

MEETING OF THE BOTANICAL BRANCH.

The third meeting of the Botanical Branch was held on December 11th, at the residence of Mr. George Michaud. There were present: Messrs. G. H. Clark, James M. Macoun, Wm. T. Macoun, A. E. Attwood, H. Groh, R. MacMillan, Norman Criddle, R. B. White and the Chairman.

The subject for the evening was "The value of the seeds as a means of identifying plants." The seeds were shown by Mr. Michaud to be very important in identifying plants on account of their more constant characters, being less affected by environment than are other organs such as leaves, flowers, etc. A collection of specimens mounted on slides was exhibited showing the generic characteristics of the most important families of our wild and cultivated plants in their normal and different conditions, as found in commercial samples of seed grain. Special slides showing the following interesting points were also shown:—

1. Similarity of the external appearance of seeds of quite different botanical groups; e.g., *Stipa spartea* vrs. *Erodium cicutarium*, *Saponaria officinalis* vrs. *Astragalus caryocarpus*, *Saponaria Vaccaria* vrs. *Brassica Rapa*, *Cynoglossum officinale* vrs. *Ranunculus tuberculatus*, *Euphorbia Helioscopia* vrs. *Neslia paniculata*, *Glycyrrhiza lepidota* vrs. *Xanthium canadense*, and others.

2. Apparent dissimilarity of external characters of seeds belonging to the same botanical groups; e.g., *Corispermum hyssopifolium* vrs. *Atriplex patula*, *Potentilla monspeliensis* vrs. *Rosa acicularis*, *Agrimonia gryposepala* vrs. *Geum album*, *Trifolium repens* vrs. *Glycyrrhiza lepidota*, *Geranium Bicknellii* vrs. *Erodium cicutarium*, *Apium graveolens* vrs. *Washingtonia longistylis* vrs. *Heracleum lanatum*, *Lithospermum arvense* vrs. *L. officinale*, *Cynoglossum officinale* vrs. *Myosotis palustris*, *Mimulus ringens* vrs. *Linaria vulgaris*, *Achillea Millefolium* vrs. *Bidens frondosa*, and others.

Specimens of dead leafless plants, collected under the snow at the end of November, which had been identified through single seeds still found on them, were also shown.

The purity work of the Seed Laboratory was also discussed and shown to be simply an identification of plants by the seeds only.

Those who were present at this meeting were much interested in seeing the specimens of seeds of certain species which, without a magnifying glass or microscope, appeared identical with seeds of other species, even of other genera, but which on being put under the glass showed striking differences in the marking of