

MEETINGS OF THE BOTANICAL BRANCH.

Feb. 1st, at the residence of Mr. R. B. Whyte, members present: Messrs. F. E. Buck, L. H. Newman, F. Jones, W. T. Macoun, G. O. McMillan, W. Dreher, E. D. Eddy, A. E. Attwood, J. J. Carter, G. H. Clark, J. R. Dymond, C. J. Tully, Dr. Blackader and the host, Mr. Whyte, who gave a very interesting account of his impressions of Bermuda after a short visit there in January.

The Bermudas consist of five large islands, bridged together, viz.: Bermuda, St. George, St. Davids, Somerset and Ireland. The total length is 25 miles, and from half to three wide. The highest point is 260 feet above tidewater. To the north-west there is a long, low coral reef, and the entrance to the harbor is from the east. One of the pleasure trips is to take a glass-bottomed boat and go out towards the reef, and see the marine organisms at a depth of 5 to 50 feet below through the clear water. The temperature of the water is 71°.

Bermuda is entirely of coral formation, resting on a substratum of limestone. The temperature in January was 65-68°. The minimum for the year is 57° and the maximum 80°. The rain falls on an average 200 days in the year, with a total rain-fall of 65 or 70 inches. Nearly all the drinking water is collected from the roofs of the houses, and conducted and stored in cemented cisterns. Some few wells are sunk into the coral rock, but if sunk too deep the water is salty.

The total area is 12,378 acres, of which 2,300 is in cultivation; of this 1,000 is good, 1,000 fair, and 300 poor. Agriculture is very primitive. The farms are all small, and cultivation is done mostly by hand and with the spade, quickly followed by the rake. The soil is red and very friable, and has to be fertilized after every second or third crop. The chief crops are onions, potatoes, lily bulbs and flowers, parsley, carrots, beets, radishes, arrowroot, beans, tomatoes and peas.

Animal life is scarce, excepting introduced and more or less domesticated species. The native birds are the Ground Dove (*Chaemepelia passerina bermudiana*), Redbird (*Cardinalis cardinalis cardinalis*), Bluebird (*Sialia sialis sialis*), Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*) and Bermuda Vireo, or Chick-of-the-village (*Vireo griseus bermudianus*). The crow, partridge and English sparrow are also common. The white-eyed vireo is also seen.

The indigenous plants are the cedar (*Juniperus Bermudiensis*), palmetto (*Sabal umbraculifera*), mulberry (*Morus rubra*), seashore grape (*Coccoloba uvifera*), mangrove (*Rhizophora mangle*), argemone (*A. mexicana*), creeping sorrel (*Oxalis virginica*), bay