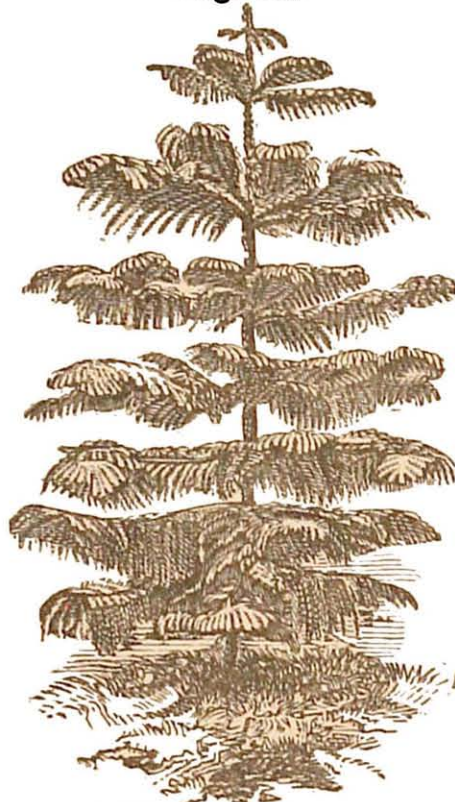


we can discover no nearer analogies than those which connect them with the fern allies. And if with the British Coal Measures we include those also of the Continent and America, we shall find the proportion in favour of the ferns still greater. The number of carboniferous plants hitherto described amounts, says M. Ad. Brogniart, to about five hundred; and of these, two hundred and fifty—one-half of the whole—were ferns.

Rising in the scale from the lower to the higher vegetable forms of the system,—from its ferns to its trees,—we find great conifers,—so great that they must have raised their heads more than a hundred feet over the soil; and such was their abundance in this neighbourhood, that one can scarce examine a fragment of coal beside one's household fire that is not charged with their carbonized remains. Though marked by certain peculiarities of structure, they bore, as is shown by the fossil trunks of Granton and Craigleith, the familiar

Fig. 20.



ALTINGIA EXCELSA.

*Norfolk Island Pine.* (Young Specimen.)