

Fig. 49.



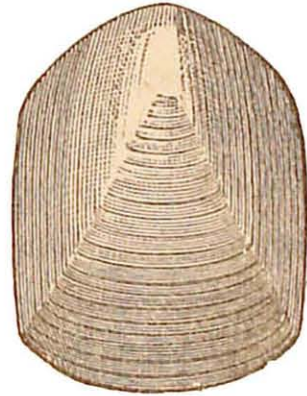
ORTHOSINA VERNEULI.

Fig. 50.



LITUITES CORNU-ARIETIS.

Fig. 51.



LINGULA LOWISII.

riads of ages ago,—a remark which, with the exceptions just intimated, and perhaps one or two others, applies equally to its brachiopods; but of at least two of its intermediate families,—the Gasteropoda and Lamellibranchiata,—several of the forms resemble those of recent shells of the temperate latitudes. In its general aspect, however, the Silurian fauna, antiquely fashioned, as I have said, as became its place in the primæval ages of existence, was unlike any other which the world ever saw; and the absence of the vertebrata, or at least the inconspicuous place which they occupied if they were at all present, must have imparted to the whole, as a group, a humble and mediocre character. It seems to have been for many ages together a creation of molluscs, corals, and crustacea. At length, in an upper bed of the system, immediately under the base of the Old Red Sandstone, the remains of the earliest known fishes appear, blent with what also appears for the first time,—the fragmentary remains of a terrestrial vegetation. The rocks beneath this ancient bone-bed have yielded, as I have already said, no trace of any plant higher than the Thallogens, or at least not higher than the Zosteraceæ,—plants whose proper habitat is the sea; but, through an apparently simultaneous advance of