

family of plants, that well nigh rivalled in height those forests of masts which darken the rivers of our great commercial cities. Such was the view promulgated by M. Adolphe Brongniart; and it may be well to remark that, so far as the evidence on which it was based was positive, the view was sound. It is a fact, that inferior orders of plants were developed in those ages in a style which, in their present state of degradation, they never exemplify: they took their place, not, as now, among the pigmies and abortions of creation, but among its tallest and goodliest productions. It is, however, *not* a fact that they were the highest vegetable forms of their time. True exogenous trees also existed in great numbers and of vast size. In various localities in the coal fields of both England and Scotland, — such as Lennel Braes and Allan Bank in Berwickshire, High-Heworth, Fellon, Gateshead, and Wideopen near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and in quarries to the west of the city of Durham, — the most abundant fossils of the system are its true woods. In the quarry of Craigleith, near Edinburgh, three huge trunks have been laid open during the last twenty years, within the space of about a hundred and fifty yards, and two equally massy trunks, within half that space, in the neighboring quarry of Granton, all low in the Coal Measures. They lie diagonally athwart the strata, — at an angle of about thirty, — with the nether and weightier portion of their boles below, like snags in the Mississippi; and we infer, from their general direction, that the stream to which they reclined must have flowed from nearly north-east to south-west. The current was probably that of a noble river, which reflected on its broad bosom the shadow of many a stately tree. With the exception of one of the Granton specimens, which still retains its strong-kneed roots, they are all mere portions of trees, rounded at both