

Report on some Plant Specimens from Read's Cavern.

BY O. V. DARBISHIRE.

The material, A, B and C, could not be examined microscopically by hand sections, and was therefore embedded in paraffin, and cut with the microtome. The bits of wood were in every case much decomposed, and in part apparently consisted of charcoal. I have been kindly helped in the identification of the specimens by Prof. Groom, F.R.S., Imperial College of Science and Technology, and Mr. L. A. Boodle, Head of the Jodrell Research Laboratory, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, to both of whom my thanks are due.

SPECIMEN A.

This is in the form of charcoal, and was identified by Mr. Boodle as Hazel.

SPECIMEN B.

This is a fairly complete specimen of the stem of a diseased tree, identification of which has not been possible so far. To me it appeared to be birch, and the peculiar black markings closely resemble those left by the fungus *Polyporus betulinus*, a very common disease of the Birch. But neither Prof. Groom nor Mr. Boodle were able to confirm this, or suggest any other identification, though considerable trouble was taken.

SPECIMEN C.

This is undoubtedly oak, and my identification was confirmed by Prof. Groom and Mr. Boodle. The latter states: "I do not regard 'C' as true charcoal. It can be completely bleached by eau de Javelle." Prof. Groom remarks: "I have confidence that the piece of wood is that of an oak (hard wood), which was having a bad time during part of its life; for the annual rings are excessively thin, with the result that the pattern in transverse section is all but unrecognisable."

SPECIMEN D.

This is a portion of the inner hard layer of the fruit wall of the walnut.