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NOTE ON A FERN ASSOCIATED WITH PLATEPHEMERA ANTIQUA, Seudder. By J. W. DAWSON, L.L.D., F.R.S., &c.

The oldest remains of insects known to geologists, those of the Erian (Devonian) shales of St. John, New Brunswick, occur in beds rich in plant remains. It was indeed solely by means of the extensive quarrying operations carried on by Messrs. Hartt and Matthew in these beds in search of fossil plants, that the insect remains were discovered. In less thoroughly explored beds, fossils so rare and so obscure could not have been found. It is natural therefore that fossil plants should occur on the same slabs with the insects. On one of these, holding a fragment of the wing of *Platephmera antiqua*, there appears a considerable portion of a frond of *Pecopteris* (*Aspidites*) *serrulata*, Hartt, a common species in these beds, and also a small fragment of a leaf of the still more common *Cordaites Robbii*. It appears that Dr. Geinitz of Dresden saw this specimen in 1866, and not being at that time familiar with the ferns of the Devonian of New Brunswick, very naturally supposed that the frond was that of the closely allied *P. plumosa* of Brongniart, and on this ground he was induced to hint a suspicion that the specimen was of Carboniferous age. Dr. Seudder referred to this opinion of Geinitz in his paper on Devonian insects in the Geological Magazine, Vol. V.; and gave reasons sustaining the Devonian age of both fern and insect. I did not think it necessary to refer publicly to the matter, but took occasion to explain the true state of the case in a private letter to Geinitz; and in my report on the Devonian plants of Canada I quoted Hartt's description in full, and noticed the distinctness of his species from *P. plumosa*.

I find, however, that this doubt has been revived by Dr. Hagen in a paper on Devonian insects in the Bulletin of the Museum of Comparative Zoology for the present year (Vol. viii. No. 14). Dr. Hagen does not profess to be an authority in fossil plants, but fortifies his statements by a letter from Mr. Lesquereux, which does not however touch the question at issue, as he does not appear to have compared the specimen or Hartt's species with