

earth's crust has cracked the shaly roof; the opposite sides of the fissure have been moved to and fro over each other, and under the mighty pressure the two opposing faces have been beautifully polished.

But probably different sights will greet our eyes. The rocky ceiling is ornamented every where by the most exquisite tracery—inimitable representations of the delicate fronds of ferns (Fig. 64). We remove a scale of the rock, and behind is still another picture. Remove a second, and from the dark black rock gleams forth another form of grace and beauty. The whole mass of the shaly roof is a portfolio of inimitable sketches. The sharpest outlines and minutest serratures of the leaves are clearly traced. The very nerves, with their characteristic bifurcations, are accurately depicted on this wonderful lithograph. Petioles, and buds, and woody stems, and cones, and fruits, slender grass-leaves, striated rushes, the

Fig. 64. Coal Ferns.

