

partially dissipated by the light of the flickering torches. After moving forward with bent head for some thirty yards, we come upon a spacious opening, which admits us to the margin of a lake called the First Water, whose surface the impending rock at some points approaches within twenty inches. We cross the lake in a small skiff, and on the other side enter a vast chamber, 220 feet long, 200 feet broad, and 120 feet high. Then, by the margin of the Second Water, we observe the piled up mass of rock, named, in allusion to the incessant dripping of water from the roof, Roger Rain's House; beyond which opens another recess, the Chancel, where the walls are resplendent with stalactical incrustations. Here we are welcomed by a concert of wild and eery noises, proceeding from the upper regions of the cavern, where a group of women and children are stationed for the purpose.

Passing the Devil's Cellar and the Half-Way House, the path leads beneath three natural arches to another great cavernous hollow, so like a gigantic bell that it has received the appellation of "Great Tom of Lincoln." From this point the vault diminishes in height, the passage contracts, and becomes at length no more than the narrow channel of a rippling streamlet. The total length of this grand excavation is 2250 feet; its depth from the surface of the mountain about 620 feet. An impressive effect is here produced by the explosion of a small quantity of gunpowder compressed into a crevice of the rock; the report reverberates along the roof and sides like a continuous peal of thunder among the Alpine valleys.]

A stalactite grotto of enduring celebrity is that of the island of *Antiparos* (the ancient *Oliarus*), in the Greek Archipelago.* The traveller descends into it by a shaft or well, and finds himself in a beautiful cavern, about 260 feet wide and 235 feet high, extending nearly 1000 feet under the surface of the ground. In the centre of the Great Hall rises a magnificently large stalagmite, termed the Altar, 20 feet in diameter and 24 feet in height, at which high mass was celebrated in 1673 by the Marquis de Nointel. Four hundred lamps on this occasion were kept burning day and night for the three days of the Christmas festival; a hundred wax tapers dispersed the gloom; and the voices of five hundred worshippers blended in solemn music.

The *Grotto of Han*, near Dinant, is the greatest natural curiosity in Belgium. Fourfold the size of that of *Antiparos*; traversed, like that of *Adelsberg*, by a subterranean river—capable of being explored from one end to the other without necessitating the explorer to retrace his steps—situated in a delectable valley, which is refreshed and irri-

* [See Leake, "Northern Greece," vol. iii., p. 87, *et seq.*; Fiedler, "Reise durch Griechenland," vol. ii., pp. 191, *et seq.*]