

for this would have brought me past at least two of my favorite haunts in Fernland: a roadside colony of the Hay-scented Fern, and a series of grassy slopes and low knolls in a willow swamp, on which in the short turf are scores of enormous plants of *Botrychium ramosum* (Matricary Grape-fern). But it was not to be, and this, one of the earliest of my all-day fern-hunts, proved curiously typical of the whole season: a promise of sunshine that ended in rain.

In the first week of July I had to report for duty in Toronto, and mark matriculation papers in the arid waste of a Varsity lecture room, while ever and anon the wizard's wand of imagination transformed the bare space into a leafy grove with ferns and orchids unfurling their crosiers and gay bannerets about my desk. On July 25th, a drudge no more, I hurried down to the Yonge Street wharf, and got the fresh lake breeze from the upper deck of a Niagara boat to blow the dust and grime of city haunts away, clear my head of cobwebs, and sweeten my heart for the reception once more of the fair works of nature.

From headquarters at Queenston village next day, before 5 a.m., I went up to the Heights on foot, and then along the electric railway track towards Niagara Glen. This meant 16 hours—an all-day revel—among woods and thickets near the stupendous gorge, or down in the moist, shady glen, within sight and sound of the rushing cataract. It was a glorious day, and on the New Jersey Tea blossoms by my path I found, among scores of insect visitors, several strange beetles of the *Lepura* and *Srangili* genera, besides many little chrysomelians busy at their various food plants. The Glen itself is famous for its flora, and I wandered for hours among the giant growth of Goldie's Shield-fern and Narrow-leaved Spleenwort, past huge boulders wreathed with Walking-leaf and crowned with Polypody, or under cliffs studded with the Purple Cliff-brake and Black Spleenwort. Soon after twelve o'clock I left the last fountain and followed the footpath upstream as far as it went; then I made my way on over loose stones and tangled undergrowth to a grove of hemlock and cedar, where I sat down in silent communion with my favorite denizen of this silvan retreat: a tiny colony of the Ebony Spleenwort. This beautiful fern is far from common, the only other colony of my acquaintance being on the north shore of the Upper Rideau, nearly opposite Sand Island.

It was far on in the afternoon when at last I climbed reluctantly out of this fern paradise by the steep flight of wooden stairs. Having absorbed all the beauties of the wayside on my morning's tramp, I had myself flashed back to Brock's Monu-