

season. The case of this bird is a very perplexing one. Their coming is no migration in the common sense of the word. In fact, they are lost the moment they leave salt water. All that come here and are not shot perish of starvation, as they do not seem to be able to find suitable food in any river or lake. Why they should year after year persist in coming up here to perish is hard to say.

And, to cap the climax, the Robin (*Merula migratoria*) has been with us nearly all winter. A little flock of four was seen in various places up till Christmas, and then took up its headquarters in the trees around the City Hall, where they could be seen during even the coldest days we have had. Certainly a novel sight for Ottawa.

Also, a Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*) was seen in the middle of this winter, namely January 10th, at the Rifle Range. Why these birds, which are not supposed to winter here, stayed here this winter, or came here, is hard to tell. Did they know the winter would be a mild one?

MEETING OF THE BOTANICAL BRANCH.

Held at the residence of Mr. E. R. Cameron, 21st December, 1908. Present: Prof. J. Macoun, Dr. Ami, Rev. G. Eifrig, Dr. Blackader, and Messrs. Cory, E. R. Cameron, J. M. Macoun, W. T. Macoun, Attwood, Whyte, MacMillan, D. Cameron, Jacombe, Witten, Bond and Groh.

The first part of the evening was devoted to some subject of general botanical interest. Prof. Macoun exhibited a copy of the newly-issued edition of Gray's Manual, and gave some explanation of the need which existed for such a work, as well as some interesting information about the methods and painstaking labor by which it had been brought to its present revised form. In order to cover a more natural floral area than heretofore, it was necessary to make exhaustive explorations of the Eastern portion of Canada so as to include its flora. Likewise, in order to bring the work into line with recent ideas of classification and the latest findings of botanical science, the sequence of the families has been entirely changed, and changes in nomenclature have been adopted. Prof. Macoun referred to Britton and Brown's botany as an effort to forestall this work, but considered that this was such a superior and admirable book that it should be everywhere welcomed.

Prof. Macoun also spoke about the Ottawa Flora which he is engaged in preparing. He invited all members who have