

The Botanical Section.

President—MR. J. W. WHITE, F.L.S.

Committee—DR. H. DOWNES, F.L.S., MR. N. G. HADDEN, Miss I. M.

ROPER, F.L.S., MR. H. S. THOMPSON, DR. W. WATSON, A.L.S.

Secretary and Treasurer—MR. W. D. MILLER, Cheddon Fitzpaine, Taunton.

THE annual general meeting was held at the Museum, Taunton Castle, on January 29th, 1923, Mr. J. W. White, F.L.S., President, in the chair, when the usual formal business was transacted. Miss Roper and others presented herbarium specimens, and Dr. Downes a copy of Thurston and Vigur's Supplement to Davey's "Flora of Cornwall."

The Essex Field Club presented a large number of herbarium specimens, chiefly from Somerset, collected about a hundred years ago by Dr. Southby, *olim* Gapper, of Bridgwater. These have been examined by Dr. Watson and the Secretary, and a selection has been forwarded to Mr. Cowan for mounting and adding to the Museum herbarium. Unfortunately the majority of the sheets are not worth preserving, even from the historical point of view.

On March 9th, an informal expedition was made by several members of the Section and friends. The party visited Stogumber and Minehead Warren. No discoveries were made, but the status of *Galanthus* and *Leucojum vernum* were considered, and *Chrysosplenium alternifolium* and other interesting early flowers were noticed in bloom. While it is reasonable to look with a certain degree of suspicion on the status of the Snow-drop beside streams, the plants growing in the thicket above Stogumber Station have every appearance of being native.

A field day was held in conjunction with the Entomological Section on June 12th, to the Polden Hills. Though a little rain fell in the afternoon, a few botanists, chiefly from Taunton and Bridgwater, employed a pleasant day in walking from Cossington and Edington Stations to Ashcott Inn, where tea was provided, and the return to Bridgwater was made by motor. A thoroughly typical lias flora was observed, somewhat unrelieved by finds of distinction, the less common plants

noticed including *Lathyrus aphaca*, *Habenaria viridis*, and *Lithospermum arvense*. The flora was in a backward state, and sedges were not conspicuous, few species being noticed on the Poldens. The Bee Orchid was in great abundance. The thanks of the Section are due to Colonel B. A. Warry for permission to botanize on his land.

Much time and care had been spent in preparation for a meeting at Dulverton in July on a scale rather more ambitious than usual. Unfortunately this meeting was so little supported that it had to be abandoned.

A field day to Athelney and the moors was held on August 14th. The party spent some six hours in examining the rhines while walking from Athelney Station in a circular route towards Boroughbridge, and over Salt Moor and North Moor to Bankland Farm, and thence back to Durston by the canal bank. Generally the long drought had partially dried the ditches, and burnt brown the fields and roadsides. The rhine flora was past its best, Carices, Batrachian Ranunculi, etc., being quite over, but the remnants of many interesting ditch plants were observed, among those noticed being *Sparganium neglectum*, *Ceratophyllum demersum*, *Utricularia vulgaris*, *Stellaria palustris* and its non-glaucous form. *Trifolium fragiferum* was abundant in many places. From several previous visits these ditches appear particularly rich in water crow-foots, and might repay closer attention. Tea at Durston concluded a pleasant ramble.

Thanks chiefly to the encouragement and financial aid of Mr. A. G. Tansley, F.R.S., Mr. H. S. Thompson has collected sufficient donations to purchase a small enclosure of peat between Glastonbury and Ashcott Station, and to vest it in the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves. The idea was firstly to save from destruction by further peat cutting the rare sedge *Carex evoluta*, which is not known elsewhere in Britain, and secondly to secure the land with its varied surface for experimental purposes and ecological study. The field is to be known as the "Sharpham Moor Plot." A strong local committee of management has been formed and funds are still needed for its upkeep. Mr. C. Hunter, M.Sc., The University, Bristol, will act as honorary secretary.

In August a careful investigation was made by Mr. Thompson of the present vegetation of Steart Island and Point. The result of his observations, which are largely ecological, appear in the *Jour. of Bot.*, Jan., 1924. The article ends with a reference to further changes on Berrow Flats and in their vegetation.

Messrs. G. Bell and Sons have published during the year a "Readable School Botany" from the pen of Dr. Watson.

Over three hundred notes have been added to the Card Index during the year, and a selection from these follows:—

Viola riviniana, Reichb., var. *pseudo-mirabilis*, Greg. (5) Near Moorlinch. *Miss Roper*.

Stellaria palustris, Retz. (4) Muchelney Ham. *H. Downes*.

Sagina maritima, Don. (2) Steart Island. *H. S. Thompson*.

Malva pusilla, Sm. (4) Tintinhull. *H. Downes*.

Erodium neglectum, Baker & Salmon, in J. of B., 1920. (9)

Sand dunes, Berrow. *W. Watson*. *E. cicutarium* var. *glandulosum* previously recorded from this locality is probably this segregate.

Rhamnus catharticus, L. (4) Martock; Sock Dennis, Ilchester. *H. Downes*.

Trifolium striatum, L., var. *erectum*. (3) Gotton, Taunton. *W. Watson*.

T. scabrum, L. (4) Ham Hill. *H. Downes*.

Melilotus arvensis, Wallr. (8) Well established beside river pathway between Burnham and Highbridge. *Lady Davy*.

Callitriche truncata, Guss. (8) Sharpham Moor. *H. Thompson*.

Trinia glauca, Reichb. fil. (9) A monoecious specimen on Purn Hill, Bleadon. *C. and N. Sandwith*.

Caucalis latifolia, L. (3) Garden weed, West Monkton. *W. D. Miller*.

C. daucoides, L. (3) New road, Cheddon. *Miss Miller*.

Doronicum pardalianches, L. (10) By the Chew, Chew Magna. *Miss I. M. Roper*.

Hypochaeris glabra, L. (9) Purn Hill, Bleadon. *C. G. Trapnell*.

Taraxacum palustre, D. C. (3) Huish Champflower; Staple-grove; Langford Heathfield. *W. Watson*.

Senecio squalidus, L. (9) Wall on Tickenham Hill. *C. and N. Sandwith*.

Anagallis foemina, Mill. (5) Charlton. *Herb. Gapper*.

- Lithospermum purpureo-caeruleum*, L. (3) Woodside below Curry Rivel Monument. Possibly Ray's station. Locally called "Myrtle." W. D. Miller.
- L. arvense*, L. (3) Cornfield between Hillfarrance and Nynehead. (8) Cornfield at Cossington. W. D. Miller.
- Cuscuta trifolii*, Bab. (2) Field near Hartrow Brake, Elworthy. N. G. Hadden.
- Verbascum virgatum*, Stokes. (8) In two or three spots on the sandhills at Burnham. (9) Site of old glassworks, Nailsea. C. and N. Sandwith.
- Mentha pubescens*, Willd. (10) A patch by the Chew, Compton Dando. C. and N. Sandwith.
- M. rotundifolia*, Huds. (3) Spaxton. Herb. Gapper. (4) Wadeford, near Chard. W. Watson.
- M. piperita*, L., var. *vulgaris*, Sole. (9) This rare variety has reappeared in good quantity near Clevedon with *M. longifolia*, presumably in David Fry's station, where it was reported in 1915 by C. Bucknall. See *Jour. of Bot.*, Feb., 1918.
- M. rubra*, Sm. (9) Nailsea Drove. C. and N. Sandwith. (4) Ditch on roadside above Staple-Fitzpaine. W. Watson.
- Leonurus cardiaca*, L. (2) Bossington. Same station as noticed in 1913. Has apparently escaped previous record. W. D. Miller.
- Teucrium chamaedrys*, L. (5) Charlton. Herb. Gapper, c. 1830.
- Scleranthus perennis*, L. (3) There is an atypical plant from Spaxton so named by Gapper in his herbarium.
- Chenopodium ficifolium*, Sm. (10) Beautiful specimens in allotment ground at Ashton Gate. C. and N. Sandwith.
- C. urbicum*, L. (3) Roadside between Taunton and Cheddon, W. Watson.
- Polygonum minus*, Huds. (5) Turf Moor. Herb. Gapper, 1832. Confirming Sole's 1782 record which Murray bracketed.
- Salicornia dolichostachya*, Moss. (2) Southern shore of Steart Island. H. S. Thompson.
- Rumex maritimus*, L. (4) Thorney Moor. H. Downes.
- Urtica dioica*, L., var. *angustifolia*, Wimm. & Grab. Taunton School grounds. W. Watson.
- Spiranthes autumnalis*, Rich. (2) Watchet Hill. W. Watson. (3) Creech St. Michael. Miss Hicks.

- Orchis hircina*, Crantz. (8) Burnham. Miss Stewart.
Sparganium neglectum, Beeby. (3) Rhine between Borough-
 bridge and Durston. R. D. R. Troup.
Wolffia arrhiza, Wimm. (8) Edington. E. J. Hamlin.
Potamogeton Drucei, Fryer. (10) In the Avon at Bath. In
 flower 1922. J. W. White. In fruit 1923. H. S. Thompson.
Carex pairaei, F. Schultz. (4) Ham Hill, Martock. H. Downes,
 teste A. Bennett.
C. goodenowii, Gay, var. *chlorostachya*, Druce. (8) Catcot
 Drove. W. Watson.
C. riparia, Curt. \times *acutiformis*, Erhr. (3) Rhine near Borough-
 bridge. W. D. Miller.
Agrostis alba, L. var. *coarctata*, Hoffm. (9) Dune marsh with
Epipactis palustris, Berrow. W. Watson.
Cynosurus echinatus, L. (8) Railway siding, Highbridge.
 W. D. Miller.
Bromus unioloides, H.B.K. (4) Roadside near Martock Station.
 H. Downes.
Lycopodium selago, L. (1) Winsford Hill, with *L. alpinum*.
 Both very scarce. W. D. Miller.
Chara fragilis, Desv., subsp. *delicatula*, Braun. (3) Rhine,
 Northmoor. Miss I. M. Roper.

Though doubt has been expressed as to its origin, the discovery of *Orchis hircina* in Somerset must rank as an important factor in the year's work, and—if Gapper's identification of *Scleranthus perennis* is accepted (and the limited material perhaps confirms it)—another species is thus added to the County flora. Botanists will also have heard with interest of the discovery in Scotland by Lady Davy of *Carex microglochis*, new to the British flora.

Mention may be made of the visit of the British Mycological Society to Bristol in April. The Society visited Ashton Court, Cleve Combe and Wrington Warren with satisfactory results.

The list of members circulated during the year has been reduced to 55, by the death of one member and the resignation of three others.

The Section continues to benefit by the herbarium work of Mr. T. W. Cowan, F.L.S., to whom a debt of gratitude is due.

The Microscopical Section.

President—H. DOWNES, M.B., F.L.S., The Grange, Martock, Somerset.

Committee—Lt.-Col. J. W. GIFFORD, F.R.A.S., Oaklands, Chard,
and WALTER WATSON, D.SC., ASSOC.L.S., Taunton School, Taunton ;
together with the President and Secretary.

Secretary and Treasurer—C. R. KILLICK, M.B., Tower Hill, Williton.

ONE meeting has been held during the year at which the business of the Section was arranged ; several members brought their microscopes and exhibited specimens. The Section has spent its surplus funds in the purchase of books for the Society's Library, and the sum of £2 2s. 0d. was voted for the binding of volumes of the Royal Microscopical Society's *Journal* from the year 1908.

The following books have been purchased and, if required by members of the Section, can be obtained from the Secretary :—*The Microscope*, Cross and Cole ; *Coles' Critical Microscopy* ; *The Microscope*, Conrad Beck ; *The Microscope*, Lewis Wright.

A small cabinet was purchased for a suggested collection of slides at the Museum, and Mr. F. G. Dowell undertook to take charge of them.

The Section has joined the South-Western Naturalists' Union and it is hoped that by means of this society assistance may be obtained in directing the work of members.

C. R. KILLICK.