

or three tons."—*From the Transactions of the Royal Geological Society of Cornwall, by Dr. Paris.*

---

F. Page 95.—LITHODOMI, OR BORING MOLLUSCA; *which have the power of perforating rocks.*—Every one who has walked by the sea-side must have observed the blocks and masses of the chalk rocks full of perforations; and if his curiosity have induced him to examine these with attention, he will have perceived that though many of the cavities are empty, some of them contain the shelly remains of the animals which once inhabited them. The power possessed by creatures so delicate, and with such fragile coverings, of excavating the solid rock, has naturally excited much speculation as to the mode by which the perforations are effected; and it is now generally admitted, that it is not by mechanical power only that the feeble inhabitants of the boring shells are able to form themselves a secure asylum in the rock, but by the secretion of a liquid which acts chemically on the stone, softens it, and renders it capable of being removed with facility. In a late volume of the Philosophical Transactions, there is an interesting paper on the economy of molluscous animals, by Mr. Gray, which throws much light on the subject. It appears that, although *teredines*, *pholades*, and other boring shells, are covered with short spines and striæ, by means of which they were supposed capable of rasping stones, yet other mollusca which inhabit stony cavities are perfectly smooth. On the shore, near Kemptown, a *pholas*, which has a rasping apparatus, and a *venus*, wholly destitute of a rugous surface, may be seen in cavities of the chalk. Shells of this kind have not been observed to bore into any other substances (wood excepted) than shells, marl, chalk, limestone, and sandstone, consolidated by calcareous cement. Granite appears to resist all the dissolving powers of the mollusca. Thus, in the Plymouth Breakwater, in which limestone and granite are employed and placed side by side, the *patellæ*, or limpets, form their rounded holes in the former, while they do not in the slightest degree alter the surface of the latter, except by clearing off from it any adherent calcareous substance.