

The Botanical Section

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

Secretary and Treasurer—J. H. DAVIE, B.SC., PH.D., F.L.S.

Committee—

C. J. BARTLETT, N. G. HADDEN, E. J. HAMLIN, F. K. MAKINS, B.A., F.L.S.,
Miss A. MILLER, and H. S. THOMPSON, A.L.S.

THE twenty-eighth Annual Meeting was held at the Wyndham Hall, Taunton Castle, on 17 March 1938, Dr. Watson, President, in the chair. Fifteen members were present, and apologies for absence were received from others. The minutes of the last meeting were read by the Secretary and confirmed.

The Secretary and Treasurer's report showed that the Section was in a flourishing condition, the field days having been well attended and more frequent than in previous years. The balance at the bank and in the hands of the Treasurer was £8 17s. 8d. All the officers were re-elected, and Mr. F. K. Makins, B.A., F.L.S., of Bruton, was added to the Committee.

The question of field days produced much discussion, and various places were suggested. Several members offered to be responsible for the arrangements of some of the expeditions. Final and detailed planning was left in the hands of the President and Secretary.

A discussion on the participation of members in the collection of data on some botanical problems was of interest, but only one or two were willing to help in this 'association' work.

The President was thanked for his work in fitting-up the exhibits of Somerset plants for the revolving stand in the Great Hall, and any further expenses were authorized.

The purpose and condition of the Sharpham Moor Plot were considered, and a grant of 10s. towards its upkeep was given.

The purchase of a copy of A. Wilson's *Flora of Westmoreland* was decided on, and the inspection of the specimens provided by members brought an interesting and profitable meeting to a close.

For the first excursion to Burnham on 19 May Miss Miller proved an excellent leader, and a party of more than thirty members and friends will remember with pleasure their walk over the sand-hills. Most of the interesting plants of this habitat were noticed. Among the rarer ones: Birdsfoot, *Trigonella* (sometimes called Fenugreek), Spring Vetch, Dame's Violet and Star of Bethlehem were noted. Miss Miller kindly entertained the party to tea at the Manor Hotel.

Mr. and Mrs. Parry led the party which met at Curry Rivel on 28 May over the old drove where a few spikes of the Mouse-tail still lingered. The flora of the neighbouring peat-moor was examined, after which the limestone escarpment was climbed. On this the Pyramidal Orchid, the Yellow Rock-rose and other plants were noted. The Purple Gromwell was frequent, but only one patch with profuse flowering was seen. In the more shaded parts flowering seemed to be almost inhibited.

The South-Western Naturalists' Union provided a most interesting programme at Cheltenham on 3-6 June, which some of our members, who were able to attend, much appreciated.

Mr. Hamlin was the efficient leader of the party of twenty-four who met at Aller on 18 June. Among the plentiful Orchids on the Lias escarpment were not only the Spotted, but also the Pyramidal, Bee and Butterfly. Of great interest were the Wild Liquorice (*Astragalus glycyphyllos*), and the Leafless Vetch (*Lathyrus Aphaca*). Their popular names are not quite definite, for liquorice is not obtained from the former, and the name of Wild Liquorice is sometimes given to the Rest-harrow; whilst the 'leafless vetch' appears to possess distinct leaves. Other interesting plants observed were the Hoary Cress, Purple and the Corn Gromwells, Wood Vetch, Sainfoin, the handsome and very prickly Woolly-headed Plume-thistle, and Good King Henry.

Sixteen members met at Clevedon, 30 June, under Dr. Davie's guidance. Among the plants noticed at Clevedon were *Trifolium striatum*, the Ivy Broomrape, Medlar, and *Reseda lutea*. Remarkable was the abundance of Fiddledock, which appeared to hybridize freely with other docks. The yard at Portishead yielded, as of old, a number of alien plants.

On 7 July a large party explored Britty Common, near Castle Neroche, under Dr. Watson's leadership. Despite very wet weather the ardour of the party was not allowed to suffer. Most of the British carnivorous plants occur on the common, including three Sundews, and *Pinguicula lucitanica* with its pale pinkish flowers. Marsh Orchids were in fine bloom, and other plants of special interest noted were the Lesser Skullcap, Bog Pimpernel, Bog St. John's-wort, Bog Asphodel, Water Purslane, and various Sedges.

A field day was held at Charlton Mackrell on 21 July, and was led by Mr. F. K. Makins. *Bupleurum rotundifolium*, *Campanula hybrida*, *Galium tricornis*, *Vicia gracilis*, *Carum segetum*, *Valerianella rimosa* and *Avena fatua* were the most interesting weeds found among the wheat and oats—a remarkable series. In adjoining clover fields were *Cuscuta Trifolii* (growing on *Medicago lupulina*), *Melilotus arvensis* and *M. alba*, and in a lane the party saw plenty of the uncommon *Astragalus glycyphyllos* as well as the blue Chicory.

A Fungus Foray in Horner Woods, Exmoor, was led by Mr. N. J. Hadden on 1 October, and was attended by a few of our members.

STEEP HOLM. On 29 May this island was visited by a miscellaneous party of botanists and ornithologists. Miss Miller has kindly written an account of the trip which is as follows. 'Our party numbered almost 60, their ages ranging from 18 to 84, so it became a responsibility shepherding them all, without accident, along the wet planks on to the five motor-boats chartered to take us across. Mr. Harry Cox, lessee of the island, accompanied the party, and at his direction the boatmen made a complete circuit of the island, before disembarking us. This enabled the ornithologists to see the Cormorants' nesting-sites at close quarters, and showed the tunnel through the cliffs at the seaward end to advantage. Being recommended to leave our heavier impedimenta on the beach, we suddenly became aware of several clutches of gulls' eggs laid amongst the great pebbles at our very feet.

'A single plant of *Asplenium marinum*, far out of reach above our heads, and the leaves of *Pæonia corallina* hanging out of the rocks higher still, were noted. Mr. Cox pointed out a few

plants of *Plantago maritima*, var. *Sabrina*, known only in the British Isles from Steep Holm. Later we found it growing abundantly at the western end. For once there was immature blossom on the wild Leek, *Allium ampeloprasum*, but the Peony was very disappointing, only three flowers remaining, and the pods were not yet much developed. The azure-blue variety of Scarlet Pimpernel, Sea Storksbill, and other plants of somewhat local occurrence were observed.

'Many gulls' nests were scattered over the short turf beside the path, some containing eggs of such different sizes, colours, and markings as to suggest that two different kinds of gull had chosen to occupy the same nest. Very few smaller birds were seen: a blackbird, a robin, and a couple of wrens, a flock of homing pigeons, and of course the pair of peregrines which live in safety on Mr. Cox's Bird and Flower Sanctuary. Our thanks go out to our kindly host for a most enjoyable adventure.'

The following notes refer to some of the more interesting plants observed in 1938 or not previously noted for the locality in our reports. Where the plants are recorded by members of the committee initials are used. A new record for the division is starred. A note of exclamation signifies that a specimen has been verified by the Recorder.

Viola Lloydii Jord. (3) Rowford near Taunton. W. W.

Papaver Rhæas var. *strigosum* (Bœnn.) (5)* Near Somerton.
E. J. H.

P. Lecoquii Lamotte. (5) Near Aller. E. J. H.

Sisymbrium Sophia L. (8) Bruton (a casual). F. K. M.

Camelina sativa Crantz. (2) Allotments, W. Porlock. N. G. H.

Lepidium Draba L. (5) Somerton and Aller. E. J. H.

Dianthus Armeria L. (8)* Bruton. F. K. M.

Silene noctiflora L. (2)* Near Washford! H. D. Badcock,
1937.

Stellaria Borœana Jord. (9) Steep Holm! F. K. M.

Spergularia salina var. *neglecta* (Syme). (2) Minehead. W. W.
(9) Clevedon. Miss Livett, 1904.

Geranium molle var. *grandiflorum* Vis. Flowers about 11 mm. diam. Common some years about Pyrland and Upper Cheddon, near Taunton, in late autumn when the season is an open one. It seems to be merely a state. Its large

flowers appear on plants which, earlier on, had normally sized ones. Later the flowers are fewer and, when climatic conditions are favourable, the food supply is well maintained and the flowers are larger. W. W.

Genista anglica L. (2) Near Langcombe Head, Exmoor. N. G. H.

Lotus uliginosus var. *glabriuscula* Bab. (3)* Cothelstone. W. W.

Vicia angustifolia var. *Bobartii* Koch. (5)* Aller. W. W.

Trifolium procumbens var. *majus* Koch. (9)* Clevedon. W. W.

Pyrus Aria Ehrh. A woolly-leaved form of this was gathered by Miss Livett between Portishead and Charlescombe Bay (9). It was put in her herbarium under form *lanigera* Kerner but this is a *nomen nudum*. W. W.

Inula crithmoides L. (9) Steep Holm! A. M. Although this plant has been known to occur on the island since 1733 there was no specimen in the herbarium. Miss Miller collected one in September and it has been mounted.

Chrysanthemum segetum L. (2) Cornfield, Windwhistle, Treborough. H. D. Badcock!

Centaurea solstitialis L. (2) W. Porlock. N. G. H.

Erythraea capitata Willd. (9)* Crook Peak. F. K. M.

Veronica anagallis aquatica var. *anagalliformis* (Bor.). (9)* Bleadon and Weston. W. W.

Chenopodium rubrum L. (9) Steep Holm! A. M.

C. glaucum L. (8)* Highbridge! F. K. M. (9) On the road-verge, Brent Knoll Station! E. Rawlins and A. M.

Luzula multiflora var. *congesta* Lej. (2)* Holford. This is not an uncommon form but had not been mentioned previously in these notes as occurring in the division. It has been known from the locality for many years and Mr. Thompson informs me that he found it there in 1922. W. W.

Melica uniflora Retz. (5)* Aller. W. W.

The following aliens, which have been named at Kew, are recorded by Mr. Makins.

Glaucium corniculatum Curt. (8) Sidings at Evercreech Junction.

Camelina sagittata Crantz. (5) Sidings at Bridgwater.

Lepidium virginicum L. (8) Bruton. (9) Portishead.

Ambrosia trifida L. (5) Sidings at Bridgwater.

The following moss is new to the county :

Pottia viridifolia Mitt. Near Kingston in v.c. 5*. W. W.

The following lichens were collected and named by Dr. Watson. The numbers 5 and 6 refer respectively to the botanical vice-counties of South (West) Somerset and North Somerset.

Parmelia caperata var. *subglauca* Nyl. (5)* Lydeard Hill.

First record for the British Isles.

P. revoluta var. *rugosa* Cromb. (5) Lydeard Hill. Recorded for v.c. 5 in Watson, *Lich. Som.*, but no locality was given.

Aspicilia calcarea form *monstrosa* Lamy. (5)* Quantoxhead. (6)* Purn Hill and Cheddar.

Lecidea crustulata form *ferruginea* Kremp. (5)* Near Brendon Two Gates. First record for British Isles.

Pertusaria amara form *isidiata* Harm. (5)* On tiles, Nailbourne near Taunton. Rupestral forms of this species occur at Upper Cheddon and Staplehay (5).

P. communis form *polycarpa* Boist. (5)* Buncombe. (6)* Cleeve Combe. New record for British Isles.

Psora ostreata Hoff. (5)* Near Kingston. New county record.

Biatora mutabilis (Lee). (5)* Buncombe near Taunton.

I. M. Lamb and W. W. (6) Leigh Wood, D. A. Jones.

Allarthonia patellulata (Nyl.) Zahl. (5)* On holly, Combe St. Nicholas.

Dermatocarpon lachneum (Ach.) A.L. Sm. (5)* Curry Rivel.

D. insulare (Mass.) Migula. (5)* Near Taunton.

Leptogium massiliense Nyl. (6)* Goblin and Cleeve Combes, Cheddar.

L. fragile (Tayl.) Nyl. (6)* Ebbor Gorge, Cheddar, Cleeve Combe, Steep Holm.

Verrucaria relecta Zsch. has not yet been recorded for our islands. A plant corresponding to its description was found in a brook at Triscombe (5)*. Another *Verrucaria* from siliceous stones, more-or-less embedded in soil over White Lias, at Orchard Portman (5)*, agrees fairly well with *V. fusca* Pers. and may be the form *inchoata* Arn.

Normandina pulchella var. *sorediata* Mer. Sand Bay, Weston (6)*. This specimen is more sorediate than those to

which the varietal name was originally given. *N. pulchella* varies much in regard to soredia, and I should not give the plant a higher status than that of a form. W. W.

The following articles and notes referring to Somerset botany or written by our members were published in 1938 :

Mrs. Sandwith. 'Bristol Botany in 1937', *Proc. Bristol Nat. Soc.*

G. H. Heath, L. C. Luckwill and O. J. Pullen. 'The Heath Association on Blackdown, Mendip'. *Proc. Bristol Nat. Soc.*, 348-364. The area had been under frequent observation since 1925. 'The Rooting Systems of Heath Plants', *Journ. of Ecology*, vol. xxvi, no. 2, 1938, pp. 331-352.

H. S. Thompson. 'Notes on Melville Island Flowers', *Proc. Bristol Nat. Soc.*, p. 365. 'Drosera and Butterfly', *Journ. Bot.*, p. 86.

W. Watson, 'Note on flowering time of the Red Whortleberry', *Journ. Bot.*, p. 24; Obituary notice of Alex. Zahlbruckner, the eminent lichenologist, *Proc. Linn. Soc.*, 1937-8, p. 346.