Director's Report.—No. I.

OF the work undertaken during the winter 1892-3, and before my arrival at Plymouth in April, I must report that, as in the preceding winter, the anchovy nets were shot by the fishermen to whom they were entrusted, but unfortunately without satisfactory results.

In consequence of representations made to the Devon Sea Fisheries Committee and also to the Board of Trade by my predecessor, Mr. Calderwood, the following addition has been made by the Board of Trade to the Bye-laws which were submitted to them by the Committee for revision :

“Nothing in these Bye-laws contained shall apply to a person fishing solely for scientific purposes, under the written authority on that behalf of the Local Fisheries Committee of that district, signed by their clerk, and subject to the conditions contained in that authority.” The permit in question will be granted, in due course, to the fishermen working for the Laboratory.

Under the regulations which fixed the shortest term for the renting of a table in the Laboratory at a month, but few workers have visited us during the short Christmas and Easter vacations. Now that the minimum charge is for one week (at the rate of thirty shillings), facilities are given for a short stay at Plymouth. This should induce investigators to take any opportunity which may occur at any time of the year to collect seasonable material, or to study living animals and plants available for the time being. The weekly announcements in “Nature” of new finds, of the composition of the Plankton, and of the animals breeding, will, it is hoped, prove useful by indicating what special material is being procured during the ordinary course of dredging and tow-netting.

Dr. S. J. Hickson continued his studies on Alcyonium last Christmas. During the month of April, Mr. Riches recommenced his work on the Nemertines of Plymouth ; Mr. Maurice S. Evans, F.Z.S., F.R.G.S., was instructed in the methods of collecting and preserving marine animals before his return to Natal. Dr. G. J. Romanes, a Governor of the Association, sent his representative to occupy a table.

The sea water circulating through the Laboratory tanks and those

in the Aquarium is in excellent condition, and has recently stood a severe test in a perfectly satisfactory manner. Mr. Cunningham has succeeded in rearing young flounders through their earliest and most critical stages in the tanks of the Laboratory. This fact speaks very well for the purity of the sea water, and certain modifications of the arrangements for pumping and storing the water will ensure the continuance of this favorable condition of things regarding what is, without doubt, the most important factor in almost all the research carried on at the Laboratory.

The nature and scope of the results obtained by the naturalists of the Association is amply testified by the contents of the present number of the Journal. The papers by Mr. Riches and Mr. Gamble are important contributions to the fauna of the English Channel, and in conjunction with the faunistic work which is being carried on by Mr. Garstang, show great advance towards a more complete and detailed knowledge of the rich and varied fauna in the immediate neighbourhood of Plymouth.

EDWARD J. BLES.

May, 1893.