

suggests the propriety of consigning to this part of our subject the few observations we have to make on their history.

The existing family of Palms* is supposed to consist of nearly a thousand species, of which the greater number are limited to peculiar regions of the torrid Zone. If we look to the geological history of this large and beautiful family, we shall find that although it was called into existence, together with the most early vegetable forms of the Transition period, it presents very few species in the Coal formation, (See Lindley's Foss. Flora, No. XV, Pl. 142, P. 163,) and occurs sparingly in the Secondary series ;† but in the Tertiary formation we have abundant stems and leaves, and fruits, derived from Palms.‡

Fossil Trunks of Palm Trees.

The fossil stems of Palms are referrible to many species; they occur beautifully silicified in the Tertiary deposits of Hungary, and in the Calcaire Grossier of Paris.§ Trunks of Palms are found

* See Pl. 1, Figs. 66, 67, 68.

† See Sprengel's Account of Endogenites Palmacites in New red sandstone, near Chemnitz, (Halle, 1828.) and Cotta's Dendrolithen, (Dresden and Leipsig, 1832, Pl. ix, x.)

‡ Eight species in the family of Palms are given in Ad. Brongniart's list of the fossils of the Tertiary Series.

§ Our figure, Pl. 64, Fig. 2, represents the summit of a beau-