

menophyllaceæ, and the *Marattiaceæ*, go back to the coal-formation.*

Some of these ferns have the more complex kind of spore-case, with a jointed, elastic ring. It is to be ob-



FIG. 54.—*Sphenopteris latior*, Dawson. Coal-formation. *a*, Pinnule magnified, with traces of fructification.

served, however, that those forms which have a simple spore-case, either netted or membranous, and without annulus, are most common in the Devonian and lowest

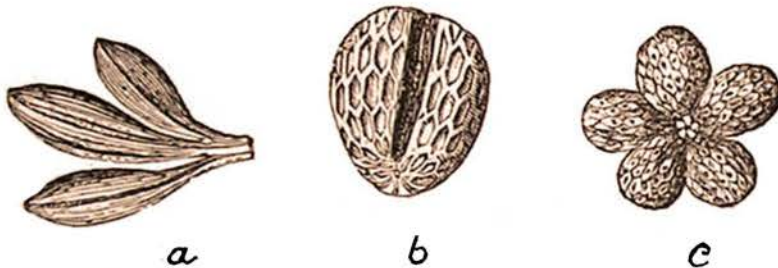


FIG. 55.—Fructification of Palæozoic ferns. *a*, Thecæ of *Archæopteris* (Erian). *b*, Theca of *Senftenbergia* (Carboniferous). *c*, Thecæ of *Asterotheca* (Carboniferous).

Carboniferous. Some of the forms in these old rocks are somewhat difficult to place in the system. Of these, the

* Mr. R. Kidston has recently described very interesting forms of fern fructification from the coal-formation of Great Britain, and much has been done by European palæobotanists, and also by Lesquereux and Fontaine in America.