

remain permeable to water, and soluble, so that this process of solution and deposition of cement in the interstices of the stone goes on constantly. The extreme result is a compact marble-like limestone, in which the grains of sand are combined in a continuous magma with stalagmite or travertine.

This dissolving and hardening process takes place irregularly, the water apparently following certain courses in its percolations, which it keeps open, and the walls of which it hardens; and in consequence of this, the rock weathers most unequally, leaving extraordinary rugged fissures and pinnacles, and piling up bowlders, the cores of masses which have been eaten away, more like slags or cinders than blocks of limestone. The ridge between Harrington Sound and Castle Harbor is a good example of this. It is like a rockery of the most irregular and fantastic style, and there seems to be something specially productive in the soil, for every crack and crevice is filled with the most luxuriant vegetation, massing over the stones and straining up as tier upon tier of climbers, clinging to the trees and rocks. Frequently the percolation of hardening matter, from some cause or other, only affects certain parts of a mass of rock, leaving spaces occupied by free sand. There seems to be little doubt that it is by the clearing-out of the sand from such spaces, either by the action of running fresh water or by that of the sea, that those remarkable caves are formed which add so much to the interest of Bermudas.

Wherever, throughout the islands, a section of the limestone is exposed of any depth, it is intersected by one or two horizontal beds of an ochre-like substance, called locally "red earth;" and the same substance is met with in greater purity in cracks and pockets all through the limestone. This red earth, mixed with varying proportions of decayed vegetable matter and coral-sand, forms the surface layer of vegetable soil. As Smith says, when this red earth is pure, the soil is inferior; when it is black—that is to say, when it contains much decomposed vegetable