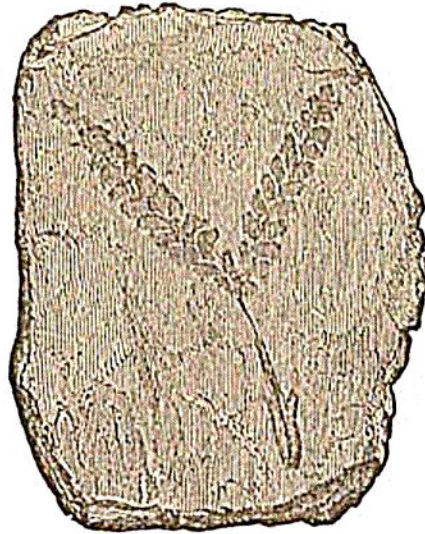


Fig. 56.



FERN? OF THE LOWER OLD RED SANDSTONE.

(Natural size.)

yet known, of every other vegetable form ; and such is their abundance in some localities, that they render the argillaceous rocks in which they lie diffused, capable of being fired as an alum slate, and exist in others as seams of a compact anthracite, occasionally used as fuel. They also occur in those districts of Wales in which the place and sequence of the various Silurian formations were first determined, though apparently in a state of keeping from which little can be premised regarding their original forms. Sir Roderick Murchison sums up his notice of the vegetable remains of the system in the province whence it derives its name, by stating, that he had submitted his specimens to “ Mr. Robert Brown and Dr. Greville, and that neither of these eminent botanists were able to say much more regarding them than that they were fucoid-like bodies.”

Such are the vegetable organisms of the Old Red Sandstone and Silurian systems: they are the remains of the