

of this important character. It is very rarely that any traces of the roots remain ; the specimen figured (fig. 2.) is from the *Foss. Flor.* A beautiful example of the foliage of another species of Calamites, from the same authority, is figured *Lign.* 40, fig. 2.

FILICITES, OR FERNS.

We now arrive at the consideration of one of the most numerous and interesting tribes of vascular cryptogamous plants, that adorned the Flora of the ancient world, and the living species of which impart beauty and elegance to the scenery of the countries where they prevail. One of the most essential characters of these plants, is that of developing their fructification on the leaves ; a fact familiar to every one who has even but cursorily examined the polypody growing on our walls, or the brake of our hedge-rows and commons. The largest species of British ferns scarcely exceed four or five feet in height ; but the arborescent, or tree-ferns, of warm climates, attain an altitude of thirty or forty feet. There is too this peculiarity in the arborescent ferns, that while in our indigenous species the leaves surround the stem, and incline towards the upper part of the plant, the foliage of the former bends downwards, and spreads out from the crown, or summit, into an elegant canopy.

The leaves of our branched ferns are persistent, and when they are shed, the markings, left by their