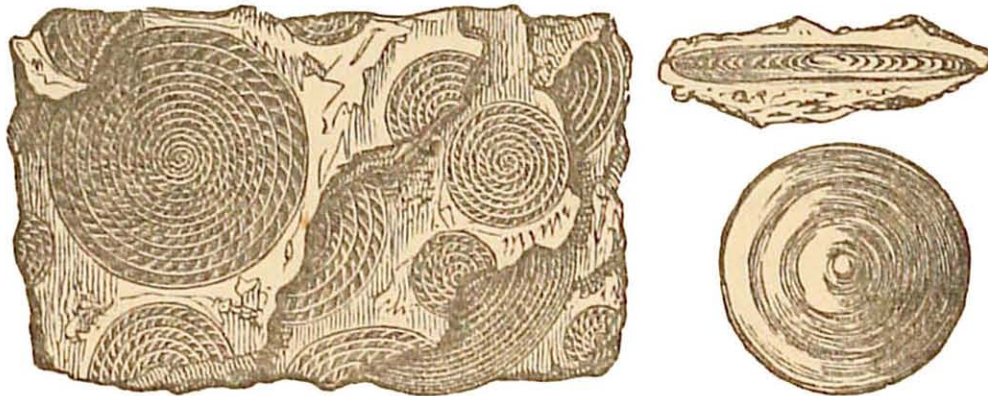


Fig. 116.

*(Pharaoh's Beans.)*

and these organisms stand out in high relief on the weathered portions of the Great Sphinx. Some of the oldest things in the world in their relation to human history,—erections, many of which had survived the memory of their founders even in the days of Herodotus,—are formed of materials so modern in their relation to the geologic epochs, that they had no existence as rock until after the Palæozoic and Secondary ages had gone by. Not only the Carboniferous sandstone of the High Church and Parliament House of Edinburgh, but even the Oolitic (*i. e.* Portland stone) of Somerset House and St Paul's, are of an antiquity incalculably vast compared with the stone out of which the oldest of the pyramids were fashioned.

The second example which I shall adduce is one with which many of my auditors must be already familiar. The Falls of Niagara are gradually eating their way through an elevated tract of table-land, upwards towards Lake Erie, at the rate of about fifty yards in forty years; and it has been argued by Sir Charles Lyell, that as they are now seven miles distant from Queenston, where the elevation of the plateaux begins, they must have taken about ten thousand years to scoop out their present deep channel through that space.*

* Sir Charles Lyell's statement is by no means so express or definite as it is represented to be in this passage, in which I have taken the evidence