



FIG. 2227. *PTERIS ARGARIA*

celled in beauty, either in form or color, the broad rich silver markings of its large graceful fronds make it an object of attraction to all fern-lovers. It is seldom, however, that a perfectly grown specimen of this fern is seen, as it requires exceptionally good culture to produce a good specimen.

The *Nephrolepis* (Sword fern) gives us several types very useful as house or window ferns. The popular Boston fern (*Nephrolepis Bostoniensis*) is perhaps the most graceful, as well as one of the easiest of culture amongst ferns, its long arching fronds making it particularly adapted for furnishing large jardinières, mantels, etc. *Nephrolepis exaltata* or the true Sword fern is also a useful house or window plant, but is not as robust as the Boston fern. The dwarfier growing types of this fern, *N. cordata compacta*, and *N. philipensis* are useful ferns, but not as enduring or lasting in a house as *N. Bostoniensis*.

Another pretty and useful fern for house

culture and one that until recently has been little seen, either as a house or window plant is the dwarf, dense growing *Aspidium coriaceum* or leather fern, deservedly taking the latter name from the extremely tough texture of its fronds as compared with many ferns. This characteristic enables this fern to resist the bad effects that a dry atmosphere produces on ferns for a much longer period than many others. Its dense, dwarf habit is also another feature that recommends it either for the window or greenhouse, or for house decoration. I have known plants of this fern retain their freshness for a longer period than many house plants such as palms and cordylines, without any extra care being bestowed on them.

The graceful growing *Asplenium bulbiferum* cannot be omitted from the list of ferns suitable for a window or for house decoration, but it succumbs sooner to drought and a dry atmosphere than some of the others I have mentioned. The long spear-like, hard fronds of *Asplenium marinum* (another distinct type of *Asplenium*) makes a most enduring and pretty fern for the house or window and is very easy to grow.

Amongst our native ferns that are espec-



FIG. 2228. *PTERIS CRETICA*