

lands of Scotland,—moors and hill-sides that, though long since divested of their last tree, are still known by their old name of *forests*. In the times of the Oolite, on the other hand, Britain had from fourteen to twenty different species of conifers ; and its great forests, of whose existence we have direct evidence in the very abundant lignites of the system, must have possessed a richness and variety which our ancient fir-woods of the historic or human period could not have possessed. With the Conifers and the Cycadeæ there were many ferns associated,—so many, that they still composed nearly two-fifths of the entire flora ; and associated with these, though in reduced proportions, we find the fern-allies. The reduction, however, of these last is rather in species than in individuals.

Fig. 38.



EQUISETUM COLUMNARE.
(Nat. size.)

The Brora Coal, one of the most considerable Oolitic seams in Europe, seems to have been formed almost exclusively of an equisetum,—*E. columnare*. In this flora the more equivocal productions of the Coal Measures are represented by what seems to be the last of the Calamites ; but it contains no *Lepidodendra*,—no *Ulodendra*,—no *Sigillaria*,—no *Favularia*,—no *Knorria* or *Halongia*. Those monsters of the vegetable world that united to the forms of its humbler productions the bulk of trees,

had, with the solitary exception of the Calamites, passed into extinction ; and ere the close of the system they too had disappeared. The forms borne by most of the Oolitic plants were comparatively familiar forms. With the Acrogens and