

SOIREES.

FIRST.—The opening meeting of the Winter Course for the year 1887-88 was held on Thursday, the 8th December, in the Museum of the Ottawa Literary and Scientific Society, when the President, Mr. R. B. Whyte, delivered his address, which is printed in this number, and which was listened to with much interest by the audience. On its conclusion Prof. Macoun, who occupied the chair, invited a full discussion of the suggestions and statements contained in the address. Mr. Fletcher thought that it was very necessary to carefully consider the past history of the Club, before attempting any change in its plan of operations. He was pleased to see so many teachers, and especially ladies, interesting themselves in the work of the Club, for if the future work was to be useful there was no better way to secure this end than by gaining the support of the teachers. Mr. Ami did not think that it was advisable at present to attempt an extension of the work, or a widening of the sphere of labour. Dr. Wicksteed suggested that desirable contributions to the season's programme would be papers on the city drinking-water, and the reported discovery of natural gas at Eastman's Springs. Mr. Fletcher, with reference to the suggested extension of the operations of the Club, considered that it was a question of such vital importance as to merit a most ample discussion, and one not to be rashly decided. There was still plenty of material unstudied in this vicinity, and requiring examination and description. At all the Excursions abundance of specimens had been found of great interest. Prof. Macoun said that about thirty years ago the late Mr. Billings had started the *Canadian Geologist and Naturalist*, a journal which still continues to lend its aid to science. Although the Club had been working for eight years, there was no scarcity of material to investigate nor could it be exhausted for many years to come, yet he was strongly of opinion that much would be gained by making the Club the nucleus, so to speak, of a general Natural History Society that would invite to it workers in all sections of the Dominion, and benefit by their labours. Under the present Constitution, whereby only papers on local subjects were invited, it was not possible for members whose duties carried them far afield, as for example the Geological Survey Staff, to