

distillation, or dropping. To explain these, a brief description of the mode of their production will be necessary. Whenever water filters through a limestone rock, it dissolves a portion of it; and on reaching any opening, such as a cavern, either at its sides or roof, it forms a *drop*, the moisture of which is soon evaporated by the air, leaving a small circular *plate* of calcareous matter; another drop succeeds in the same place, and adds, from the same cause, a fresh coat of incrustation. In time, these successive additions produce a long, irregular, conical projection from the roof, which is continually being increased by the fresh accession of water loaded with calcareous or chalky matter, which it deposits on the outside of the *stalactite* already formed, and trickling down, adds to its length by subsiding to the point, and being dried up as before; precisely in the same manner as during frosty weather, icicles, which are *stalactites of ice*, or frozen water, are formed on the edges of the eaves of a roof. When the supply of water holding lime in solution is too rapid to allow of its evaporation at the bottom of the *stalactite*, it drops to the floor of the cave, and drying up gradually, forms, in like manner, a *stalactite* rising upwards from the ground, instead of hanging from the roof; these are called, for the sake of distinction, *stalagmites*.

It frequently happens, where these processes are uninterrupted, that a *stalactite* hanging from the roof, and a *stalagmite* formed immediately under it from the superabundant water, increase till they unite, and thus constitute a natural pillar, apparently supporting the roof of the grotto; it is to the grotesque forms assumed by stalactites, and these natural columns, that caverns owe the interesting appearances, described in such glowing colours by those who witness them for the first time.—*Saturday Magazine*, No. 42.

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D. Page 62.—WEYER'S CAVE.—This cave is situated in a ridge of limestone hills, running parallel to the Blue mountains. A narrow and rugged fissure leads to a large cavern, where the most grotesque figures, formed by the percolation of water through beds of limestone, present