

are disposed to look with scepticism on the information obtained by this laborious but certain process, and to suppose that they are being presented with imaginary "restorations." I think it right here to copy a remark of a German botanist, who has felt himself called to criticise my work: "Dawson's description of the genus (*Psilophyton*) rests chiefly on the impression made on him in his repeated researches," etc. "He puts us off with an account of the general idea which he has drawn from the study of them." This is the remark of a closet naturalist, with reference to the kind of work above referred to, which, of course, cannot be represented in its entirety in figures or hand specimens.¹

As to the precursors of the Carboniferous flora, in default of information already acquired, I proceeded to question the Erian or Devonian rocks of Canada, in which Sir William Logan had already found remains of plants which had not, however, been studied or described. Laboriously coasting along the cliffs of Gaspé and the Baie des Chaleurs, digging into the sandstones of Eastern Maine, and studying the plants collected by the New York Survey, I began to find that there was a rich Devonian flora, and that, like that of the Carboniferous, it presented different stages from the base to the summit of the formation. But here a great advance was made in a somewhat unexpected way. My then young friends, the late Prof. Hartt and Mr. Matthew, of St. John, had found a few remains of plants in the Devonian, or at least pre-Carboniferous beds of St. John, which were placed in my hands for description. They were so novel and curious that inquiry was stimulated, and these gentlemen, with some friends of similar tastes, explored the shales exposed in the reefs near St. John, and when they found the more productive beds, broke them up by

¹ Solms-Laubach, "Fossil Botany." A pretentious book, which should not have been translated into English without thorough revision and correction.