The Entomological Section

President—Captain E. PAGE, M.C., Ivythorn Manor, Street, Som.
Treasurer—Mr. C. J. PERRENS, 8, Park Road, Bridgwater.
Secretary—Dr. J. V. BLACHFORD, C.B.E., Milverton Ho., Long Ashton, Bristol.

THE Annual Meeting of the Entomological Section was held at Taunton Castle on Tuesday, 16 February 1937 ; the President, Captain E. Page, M.C., in the chair.

Mr. A. R. Hayward showed two beautiful specimens of *Aristotelia divisella* taken on the Turf-moor on 28 June 1936. This is an extremely rare insect and does not appear to have been noted before outside the Cambridge and Norfolk fens.

Mr. R. Beck exhibited a very interesting series of illustrations of the varieties of marking on the elytra of the two-spotted ladybird, *Adalia bipunctata*, showing every gradation from a yellow elytron with one black spot to one black with one yellow spot.

Unfortunately we have to report the death of Mr. G. D. Hancock which took place last September. He was one of the older members who took a keen interest in all the proceedings of this Section.

NOTES BY A. R. HAYWARD

There is very little to report in the way of new County records for 1937,—a disappointing year from the collecting point of view.

Two records from previous years, not hitherto identified and noted are :—

Recurvaria nanella Hub. Taken by G. B. Coney at Batcombe in July and August 1934.

Pthorimaea semidecandrella Threlfall. On Brean sand-hills by myself, 7 July 1935.

IN 1937.

Laspeyresia scopariana H-S. Taken by Mr. Weddell in Asham Wood on 25 April.

This very local and much appreciated species was, when Meyrick's last *Handbook* was published, only known from

localities in Lancashire and Surrey. In 1935 I came across it accidentally in Dorset, just over the Somerset border, and have since been unsuccessfully trying to find it in this County, where it probably exists as the food plant, *Genista tinctoria*, is abundant. It is probably not such a rarity as has been thought, and owing to its early appearance on the wing has been overlooked.

The writer also took :

Depressaria rotundella Dgl., Haselbury Park, 30 April.

Bactra furfurana Haw., Shapwick, 1 July.

I am able to confirm the identification of *Aristotelia divisella* Dgl., first taken in this County at Shapwick on 28 June 1936, having had the good fortune to take two more on 1 July 1937.

In the report of the Entomological Section for 1936, Mr. W. W. Macmillan reported the capture of *costalis*. This is presumably *Pyralis costalis* Fab., and apparently the only records for the County previously, are one at Batcombe by G. B. Coney in July 1936 and another at Seavington, also in 1936, by T. Hole. I do not think this species has been mentioned in any previous report.

Notes from Bridgwater District for 1937,

by C. J. Perrens

From the entomological point of view the seasons seem to go from bad to worse. Nobody could say that 1936 was a good year, and 1937 was definitely worse.

There was a marked scarcity of common insects possibly due to the excessively wet spring which must have drowned many hybernating larvae and rotted the pupae.

At Shapwick the flooding was the worst for over thirty years and persisted well into April. There were very few specimens of the common *Taeniocamps* at sallow, and the scarcity of insects was very marked the whole year.

The weather in May was too cold for successful night work, and it was not until June that any good insects were taken. A warm night early in the month, at the brick ponds near Bridgwater, produced six *Spilosoma urticae* at the sheet and a fair number of common insects.

A few specimens of *Colias edusa* were noted in July but none later.

Noctua ditrapezium was taken at Holford at the end of July. It is sad to see how the bracken is ousting the heather on parts of the Quantocks.

In early August *Spilodes palealis* was taken at Butleigh at light. This insect had been previously recorded from the County near

Taunton, but the record was a little doubtful, and it was satisfactory to have it confirmed from a fresh locality.

One or two nights with light in early August at Butleigh were quite interesting and the following species taken are worthy of mention: *Zeuzera pyrina*, *Ephyra pendularia*, *Cleara glabraria*, *Drepana binaria*, and *cultraria* as well as many more common species.

The *Vanessas* were unusually scarce and no *C'album* were noted.

The ivy perhaps was a little better than last year. Several *Xylina semibrunnea*, and *X. socia* were seen, quite a number of *Xanthia aurago*, and a few *Calocampa vetusta*.

The writer of these notes collected in various parts of the country last year, and was forced to the conclusion that Lepidoptera were more scarce in Somerset than in the other localities he visited.

Dr. Blachford hunted the ivy at Long Ashton on several evenings, when he saw nothing of interest but a few *Oxyacanthae* and one or two common *Noctuae*.

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.,
Taunton School, Taunton.
Committee—C. J. BARTLETT, N. G. HADDEN, E. J. HAMLIN, Miss A. MILLER,
and H. S. THOMPSON, A.L.S.

The twenty-seventh Annual Meeting was held at the Wyndham Hall, Taunton Castle, on 18 March 1937, Dr. Watson, President, in the chair. The minutes of the last meeting having been read and confirmed, the president spoke of the loss sustained by the deaths of Dr. H. Downes and Mr. D. A. Jones.

After the election of officers it was reported that there was a balance in hand of about £8. The details of arrangements for field days were left to the president and secretary.

The first excursion was led by Dr. Watson on 13 May to Minehead Warren, where a party of over twenty spent a most enjoyable afternoon on the stabilized sand and shingle of the coast. Much interest was taken in *Trifolium suffocatum* because of its power of growing where it seems in imminent danger of being suffocated by the sand. This clover, like many other sand plants, forms a long root and spreads out its leaves so that the shifting sand grains are carried over them. Many other uncommon plants such as *Silene conica*, the Conical Campion, *Erodium moschatum*, Musky Storksbill, *Moenchia erecta*, Erect Pearlwort, *Ornithopus perpusillus*, Birdsfoot, *Trigonella ornithopioides*, Trigonella, and *Vicia lathyroides*, Spring Vetch.

The South-Western Naturalists' Union held their annual meeting at Taunton from 14–17 May. Many of their meetings were attended by some of our members.

On 29 May members had the privilege of visiting Steep Holm, through the kind permission of Mr. Harry Cox and under the leadership of Miss Miller. A single plant of *Asplenium marinum* was seen and other plants discovered were

Plantago Coronopus var. *Sabrinae*, *Erodium moschatum*, *Anagallis foemina*, *Allium Ampeloprasum*, the latter, supposedly wild, seemed to be growing in an old garden. Several plants of *Paeonia mascula* were in flower. Members who were ornithologists spent a most interesting day watching Comorants nesting and young Gulls hatching from the egg in the heat of the mid-day sun.

On 10 June a visit was paid to Thurlbear under the direction of Mr. C. J. Bartlett who showed us many interesting plants of the calcareous marl such as *Erythraea Centaurium*, *Blackstonia perfoliata*, Perfoliate Yellow Wort, Eyebright, *Satureia Acinos*, Basil Thyme, *Linum catharticum*, Cathartic Flax, and many St. John's Worts. The district was particularly rich in orchids, the following being found, *O. pyramidalis*, *O. maculata*, and its white form *O'Kellyi*, *Neottia Nidus-avis*, *Listera ovata*, *Habenaria virescens*, *Ophrys apifera*, and a late bloom of *O. mascula*. Dr. Watson pointed out the very luxuriant growth and unusually fine colour of *Polygala valgaris*, the Milkwort. Several members commented upon the fact that this year, both in the district visited and in other areas, plants usually found were not visible. It was suggested that the very heavy early spring rain may have been the limiting factor.

On 17 June there was a joint meeting of the B.E.N.A. at Watchet, led by Dr. Watson. A few of our members attended and studied the interesting biological and geological features of the district.

On 8 July Miss Beviss conducted a party to Bewley Down where the usual range of interesting bog plants were encountered, viz. *Radiola linoides*, All-seed, *Narthecium ossifragum*, Bog Asphodel, *Hypericum elodes*, Bog St. John's Wort, *Scutellaria minor*, Lesser Skull-cap, *Anagallis tenella*, Bog Pimpernel, *Pinguicula lusitanica*, Western Butterwort, which had increased somewhat. All three types of Sundew were plentiful, and in addition *D. obovata*, which is a hybrid of *rotundifolia* and *anglica*. Orchids were fairly common, though perhaps it was a little late to see them at their best. Those discovered were *Habenaria bifolia*, the Lesser Butterfly, and *O. elodes*, the Spotted Heath. *Rhyncospora alba*, the White-beaked Sedge, was plentiful.

On 24 July, fifteen members met at Catcott Burtle and explored parts of Catcott Heath under the leadership of Mr. Hamlin. Some of the rhines were full of *Utricularia* and *Hydrocharis*, and other plants noticed included *Ranunculus Lingua*, which has spread considerably in the last few years, *Veronica scutellata*, *Sparganium simplex*, *Sagina nodosa*, *Rhamus Frangula* and *Triglochin palustre*. After tea at the Burtle Inn several members visited East Huntspill where *Althea officinalis* was in flower.

A field day was held at Bruton on 17 August, led by Mr. F. K. Makins. *Senecio sarracenicus* was seen in full flower on the banks of the river Brue, near Cole Station, and also *Dipsacus pilosus*. On the outskirts of Bruton were masses of double-flowered *Saponaria officinalis* growing on the river bank, and known to have been there many years. On Creech Hill a number of flowers of *Campanula patula* were seen, and also *C. glomerata*, *Gentiana amarella* and *Asperula cynanchica*. In a corn field were *Linaria Elatine*, *L. spuria*, and white *Prunella vulgaris*.

A fungus foray was conducted by Mr. N. G. Hadden in the woods around Horner on 9 October. The long, dry summer and autumn had not been at all favourable to the development of fungi; no species was found in any abundance except *Armillaria mellea*, the destructive Honey Agaric. About sixty species showing quite a good range of form were found, though none of them were really uncommon and all had previously been recorded for the district.

Dr. Watson has continued his good work on the examination, naming, and numbering of the herbarium at Taunton Castle.

Recorder's Notes

Several plants could be considered as new records for the vice-county in which they have been recently found, if the evidence did not point to their recent introduction. *Polygonatum multiflorum*, the Solomon's Seal, shown by Mr. H. D. Badcock to occur at Roadwater as mentioned in the report for 1936, consists of one large spreading plant, and is considered by him to have been a garden outcast. A single plant of *Althaea hirsuta* was found at Watchet in 1936 by Miss Wyndham. This is known from North Somerset, v.c. 6, and its occurrence

at Watchet in v.c. 5 may be due to the conveyance of a seed in a vasculum from its Copley Wood locality or to some other casual incident. In 1936 and 1937 specimens of *Thlaspi perfoliata*, collected by Mrs. Croker Fox, were sent from Corfe. This plant has not been previously noted for Somerset, and must be considered to be an introduction of recent date. The occurrence of *Saxifraga granulata* found by Miss Ellen at Horner is considered to be a similar case. From N. Somerset v.c. 6, Mr. Makins reports *Campanula latifolia*. It is usually considered to be a northern plant, though it has been recorded and accepted from v.c. 5. Mr. Makins considers that it is an introduction of recent date into Cogley Wood.

The following refer to some interesting plants noted. When initials are given they refer to the member of the Committee responsible.

Nasturtium amphibium var. *variifolium* D.C. (10)* Bath. *W. W.*

Reseda lutea L. (10) Frome. *W. W.*

Althaea officinalis L. (8) Casual at Bruton. *F. K. Makins.*

Trifolium squamosum L. was not visible at all on the *inner* side of the sea-bank between Highbridge and the mouth of the Brue in June 1937, though it extended some 200 yards along the outer side of the bank or sea-wall. *H. S. T.*

Spiraea Filipendula L. (8) A robust, squat and slightly fleshy form on sand at mouth of R. Parrett, near Burnham. A couple of dozen plants in this unusual habitat. Many plants of *Orobanche minor* and some of Yellow Rock Rose were near. The site gives some indication of looser soil having been brought there within the last few years. *H. S. T.*

Saxifraga granulata L. (10) Extremely fine and abundant on the E. bank of narrow lane near Chew Magna ; not one plant on the W. bank. *H. S. T.*

Epilobium adenocaulon Hausskn. (9)* Portishead Dock, 1936. New to v.c. 6. *N. Y. Sandwith* and *J. P. M. Brenan.*

Oenanthe pimpinelloides L. (2) Watchet. *W. W.*

Caucalis daucoides L. (3) Charlinch (herb. Gapper).

Hieracium Lachenalii Gmel. (10) Bath. *W. W.*

Senecio squalidus var. *leiocarpus* Druce. Examples of this alien ragwort with glabrous fruits are in herb. Taunton. They were collected near Clevedon by Miss Livett.

Nepeta hederacea (L.) Trev. (10) Plentiful and persistent with pure white flowers near South Stoke, Bath. *Ivor Evans.*

Epipactis palustris Sw. (4)* Sent to me from Hardington near Yeovil. *W. W.*

Potamogeton trichoides Cham. et Schl. (9)* Near Weston-super-Mare, 1934. *Miss M. Taylor,* det. *W. H. Pearsall.* See *Rep. B. E. C.* 1934 (1935). 'New to the district and to N. Som. It is to be hoped that this record of a rare and critical species will be confirmed.'

Carex evoluta Hartm. (8) As it is believed no flowering spikes of this rare sedge have been seen since 1932 at Sharpham Moor Plot (one of its few known localities in Europe), it is feared the plant is dying out. Fewer flowers or fruits of *C. filiformis* L. (*C. lasiocarpa* Ehrh.) have also been seen during the past two seasons. *H. S. T.*

Carex Hudsoni Ar. Benn. (9) Very sparingly in a rhine on Walton-in-Gordano moor, 1936. *C.* and *N. Y. Sandwith.* Identified by E. Nelmes at Kew. This is the second station ln N. Somerset for this local species.

Bromus lepidus Holmb. (10) Old quarry near Twerton-on-Avon, 1936. This is the correct name for the grass described by I. A. Williams in 1929 as *B. brittanicus. C.* and *N. Y. Sandwith.*

Gastridium lendigerum Gaud. Given for Minehead on my authority in Marshall's *Supplement.* It had been previously collected there by Miss Gifford in 1867, see specimen in herb. Taunton. *W. W.*

The following articles referring to Somerset botany or written by our members were published in 1937 :—

Mrs. Sandwith. 'Bristol Botany in 1936', *Proc. Bristol Nat. Soc.*

W. Watson. '*Plantago lanceolata* var. *anthoviridis* Wats.,' *J. of Bot.*, 231–233; 'Harold Downes', *Proc. Linn. Soc.*, 191–92, Pl. 4,—an obituary notice of one of the Committee of the Bot. Sect. and some years ago a familiar figure at our meetings; 'Obituary notice of D. A. Jones', *ibid.*, 196–7 (also in report of *Brit. Bryol. Soc.*, 1936, 392–4); 'Lichens of the Totnes district', *Trans. Brit. Mycol. Soc.*, Oct. 1937.