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IV. On a New Locality for Pothocites (Paterson)

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III. *Notes on some Fossil Plants from the Shales of West Calder.* By C. W. PEACH, A.L.S.

On 2d May I was at West Hermand Oil Shale Works, and in the "blasse," with which the bank for a small railroad was made, at a new shaft, I found several fossil plants, one *Sphenopteris affinis* in a fine state, which I now exhibit fastened upon a glass-slide. Several other interesting plants turned up. One is very small, has a woody branched stem, and bears flower-like bodies, occasionally one on a stem, but most generally in pairs. The tips of the branches bend downwards, and to these the flower-like bodies are attached, hanging much like those of a Fritillary, with a divided perianth. I found *Sphenopteris affinis* in the same stone with it, but in no case do the two come in contact with each other. I look upon this as a very interesting plant, and although I do not say that it is a *true flowering* species, it greatly resembles one. Leaves and other organs are still required for full description. It is hoped that better specimens may ere long be obtained.

IV. *On a New Locality for Pothocites* (Paterson).

By R. ETHERIDGE, Jun., F.G.S.

At the April meeting (p. 151), the author brought under notice some specimens of *Pothocites* from the Lower Carboniferous series of the neighbourhood of West Calder. Since then he found in the Survey collection another specimen of this rare plant, obtained by the same indefatigable collector, Mr James Bennie, this time, however, from the altered and undulated shale of Barnton Pavement Stone Quarry, Corstorphine Hill. One of the former specimens exhibited showed that the stem of this plant branched, in addition to other characters, and that at the end of one of the branches was to be found an enlarged spike or strobilus similar to that originally mentioned by Dr Paterson. The present specimen exhibits another step in the organisation of *Pothocites*. Here we have what appears to be a main stem, of considerable thickness, terminated by a main enlarged spike, and giving off a branch, which also bears another strobilus or spike, although, from the nature of the matrix, some of the other characters are not so well

hibited as in the former specimens; still we can distinctly see the node-like divisions of the spike, which in this case are three in number, and the three longitudinal ridges passing from the top to bottom of each node. Situated close to this specimen, but separated from it, is what appears to be another indifferently preserved head or spike. The vegetable matter of the stem in this specimen has been converted into some carbonised material, and has been split and cracked a good deal during fossilisation.

V. *Note on Fossil Cones from the Airdrie Blackband Ironstones.* By GEO. A. PANTON, F.G.S.E.

(This paper has subsequently been printed in the Transactions of the Edinburgh Geological Society, vol. ii. p. 307.)

VI. *Report on the Open-Air Vegetation at the Botanic Garden.* By JAMES M'NAB, Curator.

It has not been customary to report on the open-air vegetation beyond April; but as this spring has been unusually early, a few observations are made to contrast with seasons which may follow.

In one of my previous reports this year, it is stated, that from the comparatively small amount of continued frosts, also of snow and easterly winds, vegetation commenced early. Several of the plants selected for recording their flowering, which usually open their first blooms in January, and often in February, were noticed as flowering in December, thus blooming twice in one year—a circumstance which also happened during the early part of the winter of 1863–64, when ten of the selected plants were in bloom during December 1863 (see Bot. Soc. Trans., March 1864); no other case has happened with the same species of plants during the twenty-five years that I have recorded their dates of blooming.

Vegetation has continued to be from two to three weeks in advance of any season hitherto recorded, except the spring of 1868. With the exception of the Catalpa and locust tree, *Celtis occidentalis* or nettle tree, *Schubertia disticha*, deciduous cypress, and a few elms and beeches, most trees