

glory. A chapter on 'The Fantasies of Ferns' is unequaled anywhere in fern literature. Not only is the text suited to the person whose mind 'is of the kindergarten order, that needs nice interesting object lessons,' but it will afford real pleasure and some instruction to the professional pteridologist, unless he has lost all sentiment, and love of the beautiful. It will prove a strong corrective for the mania which uproots every pretty, green thing. After reading it none but a confirmed vandal would wantonly disturb a colony of these beautiful plants.

Mrs. Wright's book may easily prepare the amateur for a more particular study of ferns, as suggested in Willard N. Clute's 'Our Ferns in their Haunts' (Frederick A. Stokes Co., New York). This is in fact a popular manual of the ferns of North America north of the Gulf States and east of the Rocky Mountains, and by the aid of an easy non-technical text, good cuts, and many 'half-tone' and colored plates, the subject is made so plain that no one need be without some knowledge of the ferns. It should find a place in the library of every amateur botanist, and it will do no harm to the professional botanist, who may well give it room on his shelves with other helpful books.

Why should not such books as these encourage those organizations which have for their object the cultivation of a love of Nature, and the protection of the native species? The Linnaean Fern Chapter of the Agassiz Association, which has recently issued its Eighth Annual Report (Miss Margaret Slossen, Secretary, Andover, Mass.) is such an organization of mostly amateur students of ferns. What a help such a society may become to the thousands of people who, away from herbaria and museums, desire to keep in touch with the work of others with like tastes. What an inspiration must come from membership in an organization whose members are scattered over the territory from Maine to California, and Canada to Florida and Texas, with one in England and another in far-away New Zealand.

A word may be said here in praise of a new society in Boston and its suburbs, named the 'Society for the Protection of Native Plants.' Its object is 'to check the wholesale destruction to which many of our native plants are ex-

posed.' Every botanist will wish this society the greatest success. Its secretary is Miss Maria E. Carter, Curator of the Herbarium of the Boston Society of Natural History. The urgent need of such a society is apparent not only in the densely populated Eastern States, but fully as much in the western summer resorts, where the hand of the vandal has already exterminated some species.

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THE PRESERVATION OF COLORADO CLIFF DWELLINGS.

THE Colorado Cliff Dwellings Association is endeavoring without aid from the legislature to preserve the ruins which lie on the Mesa Verde, a tableland twenty miles long by eight miles wide, in the southwest corner of Colorado. There are from three hundred to four hundred cliff dwellings including the noted 'Cliff Palace' on this mesa. These are all in the Ute Indian reservation and consequently the state or national government can not control the ruins. A ten years' lease has been made by the Association direct with the Ute Chiefs, by means of which control is had of the Mesa. The Secretary of the Interior having ratified the lease, the Association is now in charge of the ruins, and will open a toll road to them. The money received as toll will, however, be only part of the sum paid to the Indians as rent. The ruins will be kept from weathering and from the depredations of 'relic hunters.'

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PRESENTATION BEFORE THE FACULTY OF CANDIDATES FOR THE DOCTORATE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

THE University of Pennsylvania inaugurated this year what seems to be in many respects an excellent method of recommending candidates for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The usual method, borrowed from the German universities, of examining candidates before the faculty or letting them defend their theses before the faculty is not altogether suited to existing conditions. In Germany it is chiefly a form and appears to be falling into disuse. The