

The Entomological Section.

President—Mr. W. MACMILLAN, Castle Cary.

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

Secretary—Mr. H. H. SLATER, Stawell, Bridgwater.

IT is hoped to make a start in the next volume of *Proceedings* with a new list of the Insects of the County—not of Butterflies and Moths alone, but of as many orders as possible—in view of the numerous and interesting additions made since the publication of the *Victoria County History*, vol. I. Geographical and other details will be added.

This notice is intended to induce all working entomologists in the county to prepare the necessary material, and any suitable information should be forwarded to Mr. Alfred E. Hudd, 108, Pembroke Road, Clifton. County specimens to authenticate new records should be available for inspection when required, and they might afterwards (unless their return is particularly requested) form part of the projected County Type Collection at Taunton Castle.

The Entomological Section was able to arrange only one field-day in 1910, on the Turf-moor, by kind permission of Captain B. A. Warry, on Whit-Monday, May 16th. This was very successful and enjoyable, and much that was interesting came under the notice of the party. That this was the only gathering is due to the small number of ladies and gentlemen who have so far joined the Section, and also to the fact that many of the members can very seldom get away for a whole week-day, except on Bank-holidays. Moreover, the train services make access to many of the more interesting and least worked parts of the county a matter of considerable difficulty, leaving very little time, when the spot has been

reached, for work, before the return journey has to be undertaken.

Workers amongst the less popular orders of insects are very much needed. If those who are interested, and wish to help, but have no special knowledge, nor even a wish to go so far as to make a special study of the subject, would collect material and forward it to the Hon. Secretary, it would certainly be of use, and might lead to important additions to our lists, as the specimens collected could be placed with authorities and worked out by them. Seeing what an immensely important bearing the study of entomology has upon agriculture and horticulture, it is hoped that this may induce some leisured persons generally interested to render assistance.

The Proposed Ornithological Section.

Secretary pro. temp.—Mr. JAMES TURNER, Doverly Down, Porlock.

THE object of this Section, which was suggested at a meeting held at Taunton Castle on July 4th, 1910, is that an effort should be made to keep the history of the bird-life of the county up to date.

It may be remembered that the first ornithologist to place these records on a permanent footing was Mr. Cecil Smith, of Lydeard House, near Taunton, who in 1869 published his work on "The Birds of Somersetshire." Then, in 1893, the Rev. Murray A. Mathew issued in the *Proceedings* of this Society a supplemental and revised list of the birds of the county, bringing their history so far as possible up to date.*

In 1901, the Rev. F. L. Blathwayt, of Doddington Rectory, near Lincoln, wrote an interesting and valuable article on the physical features of Somerset as they affect the habits, migra-

* An addenda to Mr. Mathew's list was written by Mr. H. St. B. Goldsmith (*Proceedings*, XL, ii, 152-4).

tion and occasional visits of various species, which was published in Vol. I of the *Victoria County History of Somerset*. In the three undermentioned distinct physical portions of the county various and very different species of birds can be relied upon as residents, or as migratory visitors, or as rare and accidental wanderers:—(1) The seventy miles of sea-board of the Bristol Channel, with its island of the Steep Holms, and the cliffs of Brean Down, Minehead, and Culbone; (2) the great levels of mid-Somerset, but a few centuries ago a huge morass subjected to floods and tides; and (3) the three high ranges of hills within the county—the Mendips to the eastward, the Blackdowns on the south, and at the western extremity the table-land of Exmoor with its miles of solitude and its deeply-wooded spurs.

Mr. Blathwayt included in his article a carefully-compiled list of the Birds of Somerset numbering 258 species—a work of great research. He has kindly presented our Society with an interleaved copy of this list with recent and additional notes.

It is hoped that a Section will be formed representative of different portions of the county, and that the members will bring together their own personal experience, notes, and observations, both of the past and in the future.

It should be remembered that throughout the county there are many private collections, consisting sometimes of only a case or two, among which can be occasionally found rare specimens that should be placed on record. This is a detail which members of the Section might undertake in their respective districts. But one difficulty always arises. It is very frequently found that no mention of when and where the bird was killed is attached to the case; so that the record cannot be admitted in the county list, unless some independent note as to capture is available.

The Secretary will be glad to hear from those who take an interest in this subject, and who will be prepared to assist by

becoming members of the Section. It is suggested that the Section should meet at least once a year at Taunton Castle, to place on record fresh occurrences relating to the county's bird-life.

The Botanical Section.

President—The Rev. Preb. G. E. SMITH, Langford, Bristol.

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

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

SINCE the publication of "The Flora of Somerset," by the late Rev. R. P. Murray, nothing of special importance on the botany of the county has been recorded in the *Proceedings* of our Society; and many of the members feel strongly that time and opportunity are rapidly passing. Even during the last few years many alterations have been made which have influenced the local flora. These changes should be recorded. The increase of population, the growth of towns, the draining of the marshes, and the destruction of plants by ruthless collectors, all tend to the extinction of species, and have considerably impoverished our county from a botanical point of view.

In order to counteract this to some extent, it has been considered advisable to make an endeavour to bring Somerset botanists into closer touch with each other, in order that their work and observations may be occasionally published and thus be made available for the general good. With this object in view, a meeting was recently held at the County Museum, when there was a fair gathering of local botanists, under the chairmanship of the Rev. Preb. G. E. Smith, of Langford. Amongst those present were:—Dr. H. J. Alford, Taunton; Mr. H. Corder, Bridgwater; Mr. T. W. Cowan, F.L.S., Bishop's Hull; and the Rev. E. S. Marshall, F.L.S., West Monkton. After considerable discussion of a most interesting

description, it was decided that those present should form a sub-committee for the purpose of gathering information, recording progress in local botanical research, and bringing the floral records of the county up to date.

The Rev. Preb. G. E. Smith was elected as President, and it was decided to ask the Rev. E. S. Marshall, of West Monkton, to act as Recorder, and Mr. W. D. Miller, of Cheddon, to act as Secretary. (This they have consented to do). The Section must rely on the assistance of the members of the Society generally, as well as that of others who are interested in nature study, in order that, from time to time, local discoveries made and results arrived at may be duly recorded in the *Proceedings*.

It is highly desirable that any unpublished notes of importance relating to the county should be forwarded to the Recorder, in order that they may be considered by the Section.