

The Botanical Section

President—W. WATSON, D.S.C., A.L.S.

Committee—H. DOWNES, M.B., N. G. HADDEN, E. J. HAMLIN,
Miss I. M. ROPER, F.L.S., and H. S. THOMPSON, A.L.S.

Secretary and Treasurer—W. D. MILLER, Audrey, Burnham-on-Sea.

THE Annual General Meeting was held at the Castle, Taunton, on 5 May 1932, Dr. Watson, President, in the chair. After the minutes were read, and the accounts passed, it was decided to subscribe 10s. to the Sharpham Moor Plot and 6s. to the S.W.N. Union. In connection with the former Mr. Thompson presented a balance sheet, and expressed the view that considerable expenditure on ditching, etc., would eventually be necessary. Discussion ensued as to the possible planting of threatened species in the plot. On the proposition of Mrs. Barnard the Committee and Officers were re-elected. Mr. Gray proposed, on behalf of the publishing Committee of the parent society, that the Section should contribute towards the cost of publication of the report in the *Proceedings*. This was fully discussed, and it was decided to give a donation of £2 for the current year.

A number of interesting specimens were exhibited, including *Anemone nemorosa* var. *caerulea* from near Truro, *Geum intermedium* from Dulverton, and three forms of *Primula elatior* from Saffron Walden and the continent. A vote of condolence with the Secretary on his illness was proposed by Prebendary Pring and carried. On Mr. Corder's motion a vote of thanks to the Committee for the preparation of the report was carried. It was decided to hold three or four field days, places suggested being Brean Down, West Hatch, Shapwick and Holford.

On 9 June a party of nineteen visited Brean Down and observed the rich flora, the white rock-rose being in beautiful bloom. The members then returned to Burnham and inspected the many interesting plants in a small rockery at Mr.

and Miss Miller's house, where tea was kindly provided. Afterwards some members visited a neighbouring garden whilst others paid a short visit to the sand dunes. Aided by beautiful weather the afternoon was a very enjoyable one.

A field day took place at Thurlbear on 23 June, nearly forty members and friends—including students from Bishop Fox's and Taunton Schools—taking part. By kind permission of Viscount Portman the fields and woodlands near Thurlbear Church were visited. Plants noticed were *Helianthemum Chamaecistus*, *Genista tinctoria*, *Lathyrus Nissolia*, *Oenanthe pimpinelloides*, *Viburnum Opulus*, *Listera ovata*, *Orchis pyramidalis*, *O. maculata*, *Ophrys apifera*, *Gymnadenia conopsea*, *Habenaria chloroleuca*, *Poa nemoralis* and many others. Tea which was taken at Stoke Inn concluded a very pleasant and successful afternoon.

On 21 July a small party of twelve visited Shapwick, where throughout the summer the flora is always worth seeing. Special mention may be made of the quantity of *Galium Vailantii*, which was noted in a potato patch near Canada Farm, and persists in a patch of cultivated ground near the station. *Radiola* and young *Osmunda* were seen in plenty. Dr. Watson also detected an unusual hybrid Willow-herb *E. montanum* x *tetragonum*. The Bladder-worts were not flowering, though *U. vulgaris* was seen at a later date in some quantity.

Owing to the absence from home of both the President and Secretary, it was found impossible to arrange the meeting at Holford, fixed for 9 August.

Though the season was an open one, and flowering plants matured well and lasted till late in the year, no observations of outstanding interest have been reported. There follows a short selection from the considerable list of entries which have been added to the card index:—

- Adonis annua* L. (10) One plant at Frome station-yard. *H. Arathoon*.
Camelina sativa Crantz. (8) Highbridge sidings. *W. D. Miller*.
Lychnis Githago Scop. (2) Watchet. Waste ground near the dock. Apparently casual or recent introduction. *W. Watson*.
Euonymus europaeus L. var. *leucocarpus* DC. (5) Near the monument above Street. The cream coloured capsules of

this extremely rare variety were sent to H. S. Thompson, who was informed later that the small bush had been lifted by the original finder.

Lathyrus Aphaca L. (5) Lane near Long Sutton. *Miss Reynolds* and *J. E. Clark*.

Peplis Portula L. (9) Abundant in horse pond between Longbottom Farm and Shipham. *H. S. Thompson*.

Galium Vaillantii DC. (9) Portishead; potato patch near the station; a weaker growth, amidst *Erysimum cheiranthoides*, than on the peat moor. New for (9). *H. S. Thompson*.

Chrysanthemum segetum L. (2) Watchet. Apparently casual. *W. Watson*. Rare and fugitive in Somerset. Abundant and persistent in many parts of Scotland.

Vaccinium myrtillus L. (2) In flower on North Hill, Minehead, 26 Jan. 1932.

Scutellaria Columnae Tenore. (10) An alien from South Europe first recorded by H. Trevor Baker in 1929 from a wooded glen near Mells, is spreading and made a brave show in July amongst the native herbage. *I. M. Roper*.

Chenopodium murale L. (8) Highbridge sidings. *W. D. Miller*.

Allium oleraceum L. (9) Clevedon. *W. Watson*. First found by Miss Claydon in 1928. Apparently more than casual here.

Juncus compressus Jacq. (10) Alluvial ground near Clifton Bridge station; together with *compressus* x *Gerardi*, which rare hybrid has the creeping rhizome of *Gerardi*, putting up stems at intervals. The capsules are sub-globular, obtuse and mucronate as in *compressus*. *H. S. Thompson*.

Typha angustifolia L. (3) Ditch at Steart. *W. S. Parry*.

Alopecurus bulbosus Gouan. (2) Blue Anchor. *W. Watson*.

Lolium temulentum L. (8) In mowing grass between Edington Junction and Catcott siding. *H. S. Thompson*.

Cystopteris fragilis Bernh. (4) Native or naturalized at Montacute House. *Miss A. G. Miller*.

Dr. Watson appends the following lists of cryptogams. The numerals indicate the botanical vice-counties. V.C.R. means vice-county record, and C.R. means county record.

BRYOPHYTES

- Fissidens decipiens* De Not. (5) Wall near Cheddon. V.C.R.
Bryum bimum Schreb. (5) Wall, Greenaleigh, Minehead. V.C.R.
Schistostega osmundacea Mohr. (5) Cloutsham.
Leptodontium gemmascens Braith. (5) Old thatch, Staplegrove.
Riccia fluitans L. (6) Ditches, Shapwick.
Aneura incurvata Steph. (6) Shapwick.

LICHENS

- Evernia furfuracea* Mann. (5) Near Cloutsham. C.R.
Aspicilia calcarea var. *hoffmanni* Ach. (6) Clevedon. C.R.
Stenocybe septata Rehm. (5) Hodder's Combe. *D. A. Jones.*
 C.R.
S. byssacea Nyl. (5) Beacon Hill. *D. A. Jones.* V.C.R.
Coriscium viride Zahl. (5) Blagdon near Taunton. C.R.
Lecania prosechoides var. *aeruginascens* Oliv. (6) Sand Bay.
 C.R.
Biatorina erysiboides Th.Fr. (5) On *Ulex* above Burgundy
 Chapel, near Minehead. (6) On trees, Leigh Wood. *D. A.*
Jones. C.R.
B. prasina Syd. (6) Leigh Wood. *D. A. Jones.* V.C.R.
Claydonia fimbriata var. *floccida* B. de Lesd. (5) Near White-
 staunton. C.R.
Opegrapha saxicola Ach. (6) Brean Down and Sand Bay. C.R.
Bacidia incompta Anzi. (6) Leigh Wood. *D. A. Jones.* V.C.R.
B. effusa Arn. (5) Tetton Wood, near Taunton.
Toninia mesoidea Zahl. (6) Brean Down.
Arthopyrenia litoralis B. de Lesd. (5) On barnacles, Watchet.
 V.C.R.

During the past year the Section has lost its two honorary members. Mrs. Gregory died at Weston-super-Mare in March, aged 91 years. Her name is associated by most with the study of British violets, on which, after many years study, chiefly at Cambridge and in North Somerset, she published in 1912 a well illustrated monograph. She was also a good general botanist, and her name is appended to many notes in the *Bristol Flora*. In 1919 Mrs. Gregory presented her herbarium, including the British violets, to the British Museum (Nat. Hist.).

Mr. James Walter White, F.L.S., HON. M.SC. (Bristol), died at Bristol in October at the age of 86. He was President of this Section for the three years 1922-4, and since then has been an honorary member. In spite of very active and responsible business as a pharmaceutical chemist, he found time throughout his life for an intensive study of phanerogamic botany, and was recognized as the leading field botanist in the west of England. He published numerous papers in the Bristol Naturalists' Society *Proceedings*, the *Journal of Botany*, the *Pharmaceutical Journal*, and elsewhere. His *Flora of the Bristol Coalfield* appeared in book form in 1886, and finally in 1912 he published his culminating work, the *Flora of Bristol*, for which, both as a Flora and as an exposition of the knowledge and character of the author, no commendation can be too high. His extensive British and Continental herbaria were bequeathed to the University of Bristol. Able notices of both the above have appeared in the *J. of Bot.* from the pen of Mr. H. S. Thompson. It is only necessary here to express our sense of their loss, and our appreciation of their services rendered to Somerset botany.

Among the books of the year is 'Thomas Johnson, Botanist and Royalist' by Wallis Kew and H. E. Powell, illustrated by woodcuts from his works. It is a general description of the works and journeys of one who may be regarded amongst the fathers of British botany. Born in Yorkshire *circ.* 1600, Johnson became the best herbalist of his time in England. A description is given of his sojourn in Bath in 1634, where he published *Mercurius Botanicus* in Latin, an itinerary of a journey from London through Bath and Bristol to the Isle of Wight. His list of plants observed contains 816 names, among them many of our present-day rarities. In 1633 he practically re-wrote and greatly improved Gerard's Herbal, which had been published thirty-six years previously.

The *J. of Botany*, 1932, p. 100, contains an article on the vegetation at Brislington Railway Station (which is just in Somerset) by Mr. H. S. Thompson, who on two days in 1931 counted at least 120 species of phanerogams there. Among the plants enumerated may be mentioned *Trifolium arvense*, *Oenothera odorata*, *Orobanche Hederæ*, *Salix repens*, and the rare hybrid *Erigeron acris* x *canadensis*.

Cryptogamic botanists will be interested in the following papers: *Report, British Bryological Society*. The Society held its annual meeting at Minehead under the Presidency of Dr. Watson. Cf. *J. of Bot.*, 1932, p. 295.

Lichenological Notes, vi, by Dr. Watson. *J. of Bot.*, pp. 67-72, and pp. 96-100. A new species of *Lecidia* from Volis Hill, near Taunton, was described, p. 70.

Some recent papers on Bryophytic and Lichen Ecology. A review by Dr. Watson. *J. of Ecology*, 1932, No. 1, pp. 216-220.

The Bryophytes and Lichens of Moorland. *J. of Ecology*, 1932, No. 2, pp. 284-313, is a most valuable paper by our President. In it there are many references to Somerset, the vegetation (chiefly in relation to bryophytes and lichens) of five upland heaths (Quantocks, Brendons, Blackdowns, Exmoor, Mendip) and one wet heath (Shapwick) being listed, described and compared with moorland areas of similar kind in other parts of Britain.

The South Western Naturalists' Union held its annual meeting at Plymouth in the spring. A few of our members attended. The meeting was reported in the *J. of Bot.*, 1932, p. 205. This Section subscribes to the Union, and our members would be welcomed at its meetings.