

tradition relates, for example, of the cavern of the god Thor. In Hindustan, at Ellora, at Elephanta, at Salsette, caverns are still consecrated to religious mysteries. In France, those which extend for uncounted miles beneath the mass of the mountains of the Cevennes, furnished, in the days of the Protestant persecution (1670-1700), a secure asylum to the proscribed religionists. Under Louis XIV., a fierce and an unwise fanaticism condemned to exile or death the Protestants who refused to abnegate their creed. During the peasants' war originated by this iniquitous persecution, the numerous caverns which exist beneath different mountains of the Cevennes chain served the insurgents as places of concealment for their wounded, their munitions, their arms, and their stores of provision. In these unknown centres were performed the ceremonies of the proscribed worship; earth concealed in her bosom the simple rites which a pitiless fanaticism forbade, under the penalty of death, from being produced in the light of day.

[The Covenanters, when persecuted by Claverhouse and his coadjutors, in like manner sought the protection afforded by the dens and caverns of Galloway, Nithsdale, and Ayrshire; caverns whose mouths were concealed by thick brushwood or drooping rowan-trees, and whose roofs and sides dripped with unwholesome moisture.]

What is the origin, the mode of geological formation, of Caverns and Grottoes?

These great subterranean excavations are the result of the fractures or fissures of the globe, occasioned by its cooling. The great voids which remained yawning open through the fissures of the globe have been, for the most part, filled by eruptions of granitic matter, basalt, or the like; and in this way *beds* and *veins* have been produced. But every cavity was not so filled, and consequently are still empty as caverns. Their dimensions, frequently very moderate at the outset, have been, in course of time, considerably aggrandized by the current of waters and subterranean rivers which have eaten into their sides. The capacity of many caverns has also been increased by the waters of the deluge at the quaternary epoch. To this their rounded