

REPORT OF THE BOTANICAL SECTION, 1891

(Read Jan. 28th, 1892.)

To the Council of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club :

GENTLEMEN,—The leaders in botany have pleasure in reporting that there has been continued activity in this branch during the past season. Some additional plants have been added to the local list, new localities discovered for rare species previously recorded, and interesting observations made in growing native plants from seed. In this connection the leaders would draw attention to the work now being carried on at the botanic garden on the Central Experimental Farm, where a large number of native plants have been grown from seed from various parts of the Dominion, and which are always available for study by visitors and students. A magnificent collection of seeds of prairie flowers has during the past season been presented to the botanist in charge by Mr. T. N. Willing, of Calgary, N.W.T., a member of the club. Some of these have been sown, and many others are ready for planting in the spring. All members are invited to assist with seeds and roots of rare plants. The importance of studying plants in a growing condition cannot be too strongly urged. Of particular interest to botanists are several plants, the seeds of which have been presented by Prof. Macoun, concerning which there was some doubt as to specific identity, or for the observation of other points of scientific interest. As an instance of the value of this work mention may be made of an investigation made by Mr. J. M. Macoun last spring, by which it was found that the *Camassia*, abundant around Victoria, in Vancouver Island, is not, as was supposed, *Camassia esculenta* but *C. Leichtlinii*, a fact which had previously been suggested by Prof. Macoun. The true *C. esculenta* was collected by Mr. Macoun near Sproat's Landing, and grows in low land quite close to the river, growing, in fact, in the early part of the season when discovered, in the water by the riverside. *C. Leichtlinii* has larger and darker purple flowers, with the lowest segment of the perianth conspicuously deflexed. A collection of great interest to the botanical student is the large collection of native and foreign grasses—about 150 different species—which are being cultivated at the Experimental Farm.