

MEETINGS OF BOTANICAL BRANCH.

A meeting of the Botanical Section of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club was held at the residence of Mr. D. A. Campbell on Friday evening, Nov. 20th, 1903. The following members were present: Messrs. Attwood, Blackadar, Carter, Clarke, Eifrig, Leibner, W. T. Macoun, Whyte, Dr. Fletcher and Prof. Macoun.

It is gratifying to see the interest taken by the members in those fascinating problems of plant life which present themselves for solution at every outing. To the general public the plant at the flowering stage is everything. To the dilettante, those fleeting aspects of a plant's life, its color and its odor, are all-absorbing. Interesting as these may be, they are merely a few of the numerous points considered by anyone pretending to take more than a superficial view of the subject.

One of the questions discussed at the meeting was why so many plants at one stage of their season's growth produce what is called the "rosette" arrangement of leaves. Specimens of the following plants were shown: Wild pepper grass (*Lepidium apetalum*), horseweed (*Erigeron Canadensis*), common thistle (*Cnicus lanceolatus*), common mullein (*Verbascum Thapsus*), spiny-leaved sow-thistle (*Sonchus asper*), ox-eye or white daisy (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*), common evening primrose (*Oenothera biennis*).

These plants, widely different species, exhibit a striking uniformity of plan in the arrangement of the cluster of leaves which they produce in the autumn. Each has a very short stem and many leaves arranged in whorls close to one another. In order to prevent overlapping the lower leaves have longer stalks which push their blades beyond those above them. They were collected about the 10th of November, after the blossoming season. Many plants at that season were caring most, perhaps, for the distribution of their seeds and therefore for posterity, but, in the case of these plants, and of other biennials in general, a preparation of another kind was going on with the same end in view. The rosettes were using the rays of the late autumn sun to build material for an early start the following spring. It was