The Botanical Section

President and Recorder—W. WATSON, D.SC., Cedene, Cheddon Road, Taunton.

Secretary and Treasurer—T. L. GREEN, B.SC., F.R.E.S., Taunton School.

Committee—

C. J. BARTLETT, N. G. HADDEN, E. J. HAMLIN, F. K. MAKINS, B.A.

THE thirty-second Annual Meeting was held at Taunton Castle on Thursday, 7 May 1942. The President, Dr. W. Watson, was in the chair, and despite war-time conditions there was a representative attendance. The Hon. Secretary and Treasurer was unable to attend as he had been transferred to an Officer Cadet Training Unit and owing to his military duties tendered his resignation. This was regretfully accepted and the meeting expressed appreciation of his services to the Botanical Section during the previous three years. Mr. T. L. Green, B.SC., F.R.E.S., of Taunton School, was elected to fill the vacant position due to Mr. Kenyon's resignation. Other existing officers were re-elected. The balance sheet showed a balance in hand of £7 15*s.* 6½*d.*

The President said that copies of the Report, which had been considered by the Committee and which would be printed in the *Proceedings*, would be circulated to members as soon as the off-prints were available. The Wild Flower Table in the Taunton Public Library had been maintained, and the President had been helped in this work by Mr. Priske and other members. Despite considerable difficulties several field days had been held, and not only were they well attended but they also had been productive of good results. The South-Western Naturalists' Union was not holding meetings during the year, but it was decided to continue the subscription to this Union if necessary. A point of interest and of importance arose in discussion of the fact that the lists of Somerset Cryptogams were very scattered except so far as bryophytes and lichens were concerned. To remedy this it was considered advisable to make an attempt to collect and tabulate the relevant records and references. There was also some discussion on books now in possession of the Section, and the Committee was instructed to purchase such

others as they thought advisable. Mr. Corder promised to present a copy of Gibbons's *Flora of Essex*. Some field diaries compiled by the late General Frith were exhibited, which showed, over a period of several years, records of wild flowers and their dates of flowering. Mrs. Frith passed certain other books into the hands of the President for use by members of the Society or other interested people. A further exhibit was of plants, some fresh and some which had been mounted for the herbarium during the past year.

Turning to the question of a programme for field meetings in the coming summer the President referred to the probability that transport problems would be even more acute, but said that he was anxious that the usual expeditions should be undertaken if possible. This attitude was warmly supported by the members present and it was suggested that Minehead, Winscombe, Croford, Somerton and Adcombe would be suitable localities, finishing with a Fungus Foray in October.

Field Meetings in 1942 ;

The suggestions made at the meeting of 7 May were put into operation and a series of meetings arranged in the field. The season itself was a little unusual because of climatic conditions which had delayed many plants past their usual flowering time. Thus the President noted that on 1 March, when one expects to find about thirty plants in flower in this district, he was able to find but one species in flower. The ash was not in leaf until much after the oak, and a further point of interest was that the number of samaras produced was much lower than usual. The Secretary also noted this late start of the flowering season and found that it affected a great number of species and was still a marked feature as late in the year as the beginning of July.

16 May.—Mr. Hadden conducted a party from the West Somerset Branch of the Archæological and Natural History Society over Minehead Warren, which was attended by representatives of the Botanical Section to whom the expedition had been made open. Considerable interest was taken in the peculiar flora, especially in *Trifolium suffocatum* and *Stellaria Boræana*. The latter, the small apetalous chickweed, appeared to be much more abundant than usual.

11 June.—A very small party visited Croford and was rewarded by seeing a magnificent display of Monkshood in flower.

18 June.—Mr. Bartlett conducted a party to Adcombe. Ten members were present, who were joined by the Biology Mistress and some girls from Bishop Fox's School. In welcoming them the Secretary pointed out that not only would the girls concerned derive benefit from such field work, but so too would the Section, because contacts established in this manner should help to build up future membership. The country visited lay on Lower Lias and Rhætic formations and consisted of woodland, marly pastures and wet heathland. In the woods the Tway-blade Orchid was abundant and many other flowers of interest were seen, including Herb Paris, Butterfly Orchid, Hairy St. John's Wort, Wood Spurge and *Carex pendula*. In boggy places Bog Pimpernel, Stonewort, *Orchis prætermissa*, *Pedicularis palustris* and *Chara vulgaris* were seen. Several species of *Carex* were abundant and some hybrid forms were noted. On the pastures *Ophioglossum vulgatum* was found.

2 July.—Miss M. Ashby conducted a party over ground in the Winscombe area which, though it had provided many of the plant records in Murray's *Flora of Somerset*, had not previously been visited by a Botanical Section field expedition. Interest centred chiefly on Max bog and adjoining fields, where the pasture land was found to include a peculiar mixture of heath and marsh plants. Pepper Saxifrage, Sawwort, Wood Betony, Dyer's Weed, *Triodia decumbens* and *Festuca elatior* being often fairly closely associated with Ragged Robin (sometimes white flowered), Brookweed, Creeping Jenny, Bog Pimpernel, *Orchis prætermissa*, *O. elodes*, *Gymnadenia conopsea*, *Sium erectum* and *Juncus obtusiflorus*. Many sedges, including the Flea Fledge, were seen.

18 July.—Mr. Hamlin proved an excellent leader on an expedition to Edington, where the usual bog plants were seen and where the uncommon *Ranunculus Lingua* and *Nasturtium sylvestre* were also found.

23 July.—Mr. Makins led a party to Copley Wood and adjoining regions near Somerton. The old locality for *Althea hirsuta* and *Anagallis cærulea* was overgrown, but some plants of the former were noted on a ride at the margin of the wood.

In another ride several patches of *Monotropa* were seen. Other plants of interest were Fiddle Dock, Good King Henry, *Chenopodium polyspermum* and *Cnicus eriophorus*.

30 July.—The President conducted a small party along the River Tone and the Canal starting from the G.W.R. Goods Warehouse. Previously the weather had been very wet but the expedition was rewarded with an afternoon of brilliant sunshine and the party was enabled to enjoy to the full the luxuriant vegetation of the river and adjoining pools.

The visit to Uphill planned for *3 September* had to be cancelled.

3 October.—In company with members from the West Somerset Branch a joint Fungus Foray was held in the woods at Dunster on a bright sunny afternoon. A large number of fungi of various shapes and colours were found, most of which were named by Mr. Hadden. They included various species of *Russula*, *Boletus* and *Hydnum*, and two poisonous species of *Amanita*, the Scarlet Fly-cap and the Panther-cup, were seen. A gelantinous fungus with spines, *Tremellodon*, was found and proved to be a new record for the district.

The following articles written by our members or referring to Somerset botany have been published during the past year :

Sandwith, C. I., ' Bristol Botany in 1941 ', *Proc. Bris. Nat. Soc.*

Watson, W., ' Notes on British Aspicilias referred to in Magnusson's Monograph on the *Aspicilia gibbosa* group ', *J. of Bot.*, 1942, 74–76, and review of the same work, *ibid.*, 78–80. ' Notes on Lichens in the Herbarium of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, III ', *Trans. Bot. Soc. Edinb.*, vol. xxxiii, Pt. iii, 1942. ' Notes and Addenda in Lich. S.W. Wiltshire with T. F. G. and A. E. A. Dunston ', *Wilts Arch. and Nat. Hist. Soc. Mag.*, vol. xlix, 526–533.

Recorder's Notes

The bracketed numbers refer to the ten divisions into which Somerset was divided by Murray. Where the plants are recorded by members of the Committee initials are used. Divisional or vice-county records are starred.

Papaver Lecoquii Lam. (8) Beacon Hill, Mendip. *C. and N. Sandwith. Bristol Botany in* 1941.

P. Rhœas var. *strigosum* (Boenn.). (2) Staple near St. Audries. *E. J. H.*

Stellaria Holostea L. ' A pretty form with the petals deeply lacinated with narrow lobes was found by Mr. Ivor Evans near Keynsham. In this form, which has occurred elsewhere in England, the lobes themselves are sometimes so deeply divided that each petal has four narrow subequal segments in its upper half ', *ibid.*

Poterium Sanguisorba L. ' A curious " hen and chicken " form of proliferation, with numerous small heads of flowers rising on peduncles from main heads, was found by Mr. Ivor Evans on a roadside at Failand ', *ibid.*

Rosa obtusifolia form *concinna* (Baker) W.-Dod. (3*) This is not the var. *tomentella* (Lem.) Baker, which also occurs in the Taunton district, as it has leaves which are uniseriate and has few or no subfoliar glands. The hispid peduncles place it under *f. concinna*. The typical form of *R. obtusifolia* is without hispid peduncles and also occurs in the same district, but no member of the *obtusifolia* (or *tomentella*) group is at all frequent there.

Pimpinella major Huds. (10*) Bannerdown Hill, Bath, *see* W. D. Miller's county diary, collected by him on 6 July 1926.

Astrantia major L. This appeared in a Taunton garden where it certainly had not been intentionally planted. It had probably been accidentally introduced with other plants. *R. A. Priske !*

Cichorium Intybus L. A few plants of the wild chicory in a field at Perry Green, Wembdon (3) struck me as unusual in this district. *E. J. H.*

Leontodon hispidus L. A form with the involucre glabrous or almost so was noted at Churchstaunton (6). A similar form from Winscombe (9) is mentioned in *Brist. Bot. in* 1941.

Monotropa Hypopitys L. A number of flowering plants were noticed on a ride in Copley Wood in July. There is a record in Murray's *Flora of Somerset*, ' 5 or 7. Near Butleigh Monument in 1880. *J. Morland* '. This probably refers to the same locality. The ride is certainly in division 5. So far as known the bird's nest has not been seen in this area since 1880.

Euphorbia platyphyllos L. (8) Near Street. *E. F. Payne.*

Centunculus minimus L. (10*) Near Nettlebridge. *C. and N. Sandwith. Brist. Bot. in* 1941.

Scirpus sylvaticus L. (3) Cannington. *E. J. H.*

Carex lævigata Sm. (10*) Near Nettlebridge, *ibid.* Some doubts are cast on the Axbridge record in our Report for 1935. The specimen was verified by me. It was said to have been collected near Axbridge, and, though the locality seemed an unlikely one for the species, I had no other reason for doubting the accuracy of the collector's statement.

Glyceria declinata Breb. (9*) In boggy ground below Tyning's Farm near Shipham, *ibid.* There are a fair number of records of this for S. Somerset (v.c.5), but the Mendip record is apparently a new vice county record for N. Somerset (v.c.6).

Molinia cœrulea var. *viridiflora* Lej. (6) Near Forches Corner, Blackdown Hills.

Phalaris arundinacea var. *picta* L. Uphill, probably a throw-out or escape from a neighbouring garden.

CRYPTOGAMS.

The moss dissected out from the peat deposits near Edington is not *Paludella squarrosa* as stated in our Report for 1941. It has now been identified as *Meesia triquetra* Aongstr., a moss which is fairly frequent in N. Europe, but has not been found as a living plant in this country.

The foliose liverwort, *Lophozia Floerkii* (W. and W.) Schiff. has been found by Mrs. Sandwith on the turf-moor at Shapwick! It is a new vice-county record for v.c. 6.

LICHENS.

Evernia furfuracea f. *scobicina* (Ach.) Crombie. Crowcombe. This form has not been previously recorded for the county. It has the surface studded with cylindrical projections and often occurs where the type is present.

Platysma pinastri (Scop.) Nyl. Unexpectedly found on pine, at an altitude of about 600 feet, Ham Wood, Dunster. New to the county. It is a lichen which one usually associates with higher altitudes and more boreal conditions.

Acarospora smaragdula (Wahl.) Hav. On shingle, Blue Anchor. New to the county. With caustic potash the thallus becomes a very distinct red. Similar specimens collected some years ago on the Blue Anchor shingle did not

give a red coloration and were doubtfully referred to *A. scyphulifers* in Lich. Somers. I have little doubt that they belong to *A. smaragdula*, but the katabolic substance had not been produced in sufficient quantity or condition for causing the red coloration when caustic potash solution was applied.

Pertusaria globulifera (Turn.) Nyl. Pitminster. The species, as used in a broad sense is common, but the Pitminster plant is the one which has been taken by Erichsen to represent the type.

P. Henrici (Harm.) Erichs. On elm, Holway near Taunton.

Xanthoria polycarpa (Ehrh.) Oliv. On elder above Blagdon (v.c. 5).

Physica pulverulenta f. *subpapillosa* (Cromb.) B. de Lesd. On elm, Holway near Taunton. This is a form which has not previously been recorded from the county.

Stereocaulon coralloides Fr. On the face of a sea-wall, Blue Anchor. It was rather unexpected to find a *Stereocaulon* at such a low altitude, especially as specimens of this genus are rare in Somerset.

Leptogium plicatila (Ach.) Nyl. On wall, Norton Fitzwarren.

Arthonia pruinata (Pers.) Steud. Blagdon near Taunton.

Calicium quercinum var. *lenticulare* (Ach.) Nyl. Near Greenaleigh Farm, Minehead.

FUNGI.

Agaricus comptulus. Fr. Taunton. New for Somerset.

Entoloma lividum Bull. Staplegrove and Pyrland near Taunton.

E. sericeum Fr. On lawn. Taunton. New for v.c. 5.

Hypholoma velutinum (Pers.) Fr. Taunton, *teste A. A. Pearson.*

Lepiota gracilenta Kromb. and *L. excoriata* Schaeff. Near Taunton.

Lactarius torminosus Fr. Bridgwater, *E. J. H., teste A. A. Pearson.* New to v.c. 5.

Naucoria tabacina DC. and *N. tenax* Fr. Taunton. Both new for Somerset.

Panus torulosus (Pers.) Fr. Staplegrove, *teste A. A. Pearson.* New for Somerset.

Tremellodon gelatinosus Pers. Dunster, *N. G. H.* New for Somerset.