

NOTES ON AMERICAN FERNS—V.*

BY WILLIAM R. MAXON.

THE CORRECT NAME FOR THE LITTLE EBONY SPLEENWORT.—At plate 222 in the third volume of the "Icones Plantarum," Sir William Hooker described and figured a diminutive South American fern to which he gave the name *Asplenium parvulum*. This was in 1840. Two years later Martens and Galeotti in their well-known "Memoire sur les Fougères du Mexique" (Mem. Acad. Brux. 15:60. pl. 15. f. 3.) applied the same name to a new species from Mexico which has since been found to have a wide range in our Southern and Southwestern States. Kunze (Linnaea 18:331. 1844.) soon after called attention to the error of the latter authors in their application of the name to a very unlike plant and properly proposed the name *Asplenium resiliens*. Liebman (Mex. Breg. 88. 1849) seems to have been the only writer to follow Kunze's lead, though it appears certain that the latter name must now be taken up. It is to be presumed that even those who agree to priority of specific names only under the "recognized" genus will hardly protest against writing *A. resiliens* Kunze for *A. parvulum* Mart. and Gal.

PHEGOPTERIS PHEGOPTERIS IN CENTRAL NEW YORK.—Mr. House's observation in the last number of the BULLETIN on the occurrence of this species in Herkimer County, New York, recalls a statement made by Dr. Underwood to me that he had collected it at Cazenovia, Madison County, which is only a very few miles from the exact geographical centre of the State. It has been found also at Unadilla Forks, Otsego County, by Miss S. A. Brown; but it must after all be reckoned a rare fern in Central New York. Its rarity is not easily explained, considering the varying topography of the region, the reported abundance of the species in Northern New York and its occurrence at numerous stations further south which are apparently no more favorable to its growth.

MARSILEA UNCINATA IN LOUISIANA.—To Mr. Clute's recent note on finding *M. uncinata* at New Orleans, I am able to add an

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additional record for Louisiana. Specimens in the National Herbarium apparently of this species were collected by Mr. C. R. Ball at Alexandria, Rapides County, May 29, 1899; No. 492. The plant is said to be "common; creeping in ditches."

PHEGOPTERIS ROBERTIANA (Hoffm.) A. Braun.—A letter received from Dr. Ascherson, of Berlin, some time ago called my attention to the fact that Hoffman's *Polypodium Robertianum* was first transferred to *Phegopteris* by Alexander Braun in Ascherson's "Flora der Provinz Brandenburg" (1859). The specific name *Robertianum* was applied by Hoffman on account of the fern's faint odor (*odor debilis*) of *Geranium Robertianum*.

ASPLENIUM EBENOIDES.—There remain in my possession a number of reprints of "Notes on the Validity of *Asplenium ebenoides* as a Species," which I shall be glad to send upon request to members of the Chapter who have not already received copies.

Washington, D. C.

HELPS FOR THE BEGINNER.

VII.—THE SCOURING RUSHES.

No sooner does a tinge of green begin to creep into the vernal landscape than the scouring rushes (*Equisetum*) bestir themselves. Almost as soon as the first flowers are blooming we may find on moist warm banks, especially railway embankments, the inflorescence of the earliest of the species which often occur in such numbers as to give a tinge of its own color to the landscape. These sturdy erect spikes of warm flesh color are familiar to the majority of those who have passed a season in the country, though it is possible many have regarded them as curious fungoid growths not to be associated with the more decorative green fronds that later appear in the same places. These early spikes are not really flowers, although they do bear in the cone-like tips a copious supply of green spores from which the new plants eventually grow.

The scouring rushes, or horse tails, as several of the species are called, are built on a very singular plan. The stems are hollow and made up of short joints, one end