

A curious circumstance had given me a particular interest in one of the Walsingham caves. In the year 1819, the late Sir David Milne, at that time commanding in chief on the North American and West Indian station, had a very fine stalagmite upward of eleven feet in length, averaging two feet in diameter, and weighing three and a half tons, removed from the cave and placed in the Museum of the University of Edinburgh, where the course of circumstances has now placed it in my custody. The stalagmite was sawed over near the floor of the cave, and in the year 1863 Sir Alexander Milne, then commanding in chief on the same station, visited the cave and examined carefully the stump of the column which had been removed forty-four years before by his father. It had made some attempt at reparation, and, in the year 1864, Mr. David Milne Home gave the results of his brother's observations in a notice to the Royal Society of Edinburgh. He observed five drops of water falling on the stump, two at the rate of three or four drops in the minute, the others much less frequently. At the spot where the two drops were falling two small knobs of calcareous matter had been formed. On the part of the stump where the three drops were falling, the deposit consisted of only a thin crust. The total estimated bulk of the stalagmite which had accumulated during forty-four years was about five cubic inches. Mr. Milne Home calculated that at that rate it would have taken six hundred thousand years to form the original stalagmite; but he points out very truly that it is highly improbable that the supply has been uniform, and that in all likelihood it was very much greater at an earlier period, and has been steadily decreasing, owing to the consolidation of the rock forming the roof of the cavern.

When we examined the stump, which was about ten years later, the two drops were still falling, but apparently somewhat more slowly, one not quite three times in a minute, the other twice; this must depend, however, in some measure upon the