

## 1896 REPORT TO NEBC MEMBERS AFTER FIRST MEETING

CAMBRIDGE, Feb. 11, 1896.

*To the Members of the New England Botanical Club :*

At the meeting called to consider the desirability of forming a club the undersigned were appointed a committee to prepare a sketch of the kind of work which should be undertaken by the club. This committee could not well report until after the formal organization, which was not effected until the meeting of February 5. An attempt was made on that evening to present informally the views of the committee, but the late hour prevented a full discussion of the subject. It has seemed to us desirable, therefore, to send to each member a copy of the report in writing with the hope that it will be given due consideration before the next meeting, so that, if the plan here proposed does not meet with general approval, some other plan may be substituted for it and adopted at the next meeting. The committee feel that a definite plan of action should be decided upon before the opening of the collecting season in order that the good results to be expected from well organized work during the summer months may not be lost.

The committee recommend that in the beginning, the work of the club be specially directed toward: first, the careful exploration of the local flora of the vicinity of Boston,; and secondly, the exploration of the alpine and subalpine regions of the White Mountains. While it is not supposed that the work done by all the members will be limited to these two fields, it is advised that, for the present at least, special efforts be made to promote work on the local and mountain floras, reserving to a later date the detailed study of other sections of New England and the special study of such other botanical questions as may present themselves. For the better organization of the proposed work it is recommended that two standing committees be appointed: one to direct work on the local flora and one to superintend work on the mountain flora. The committees should not be too large, but should include those members who are already known to have a more or less expert knowledge of one or more groups of plants of the region to be studied. It is not, however, advised that all the members of the club be placed on one or other of these two committees, although all may be expected to aid them in their work so far as possible. From the discussion of February 5 the following persons appeared to suggest themselves to the members present as forming good nuclei for the proposed committees, viz. : on local flora, Mr. Deane, Mr. Williams, Mr. Collins and Mr. Churchill; on mountain flora, Mr. E. Faxon, Mr. C. E. Faxon, Dr. Kennedy and Dr. Farlow.\*

It will be the duty of the committees to report to the club at an early date the present condition of our knowledge of the local and mountain floras. After discussion with the members they would be expected to settle what are to be regarded as the geographical limits of the flora of the vicinity of Boston and whether the exploration of the mountain should be limited to the White Mountains, or should include the higher peaks of the Green Mountains and other scattered peaks. At the following meeting of the club, or as soon after as possible, the committees should report to the club what localities, in their opinion, should be explored during the coming season and they should explain in detail the manner in which such explorations can be made most systematically. They should then endeavor to apportion among the members who are in a position to take part in the explorations the special fields in which they are to work and give them such information and directions as seem to them desirable.

At the close of the collecting season it shall be the duty of each committee to collate the results of the different exploring parties, and combining them with such information as they may be able to furnish from their previous experience, present a report to the club at some meeting held during the following winter if possible. The club shall then discuss the reports and decide whether it is advisable to give the substance of them to the public or whether they shall be used as a basis for a continuation of the work during the following summer.

This report is submitted for consideration because the committee feel that, however pleasant socially may be the meetings of the club, society is likely to be held together for any length of time unless there is a definite aim of work in which members can participate cordially. With a definite plan of work the club can be sure of the valuable co-operation for scientific purposes of some whose occupations leave them little leisure for meetings which are largely social in character.

F. S. COLLINS,  
B. M. WATSON,  
W. G. FARLOW.

\*These names are offered merely as suggestions. It is assumed that changes and additions will be made by the members when the report is taken up for consideration.