

Fragments of trunks of Coniferous wood, and occasionally leaves and cones occur through all stages of the Oolite formation, from the Lias to the Portland stone. On the upper surface of the Portland stone, we find the remains of an ancient forest, in which are preserved large prostrate silicified trunks, and silicified stumps of Coniferæ, having their roots still fixed in the black vegetable mould in which they grew. Fragments of coniferous wood are also frequent throughout the Wealden and Green-sand formations, and occur occasionally in Chalk.*

It appears that the Coniferæ are common to fossiliferous strata of all periods; they are least abundant in the Transition series, more numerous in the Secondary, and most frequent in the Tertiary series. Hence we learn that there has been no time since the commencement of terrestrial vegetation on the surface of our Globe, in which large Coniferous trees did not exist; but our present evidence is insufficient, to ascertain with accuracy the proportions they bore to the relative numbers of other families of plants, in each of the successive geological epochs, which are thus connected with our own, by a new and beautiful series of links, derived from one of the most important tribes of the vegetable kingdom.

* There is in the Oxford Museum a fragment of silicified coniferous wood, perforated by Teredines, found by Rev. Dr. Faussett, in a chalk flint at Lower Hardres, near Canterbury.