

removing their finer particles, and thus greatly aiding in their superficial disruption.

The solvent action of subterranean water is best seen in districts of calcareous rocks. The outcrop of a limestone, for example, can often be traced across a moor by a line of curious depressions of the surface. These 'swallow-holes,' or 'sinks,' as they are called, have been dissolved out of the limestone by percolating water, and the peat or soil gradually sinks into them. Not unfrequently they communicate with subterranean passages and tunnels, which have, in like manner, been eaten out of the rock by the solvent action of water. Sometimes these cavities expand into spacious caverns, which, where they open upon a plain or slope, served in old times as dens for wild beasts and sometimes as habitations for man. Owing to the comparative infrequency of limestone or highly calcareous rocks in Scotland, examples of such caverns and labyrinthine underground passages are much less common and extensive than in England, where the Carboniferous and Devonian limestones have been hollowed out on a large scale, and possess many famous caves. One of the most honeycombed tracts I have met with in Scotland is that occupied by the calcareous Jurassic sandstones of the Inner Hebrides. The east side of the Island of Raasay presents a lofty cliff of these sandstones, at the summit of which lies a bare moor. Innumerable swallow-holes open along this moor, sometimes so treacherously concealed with long grass and fern that in a mist or in the dark a traveller might easily be lost in them. Prince Charlie's Cave near Portree, and the Spar Cave of Strathaird, are examples of caverns in the same group of rocks.

Occasionally the water that issues from below, deposits at the surface the mineral matter it has abstracted in its under-