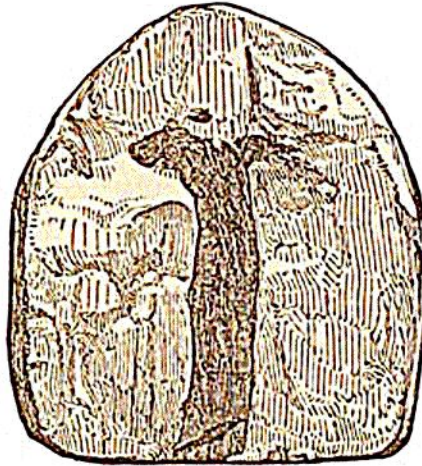


the east of the town of Cromarty, which occurs more than four hundred feet over the Great Conglomerate base of the system. A nodule that lay immediately beside it contained a well-preserved specimen of the *Coccosteus Decipiens*; and in the nodule in which the lignite itself is contained, (fig. 57,)

Fig. 57.



LIGNITE OF THE LOWER OLD RED SANDSTONE.

(One third nat. size, linear.)

the practised eye may detect a scattered group of scales of *Diplacanthus*, a scarce less characteristic organism of the lower formation. And what, asks the reader, is the character of this very ancient vegetable,—the most ancient, by three whole formations, that has presented its internal structure to the microscope? Is it as low in the scale of development as in the geological scale? Does this venerable Adam of the forest appear, like the Adam of the infidel, as a squalid, ill-formed savage, with a rugged shaggy nature, which it would require the suggestive necessities of many ages painfully to lick into civilization? Or does it appear rather like the Adam