

granite, being set at liberty. The disintegration of granite, is a striking feature throughout extensive districts in Auvergne, especially in the neighbourhood of Clermont. In the ancient shingle of the cliffs at Kemp Town, near Brighton, blocks of granite occur which may be crumbled to pieces between the fingers. I have already shown you masses of pebbles held together by calcareous spar, from the same locality; we have, therefore, examples in that ancient bed, both of the conservative and disintegrating effects of carbonic acid—cementing the loose beach into solid blocks by calcareous depositions; and, when in a gaseous state, or combined with water, dissolving the granite by its action on the felspar.

49. CARBONIC ACID GAS IN CAVES AND WELLS.—The escape of carbonic acid through fissures, into mines, wells, and caverns, is of frequent occurrence; and as the specific gravity of this gas is greater than that of atmospheric air, it occupies the bottom of these cavities, and its presence is seldom suspected till shown by its deleterious effects; it is called choke-damp by miners. Fatal accidents often happen to well-diggers and excavators from this cause.

The Grotto del Cane, near Puzzuoli, four leagues from Naples, has for centuries been celebrated on account of the carbonic acid gas, containing in combination much aqueous vapour, which is constantly rising from fissures in the rock, and is con-