

## Briefer Articles.

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### A BOTANISTS' MECCA.

NOT long ago I was interested in looking over the package of Hart's-tongue, *Phyllitis scolopendrium* (or *Scolopendrium vulgare*, as it is more commonly known) preserved in the D. C. Eaton herbarium at Yale University, to note what a good proportion of our noted botanists have made this fern an object of especial search at out-of-the-way Chittenango Falls, Madison County, New York. There were fronds collected by Dr. Torrey, and others by Clinton in 1863. Some were marked by the familiar initials D. C. E. to indicate the late Professor Eaton's pilgrimage; and still others there were, collected by Dr. Underwood. Indeed, it was the collecting of the Hart's-tongue here and in the Jamesville region nearby that aroused in the latter botanist that interest in fern study which has made it his chosen specialty.

It seemed so likely that Dr. Gray from his home in Oneida County, adjoining, must also have visited the Falls that I was prompted to inquire whether specimens of his collecting were to be found in the Gray Herbarium at Harvard. This proved to be the case; and I have since learned from Mr. G. S. Miller, jr., of at least one visit Dr. Gray made to the Falls in company with the former's grandfather.

The whole region is one of extreme interest botanically, and only last summer a party consisting of Dr. and Mrs. Britton and other members of the Torrey Botanical Club, with Dr. Underwood as guide, paid the Jamesville locality a visit. It was here, too, that Paine made his investigations on the rarity of the fern, in the early '60s; and it is safe to say that many other botanists, besides numerous amateurs, of whose specimens we have not such definite records, have enjoyed similar expeditions.

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### GERMINATION OF THE COCOANUT.

AS THE cocoanut comes to our markets it is deprived of its husk. This husk is of a coarse fibrous structure and covers the nut so thickly that in its original form the fruit is broadly oval, the nut occupying an excentric position with the "eyes" directed toward the stem end of the fruit. In its natural habitat the cocoa palm grows abundantly near the water, and as the fruit falls from the tree it often floats about until it comes to rest in some shallow place and there germinates. The husk not only makes the fruit lighter, but probably serves under any condition by virtue of its absorptive quality to keep the seed more moist and so facilitate germination. Many of the nuts imported in the husk for our work were germi-