

"GLEANINGS IN FERNLAND."

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Readers of the OTTAWA NATURALIST in 1910 who went "Fern-hunting in Ontario" with me, may remember that our treasure-trove amounted to 37 species. In the course of our wanderings, as I seem to remember, we had good store of pleasure, and surprises not a few; the charm of surroundings possessed by the ferns forming a spell of peculiar potency, our sheaf of fronds, in the getting and the gathering, gave us communion with Nature in some of her most enchanting haunts; while in tending and garnering, these peaceful trophies of ours were still redolent of the woods, and even to-day keep green and fragrant with glad memories of summer days and rambles.

Manifold sights, unseen or unheeded before, taught us to keep eyes open and wits a-stretch for all the observations and reflections we could make. Some of the inferences that we drew might perhaps provoke inquiry; some of our questions never found an answer: moot points, one or two of which have since cleared themselves up; but nothing had happened till quite lately to justify rushing into print. Since last July, however, it has been my good fortune to add no less than six species to our list, and I believe it would be possible for a careful fern-hunter to extend the record to a grand total of 50, without stepping over the border of old Ontario. All, then, who love these most beautiful forms of living foliage, especially in their native haunts of woodland dell and rocky height, are now invited to "follow the gleam" once more, and dream themselves back into summer this Christmas-tide.

One of my first trips for ferns in the neighbourhood of Peterborough was two or three miles south east into Otonabee, my objective being Burnham's wood. The net result of two days' roaming was 15 species of fern: the Oak and the Bracken, the Silvery Spleenwort and the Lady Fern, the Christmas and the Marsh, the Marginal, Crested and Prickly Shield Ferns, the two Bladder Ferns, the two Onocleas, the Adder's Tongue, and the Virginia Grape Fern. A series of tramps west of the city added 10 more to my local check-list of the fern-flora, viz.: Maidenhair, Narrow-leaved Spleenwort and Goldie's Shield Fern, the New York and the Hay-scented, the three Osmundas, and two more Grape-ferns—the Little and the Ternate. This June, in the intervals of a day's trout fishing south of Bethany, I found another station for the Narrow-leaved Spleenwort and its "*fides Achates*," the Goldie's, besides having the exquisite pleasure of