

The club contribution to the exhibition last summer was not as full an exhibit of the club work as I would have liked. Several members on whom the committee relied for assistance were absent from the city, and their collections were not available. Notwithstanding this drawback, the space allotted to us was a great centre of attraction to visitors. Mr. Fletcher's magnificent collection of foreign butterflies, injurious insects, and Ottawa butterflies, Mr. Latchford's cases of shells, Mr. G. R. White's birds, Mr. Bell's great mineral display, along with the botanical collections, made a display of which we have every reason to be proud.

It has often occurred to me while observing the working of the Club during the last three or four years, that in some respects it has become too mechanical for the best results, not only as far as the effects on our members is concerned, but for the cause we all have at heart, the study and cultivation of a love for natural history. To confine myself to the section I know most about, that of botany. As you are aware, the Council at its first meeting after election appoints two or three members to be leaders in each department, whose duties are to arrange excursions, look after the interest of the branch, and make a report at the end of the year of the work done—duties which, as a rule, are performed with most commendable zeal and efficiency. But though most valuable results have flowed from the system since its inauguration eight years ago, I cannot but think some serious drawbacks attend it, the principal being the tendency to weaken the spontaneous work of the other members. I think I see a disposition to lean too much on the leaders. At our excursions, for instance, many of our young botanists who make collections are too ready to get the whole work of naming their specimens done for them by the leaders—a plan which I need hardly say will never make them botanists. There is all the difference in the world between the knowledge one has of a plant he has got named by some one else and one that he has ferreted out for himself; and it is only when he fails to find it out that he should call on the leaders for assistance. Others carry this dependence still further, and do not collect at all, expecting that the leaders will have done so, and that they will get the names of the plants they have seen at the close of the outing; and the knowledge that this assistance can so