

beds of gypsum (*a a*) connect themselves by means of fibrous veins with the overlying and underlying beds.

The most frequent form of concretions is that of isolated spherical, elliptical, or variously shaped nodules, disposed in certain layers of a stratum or dispersed irregularly

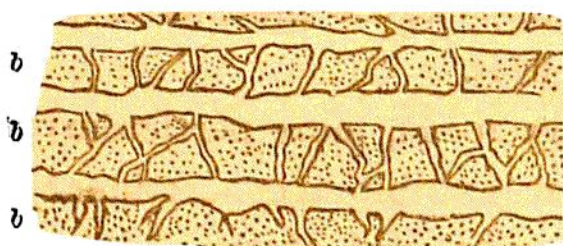


Fig. 211.—Sections of beds and connecting strings of gypsum in the Trias, Watchet, Somersetshire (E.).

through it (Fig. 212). They most commonly consist of ferrous or calcic carbonates, or of silica. Many clay-iron-stone beds assume a nodular form,

and this mineral occurs abundantly in the shape of separate nodules in shales and clay-rocks. The nodules have frequently formed round some organic body, such as a fragment of plant, a shell, bone, or coprolite. That the carbonate was slowly precipitated during the formation of the bed of shale in which its nodules lie, may often be satisfactorily proved by the lines of deposit passing continuously through

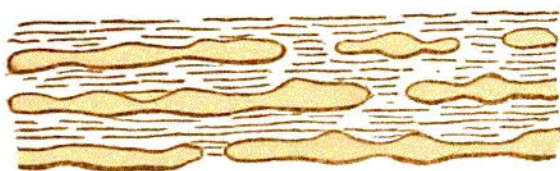


Fig. 212.—Concretions of limestone in shale.



Fig. 213.—Concretions surrounding organic centres and exhibiting the continuation of the lines of stratification of the surrounding shales.

the nodules (Fig. 213). In many cases, the internal first-formed parts of a nodule have contracted more than the outer and more compact crust; and have cracked into open polygonal spaces, which are commonly filled with calcite (Fig. 26). Such *septarian nodules*, whether composed of clay-ironstone or limestone, are abundant in many shales, as in the Carboniferous and Liassic series of England.

Alluvial clays sometimes contain fantastically shaped