

sive than that of the fish ; and we may, I think, legitimately conclude, that in Ireland, as in our own country, it was a

Fig. 124.



CYCLOPTERIS HIBERNICUS.

contemporary of the great Pterichthys (*P. major*),—the hugest, and at least one of the last of his race,—and gave its rich green to the hill-sides of what is still the Emerald Island, during the latter ages of the Old Red Sandstone, and ere the Carboniferous period had yet begun. The *Cyclopteris Hibernicus*, as shown by the Prestonhaugh specimen and those of Ireland, was a bipinnate fern of very considerable size,—probably a tree fern. Its pinnæ, opposite in the lower part of the frond, are alternate in the upper ; while its leaflets, which are of a sub-rhomboidal form, and so closely ranged as to impinge on each other, are at least generally alternate in their arrangement throughout. Among living plants it seems most nearly represented by a South American species, — *Didymoclaena pulcherrima*,—one of the smaller tree ferns. The leaves of this graceful species are bipinnate, like those of the fossil ; and the pinnæ (thickly set with simple, alternately arranged leaflets) are opposite in the lower part of the frond, and alternate in the upper. Widely as they are separated in time, the recent South American *Didymoclaena* and the Old Red Sandstone *Cyclopteris*, that passed into extinction ere the times of the Coal, might be ranged together, so far at least