

The Entomological Section.

President—The Rev. Preb. A. P. WICKHAM, East Brent Vicarage, Highbridge.

Recorder—Mr. A. E. HUDD, F.E.S., 108, Pembroke Road, Clifton.

Treasurer—Mr. W. A. BOGUE, F.E.S., The Bank House, Watchet.

Secretary—Mr. H. H. SLATER, Brooke House, Cannington.

THE usual winter meeting was held at Taunton Castle on Thursday, February 17th, 1916. Prebendary A. P. Wickham was unanimously elected President (*vice* Mr. G. B. Coney absent on service), and took the chair, the rest of the officers being re-elected.

Field Meetings were held, at Otterhead on June 22nd (a hopelessly wet day, and nothing done); at Brockley Combe on July 13th; and, in conjunction with the Botanical Section, at Roadwater, for Raleigh's Cross and the Luxborough Valley, on July 27th. They were pleasant gatherings, whatever the weather happened to be, but war-time excursions hardly seem to be the real thing, and are rarely productive—entomologically, at all events. But the season of 1916, owing to its unusually mixed-up climate, beginning with June in January, succeeded by January in May and June, has been one of the worst that any of us remember, all through.

Mr. Charbonnier has been unable—or, more correctly, unwilling—to complete the *Diptera* list for printing this year. He feels certain that so many more species must occur in the

County which have not yet been recorded. Many parts of the County are still unworked, and some of our best workers are away on military service. If any one (including members of the parent Society) could help us to obtain a few enthusiastic young recruits (under military age) we should be very grateful; and if they were willing only to collect bees and flies in their own neighbourhood, they might be of the utmost service.

Our best thanks are due to Mrs. Smyth-Pigott of Brockley Hall, Mrs. Herbert Berthon of Cleve Court, and Mr. R. Brooks-King, for kind permission given to the Section to visit their land. In addition, Mrs. Brooks-King was good enough to entertain some very wet entomologists to tea.

We much regret losing the Rev. S. O. Ridley, one of our best workers, who is no longer resident in Somerset, but remains a member. For the first year since our inception, we have elected no new members in 1916.

The Ornithological Section.

President—The Right Hon. LORD ST. AUDRIES.

Recorders—Miss AMY SMITH, The Mount, Halse, Taunton;
and Dr. J. WIGLESWORTH, Springfield House, Winscombe.

Secretary and Treasurer—Mr. GEORGE HISCOCK, Cyprus Terrace, Taunton.

THE Annual Meeting of the Ornithological Section was held at Taunton Castle on March 9th, 1916, when the officers were re-elected. Progress was reported in the formation of a collection of Somerset Birds' Eggs.

In April typewritten copies of "Notes on Somerset Birds (chiefly 1915)," drawn up by the Recorders for the Western and Eastern parts of the county respectively, were sent to the members of the Section.

In the Brean Down Bird sanctuary the Ravens had a successful breeding season last spring, three young having been reared and having been seen well on the wing along with their parents by one of the Recorders on May 5th. The Peregrines, however, were not so fortunate, as, though the birds nested in the usual site, the watcher, Mr. Hawkings, reported that they failed to bring out any young.

Records of the Little Owl continue to be received showing that this bird is well established in the county. The Rev. Preb. Wickham reports one as having been captured by a farmer in the neighbourhood of East Brent last January; Mr. F. A. Bruton saw one emerge from a hole in a tree near Hutton, in June; and Mr. R. O. de Gex had a nesting site under observation for about a month last spring in an old oak tree, about three miles from Clifton, but this nest was subsequently harried.

An interesting event was the occurrence of the Black Tern at Blagdon lake on April 26th, on the evening of which day Mr. R. O. de Gex had three specimens of this rare bird under observation for about half an hour.

A Shag was shot at Winscombe on the afternoon of November 9th whilst sitting on the roof of a house. It proved to be a young bird of the year. The rarity with which this strictly marine species ever ventures inland makes the occurrence worthy of note, but apart from this there are but few records of the bird having been obtained in the county, although there is reason to believe that it is more common than has been thought.

The additions to the Museum Collections include a Puffin found dead in a "snow box" on the roof of Dinder Church, 5th January, 1916; a Cormorant shot on the River Tone at Taunton, 2nd October, 1916; and a Scaup-duck (male) shot at the Warren, Minehead Without, 8th December, 1916.

A Wigeon (young male) was shot on the lake at Orchard Portman on 12th September, 1916, and will be presented to the Museum by Mr. W. H. Rendell when set up.

The stuffing of the pair of Ruddy Sheldrakes shot at Porlock in November, 1915 (previously reported upon), has been completed this year.

Mention should also be made of the two large cases containing Ducks shot by the late Colonel Bethune Patton on the Slapton Ley, South Devon, 1900-1; these were presented by Mrs. Patton this year.

Several Somerset Birds' Eggs, mentioned in the list of Museum acquisitions, have also been added during the year.

(This report was drawn up by Dr. J. Wigglesworth and Mr. H. St. George Gray; Miss A. Smith has been too busy with war work to send in any notes.)

The Botanical Section.

President and Recorder—The Rev. E. S. MARSHALL, F.L.S.,
West Monkton Rectory, Taunton.

Secretary and Treasurer—Mr. W. D. MILLER, Cheddon, Taunton.

THE annual spring meeting was held at Taunton Castle on Tuesday, February 22nd, 1916, the Rev. E. S. Marshall, President, in the chair. There was a fair attendance of members. The accounts for the previous year were passed, showing a balance in hand of £7 3s. 0d. It was decided to devote a portion of this amount to the purchase of Kerner and Oliver's *Natural History of Plants*, and to the fitting of additional cabinet accommodation.

Field-days were arranged for June 8th, July 6th, and July 27th,—Stear Point and Island, Moors and Canal, and Raleigh's Cross being provisionally fixed for the meetings.

Contributions in kind to the Herbarium were announced from the President, Miss Livett, Mr. H. S. Thompson, and Mr. H. Slater, and the Secretary was asked to notify members that well dried specimens, if sent to Mr. T. W. Cowan at the Castle, would be very acceptable.

The Secretary also referred to leaflets received in connection with the cultivation of medicinal plants, and the collection of *Sphagnum* for hospital dressings.

In accordance with the resolutions of the meeting a good second-hand copy of Kerner and Oliver's *Natural History of Plants* has been added to the library, and a total amount of £6 10s. 3d. has been spent on cabinet work. There is now ample Herbarium space for some time to come, and the cupboards have been raised from the floor. Mr. Cowan has done a great deal of work in this connection, and, after the donors, it is thanks to him that the collection is becoming an orderly and valuable one.

It was not found possible to reach Steart Island on June 8th; and a comparatively small number of botanists met at Burnham for a pleasant, though not very productive day.

On July 6th some twenty members and friends met at Edington Junction, and examined the adjacent area of the

peat moor. Time was limited by the railway service ; but flowers were profuse and beautiful, and some interesting notes were made.

Against the last meet at Raleigh's Cross on July 27th—held in conjunction with the Entomological Section—the impossibility of finding transport, the great heat, and various other fixtures combined to militate. The county botanical divisions, Nos. 1, 2 and 3, meet at this spot ; and the geology and physical geography of the neighbourhood should provide a rich field for investigation. Unfortunately only eight members and friends were able to be present, and no notes of first-rate importance have been received.

Field-days have thus been, and must be, valuable chiefly as opportunities of intercourse between botanists. It must not, however, be supposed that the year has been barren of botanical results.

A very considerable amount of work has been done by the President, and others ; and notes of interest have been received from Lady Davy, Messrs. Norman G. Hadden, H. Stuart Thompson, F.L.S., W. Watson, E. J. Hamlin, H. Slater, and several others. This is a considerable advance on previous years, and members are cordially invited to report any observations they make either to the President or the Secretary. There is little difficulty in selecting records of particular interest ; and a valuable note may be lost through the possible diffidence of members in submitting their results.

Among a very large number of notes received, the following may be selected for this report :—

2. *Teesdalia nudicaulis*. Porlock Hill, roadside. N. G. Hadden. Particularly interesting, in view of the fact that many hours' search failed to detect it in its only other recorded Somerset station.

1, 3, 6. *Viola epipsila*, varieties and hybrids. W. P. Hiern, and E. S. Marshall. Previously unrecorded for the county.

8. *Stellaria palustris*, the non-glaucous form (and intermediates). Edington Junction. W. Watson. New for Somerset.

2. *Trigonella ornithopodioides*. Selworthy Green. N. G. Hadden.

8. *Anthyllis vulneraria*. Burnham. E. S. Marshall. A form peculiar in the spreading villosity of the calyx and its generally bicolorous character ; heads and corollas small.

2. *Vicia lathyroides*. Minehead Warren. N. G. Hadden. Remarkable that it should have been previously overlooked.

1. *Hieracium grandidens*. Railway cutting, near East Anstey. E. S. Marshall. New for Somerset. Abundant on Sheepwash Hill, Devon, about five miles distant.

1. *Hieracium mutabile*, Ley. Banks of the Barle, etc., near Dulverton. E. S. Marshall. New for Somerset.

1. *Campanula latifolia*. By the Barle, near Dulverton Station. Mr. Marshall sees no reason to suspect this considerable patch of plants of being introduced. So far, however, it has not been recorded from higher up the stream.

2, 3, 6. *Mimulus moschatus*. This plant seems to be spreading, like *M. Langsdorffii*. Apparently it is usually unscented, when growing wild.

2. *Leucojum aestivum*. Near Porlock. N. G. Hadden. A considerable distance from any houses. New for Somerset, as a wild plant, and a westward extension of range.

2. *Allium Ampeloprasum*. Porlock Marsh. N. G. Hadden. The parent station on Steep Holm practically overhangs the sea, and seeds or bulbs may often reach the mainland thence.

2. *Asplenium septentrionale*. Old walls near Porlock. N. G. Hadden. A very welcome persistence.

1. *Polypodium Phegopteris*. By the Barle, below Simonsbath. Lady Davy.

Among Liverworts Mr. Watson records *Jubula Hutchinsia* and *Trichocolea tomentella* as of special interest. In addition the County Divisional lists have been freely-enriched, and numbers of additional stations have been recorded.

Messrs. H. Slater and E. J. Hamlin have noted about a dozen aliens at Bridgwater Docks and Cannington Park, doubtless imported in connection with the mule depôts in that district. Mr. White, in the *Flora of Bristol*, included a large number of aliens from Portishead Station yard ; but none of these plants can claim more than a passing notice among the flowers of Somerset.

As previously mentioned in these notes, the President pub-

lishes annually a fairly exhaustive notice of Somerset finds in the *Journal of Botany*.

With respect to the cultivation of medicinal plants, the Secretary has had considerable correspondence with the Organizing Secretary of the National Herb-growing Association, Mr. C. E. J. Walkey, Staplegrove, Taunton, who would welcome further enquiries. A determined effort is being made by this Association to revive the growth and organized collection of medicinal herb plants. Local committees have been, or are in process of being formed. Botanists who have an œcological knowledge of the flora of their own neighbourhood would be able materially to assist such committees; and the cultivation of plants, valuable from a national point of view, might appeal to many gardeners.

The thanks of the Section are due to the members of the Burnham and Berrow Golf Club for permission to botanize on the links.

It has not been found possible under present circumstances to embark on fresh activities; but the membership of the Section is well maintained, and there is plenty of work to be done on the old lines.