

araucarian, also mutilated, for it wants top and branches, and *it* measures seventy feet in length by four feet in diameter. I saw lately in a quarry of the Coal Measures about two miles from my dwelling-house, near Edinburgh, the stem of a plant (*Lepidodendron Sternbergii*), allied to the dwarfish club-mosses of our moors, considerably thicker than the body of a man, and which, reckoning on the ordinary proportions of the plant, must have been at least seventy feet in height. And of a kind of aquatic reed (calamites), that more resembles the diminutive mare's tail of our marshes than aught else that now lives, remains have been found in abundance in the same coal-field, more than a foot in diameter by thirty feet in length. Imposing, then, as are the vegetable remains of this portion of the national museum, they would be greatly more imposing still did they more adequately represent the gigantic flora of the remote age to which they belong.

Passing onwards in the gallery from the great plants of the Palæozoic division to the animals of the Secondary one, the attention is at once arrested by the monstrous forms on the wall. Shapes that more than rival in strangeness the great dragons, and griffins, and "laithly worms" of mediæval legend, or, according to Milton, the "gorgons, hydras, and chimeras dire," of classical fable, frown on the passing visitor, and, though wrapped up in their dead and stony sleep of ages, seem not only the most strange, but also the most terrible things on which his eye ever rested. Enormous jaws, bristling with pointed teeth, gape horrid in the stone, under staring eye-sockets a full foot in diameter. Necks that half-equal in length the entire body of the boa-constrictor stretch out from bodies mounted on fins like those of a fish, and furnished with tails somewhat resembling those of the mammals. Here we see a winged dragon, that, armed with sharp teeth and strong claws, had careered through the air on leathern wings like those of a bat; there an enormous