

Selaginella, which under the name of creeping moss is used to adorn the soil of our hot-houses in the form of a thick carpet. The largest *club-mosses* of the present day are found in the Sunda Islands, where their stalks rise to the height of twenty-five feet, and attain half a foot in thickness. But in the primary and secondary periods even larger trees of this kind were widely distributed, the most ancient of which probably were the progenitors of the pines (Lycopodites). The most important dimensions were, however, attained by the class of scale trees (Lepidodendreæ), and by the seal trees (Sigillarieæ). These two orders, with a few species, appear in the Devonian period, but do not attain their immense and astonishing development until the Carboniferous period, and become extinct towards the end of it, or in the Permian period directly following upon it. The scale trees, or Lepidodendreæ, were probably more closely related to club-mosses than to Sigillarieæ. They grew into splendid, straight, unbranching trunks which divided at the top into numerous forked branches. They bore a large crown of scaly leaves, and like the trunk were marked in elegant spiral lines by the scars left at the base of the leaf stalks which had fallen off. We know of scale-marked trees from forty to sixty feet in length, and from twelve to fifteen feet in diameter at the root. Some trunks are said to be even more than a hundred feet in length. In the coal are found still larger accumulations of the no less highly developed but more slender trunks of the remarkable seal trees, Sigillarieæ, which in many places form the principal part of coal seams. Their roots were formerly described as quite a distinct vegetable form (under the name of Stigmara). The Sigillarieæ are in many respects very like