

“discourse”), who occupies himself with the study of animated beings which have lived on the earth, takes careful account also of the sort of moulds left by organised bodies in the fine sediment which has enveloped them after death. Many organic beings have left no trace of their existence in Nature, except their impressions, which we find perfectly preserved in the sandstone and limestone, in marl or



Fig. 2.—Impressions of rain-drops.

clay, and in the coal-measures ; and these moulds are sufficient to tell us the kind to which the living animals belonged. We shall, no doubt, astonish our readers when we tell them that there are blocks of sandstone with distinct impressions of drops of rain which had fallen upon sea-shores of the ancient world. The impressions of these rain-drops, made upon the sands, were preserved by desiccation ; and these same sands, being transformed by subsequent hardening into solid and coherent sandstones, their impressions have been thus preserved to