

the same cause and are consequently very much alike. In both species the fruiting spike is an ordinary frond modified to protect the sporangia. In the Sensitive Fern the pinna of the fertile spike appears as a midrib supporting on each side a row of sessile or berry bead-like capsules, each lobe of the original pinna having apparently rolled in on itself independently; in the Ostrich Fern the pinna shows as a long narrow pod, or more exactly a mid-rib flanked on each side from base to apex by a narrow more or less cylindrical roll or coil; in this case the pinnules have not rolled in on themselves separately, but their presence as distinct pinnules or lobes of the pinna is shown by the coil being cut into segments at short intervals corresponding to the pinnatifid notches of the unmodified pinna. The fruiting fronds of both species develop in July and August; the genus, as we have it, is decidedly moisture-loving, the plants being everywhere familiar objects about wet meadows, swamps and thickets. I say everywhere, but in the Algonquin Park within say 12 miles of headquarters, the Ostrich Fern does not grow; the last time I returned from the Park to Ottawa I spied none of it from the train west of Golden Lake. The Sensitive Fern is reputed a frequent victim of late spring frosts, but I have not found it so "sensitive" in this respect as the Oak Fern, the Marsh Shield Fern or the Cinnamon Fern.

The Ostrich Fern is surely a fern pre-eminently handsome and of tropical splendour; no doubt the *Osmunda regalis* attains a greater height and is more massive, indeed it is often mistaken for a shrub of some kind; but the Ostrich Fern can never be taken for anything other than a fern, its pale green fronds are unmistakable; so, indeed, are the fronds of the Cinnamon and the Interrupted Ferns, which nearly surpass it in size, but what all the *Osmundas* lack in the entire plant, the Ostrich Fern has in matchless sort—symmetry. The plant grows in a hollow crown, a circlet of symmetrical fronds, equidistant, uniform; the fronds grow upwards and outwards for 3 or 4 feet and then curl gracefully away from the centre, their tips curving back in a beautiful arch, they look like giant shuttlecocks or green vases of graceful outline and exquisite workmanship. From the centre of this vase springs later a cluster of short stiff fruiting fronds. I kept a plant of the Ostrich Fern in a large pot one spring; for a week or more, at the time of their greatest activity, the fronds grew nearly 2 inches every 24 hours; by the end of June the fronds were between 5 and 6 feet long. Not only is the whole plant symmetrical, but each frond is a study in proportion. It tapers very gradually to the base from near the top, where it suddenly contracts into a narrow apex of little pinnae or pinnules.