8. (a) Apply Lemma 13.2 to show that the countable collection

$$\mathcal{B} = \{(a, b) \mid a < b,\ a \text{ and } b \text{ rational}\}$$

is a basis that generates the standard topology on $\mathbb{R}$.

(b) Show that the collection

$$\mathcal{C} = \{[a, b) \mid a < b,\ a \text{ and } b \text{ rational}\}$$

is a basis that generates a topology different from the lower limit topology on $\mathbb{R}$.

(from Basis for a Topology)

Lemma 13.2. *Let X be a topological space. Suppose that $\mathcal{C}$ is a collection of open sets of X such that for each open set U of X and each x in U, there is an element C of $\mathcal{C}$ such that $x \in C \subset U$. Then $\mathcal{C}$ is a basis for the topology of X.*

Proof. We must show that $\mathcal{C}$ is a basis. The first condition for a basis is easy: Given $x \in X$, since X is itself an open set, there is by hypothesis an element C of $\mathcal{C}$ such that $x \in C \subset X$. To check the second condition, let x belong to $C_1 \cap C_2$, where C_1 and C_2 are elements of $\mathcal{C}$. Since C_1 and C_2 are open, so is $C_1 \cap C_2$. Therefore, there exists by hypothesis an element C_3 in $\mathcal{C}$ such that $x \in C_3 \subset C_1 \cap C_2$.

Let $\mathcal{T}$ be the collection of open sets of X; we must show that the topology $\mathcal{T}'$ generated by $\mathcal{C}$ equals the topology $\mathcal{T}$. First, note that if U belongs to $\mathcal{T}$ and if $x \in U$, then there is by hypothesis an element C of $\mathcal{C}$ such that $x \in C \subset U$. It follows that U belongs to the topology $\mathcal{T}'$, by definition. Conversely, if W belongs to the topology $\mathcal{T}'$, then W equals a union of elements of $\mathcal{C}$, by the preceding lemma. Since each element of $\mathcal{C}$ belongs to $\mathcal{T}$ and $\mathcal{T}$ is a topology, W also belongs to $\mathcal{T}$. ∎