennines are composed, and carbonic acid being thus evolved, rises to the source of the springs derived from the action of the atmosphere, gives them their impregnation, and enables them to dissolve calcareous matter."

44. MARBLE OF TABREEZ.—In Persia, a beautiful transparent limestone, called Tabreez marble, is formed by deposition from a celebrated spring near Maragha, where the whole process of its formation may be seen. In one part the water is clear, in another dark, muddy, and stagnant; in a third it is very thick, and almost black; while in the last stage it is of a snowy whiteness. The petrifying pools look like frozen water: a stone thrown on them breaks the crust, and the water exudes through the opening; and in some states the process has proceeded so far as to admit of walking on the surface of the lake. A section of the stony mass resembles an accumulation of sheets of paper, being finely laminated; and such is the tendency of this water to solidify, that the very bubbles on its surface become hard, as if they had been suddenly arrested, and metamorphosed into stone.*

* Morier's Travels.