

who was in the habit of collecting corals and knew the localities of the different species, and under his guidance we explored some low caves under the cliffs along the northern shore. The roofs of the caves were covered with green algæ, and below the scarcely perceptible line where the air met the still, clear water, there was a complete incrustation of the delicate coral *Mycedium fragile*, standing out in undulating purple crescents like some luxuriant lichen. Some of the sailors stripped and dived for it, and soon there was a pile of beautiful specimens in the boat. A colony of tropic birds (*Phaëton æthereus*) were building in the cliffs above, and as they sailed over us, their two long, white tail-feathers gleaming in the sun, their white breasts reflected the color of the water, and they looked as if they had been moulded in pale-green glass. We rowed slowly round, in full enjoyment, to the corner of the Sound nearest Walsingham, and a few minutes' walk brought us to the caves.

As in all limestone districts, the caves at Bermudas consist of large vaulted chambers hollowed out in the rock by the removal of its material by running fresh water or by the action of the sea. The process is probably more rapid in a coral island than it is where the rock belongs to one of the older formations. Dana observed similar caverns in Metia or Aurora Island, one of the western Paumotus, in which the geological structure may greatly resemble that of Bermudas; and he quotes from the Rev. Mr. Williams an account of a cavern in the coral rock of Atiu, one of the Hervey group, in which he "wandered two hours without finding a termination to its windings, passing through chambers with fretwork ceilings of stalagmite, and stalactite columns which sparkled brilliantly with the reflected torch-light."* The entrances are usually small crevices

* "United States Exploring Expedition," vol. x., GEOLOGY, by James D. Dana, A.M., Geologist to the Expedition, p. 67.