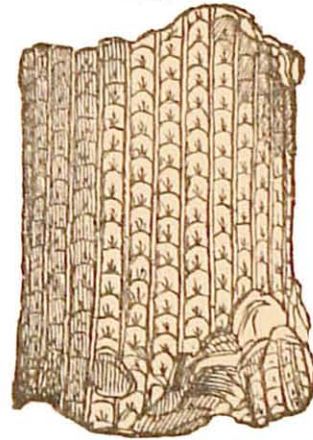


at least, have I found these lie so thickly, layer above layer, as around the stems of *Sigillaria* ; and the fact that, even in our own times, plants widely differing from the tree ferns, —such, for instance, as one of the *Cycadeæ*,—should bear leaves scarce distinguishable from fern fronds, may well reconcile us to an apparent anomaly in the case of an ancient plant such as *Sigillaria*, whose entire constitution, so far as it has been ascertained, appears to have been anomalous. The sculpturesque character of this richly fretted genus was shared by not a few of its contemporaries. The *Ulodendra*, with their rectilinear rows of circular scars, and their stems covered with leaf-like carvings, rivalled in effect the ornately relieved torus of a Corinthian column : *Favularia*, *Knorria*, *Halonia*, many of the *Calamites*, and all the *Lepidodendra*, exhibited the most delicate sculpturing. In walking among the ruins of this ancient flora, the Palæontologist almost feels as if he had got among the broken fragments of Italian palaces, erected long ages ago, when the architecture of Rome was most ornate, and every moulding was roughened with ornament ; and in attempting to call up in fancy the old Carboniferous forests, he has to dwell on this peculiar feature as one of the most prominent, and to see, in the multitude of trunks darkened above by clouds of foliage, that rise upon him in the prospect, the slim columns of an elder *Alhambra*, roughened with arabesque tracery and exquisite filagree work.

In the Oolitic flora we find a few peculiar features introduced. The *Cycadeæ*,—a family of plants allied to the ferns on the one hand, and to the conifers on the other, and which in their general aspect not a little resemble stunted palms,—

Fig. 32.



FAVULARIA TESSELLATA.
(One-fifth nat. size.)