

peril to life and limb. The passage is long and in places very steep—in fact almost vertical. This feat has been done by a number of persons visiting the caves. For any party of explorers to enter these caves without a guide, would be a most risky piece of business; for when once fairly entangled in the intricate labyrinth of rooms and passages, places of exits and entrances, it would be impossible to find one's way out to the "open world." One might wander in helpless bewilderment through gloomy regions for days, weeks and even months without finding an outlet from this mountain prison. There is one man who, having very frequently explored these caves, acts as guide to all parties who desire to enter. No traces can be found where human beings have at former times inhabited these dungeon-like abodes, or even visited them. Nor have they been used as dens by wild animals. Near one of the openings, in a small chamber, can be found a few small bones of birds and small animals—probably wolves or bears have killed their prey and devoured the flesh near the mouth of the cave, not having the courage to penetrate far.

Darkness in these caves is profound—almost palpable, and the silence is most solemn and oppressive; the very gloom seems weighted with an oppression that is awful at times. Human voices sound strange and sepulchral, while the flaring torches and lanterns cast flashes of light between which flit and lurk deep, sinister shadows—like frowning spectres playing hide and seek.

The most remarkable feature of the upper cave is what is known as the "Queen's Chamber," which is spacious and well worthy the appellation. Countless stalactites depend from the ceiling and projecting points of rocks, which, under the uncertain, unsteady glare of torches, present a wonderful sight—reminding one of a huge arctic grotto, thickly hung with snow white icicles. These stalactites have been in slow process of formation for years—centuries perhaps. One thing that adds greatly to weird beauty of the view is the fact that at the extreme tip end of each stalactite hangs a solitary drop of crystal water. Under the light each drop flashes and corruscates with all the fiery brilliancy of a huge solitaire diamond. This scene is illustrated on the first page.

Another very singular formation is called the "Giant's Tongue," which, in form, very closely resembles that organ. It is attached to, and protruding from the wall, and is several feet in length. On the floor of one of the lower chambers in the lower cave is a very singular formation caused by the slow dripping of water from the ceiling. This formation bears a close resemblance to petrified moss, or coal. The action of the water and decomposed lime-stone has wrought out an infinite variety of exquisite forms of delicacy and

beauty. It is very fragile and breaks with the brittleness of fragile glass. But when broken off and exposed to sunlight and the open air these moss-like formations soon turn to a dull unattractive color and lose their charm.

The remoteness of these caves and the great difficulties to be overcome in reaching them, have prevented hundreds from visiting these natural wonders of Oregon. Before many years, however, a good passable road will probably be opened from Grant's Pass to the mountain, and then they will no doubt become favorite places of resort, and objects of interest and attraction to tourists.

Speaking of the large shipment of Oregon made iron pipe to San Francisco, a local paper says: "It is a pleasing sight to Oregonians, who have so long watched their money flow into California coffers, to see the tide now turned in the other direction." Granted, but is it equally pleasing to see Portland money sent to St. Louis for pipe for her water mains, when a better quality of pipe is made here and can be laid down at the same figure. If Portlanders are looking for something pleasing to gaze upon let them contemplate this for a while.

Portland policemen will cheer up a little when they read of the Ray Foster case in San Francisco. A crippled woman disappears from a house, but partially dressed, the indications being that she was killed by some one secreted in her room and her body carried away, and the police of the city know no more about it than those of Portland do of the whereabouts of Gibbs. There are more things than one that "no fella can find out."

Two weeks ago the West Shore called attention to the fact that a two-story frame building had been erected in the business part of the city, which stands as a menace to adjacent property. The uses to which it is put render it peculiarly liable to fire, and the officials who have permitted this violation of the ordinance establishing fire limits should have their conduct investigated by the city council.

"Joe the Turk"—may his tribe decrease—wants the accommodating jailers of East Portland to permit him to have his photograph taken with the prison walls for a back ground. When this is done he will no doubt hawk them about the streets with the *War Cry* venders as "Joe the Martyr," and the good cause will again be on the ascendant.

With an assessed valuation of taxable property at \$125,058,879, being an increase in the year of nearly fifty per cent, the new state of Washington sets herself up in business in a most promising way.