

Fig. 68.



FOSSIL FOOT-PRINT.  
(*Connecticut.*)

of the specimens even the pressure of a metatarsal brush, still possessed by some birds, is distinctly traceable ; nay, there are instances in which the impress of the dermoid papillæ has remained as sharply as if made in wax. But the immense size of some of these foot-prints served to militate for a time against belief in their ornithic origin. The impressions that are but secondary in point of size greatly exceed those of the hugest birds which now exist ; while those of the largest class equal the prints of the bulkier quadrupeds. There are tri-dactyle foot-prints in the red sandstones of Connecticut that measure eighteen inches in length from the heel to the middle claw, nearly thirteen inches in breadth from the outer to the inner toe, and which indicate, from their distance apart in the straight line, a stride of about six feet in the creature that impressed them in these ancient sands,—measurements that might well startle zoologists who had derived their experience of the ornithic class from existing birds exclusively. Comparatively recent discoveries have, however, if not lessened, at least familiarized us to the wonder. In a deposit of New Zealand that dates little if at all in advance of the human