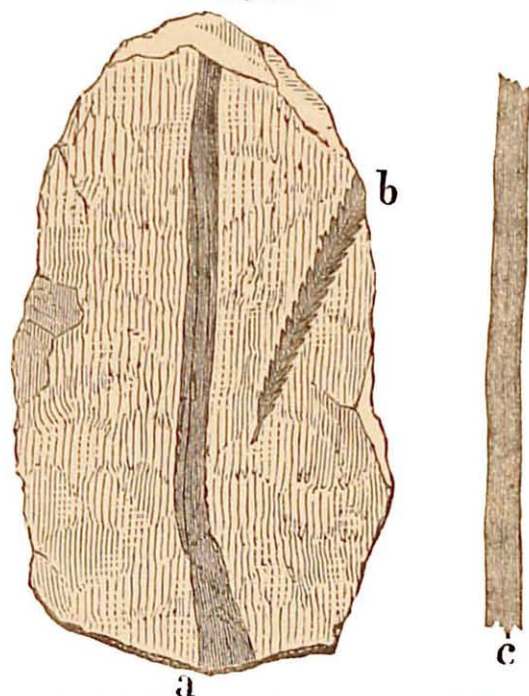


Fig. 117.



a. SILURIAN ORGANISM. b. GRAPTOLITE. c. PORTION OF THE
LEAF OF ZOSTERA MARINA.

can be instituted between forms so exceedingly simple, the ancient very closely resembles the recent organism. It is not impossible, therefore, that the Silurian vegetable may have belonged to some tribe of plants allied to *Zostera*; and if so, we can easily conceive how the Silurian anthracite of our country may be altogether of marine origin, and may yet exhibit in its microscopic tubular fibres vestiges of a vegetation higher than the algæ.

[It were well, in dealing with the very ancient floras, in which equivocal forms occur that might have belonged to either the land or the sea, to keep in view those curious plants of the present time, the habitats of which are decidedly marine, but which are marked by many of the peculiarities of the seed-bearing plants of the land. The superiority of *Zostera* to the common sea-weeds of our coasts appears to have struck in the north of Scotland eyes very little practised in such matters, and seems to have given rise, in consequence, to a popular myth. *Zostera marina* abounds on a series of