

and during our Saturday half-holidays, some of them had accompanied me in my excursions to it. But it had failed, somehow, to catch their fancy. It was too solitary, and too far from home, and as a scene of amusement, not at all equal to the town-links, where they could play at "shinty," and "French and English," almost within *hail* of their parents' homesteads. The very tract along its flat, mossy summit, over which, according to tradition, Wallace had once driven before him in headlong rout a strong body of English, and which was actually mottled with sepulchral tumuli, still visible amid the heath, failed in any marked degree to engage them; and though they liked well enough to hear about the caves, they seemed to have no very great desire to see them. There was, however, one little fellow, who sat at the Latin form,—the member of a class lower and brighter than the heavy one, though it was not particularly bright neither,—who differed in this respect from all the others. Though he was my junior by about a twelvemonth, and shorter by about half a head, he was a diligent boy in even the Grammar School, in which boys were so rarely diligent, and, for his years, a thoroughly sensible one, without a grain of the dreamer in his composition. I succeeded, however, notwithstanding his sobriety, in infecting him thoroughly with my peculiar tastes, and learned to love him very much, partly because he doubled my amusements by sharing in them, and partly, I dare say,—on the principle on which Mahomet preferred his old wife to his young one,—because "he believed in me." Devoted to him as Caliban in the *Tempest* to his friend Trinculo,—

"I showed him the best springs, I plucked him berries,
And I with my long nails did dig him pig-nuts."

His curiosity on this occasion was largely excited by my description of the Doocot Cave; and, setting out one morning to explore its wonders, armed with John Feddes's hammer, in the benefits of which my friend was permitted liberally to share, we failed, for that day at least, in finding our way back.

It was on a pleasant spring morning that, with my little