

**The Journal**  
**OF**  
**The Scottish**  
**Rock Garden Club**

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Squadron Leader J. J. BOYD-HARVEY, Hon. Secretary,  
Boonslie, Dirleton, East Lothian

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# AUTHORITATIVE MONOGRAPHS

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# The Journal OF The Scottish Rock Garden Club

Editor—J. L. MOWAT, University Botanical Gardens, St. Andrews



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## Editor's Notes

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THIS issue of the Journal marks a new departure in the efforts of the Club, being the first time in its not very long life that two Journals have been published in one year. For some time now a desire for a second Journal has been expressed by many members and it was felt that this year the Club should make a special effort to meet this wish by issuing a combined Journal and Review. Unfortunately considerations of cost and the current paper shortage have combined to necessitate a considerable curtailment in size. This is particularly unfortunate after the very successful Joint International Rock Plant Conference which was held in the spring of this year, but members will be glad to know that a special publication containing a full and detailed report of the Conference is being prepared by the Alpine Garden Society, to be on sale shortly.

The Conference opened in London on Tuesday, April 24th, with a very well organised Conference Show, having close on 500 entries, and the entertaining of Overseas Delegates and other invited guests to luncheon by the President and Council of the Royal Horticultural Society, after which the official opening by Mr. E. B. Anderson, President of the Alpine Garden Society, took place. This was followed by the first paper, a most interesting address on "Uncommon Rock Plants," by Colonel F. C. Stern, and in the evening came the A.G.S. Conference Dinner at which nearly 200 were present. The first day was rounded off by a talk from Dr. George Taylor, with colour films illustrating "A Botanist in S.E. Tibet." This brief report of the first day's activities will serve to give some idea of the very full programme prepared and so ably carried through by the Alpine Garden Society. The next three days were similarly packed with interesting papers of a uniformly high standard, which it is quite beyond the scope of this editorial to mention even briefly, while it goes without saying that those who took part in the visits to the R.H.S. Gardens at Wisley and the Royal Gardens at Kew will not easily forget those visits. As already stated a special Conference Report by the A.G.S. giving full details of all papers and the discussions following each, will very shortly be available.

On Monday, 30th April, the second part of the Conference opened in Edinburgh where, by the courtesy of Sir William Wright Smith, the Lecture Hall and various other rooms at the Royal Botanic Garden had been made available, and the whole staff went out of their way to vie with each other in helping in any way they could. Unfortunately the weather clerk decided to put on a "Caledonia stern and wild"

act and greeted our visitors from the South and from Overseas with a Nor' easter and cold, sleety showers instead of a spell of the more genial spring weather such as some of our older Club members may remember. In spite of the weather, all those attending the Conference were full of enthusiasm and had a happy and memorable week; old friends in rock-gardening met, many new friendships were made, and in addition to the full programme of lectures, many spontaneous discussions took place. They sprouted up everywhere—in rooms, passages, in corners of the rock garden or wild garden, and of course by the seed frames and propagation pits. Small wonder that in such an atmosphere it was not too difficult to forget the unkindness of the weather.

The second part of the Conference was officially opened by our President, Major Walmsley, with a brief well-chosen speech, and this was followed by a paper of interest to all *Primula* lovers—"Recent *Primula* Introductions," by Dr. H. R. Fletcher. The next paper was by Mrs. W. D. Crewdson on "Plants that have done well in my Garden," and the animated discussions following these two papers occupied us till lunch-time. In the afternoon Sir William Wright Smith officially welcomed Conference members in a tour of the Royal Botanic Garden, where in spite of showers members were soon to be found probing into every corner. The Reception given in the evening by the City of Edinburgh proved a most happy and enjoyable occasion. Lord Provost Sir William Murray in his address of welcome soon dispelled any possible air of formality and made all present feel that they were there as a happy party united by a common interest. In this he was ably assisted by his sister, the Lady Provost, Miss Murray—herself a keen garden enthusiast.

On Tuesday morning a party started off by bus in pouring rain to view the garden of Mr. and Mrs. MacFarlane at Bystone, Busby, and thence go on to the Conference Show at Glasgow. It was still raining when we arrived at Busby but the hospitable welcome and hot coffee supplied by our hosts brightened all up before their tour round that most attractive garden. The Show in Glasgow, a colourful spectacle with over 500 entries and many trade exhibits, was opened by the Lord Provost, Sir Victor Warren, to a crowded audience of rock garden enthusiasts who found on the well-covered show benches many rare plants in fine condition to interest them.

On Wednesday the first paper, on "Alpine Plants of Britain," was given by Mr. Robert M. Adam, who at short notice generously took the place of Professor J. R. Matthews who was unable to be present. Mr. Adam's talk and wonderful photographs were enjoyed by all, particularly by those friends from the South and from abroad. The next paper, by M. Aymon Correvon, Geneva, on "Cultivation of Alpines in Frames and Cold Houses," was closely followed by his audience and a lively discussion followed. In the afternoon Mr. D. Wilkie in "Dwarf Ericaceae" covered the smaller members of that very interesting order, accompanying his talk with many fine slides

and much useful cultural advice. In the short time left before tea M. Corveon showed a number of coloured slides of typical Swiss rock garden layouts. In the evening Major George Sherriff regaled a crowded lecture hall with some of his beautiful coloured films, accompanied by a vivid account of "Plant Hunting in S.E. Tibet and Bhutan."

Thursday was occupied by an excursion taking in Branklyn, Perth, the garden of Mr. and Mrs. Renton, and Keillour Castle, Methven, of Major and Mrs. Knox Finlay. To those to whom these were previously just names of places where wonderful Himalayan plants flourished which elsewhere resisted all efforts, and whence periodically some new plant or rarity appeared on the show bench, these two gardens and the results attained by their owners provided a thrilling experience and must have aroused envy in many a heart. Mr. E. E. Kemp's paper on Friday—"The Propagation of Alpine Plants"—and his demonstration of his methods and results laid out in another laboratory aroused very keen discussion which lasted till members finally had to rush off to the farewell Conference Luncheon which ended what all participants will agree was a most successful and unforgettable fortnight. Many beneficial results of the Conference were apparent at the time but much of its value will continue to appear for some time to come—it may even be that the present flow of new members is an indirect sequel arising from the enthusiasm created then.

While it will be seen in later pages that many County Representatives arrange most instructive and enjoyable programmes in their areas, with lectures, talks, and discussions in the winter months and visits to gardens in the summer, this is by no means the whole picture : in many, probably most, areas, members have been brought together in a friendly, personal way till now they are visiting and exchanging ideas and plants as friends rather than merely Club members.

It was feared that the rigours of the long hard winter continuing far into a non-existing Spring, would adversely affect our shows this year, but reports prove that this was not so ; the standard was high and competition keen and our thanks must go to all Show Secretaries and their willing helpers, who only by untiring efforts can maintain, let alone increase, the success of our shows.

In his report, Mr. Masterton, in charge of seed distribution, mentions having sent out over 5000 packets of seed last winter but makes no mention of the work this must entail for him. Our thanks and appreciation can best be shown by all of us doing what we can to support this very popular Club activity.

The granting of awards by a Joint Committee of the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society and the S.R.G.C. to plants of outstanding merit was an interesting innovation last year and its popularity and worth will be seen by the report of the first full year prepared by

Mr. D. Wilkie. We must also thank Mr. Wilkie for the fine plant photographs he has made available to the Journal again.

East Lothian members are to be congratulated on their enterprise in deciding to hold a branch Autumn Rock Plant Show in Haddington on 15th September—a venture worthy of every praise and support from other members.

It must be a matter of regret to all members that, by a ruling of his own introduction, our President, who has done so much for the Club in his four years of office, is due to retire in October. This year's increase of 400 new members brings the total number of members to five times what it was when Major Walmsley took office. He has been untiring in his efforts for the Club and regarded the duties of his office as a full time work.

That Dr. Fletcher's remarks in the last Journal have had some effect (though slight) will be seen by certain new names among contributors, but in his efforts to draw articles out of members the editor still feels like a dentist extracting teeth. Please send in articles or notes without waiting to be asked.

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The new address of the Club's Hon. Publicity Manager :—  
Major-General Murray-Lyon, 28A Inverleith Place, Edinburgh, 4.

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The new Hon. Treasurer is :—  
Mr. Stewart Mitchell, 1 Muirfield Crescent, Dundee.

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#### ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS, 1951-52

All Members who have not already paid their Annual Subscriptions of 10/- due on **1st September, 1951**, are asked to do so as soon as possible.

Remittances, which should include Bank Charges, to be made payable to the Club.

Members can save themselves and the Club trouble and postage by use of Banker's Orders for paying their Annual Subscriptions. The form enclosed elsewhere in this Journal may be used.

The next publication will be the Year Book for 1951-52, in which will be a List of Members according to subscriptions paid at date of going to press. This means that any who have omitted to pay their subscriptions by then may be overlooked in the issue of subsequent publications.

STEWART MITCHELL,  
*Hon. Treasurer.*



## News from Nepal

(Colonel D. G. Lowndes spent six months collecting for the British Museum in Central Nepal during 1950, and the following extract from his letters describes one of the localities that he visited).

*Khangsar Gonpa—26th July.*—I moved here on the 23rd and am camped on a little shelf on the hillside alongside the Gonpa (monastery), which is not occupied at present, though a lamp is kept burning on the altar in the chapel by the villagers or visiting monks. It is not a proper Gonpa and probably serves to accommodate one or two lamas from time to time, and perhaps a couple of students. Water comes to it by a conduit from higher up the hill as the stream runs in a deep ghyll below it. It is rather apt to get blocked by stones and sand where it takes off from the stream, and the water runs dirty with snow water in the evenings, but is otherwise most satisfactory. Just behind our tents are some big juniper trees about 40 feet high and very old, and we have been adjured not to harm them as they belong to the Gonpa. The altitude is perhaps 13,500 ft. The village is some two miles down the valley and for a wonder the inhabitants are quite friendly and co-operative; in fact the head-man's orderly is acting as hewer of wood for us for a day or two, and yesterday he fetched the milk as well. He offered the choice of yaks' or cows' milk and produced eggs and butter of his own accord. Wonders never cease! The yak '*goth*,' where they are milked, is about three miles away up the hill in a very bleak spot at about 16,000 ft.

The hillside rises very steeply above our camp for about a mile and a thousand feet, and is covered with a thick scrub of dwarf juniper, buckthorn, and other bushes. After that the slopes become more gentle for 500 feet or so and then there are open grassy slopes with occasional screes from about 15,000 ft. That's about as far as I've been so far.

I came here riding a fine strong white mare (they only ride the mares here and never sell them), with a tendency to kick. On the 24th, I rode some way up the hill before dismounting to examine some flower. I left the pony grazing on a small grassy lawn. Five minutes later I looked round to see her legging it up the hill for pasture new with my cooli in hot pursuit about ten yards behind. That was at 11 a.m. I waited till 2 p.m., catching butterflies and collecting plants, and then returned to camp laden with rukhsack, two presses, two water-proofs, umbrella, and ice axe (for digging plants). The wretched cooli got back late in the evening. The pony had kept just ahead of him without difficulty until it reached the '*goth*' when it kicked whenever he tried to get close enough to catch it. Eventually it was caught with the help of an herdsman and relieved of its saddle, etc., and he returned with a more docile bay.

Flowers were quite plentiful ; the nicest were a fine deep blue *Delphinium*,<sup>1</sup> up to two feet tall ; a very sweet scented white garlic<sup>2</sup> and a queer grey and yellow *Corydalis* that grew only on some steep wet shales completely devoid of any other vegetation. The big blue *Geranium*—*G. Wallichiaum*?—makes a fine show everywhere here between 12,500 ft. and 14,000 ft.

Yesterday I managed to progress further up the hill, and found, among other things, a nice *Cyananthus*, grey blue with small fine leaves just coming into flower : a fine dark rose-pink *Pedicularis*<sup>3</sup> that was almost prostrate, and a bright yellow *Corydalis* which I had found before, but this time it was nearly two feet high. On the first scree that I came to, at about 15,000 ft., there was a beautiful Composite<sup>4</sup> with bright yellow flowers three inches across borne singly on six-inch stems, and grey green leaves, mottled with purple, that lay flat on the ground. Here also was an attractive *Lamium* ?<sup>5</sup>, about six inches high, with grey silky leaves so arranged as almost to hide the pale pink hooded flowers that were quite large. Both these grew on very steep loose scree that was very wet. Close by, among dwarf juniper and big stones the prickly *Meconopsis*<sup>6</sup> was in fair quantity in a nice clear blue form.

By the time these and other lesser things had been put into the press it was after 2 p.m. and we were enveloped in a thick and wet cloud with visibility of less than twenty yards, and so I set off down the hill, getting into sunshine after about an hour. We have been lucky with the weather here so far. The 24th and 25th were brilliantly clear till the afternoon and again in the evening and we got some wonderful views. However, it rained really hard both nights, which was far from pleasant.

We have both stopped in today and I have been changing papers in the presses till my back ached and ached again, all the presses being full. Now I am having a respite, as I've run out of dry drying paper, with three more presses to do. It has been fine till now—2.30 p.m.—tho' mostly grey with but little sunshine. Jimmy is skinning birds and at the moment is working on a Chakor, shot yesterday, which he maintains will prove a work of art that will make the professionals at the Museum green with envy ! Later we shall dine off its carcase, which will be a pleasant change from the everlasting rice and potatoes.

Tomorrow I hope for fine weather again and intend to go straight up as high as I can and then work down. If I don't do this I feel that I shall never get high as there is so much to collect in the zone between 13,500 ft. and 15,000 ft. In the past day and a half's collecting I have got over 20 'new' flowers.

<sup>1</sup>L1229 = *Delphinium grandiflorum*.

<sup>2</sup>L1227 = *Allium fasciculatum*.

<sup>3</sup>L1231.

<sup>4</sup>L1244 = *Cremanthodium* sp.

<sup>5</sup>L1245 = *Eriophyton Wallichianum*.

<sup>6</sup>L1242 = *Meconopsis horridula*.

*Base Camp—2nd August.*—How I wish that you could have been with me on the 27th and 28th! Both were brilliantly sunny days with marvellous views all round. On each day I got fairly high—16,000 ft. on the 27th and rather higher on the 28th. Flowers there were aplenty on open grassy hillsides where yaks were grazing.

On the 27th I first stopped where a small stream emerged from a gorge to flow through shingle beds. Here I found a delightful *Corydalis* in the shingle; tufts of bright yellow flowers and blue-grey leaves scarce two inches high but making patches a foot and more across; a real treasure of which I must make a special effort to collect seed in due course. There were also two nice mauve asters,<sup>7</sup> a dwarf grey-leaved *Thalictrum* that I may have found before, and a nice white everlasting with silvery leaves. Higher up, where the pastures began, the white 'nutans' *Primula*,<sup>8</sup> that I had only seen sparingly before, was in thousands all over the turf and very lovely. Surely I shall be able to get seed of it here! A yellow 'peppermint'<sup>9</sup> grew everywhere, varying in height from two inches to as many feet according, as I suppose, to the density of the yaks. It is very strongly scented and quite pretty, and seems peculiar to places where yaks are, as I found it at Mome Tsamdong in Sikkim. Higher still I found my first *Cremanthodium*,<sup>10</sup> a pale yellow Daisy with a curiously twisted single flower about two inches across and three inches high. Search as I would I could not find another plant. Higher still on some scree was a fine onion<sup>11</sup> with balls of bright purple-pink flowers and grey-green leaves; quite dwarf. Here too was a nice pink *Arenaria* with biggish flowers rather like a pink *A. montana*. There were, of course, many other flowers. Much of the hillside was pink with a six inch *Polygonum*, pretty in the mass but not otherwise of any particular merit. The *Cyananthus* was in quantity though it does not make much of a show; while a fine foot-high *Senecio*,<sup>12</sup> with big yellow flowers covered literally acres. For a change it had quite a pleasant scent. After eating my piece I came on a little spring-fed pond where was a water buttercup—a great surprise—and also a fine growth of *Hippuris*.

I spent some time near the pond catching butterflies and then started back to camp, catching some nice ones, including three Apollos, as I went down the hill.

On the 28th I went up a side valley that I had seen from afar and which looked promising as there were numerous small streams and many patches of scree. I made my first halt at about 15,500 ft., where I found *Cremanthodium reniforme*. Roundish shiny leaves and foot-high nodding yellow flowers on reddish stems, often growing in the running water. Other things were three small 'saxes,' two with white

<sup>7</sup>L1250 = *Aster Stracheyi* and L1254 = *Erigeron multiradiatus*.

<sup>8</sup>L1035 = *Primula Wigrammiana*.

<sup>9</sup>L1237 = *Elsholtzia eriostachya*.

<sup>10</sup>L1278 = *Cremanthodium oblongatum*.

<sup>11</sup>L1262 = *Allium carolinianum* (syn *blandum*).

<sup>12</sup>L1263 = *Cremanthodium arnicoides*.

flowers rather like *S. stellaris* and one with tiny bronze-yellow flowers. Also a cherry-pink *Sedum* which made great tufts on tussocks in the bog. Above this, on the screes, were clumps of a lovely scented *Delphinium*<sup>13</sup> about two feet high with grey-blue papery-looking flowers, and exquisite pure white *Pedicularis* with a purple 'beak' and a scent of roses, and two or three more 'saxes,' one with clear golden yellow flowers on three or four inch stems. There were also several other Louseworts (or Licewort?). What a pity it is that they seem to be hopeless for the garden! I must have found at least a dozen different ones, almost all of which would be garden treasures.

There was a lot of the prickly *Meconopsis* in many lovely shades of blue—not a mauve among them. Finally the white *Primula* was in countless thousands everywhere—in dry ground and wet—in the turf, and among stones in the dwarf juniper. The most lovely thing that I've seen so far.

I climbed across the screes, which were very steep, to a col that I hoped was 17,000 (but which is certainly lower), and looked over into a further grassy valley where yaks were grazing. On the very top of the col I found the tiny primrose-scented *Primula*<sup>14</sup> and the mossy *Androsace*, which I had found growing together before. My presses were full, so I regretfully turned back through thickening clouds at about 2.30 p.m.

I went up there again next day, particularly for butterflies, to which I had been too busy to pay attention before. But it was a dull day with very little sun and so it proved a disappointment, though I did get four or five nice clouded yellows.

<sup>13</sup>L1283 = *Delphinium Brunonianum*.

<sup>14</sup>L1130 = *Primula concinna*.

## Anemone Vernalis

THE accompanying photograph shows what might, I think, be considered quite a good specimen of *Anemone vernalis*. It was dug up and potted for showing. It was grown in full sun in rich scree, or it might be called alpine meadow mixture, equal parts weathered boiler ash, sand, loam and granulated peat, about nine inches deep over a good fat turf covering 6 or 8 inches of cinders. Judging by the self-sown seedlings it seems to like these conditions.

Perthshire.

M. L.

Members may purchase the Club Badge, price 2/6, from the Hon. Secretary or from County Representatives. This badge is a most attractive representation of the Club's emblem, *Dryas octopetala*.

## Peat Garden Construction

By L. G. KINNEAR

GARDENERS look in every direction for material, from the Aleutian Islands to the Straits of Magellan. There is no temperate climate which does not contribute to our borders. Our fancies wander, but there is a decided unity in our regard, and so many eyes now turn with longing and envy on Central Asia. This may not be a comfortable region, but it includes Western China, Thibet, Sikkim, Nepal, and Bhutan. From there we get inhabitants of moist woodlands, Primulas, Meconopsis, Nomocharis, and Lilies. We grow these to the best of our ability, but it is, as ever, a struggle to provide conditions to suit our plants. We exterminate the plants which suit our conditions, we call them weeds. In the East of Scotland it is more difficult each year for our spring weather is increasingly arid and bitterly cold. It is specially necessary to provide the right conditions for our immigrants.

One way of making them comfortable, is the Peat Garden. So far as I know, the first of these was constructed in the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh. This has been a help in dry spring weather and it has been copied here and there and it can be made to suit any size of garden. But so dry are our conditions that even a Peat Garden is inadequate and an added supply of water is a real blessing from March till June.

The Peat Garden is no competitor of the Rock Garden. The latter is for sun loving high Alpine plants. The more coy can nestle behind a stone. The Peat Garden should be made on ground sloping to the North with dappled shade overall. There is no aspect in our gardens which we cannot use.

In too many cases the design of such a garden degenerates into a staircase of peat walled terraces. Such regularity must be avoided. Consider a slope where peat has once been cut. Various levels of peat faces are exposed but time and subsidence have curved and softened these lines. This is important, for such curved lines are necessary in a Peat Garden to carry off surface moisture. The ledges and terraces should slope to the front and the walls curve downwards at the sides. No curves should meet in a cleft, for there too much moisture would collect in wet weather. The walls are built of household peats—I know of no other source of supply. These walls can be convex and concave alternately to provide spaces for planting, enchanting spaces which cry for a trowel. The walls slope back slightly for stability, and precious plants, prone to collar rot, can be tucked in between peats in these vertical faces. It is good design to have a higher wall—several courses of peat bricks—holding up a broader terrace and where the ledge is narrow, only one or perhaps two courses of peat

bricks are needed. Such irregularity and balance of proportion make the design successful, and in winter, when the levels are white with snow, contrasting with the black peat faces, a picture of beauty should result. So avoid symmetry and regular steps.

The soil of the garden—it should be line-free—is mixed with granulated peat, leaf mould and coarse sand. In my case, the garden is flat, which meant that the south side had to be built up with stone in order to give the necessary slope to the North. This stone wall was built up along with the soil and the highest peat wall came next, two courses below the soil level, three above and the mixture packed in between that and the stone. These curving lines were broken with an outcrop of stone here and there—it helps the design and gives foothold for weeding and planting. In dry weather the peat walls are quite capable of supporting my weight when weeding, but peats are soft and crumbly when wet and should not be stepped on then. For all that, a Peat Garden lasts a long time. The one in Edinburgh has been in existence for years and the individual peats are now merged in a homogeneous mass. Plants look well against such a background.

But even this moisture retaining medium can get too dry in our springs. If there is no natural slope to the North and one has to be made artificially, as in my case, conditions are even worse, because the raised soil dries out all the quicker. I therefore procured two long copper pipes joined by a T piece with a short piece of piping at right angles. The two far ends were beaten flat, doubled and flattened again. Every nine inches, a hole  $\frac{1}{8}$ " dia. was drilled. The pipe is  $\frac{1}{2}$ " outside diameter and this fits the bore of a standard garden hose. Force the hose on the short pipe and turn on the water and a jet issues from every hole. Tilt the apparatus even slightly, and the raised holes cease to function. For this reason, a trench was excavated in the highest terrace and the base of this trench very carefully levelled. The pipes were bent to the shape of the trench and laid inside. A trial by water ensued, and when it was certain that every hole did its duty, the soil was replaced. The pipe was 4" to 10" below the surface as the height of the terrace varied. This is an extravagant method and only used because neither end of the pipe was suitably placed for the hose. The short pipe emerges  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " to 2" from the stone wall by the path and the hose is easily forced on. The simple way is to get some second-hand copper pipe (if you can), flatten and double one end, drill the holes and bury that. The open end can come through a stone or peat wall, or it can be bent upright and kept free from dirt by corking. In all of these cases, force the hose on the end and turn on the tap. The amount of turn should be found by experiment, because too much pressure of water would disturb and wash away the soil, but enough must be used to get every hole working. Where the pipe lies near the surface, dark patches of moisture appear almost at once. Where it is deep, one uses faith. It is so easy to set the hose and turn the tap and spend the afternoon in other work. The moisture percolates downwards through the bed and the benefit is marked. It is only

successful where the water supply is lime free, but a certain amount of lime may even be a help because some peats can be very sour.

The Peat Garden I have made is a very small one and is for the sake of experiment—a prototype. A larger one is under construction and it will have the improvements gained from this experience. Much knowledge can be gathered from visits to other gardens. Instead of peat, Mr. Knox Findlay of Keillour Castle uses sawdust in his glorious garden. I have read of the successful use of sawdust from various sources; lilies thrive in it in New Zealand, but it must be weathered and not fresh. Cinders, too, are splendid for lightening the soil where it is heavy and that part of my peat garden where I used sharp fine factory cinders instead of coarse sand has the freest germination of seeds.

Finally, constructing a Peat Garden should not be all hard labour. Having built three or four of the peat walls, a cigarette in a deck chair some distance from the site is essential. Study the lines made and plan the form to come. Parts of my construction were demolished three times and rebuilt before they passed the deck chair test. This is worth while for, in a month or two, the peat looks as if it had been there for years and years.

## Growing Rhodohypoxis

By MRS. R. McCONNEL

I HAVE been asked how to grow Rhodohypoxis, and I can only say that I find them easier to grow than Mustard and Cress! This statement may seem odd, but I never could grow Mustard and Cress. One thing to remember in growing Rhodohypoxis is that it will not grow in limey soil, but anywhere else they just *grow*!

The soil I find they prefer is one containing loam, leafmould and sand, which is what I call a soft mixture. This is for their culture in pots. Outside, put them in just any soil, but if it is heavy add sand to lighten it. Do not be afraid of dividing them in July or early August even when in flower. Sow the seed as soon as collected. They will grow in full sun or partial shade, but will grow anywhere so long as there is no lime.

In winter protect those outside with cloches or slabs of peat, which can be removed in April or before, according to the season. The frost will not hurt them, unless very severe, but they are not fond of too much wet in the winter. Once they begin to grow, about May, they will stand, and enjoy, plenty of water.

Rhodohypoxis are one of the easiest of Alpines to grow and they give you a very long flowering period, which hardly any other Alpine does. They flower here in Ayrshire from May to October.

## Saxifraga: Kabschia Section

By DAVID LIVINGSTONE

IN HIS description in "The English Rock Garden" of the Kabschia or cushion section of Saxifrages, Farrer said this—"Under this repulsive and irrelevant name lie the dearest (in every sense) jewels of the family." The name is indeed irrelevant because, when these little plants are in good condition, their mounds or hummocks are hard and spiny, quite unlike the soft cushions which add so much to our comfort. The description "cushion" is more applicable to the mossy Saxifrages. Farrer was also right in describing the Kabschia Saxifrages as the "dearest jewels of the family." Perhaps we might go further and say that they are amongst the finest of all rock garden plants. There is no doubt that they fascinate many people by reason of their attractive foliage, symmetry of shape and beauty in bud and flower. Early in the year—January in some cases—the flower buds, like so many little beads, can be seen nestling tight against the foliage. It is with breathless anticipation that one watches the stems rise to an inch or two and the flowers, in their various shades and forms, unfold to display their full beauty. The foliage, in small rosettes or tufts of green or gray, makes firm compact mounds beautifully symmetrical in shape which are of interest throughout the entire year. They are so neat that it has sometimes been difficult to convince visitors with no knowledge of these Saxifrages that the plants have not been clipped with shears.

I do not know what Farrer had in mind when he said they were the dearest "in every sense." If he referred to cost his remark is certainly not applicable today. They rank amongst the cheapest of rock garden plants, although like everything else they are more expensive now than when I started to grow them some 20 years ago. I can well remember as a youth haunting a well-known nurseryman's shop in St. Enoch Square, Glasgow, to see the boxes of saxifrages, some with tight little buds and some with flowers beginning to open, and, when my pocket allowance permitted, to buy one for, believe it or not, ninepence. What a thrill it was to carry home each little treasure and to watch it grow in size and beauty. All this took place before I was "bitten" by the Primula "bug" and began to specialise in Primulas to the exclusion of many other plants. But I kept a soft spot for the Kabschia Saxifrages and even now as I pass through St. Enoch Square I recall with pleasure those boxes of neat, well grown little plants.

Kabschia Saxifrages were known to British gardeners in the middle of the eighteenth century, perhaps even earlier. These were species collected in the European Alps. About 1890 Mr. Boyd of Melrose achieved remarkable results by hybridization. One outstanding ex-



ample of his work is the finest yellow *Kabschia*, *S. Faldonside*. Hybridists, inspired by his results, have continued throughout the first part of this century to raise innumerable hybrids but many of them have, unfortunately, no outstanding features to distinguish them from others already in cultivation. Some care, therefore, is necessary in the selection of hybrids and I would suggest that a *Kabschia* hybrid should not be bought on name or description only but should be seen to make sure that it is really different from, or better than, those already grown. As I have already indicated above, many of the species of *Kabschia Saxifrages* are found growing in the European Alps. Some are also to be found in the Caucasus, but in lesser numbers, and there is at least one, *S. lilacina*, which is found in the Himalayas.

*Kabschia Saxifrages* are ideal rock garden plants for both the beginner and the more experienced. They are really very hardy, provided of course they are given the correct position and soil conditions. They are easily grown and, with very few exceptions, their successful cultivation provides no great problems. As they flower early in the year when our weather is at its worst, some growers provide cover by cloches or simply by panes of glass to preserve the flowers from damage by rain or snow. This sometimes gives rise to a belief that they are tender, but this is not so. The plants will stand up to the roughest weather and the most severe frost that we are likely to experience provided always, as I have said already, that soil conditions and position are correct.

Their use is not limited to the rock garden itself ; indeed, they are extremely useful plants in the scree. They are perhaps at their very best in the alpine house or cold frame and those that are less rapid in growth, such as *S. Irvingii* and *S. Faldonside*, are much in demand for miniature or trough gardening. There are even a few quick growing varieties like *S. apiculata* and *S. Elizabethae* which can be, and are, grown as border edging. This is sacrilege ! It is a great pity that plants which are so symmetrical when they are allowed to grow freely should be clipped and trimmed. If garden edging is necessary, a box hedge is indicated.

In the rock garden itself, the best position seems to be the raised rock ledge or scree pocket where the plants may develop their natural symmetrical mounds or hummocks. Planted in rock crevices or narrow fissures as we sometimes see them, the more vigorous plants assume the contour of the surrounding rock and as part of their attraction lies in the effect one gets when they are growing unhindered their full value is not realised. There is, too, an advantage in having them on a rock ledge where they are nearer to the eye and their beauty is more readily appreciated. Except for the quickest growing varieties, like *S. apiculata*, they should not be planted out in open soil. In the scree they find ideal conditions and there is no restriction on their natural development where they will grow for a good number of years, increasing steadily in size and in the number of blooms. For the miniature garden or stone trough, the slower growing kinds should

be used and, of course, as they may outgrow their space in three or four years it pays to have a supply of youngsters coming on to take their place.

And now a word on pot culture. I think it is a mistake to overpot these particular saxifrages and I have usually allowed them to continue in the same size of pot for two years with good results. One should start off with a nice little plant in a 2" or 3" pot or deep pan and gradually move on to 7" or 8". Above that size the containers are too big and difficult to handle. It is possible with some varieties, such as *S. Mother-of-Pearl* or *S. Burseriana sulphurea*, to have something like 200 blooms all out at one time on a plant in a 5" or 6" pot.

I am not in favour of more than one plant to a pot or pan as they will eventually run together and spoil their symmetrical appeal. I am sorry to appear to harp on this theme but once having grown or seen *Kabschia Saxifrages* you will realise why. Pots dressed off with limestone chips add to the beauty of the plants and help to make their surroundings look a little less artificial.

Situation is important because the plant must have a cool root run in Summer, particularly if we have, as we all too seldom have in Scotland, the hot sun which we had over an extended period in the Summer of 1949. Indeed, some growers go as far as to say that the plants should have some shade in Summer. This, I think, is unnecessary in the rock garden where their roots should be kept cool by their close association with the rocks and in the scree the very nature of which should give the necessary protection to their roots. But in pots the matter is a little different. Conditions there are more artificial and pots quickly dry out in hot weather, causing grievous harm to the occupants. In very hot weather care in watering is very necessary and it is advisable to give some protection by the use of lathes or strips of wood across the frames so that the sun does not rest for long on one particular spot. By the way, plants for the alpine house should be frame grown until they have reached the tight bud stage when they should be moved inside. As soon as they have finished flowering they should again be removed to cooler quarters out of doors. There is one species, to my knowledge, which does definitely resent full summer sun, no matter where it is grown, that is the Himalayan species *S. lilacina*, which is also an exception in that it resents the presence of free lime in the soil. Most other species and varieties seem not to care the proverbial "two hoots" whether lime be present or not.

In the preceding paragraph I indicated that most species and varieties do not mind whether lime is present in the soil or not. That is perfectly true, but there is no doubt that the presence of lime gives the best results. The plants seem to be more vigorous, flowers more plentiful and the foliage of the gray leaved kinds is certainly enhanced. For the general run of *Kabschia Saxifrages*, therefore, I recommend that lime stone chips be used in preference to any other if they can be obtained, but there is no need to despair if they are not easily procurable. Whinstone or granite may be used as a substitute. I recommend

too, that old mortar rubble should be incorporated in the compost in a roughish form, say, mostly in pieces about the size of a pea, smaller or bigger, of course, would be all right too, but dust should be avoided. I do not wish to lay down any hard and fast rule as to compost. In this matter, so far as Saxifrages are concerned, I have always gone by the feel of the compost, which should be distinctly rough and gritty so that it does not bind under wet conditions. Perhaps the following compost might be tried as a basis from which to begin experimenting : equal parts of loam, beech leaf mould, coarse Bedfordshire silver sand, old mortar rubble, and limestone chips. This mixture could be used no matter where the plants are to be grown—in the rock garden, the scree, or the miniature garden. When grown in pots perhaps a little more loam could be added with safety. Whatever the compost it must be free and permit of water passing through it quickly. Stagnant soil conditions, as with many other rock garden plants, only result in death. I should add here that firm planting is very necessary.

A few words on propagation seems to be necessary to round off these notes. I have already passed judgment on the innumerable hybrids in cultivation and I suggest that propagation from seed should be left severely alone as this would only result in more confusion and very likely add little lustre to the collection. It is far better to make a wise choice of species and the best of the hybrids and propagate vegetatively. The best time for propagating in this way is towards the end of May or the beginning of June. Single rosettes should be removed with a sharp knife or razor blade from the perimeter of the plants. The cuttings will be small and will require careful handling. They should be inserted into pots containing a compost of say four-fifths sand and one-fifth leaf mould or peat. The pots should be stood in a shaded propagation box or closed frame until the cuttings are well rooted. The little plants should then be put into 2" pots in the compost suggested for plants in a preceding paragraph. Left in these pots for some eighteen months they will make fine little plants, probably with a few flowers, and can safely be planted out in their permanent quarters or potted on with a view to retention in the cold frame for use in the alpine house. A reasonable little plant will thus have been formed in rather less than two years from the taking of the cuttings.

This is truly a race of plants which must grace any collection of rock garden plants, no matter how big or small.

## **A Further Note on *Polemonium Confertum***

I HAVE grown *Polemonium confertum* in full sun in a rich loam with plenty of moisture and without winter protection and they have thriven like mushrooms : one plant has twenty flower spikes and another eighteen. They have also set seed.

R. S. M.

## Locum Tenens

I AM a member of the Scottish Rock Garden Club, not that I know much about Alpines, but I have a wife who does. One of the more unexpected advantages of membership is that I feel that I have gained a higher status and a little more confidence for my activities as locum tenens.

We live in Scotland, but my wife has many friends in the south of England. Thus it is natural that she should go and visit them and their gardens, and she may be away for a fortnight or more at a time. It is during these periods that I become a locum tenens.

I must explain that my wife's rock garden, alpine house and frames are not extensive, and that she looks after them entirely herself. I am, however, occasionally permitted to weed the middle of the paths and to pull up groundsel and chickweed, both of which I can recognise. Otherwise I may look and admire, but I am not to touch.

The fun starts when I am to be left in charge. I get my instructions, probably the day before my wife leaves, and I find great difficulty in preventing them from going in at one ear and coming out at the other. As I have said, I know little about Alpines. Of course my wife knows all the plants individually and intimately, their habits, their likes and dislikes, whether each one prefers to be warm or cold and whether it appreciates a drink or would rather be bone dry.

This is the sort of thing :—

*She* : "Remember to turn the glass on the propagating frame every day, but don't water. Of course, if they get very dry it will be fatal."

*Me* : "How do I prevent them getting dry if we have a heat wave and I am not allowed to water?"

*She* : "There won't be a heat wave, but if there is you must use your intelligence."

*Me* : "Wow!"

There are a mass of pots (or should I say pans?) in the Alpine House, all sunk in sandy gravel. They touch each other but, because they are round, there are little sandy spaces between them. I am instructed that this sand must always be moist and must be watered every day. That sounds fine, except that there are some pots, housing most precious things, which on no account should receive any water on them or even inside the pot. What makes it more exciting is that often these dry pots are touching others which should always stay damp and require plenty of water. I suppose that you experts find such a watering operation a simple matter. Frankly, I don't. I get hold of the smallest watering can, with a tiny spout, and fill it with water—not too full, or I may spill some over a rarity—and the thing only

holds about half a pint. Then I dribble a little water round the outside of each pot (there seem to be several hundred of them) and by the time I have circumvented about four pots the can is empty and I have to bend down under the staging to refill it from the tank. It is, of course, splendid exercise and very good for my figure.

There is another form of watering which I am told to do if the weather is dry. It is called a "swish." This is much more fun. You can use a bigger can. You put a rose on it and then, holding it above the pans, you swing it smartly from right to left, or left to right, and thereby deposit a fine spray over the lot. That is the theory. When I do it, it works rather differently. With the first firm movement, from right to left, the rose of the can comes off and hits a *Primula Allionii* in the eye and a great flow of water from the spout drowns a *Draba*.

It is an extraordinary thing that whenever I am left in charge the weather has a spite against me. For example, one year we had lovely warm weather in May and about the middle of the month my wife went away on a visit. After seeing her off I returned rapidly to my desk to make notes on some last minute instructions about how to compete with all this heat so early in the season. Two days later it rained hard and got cold, and the following night there was a sharp frost. That was clearly another occasion on which to use my intelligence. It was only some of the things under my care that died, so I think I must have done well.

There is one other problem that, on these occasions, I have to contend with. It is the unexpected arrival of various plants from nurserymen. The cause is simple and I have no complaint about it. My wife does go to quite a lot of shows and, seeing something that she thinks is charming, promptly orders it to be sent at the proper season. Result, arrival of parcel during her absence. I open it, because it has a nurseryman's label on it, and inspect the contents. They have impossible names. Luckily we have quite a stock of gardening books and catalogues. After much search I can usually find the name somewhere, but the books do not always tell you what to do. Do you heel it in, plant it in the open or pot it up, and, if so, in what type of soil and then where do you put it? Two examples are sufficient.

The first was early this year. The parcel contained what looked to me like some dried up branching sticks, with a few roots at one end. They had a label which said "4 Salmon Beauty." I was completely stumped. However, I showed the things to a gardener, who said they might be *Pyrethrums*. Then followed a hunt through a plethora of catalogues and, sure enough, I found a *Pyrethrum* called *Salmon Beauty*, and all was well. They were not, of course, to be grown in the rock garden.

The second example was also odd. Quite a number of Alpines had been arriving, which I had dealt with, but in one parcel was a thing called "Populus" something or other, I forget what. I had my usual

hunt and eventually, in a book on trees, I discovered that it was a variety of Poplar that grows to a height of some 50 feet. Greatly daring, I refrained from planting this in the rock garden and put it in a clearing in a wood. It has already grown about two feet in a year.

For obvious reasons I think I should remain anonymous. My story is true. Its object is perhaps to amuse but mainly to encourage other husbands in the entertaining task of caring for what their better halves delight in. So, if I may, I will just sign myself, as I began

Locum Tenens.

## Propagation by Leaf-cuttings of the *Petiolaris Primulas*

By R. S. MASTERTON

**PROPAGATION** by leaf-cuttings is the surest way of raising most of the *Petiolaris* section of *Primulas*. If one has a propagating frame in a greenhouse or an outside frame that can be kept closed and shaded then the technique is very simple. Having selected the plant I want to increase, I hold a leaf by the base of the petiole and pull downwards. In most cases the leaf will come away with the leaf-bud intact—this bud must be there before the leaf will root and develop into a plant. It is usually quite small and situated on the medial surface of the petiole at its very base ; usually it is lighter in colour than the petiole itself.

The leaf is now inserted in sand or 'vermiculite.' I usually line leaf cuttings round the inside of a pot containing sharp sand, inserting the base of the leaf and the leaf bud just enough to keep it in an upright position. Do not bury the leaf-bud too deeply. Rooting will take place in 3 to 6 weeks and the bud will start into growth in even shorter time. Once root formation has started, transplant to a box with a sandy mixture and treat as you would any other cutting.

*Petiolaris primulas* that I have treated this way are as follows :—*Pp. bhutanica*, *Edgeworthii alba*, *scapigera*, *scapigera alba*, *bracteosa*, *sessilis*, *gracilipes*, *scapeosa*, *xPandora*, *aureata*. Two species that have not produced leaf-buds with me are *P. aureata* form and *P. sonchifolia*.

### IT HELPS OUR CLUB

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## Sawdust

By M. W. and W. G. K. FINLAY

THE question of using sawdust in gardens has been under discussion for a number of years, and from time to time, articles appear on this subject in horticultural papers, but whereas most gardeners are now compost minded, comparatively few are, so far, sawdust minded.

At Keillour, we have used sawdust for the past three and a half years, old sawdust in which worms are working. We were fortunate in finding a large pit of this material near to the estate sawmill. The finest nettles we had ever seen grew there, so we dug down to find out the reason why, and our excavations revealed the rich deposit. The nettles were eradicated with an application of sodium chlorate.

We decided to try out the deposit on our 1948 Tomato crop, and our gardener courageously agreed. We planted them in a compost of equal parts loam and sawdust, and the crop was excellent. (Now we also use sawdust for cucumbers, and grow them in two parts sawdust to one of loam and one of well-rotted manure).

In the same year we filled up open frames with sawdust and sand, and sowed seed of *Liliums* and *Nomocharis* in this mixture and made further use of sawdust in many other parts of the garden, including the beds in our peat wall garden which were then under construction.

The 1948 results were so interesting that Dr. Tod of the East of Scotland Agricultural College kindly took a sample of our sawdust, and the following is a copy of his analysis of this material :

Moisture, 15.2 %; Ash, 34.4 %;  $P^2O^5$ , 0.2 %;  $K^2O$ , 0.4 %; N, 0.9 %; Organic Carbon, 2.8 %; Ca, 0.4 %

We have found that sawdust is retentive of moisture, friable, and provides a good root run. Further, slugs dislike it, and, with the exception of the initial nettle seedlings, the deposit has been almost weed free. On the other hand, our leaf mould is full of weed seeds, and although we use compost made on the Indore system and find it excellent—this involves a considerable amount of labour, and we can not make sufficient to meet our requirements.

There is no doubt that rock and woodland plants must be fed in order to obtain good and lasting results, and yet we must not overfeed, or our plants will be grown out of character. We feed by mulching, and for this purpose again we use sawdust to a very great extent. We mulch in Autumn and in Spring, and the worms, which delight in the deposit, gradually incorporate it with the soil, thus increasing the humus and plant food content.

It is known that the application of some mulches should not be made until the heat of the sun has warmed the ground. Manure is

heavy and cold, as also is damp and not fully rotted leaf mould ; but in a garden where there is nearly always a drought in April, May and indeed in June, something must be done to conserve the moisture early in the year. The plants pop up through this top dressing, which appears also to give them some frost protection.

Although experiments with strawberries may be of little interest to members of the S.R.G.C., no doubt many of us grow them. We have this year used sawdust for some of our strawberries instead of straw, and we laid it down very early. To straw a strawberry bed early in the season collects slugs and also collects Spring frosts ; and to straw a strawberry bed late may damage the early blossom, and is always a tiresome job. We have also tried out 1945 pure spruce sawdust, and await the results.

When we go around the garden planting, feeding, mulching or making up new beds, a barrow load of sawdust nearly always accompanies us ; generally sand has been added to the barrow load, and often bone meal. Sawdust is widely used at Keillour.

## **Lithosperum Oleifolium**

THIS is often said not to be hardy in Scotland except in the milder districts. It is, however, flourishing at 600 feet in Perthshire after two winters in the open.

It is growing in scree on the south side of a rock, the scree mixture is approx. 2/3rds boiler ash and limestone chips half and half and 1/3rd equal parts loam, granulated peat and sand, all over good drainage. It has NOT been covered with glass. Drainage would appear to be the answer.

Perthshire.

M. L.

### **ALPINES**

—o—

### **H. DAVENPORT JONES**

WASHFIELD NURSERIES,

**HAWKHURST, KENT**

(Formerly with Miss E. A. Britton, Devon)

—o—

LIST ON APPLICATION



## Exhibiting

By J. T. WALL

IT IS with no little diffidence that I contribute this short note, and the desire to see good plants displayed to the best advantage is all that encourages me to do so. Display is a most important feature in exhibiting: how often do we see at our shows excellent and well-grown plants displayed with all too little attention to neatness, cleanliness, balance of plant to size of receptacle, and, alas, in dirty pots or pans. Such items, small on their own, can, when taken over all the class, detract from the otherwise high standard of the exhibition.

A few hints may be of use to the beginner and encourage the more experienced to maintain the high standard one looks for at our shows. First the plant should be 'vetted' to see that all dead leaves, flower stalks, malformed leaves, etc., are removed before lifting commences: this will prevent damage which might easily be done when the plant is less firmly anchored. Do not put a plant in a receptacle too large or too small for it. If already growing in a pot or pan the plant should be cleaned up, the surface soil removed, a fresh top dressing applied, and the surface dressed with stone chips, screened pea gravel, or tight close-growing moss, whichever is most in keeping with the plant. Try to finish off the dressing  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch below the rim of the receptacle. Pieces of rock inserted to project an inch or two above the rim are in order but the soil should not be built up to them to give a pudding effect with no means of getting water to the roots of the plant.

Some plants may need support and it is important to be neat with this. Florists' wires or wreath stubs are excellent and inconspicuous, and may be bent at will to support the plant without tying; but if tying is necessary, split green raffia, or even cotton, is preferable to the stout, ragged material one so often sees.

Carpeting plants should be lifted with great care and need exacting judgment in potting. The right amount of soil should be placed in the pot, the specimen be set on this to protrude about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch above the rim, and soil placed loosely round the sides to the same level; shake the pot and tap it on the bench, then press with the flat of the hand firmly over the plant—this will prevent ends sticking up at the wrong angle. Above all lift these plants several days before the show and water well, keep them in a cool house or frame in plenty of light.

With shrubs the details are not so numerous; old flower-heads and dirty receptacles are the most obvious faults. With conifers the main fault is the collection of dead 'needles' left in the plants: these should be given a vigorous shake, and the tight-growing ones combed out with a thin, pointed stick or knitting needle; and all will benefit from a good syringing with tepid soapy water a fortnight or so before

the show. This will put a fresh glow on the green specimens and a new bloom on the glaucous species.

Do not pack wet pans, etc., for a journey : they pick up dirt and packing material and will soil the table-covering and exhibitor's cards—minor points which can nevertheless make or mar the appearance of a show.

## International Rock Garden Conference—1951 Scottish Week

By MRS. K. MARRIAGE

EVERYTHING about the Scottish week of the International Rock Garden Conference was altogether enjoyable. Much of the success of this end of the Conference was due to the beauty, layout and horticultural interest of the Edinburgh Royal Botanic Garden in which the meetings were held. Two features underlined in my notebook are propagation of alpines under Mr. Kemp and the Peat Garden ingeniously constructed of giant peat steps controlled by hidden chicken wire. Here were peat-lovers and calcifugitives at their best. Vertical faces of steps were most successfully planted.

Sir William Wright Smith's evident stressing of genera which enjoy that climate is an example that more of us might follow with benefit. Just look at the Primulas and Rhododendrons in this Botanic Garden !

Lectures were well arranged for diversity and were full of meat. Major Sherriff's account of his collecting in Tibet and Bhutan and his pictures made a fine flourish at the end.

A visit to the garden of Mr. and Mrs. MacFarlane, Bystone, was a real delight. This rock garden is particularly well-designed, and planted with taste and discrimination. None of that feeling that one was viewing a horticultural museum instead of a rock garden. Perfect maintenance showed that some craftsmen (or women) still love their work. And wasn't the coffee acceptable? The Glasgow Rock Garden Show had many exciting exhibits. It was a thrill to see our Pike's Peak *Mertensia coriacea* looking so blooming even though in the confines of a flower pot.

The judges had an easy job awarding the "Large Gold Medal" to Jack Drake's exhibit. This extensive display contained many plants of unusual interest, well grown, and superbly arranged : texture, colour, mass and form all contributing to a good composition.

These sketchy notes ashamedly omit visits of the writer to Keillour Castle and the garden of Mr. and Mrs. Renton because of 'a cold in the head.'

Arrangements made for the comfort and pleasure of participators in the Conference were most thoughtfully and successfully planned.



KHANGSAR GONPA

(Photo., D. G. Llowndes)



Fig. 34. ANEMONE VERNALIS

(Photo., James Gilchrist)



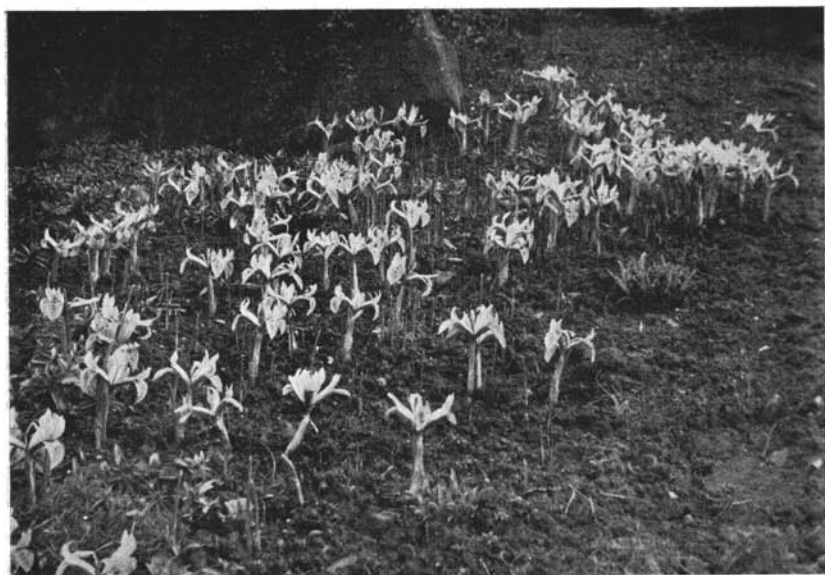
*Fig. 35. SAXIFRAGA BURSERIANA V. SULPHUREA*

*(Photo., D. Wilkie)*



*Fig. 36. SAXIFRAGA IRVINGII*

*(Photo., D. Wilkie)*



*Fig. 37. IRIS HISTRIOIDES VAR. MAJOR*

*(Photo., D. Wilkie)*



*Fig. 38. SAXIFRAGA OPPOSITIFOLIA VAR. LATINA*

*(Photo., D. Wilkie)*



*Fig. 39.* PRIMULA BRACTEOSA—GOOD FORM

*Photo., D. Wilkie*



*Fig. 40.* PRIMULA ELLISIAE

*(Photo., D. Wilkie)*

## Further Notes from Westmorland

By MRS. C. M. CREWDSON

In the Journal of the Scottish Rock Garden Club for 1949 some notes on my garden in Westmorland were printed, and several members have asked me lately if I am not going to give the sequel to the behaviour of "Cooky," that tricky little American *Primula Cusickiana*, from the Wallowa Mountains, of which I received plants by air in 1947, collected by Mrs. Berry, of Oregon.

This year, four years after I had received the plants, one actually elected to flower, but unfortunately for me too early for any of the shows, for early in January the little shoots of one plant began to come through, and by February 5th I had the excitement of seeing a bud really forming; by February 10th it was showing a faint mauve, and by February 19th the flowers were fully out.

It is certainly an attractive and pleasing little species, with bright green spoon-shaped leaves, and violet flowers and I can well imagine that a mass of them on the mountains must be a wonderful sight. With the same rapidity with which they appeared all my plants of "Cooky" have disappeared again and now at the end of May nothing remains but a few brown dead leaves.

This is, I think, the most difficult time for the treatment of this *Primula*; it is a case of to water, or not to water, so I try the half-way course, and give a little water occasionally and rather sparingly, and let the pots have plenty of sun, for I have read that this species requires a thorough drying and baking in hot sunshine after the flowering season.

\* \* \* \* \*

Amongst the seedlings which I had from Ludlow and Sherriff's seed, I had some *Primula pusilla*, and last autumn I planted out one or two as an experiment on my small peat wall, but I could not see any signs of them this spring, and feared they were lost during the winter, but going past the wall today (June 6th) a tiny patch of violet almost underneath a plant of *P. Edgworthii* caught my eye; on looking closer I found it was a small plant of *P. pusilla* which must have been washed out of its original position at the top of the wall, but had somehow survived and was bravely blooming. This small *Primula* is mentioned by Major Sherriff and Dr. George Taylor in the A.G.S. Bulletin in 1940 in their notes on some "Himalayan Primulas," where they say it has always proved somewhat difficult, and that in its natural habitat it covers damp, rocky banks. I should like to make it so happy that I should be able to see a mass of these, for at the moment I almost need a microscope to see my little plant!! I

have, however, a few more plants in a frame and these I shall now add to the little courageous one in the peat wall.

\* \* \* \* \*

Also from L. and S., I have had great pleasure from the plants and seedlings of *Primula tenella*. This small Primula seems easy and adaptable, and though no doubt it would look best spreading down the narrow rock fissures in its native country, still it is very attractive in a pan in the alpine house. It forms numerous rosettes and the flowers are a lovely shade of violet-blue, with a white eye. The leaves are covered with white farina underneath.

## Experience—The Best Teacher

By MRS. R. McCONNEL

I AM wondering if the editor will be feeling sorry that he ever mentioned in his Notes in the Journal of 1951 that not enough members were contributing, but here goes.

I feel sure that to grow Alpines successfully you need, first of all to study their likes and dislikes, and then experiment in your own garden as to whether your conditions and climate are to their taste. If the climate does not suit them, there is nothing much you can do about it, except try them in frames or Alpine House, where, if your conditions are not right, you can at least alter them. A plant that you can grow on the North side of a rock in the South of England, may need more sun up in Scotland.

I have tried to grow Alpines in several climates and have had gardens in India (Quetta) and in Palestine, and I am convinced that there is nothing like personal experience to find out how to grow your plants under varying conditions and climates. Some of the plants that grow so well here in Ayrshire, such as the Asiatic primulas and some of the Meconopsis, used to give one look and then die in the garden I had in Surrey. Then again, the *Primula Hirsuta*, which I collected in the Pyrenees, did beautifully in Surrey, but here they are not happy outside, though I have a few in pots that seem better. *Rhodohypoxis* used to seed itself in the South, also *Eidelweiss*, but they refuse to do so here. Conversely, *Lewisia Cotyledon* and *L. Columbiana* do seed themselves here. If plants seed about naturally, one can be pretty sure that they are happy.

I find that growing plants which I have collected myself is most thrilling, and I like to try and give them, as nearly as possible, the same situation and soil as that in which I found them. It is sad that in our climate they can not get the deep covering of snow all winter or a thorough baking by the sun in summer, which some of the plants need. It is in the winter months in this country that so much of the damage is done to plants, more by wet than by frost. All the con-



ditions and pests we have to deal with and finding out the answers for oneself does make growing Alpines such fun and so exciting. I can not give the answers, but I am certain that care and love of our plants, but not coddling, goes a long way towards producing what we all want, and that is, in the words of Mr. Reginald Farrer, "Happy Children of the Alps."

## Anemonopsis Macrophylla

I HAVE had a plant for six years, but though it has produced a few flowers every year it was only in the exceptionally wet summer of 1950 that it did itself justice. As it does not seem to be widely grown, a short description may be of interest, more so as Farrer's description in the "English Rock Garden" does not quite tally with my plant.

Anemonopsis is a monotypic genus of Ranunculaceae native of Japanese woodlands. While the flowers are vaguely suggestive of Anemone the general habit is much nearer that of Aquilegia. It has, however, several very distinctive characteristics, among them its very deliberate growth. Although the basal leaves appear in March and the flower stems are well set with buds by June, the flowers do not open till July, and being individually long-lived and opening in succession, carry on for seven or eight weeks; when seed is set it takes fully two months to ripen.

Last year my plant had five or six flowering-stems about fifteen inches high, slender, but tough and wiry, dark purple-brown in colour, bearing small alternate leaves with axillary pedicels projecting at right angles to the stems; these each curve downwards at the tip and end in a dark round flower-bud—as does the main stem. The effect is quite unlike that of Anemone japonica to which Farrer compares it, the flowers being set at equal distances apart and the whole growth delicate and graceful. The inverted flowers have the perianth in three rows, all coloured, the two outer rows making a flower like typical Anemone and the inmost forming a sort of corona very like that of a short-cupped Narcissus. Farrer describes them as 'white centred, of a rich lavender blue': my plant reverses the colour scheme, the flowers paling towards the edges and on the reverse. I make the colour Aconite violet (HCC937/1), gradually paling to pastel lilac (HCC437/1): the whole flower has a waxy, glistening sheen which illumines its rather quiet tints.

When seed is set another peculiarity is revealed. In Aquilegia the pedicel after fertilisation gradually straightens itself till the fruit is held erect. In Anemonopsis the pedicel rigidly maintains its downward curve but each of the three carpels, which point downwards when the petals fall, gradually turns upwards till when the seed is ripe they are completely reflexed like the petals of a cyclamen. The seeds themselves are distinctive, looking like so many miniature loafahs.

Until last year I had no seed and my only attempt at propagation followed on the accidental breaking of a young shoot in the Spring. This, plunged in a sand bed, before long produced roots and was potted up : later it produced growth-buds. It should be possible to propagate like *Delphinium*.

My plant is growing in a mixture of leafy soil and chips, under the shade of a *Cytisus praecox*. This year's experience suggests that the vulnerable point lies in the time that the flower-buds take to open : a very dry spell between the beginning of June and the end of August may cause all or some of the unopened buds to shrivel. But even if it only does itself full justice once in six years it is a plant I should not willingly be without, not only because of its delicate beauty, but also because of its amusing originality.

R. J. R. M.

## ***Erodium Reichardii* v. *Roseum***

SINCE coming North I have been agreeably surprised at the behaviour of many plants that hitherto I had considered temperamental. The plant mentioned here is a case in point. Growing on a rocky escarpment in the garden of Crichton Royal, Dumfries, it forms a thick mat between and over the closely-built face, giving ample evidence of the many winters it has weathered to give throughout the summer its unstinted measure of bright pink flowers that just surmount the close carpet of bright emerald green lobed leaves. There is no doubt that a dry wall, or the steep crevice or slope of the scree, is essential to its survival, and it is most worthy of such a site. In the South I found that it was not at all dependable even on such sites, and always considered a few rooted pieces plunged in a frame a sound investment.

There is a most charming double form which originated in Messrs. Ladham's nursery at Elstead, Surrey, having all the grace and charm of the type but with double flowers of even brighter pink that last longer in flower. One feature of this plant that is not so appreciated is its habit of reverting to type for a season or part of a season and producing all single or part single and part double flowers then reverting without rhyme or reason to double again. The first batch of cuttings taken last fall from good doubles all came single this Spring while the second batch has produced roughly half double and half single forms. I am hoping that propagation from the doubles this year will fix the plant once for all. Single or double, however, these cheerful cranesbills—in spite of their idiosyncrasies—are both worthy members of the wide range of rock garden plants.

J. T. WALL

*Editor's Note.*—In the drier climate of East Scotland and possibly a lighter soil *Erodium chamaedryoides roseum*, to give the alternative name, has flourished with me for over twenty years on the flat as edging to a path.

## President's Review

By our Constitution no President can hold office for more than four consecutive years, so I propose on this occasion, in place of my customary annual review, to mention very briefly the progress that has been made by the Club during the four years in which I have had the honour of being your President.

One of my first acts after being elected four years ago was, with the approval of the Committee, to write to each of the 320 members then on the roll explaining our aims and our difficulties. The former included the holding of Shows in different parts of the country, the appointment of County Representatives to arrange local meetings and excursions, the collection and distribution of seeds. I also expressed the hope that The Journal might become a half-yearly issue. The implementing of this policy of expansion has resulted in an increase in our membership from 320 to our present figure of about 1500. All this has not been achieved without a great deal of hard work by the Office-Bearers and the County Representatives, who have done so much to make members feel that they belong to a live and worthwhile organisation, to which everyone who is interested in the growing of rock plants is welcome. Where all, both past and present, have given of their best it is not my intention to mention individuals. Suffice it to say that without the co-operation of all these willing helpers the Club would not be in the position in which it stands today. I am happy to know that, on relinquishing my own office, I am leaving behind a team of real enthusiasts.

During the past four years our Constitution has been revised to meet the altered conditions arising from the expansion in the Club's membership and activities. Rules for judging have been drawn up. The Show Notes and Rules have been enlarged and revised. Publicity leaflets for distribution to potential members have been printed and are in the hands of C.Rs., or can be obtained from the Hon. Publicity Manager. For the benefit of members wishing to put up plants for awards, but who cannot overcome the difficulty and expense of getting them to London for a R.H.S. award, an arrangement has been made, and a joint Committee formed, with the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society, whereby members can at specified times submit plants for a R.C.H.S. award. The Club is now holding five Spring Shows in different parts of the country, at each of which is now awarded a Club bronze medal for the encouragement of those who have not previously won more than three first prizes. At several of our Shows, through the generosity of private individuals, one or more Challenge Cups or Medals have been gifted for competition. Similar gifts, particularly in connection with the provincial Shows, would be most acceptable. One of our most enterprising C.Rs. has this year organised a Show for the benefit of the local members in the rather difficult month of September : such initiative is worthy of every encouragement. During each of the past three years we have staged an exhibit at the Royal Highland Show. This has proved a great attraction to the garden-loving public, and has been of enormous publicity value besides being directly responsible for a large number of new members. Similar exhibits on a smaller scale at the Ayrshire Gardeners Bulb Show in March, and a small Alpine Show at Kirkcudbright in April, were tried this year and proved well worth the trouble involved. The most important event of the year, indeed of the past four years, has been the holding of an International Rock Garden Plant Conference. This was sponsored by The Alpine Garden Society, who invited us to co-operate as joint organisers and be entirely responsible for the proposed Scottish part of the Conference. I think we may claim that the Conference was an outstanding success and did much to dis-

seminate the knowledge of the experts, besides bringing into closer touch the Societies and individuals who, like ourselves, are encouraging the growing of rock garden plants, not only in Great Britain but in many countries of Europe and North America. The full Conference Report will be published by the A.G.S. and should be well worth buying as it will prove of great interest and lasting value.

This review would not give a complete picture of the state of our Club if I referred only to our achievements without mentioning our difficulties, and prospects for the future. Most of the difficulties revolve round finance. We all know that prices keep rising, not least in the cost of printing and paper, and some postage rates. Our publications cost a great deal more than they did two years ago. At the same time the public are not so keen to buy them. This year there has been a noticeable falling off in the numbers attending most of our Shows. Without anticipating our Hon. Treasurer's report at the A.G.M., I fear that I am on safe ground in saying that our expenditure will have exceeded our income. Partly this is attributable, as anticipated, to extra expenditure on the Conference. All this does not mean that we are in financial difficulties, or that a rise in the annual subscription is imminent. I hope that will never become necessary, if indeed it would achieve its aim. But it does mean that unless we can build up a substantial reserve—the only chance of which would seem to be through donations or legacies, which will always be welcome—we shall have to practice economy in administration. This is of course a matter that the Council has constantly in mind, but suggestions are always welcome.

I have referred previously to the enthusiasm of our Office-Bearers. It is perhaps not generally realised what an immense amount of time and thought have to be given by, in particular, our Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer in performing the duties of their respective offices for a Club whose membership is now over 1500 and still rising. Their services are given voluntarily, but their spare time is by no means unlimited and it is up to us to ease their burden in any way we can.

Our policy of decentralisation has undoubtedly paid good dividends. In the districts in which Shows have been held, or which are covered by particularly energetic County Representatives, can be seen the largest increases in membership. Conversely there are some counties in which, usually for geographical reasons, we still have comparatively few members. Personally I would like to see the number and location of our Shows still further extended, so that one at least is within the reach of all. And more publicity exhibits might be staged at Agricultural and other Shows. This may necessitate further Office-Bearers to avoid putting extra work on those who are already giving all the time they can spare. By our revised Constitution six members of the Council retire annually and cannot be re-elected for the ensuing year. This gives a better chance, of which I hope advantage will be taken, for the election of new nominees from the counties. I feel strongly that we want as wide a representation as possible on the Council. Our Club is a national one and, apart from the limitations imposed by geographical reasons, we should not favour one district more than another. The Council is the directing body and the helping hand, but the future expansion and wellbeing of our Club, particularly the fostering of that friendly spirit which is so important, will lie more and more with the County Representatives and with each individual member. Although the recent rate of increase in our membership cannot be expected to continue indefinitely, there is still tremendous scope, not only in the country districts but amongst the occupiers of small town gardens. If every member will take note of the value of what he receives for his 10/- subscription, even if he goes to only one, or none, of our Shows, he will have no difficulty in persuading others to join. Don't accept the excuse that they know so little. It is the beginner we particularly want to help, not only to grow better plants, but to meet others with the same tastes.

To that ever increasing number of members who live outside Scotland we can only offer, besides our publications and the chance of getting some really good seed through our Distribution, a very warm welcome when they visit us.

Culderry,  
Garlieston,  
Wigtownshire.  
September, 1951.

ALAN WALMSLEY,  
President.

## Seed Distribution

This note is to remind members that once again there will be a Seed Distribution this year. It is hoped that as many members as possible will send in seed, which should reach me before **31st October, 1951**. This year I have already received a very fine collection of seed of New Zealand alpinines. It includes seed of *Ranunculus Lyallii*, many *Celmisia* species, *Leucogenes grandiceps*, and many other interesting seeds. These came from Mrs. C. Walker, Te Horo, New Zealand, and I would like to take this opportunity of thanking her on the Club's behalf.

Perhaps members will be interested to learn that last year over 5,000 packets of seed were sent out to members, not only in Britain but also in Canada, U.S.A., Australia, and New Zealand. One point of note is that every item in the list was asked for by some member, so no one should hesitate to send in seed of any alpine or allied plant.

The quantity of seed sent in is immaterial. The more the better, of course, but a few seeds of a good plant will be most acceptable: perhaps some other member will send in more seed of the same species and so we get sufficient seed in the end to satisfy all the applicants. It is of course natural that the rare species are the most popular, and we will continue this year to give priority to members who send in seed. This year, as last, members living abroad will also have priority.

I would again appeal to members to send in seed so that the 1951 Seed Distribution will be better than ever.

R. S. MASTERTON,  
Cluny House,  
Aberfeldy,  
Perthshire.

## Plants that have gained Awards

In the early part of 1950, the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society agreed to form a Joint Committee with the Club, for the purpose of presenting awards to plants of merit and distinction. That this has been popular can be seen in the number of plants that have been placed before this Committee. The following plants have been given Awards:—

***Androsace imbricata*, A.M.**, 10th May 1951. One of the most beautiful of the cushion *Androsaces*, forming hummocks of silvery-white rosettes from which arise white flowers sometimes with a distinct reddish eye. Belonging to the Western Alps, it is considered one of the most difficult in cultivation. Ex. by Mr. A. D. Reid, Edinburgh.

***Androsace pyrenaica*, A.M.**, 10th May 1951. Also a cushion plant, but this time more greenish in hue and with slightly larger white flowers. A good plant and not so difficult in cultivation. Ex. by Mr. Henry Archibald, Carnwath.

**Anemone vernalis**, A.M., 10th May 1951. A plant of wide distribution resembling the better known *Anemone Pulsatilla*, the flowers, which come up very early before the leaves are developed, are white with a purplish blue flush on the reverse. Undoubtedly one of the finest of the genus and not an easy plant in cultivation. Ex. by Mr. R. S. Masterton, Aberfeldy.

**Cassiope lycopodioides**, A.M., 2nd May 1950. The genus *Cassiope*, although it has been known to science for over a hundred years, only made its appearance in gardens in this country of comparatively recent years. The species *C. lycopodioides*, which is native to Northern Asia and Japan, is a prostrate evergreen with closely imbricated leaves of deep green and covered with pure white bell-shaped flowers which are borne on thread-like stalks. Ex. by Mr. R. S. Masterton, Aberfeldy.

**Gentiana verna**, A.M., 2nd May 1950. In spite of the many beautiful species recently introduced, *Gentiana verna* is still one of the finest and one of the most adaptable of the whole genus. The pure blue of its flowers and neat habit of growth makes it worth an award and worthy of a place in any garden. Ex. by Mr. R. S. Masterton, Aberfeldy.

**Iris Danfordiae**, A.M., 6th March 1951. A yellow-flowered gem of the bulbous group, sending up its bright blooms very early in the year long before the foliage makes its appearance. A plant more for the alpine house than out of doors. Not an easy subject to keep. Ex. by Mr. D. Livingstone, Edinburgh.

**Iris histrioides var. major**, A.M., 6th February 1951. A strong and hardy species of the bulbous group which flowers earlier than the more common *I. reticulata* and with much larger flowers than that plant. Good deep blue, heavily marked with gold in the falls and retaining this colour in spite of frost and snow. Ex. by Mr. D. Livingstone, Edinburgh.

**Mertensia coriacea**, A.M., 2nd May 1950. Described by the exhibitor in last year's Journal (8. 1951). Little need be said here except to agree that it is one of the loveliest of all *Mertensias* with its glaucous blue foliage and its vivid sky blue flowers which come out pink and then turn blue. Ex. by Mr. Jack Drake, Aviemore.

**Narcissus asturiensis**, A.M., 6th March 1951. Better known as *N. minor* var *minimus*, this species is one of the earliest to flower and one of the neatest in habit. Only about three inches high, the flowers have the large trumpet and are a clear yellow. Perfectly hardy out of doors, but so often damaged by rough weather. Ex. by Mr. D. Livingstone, Edinburgh.

**Polemonium confertum**, C.C., 2nd May 1950. A very pretty plant for the scree with the leaves bearing the leaflets in whorls: the flowers are carried several together in a head or spike and are a bright blue or blue-violet. Very different to the common *Polemonium* and much more difficult to flower well. Awarded to Mr. Jack Drake, Aviemore.

**Primula aureata**, F.C.C., 10th April 1951. On this occasion this plant deserved this high award. One of the most attractive of the *Petiolares* Section, its history has already been given in our Journal and a very brief note will suffice here. The foliage is covered with white meal and the flowers, which are over one and a half inches in diameter, are a deep yellow with more than half of the centre of the flower covered with a deep orange shade. Ex. by Mr. Henry Archibald, Carnwath. (A P.C. was awarded this plant on 2nd May 1950, when exhibited by Mr. R. S. Masterton).

**Primula aureata form**, A.M., 10th April 1951. A rather unknown plant which went under the name of *Primula Edgeworthii* var *Alba* for a long time and which may prove a distinct species. The leaves on this plant retain their mealy covering throughout the year and the flowers are creamy yellow. Not as good a flowering plant as either *P. aureata* or *P. Edgeworthii*, but has attractive foliage and a plant that makes many offsets. Ex. by Mr. A. D. Reid, Edinburgh.

**Primula Baileyana**, A.M., 10th April 1951. A very rare *Primula* belonging to the *Rotundifolia* Section and a native of S.E. Tibet. A beautiful plant with roundest leaves covered with white meal and with an umbel of several pale violet-blue flowers which have a white or yellowish eye. Doubtfully hardy. Ex. by Major and Mrs. Knox Finlay, Keillour, Methven.

**Primula bhutanica**, A.M., 10th April 1951. Introduced into this country as living plants, this species has settled down in cultivation and has proved a wonderful addition to the rock garden. Owing to its hardiness, freedom of growth, and beautiful blooms, it is likely to become more popular than *P. Edgeworthii*. Forming rosettes of toothed leaves which are covered for part of the year with white farina, the plant produces numerous long pedicelled flowers of a pale mauve blue; already there are variations in the flower colour as much of the present stock has been used for seed. Ex. by Major-General W. L. Murray-Lyon, D.S.O., M.C.

**Primula Bilekii**, A.M., 10th April 1951. One of the many hybrids which has *P. minima* as one of the parents and which it resembles but with larger flowers; these are a good pink with whitish eye. Ex. by Mr. Jack Drake, Aviemore.

**Primula bracteosa**, Good form, F.C.C., 6th February 1951. It is possible that at a later date this plant will be given another name, but at present it is kept as above. Introduced as living plants under the label, Stonor No. 2, it has already proved its worth. The plant which was given this award has been flowering for several months with just very short breaks. The leaves are a deep green with reddish tinge beneath and down the petioles and the flowers are a deep pink with a marked centre, part of which looks like a blunt pointed star. Ex. by Mr. A. D. Reid, Edinburgh.

**Primula Ellisiae**, A.M., 2nd May 1950. A native of New Mexico, *P. Ellisiae* is one of the finest of the Western species of the genus, not only as a suitable subject for the alpine house, but also for growing out of doors: it has proved perfectly hardy at Edinburgh and blooms over a long period. The flowers are produced on a six to nine inch scape and are a deep rose-violet with yellow eye. Ex. by Mr. Jack Drake, Aviemore.

**Primula frondosa**, A.M., 2nd May 1950. A well known species, belonging to the *Balkans* and one of the easiest to cultivate. A dwarf plant of about four to six inches in height, the obovate leaves are usually covered with a white farina, especially on the undersides. With several flowers to a scape, they are rose lilac to reddish purple. Ex. by Mr. R. S. Masterton, Aberfeldy.

**Primula marginata Drake's form**, A.M., 10th April 1951. While *P. marginata* itself can be considered one of the loveliest of the *Auricula* Section, this form is a much larger plant with fuller flowers of a pale lilac lavender. Ex. by Mr. Jack Drake, Aviemore.

**Primula obtusifolia**, A.M., 2nd May 1950. This species has been known to science for over a hundred years and during that period had been confused with one or two allied species. A native of the Himalayas, it has proved a difficult plant in cultivation. Now placed as one of the *Nivales* Section, it has long elliptic or oblong leaves which are completely covered with white farina. The flowers, which are produced several to scape, are purplish with a white or yellowish eye. Ex. by Mr. Jack Drake, Aviemore.

**X Primula Pandora**, A.M., 10th April 1951. A hybrid between *P. scapigera* and *P. Edgeworthii*, it resembles the former parent more than the latter in habit of growth and colour of flower. Also it is more robust than either parent. The flowers are a deep pink with a slight tinge of mauve and a whitish eye. Ex. by Major-General D. M. Murray-Lyon, D.S.O., M.C.

**Primula reptans**, A.M., 10th April 1951. A dwarf species of spreading habit, and forms tufts of deep green, cut leaves close to the ground. On these tufts sit the large violet purple flowers with a whitish eye. Un-

doubtedly a lovely plant when in flower and although it grows well, it is a difficult plant to flower well. Ex. by Mr. R. S. Masterton, Aberfeldy.

**Primula Rockii**, A.M., 10th April 1951. Introduced in the late twenties, this plant has never become plentiful as it seldom sets seed in this country and must be increased by division, which is a slow method. Belonging to the Bullatae Section, it is related to the better known *P. Forrestii*. It is a neat evergreen plant with neat golden yellow flowers borne on long pedicels. Of doubtful hardiness, protection is necessary in winter. Ex. by Mr. A. D. Reid, Edinburgh.

**Primula secundiflora**, C.C., 6th June 1950. A well known plant of the Sikkimensis Section, bright glossy green leaves and flower stems carrying several nodding bells of a reddish shade; a very pretty plant well worth growing. Awarded to Dr. H. Tod, Miltonbridge, Midlothian.

**Rhododendron campylogynum**, A.M., 10th April 1951. One of the neatest of the dwarf forms of the genus. An evergreen of not more than a foot and a half, the flowers are borne separately on long slender stalks and may be any shade between salmon pink and plum purple. In shape, the flowers are bell-shaped but sit up facing the light. Ex. by Major J. C. Neish, Tannadice, Forfar.

**Rhododendron repens**, A.M., 10th April 1951. Certainly a gem when in flower, but unfortunately not an easy plant to flower well. It is a prostrate grower with leaves about an inch in length, evergreen, and a dark glossy green in colour. It is, however, the flowers that are outstanding, large for the size of the plant, they are a brilliant red. Ex. by Major-General W. L. Murray-Lyon, D.S.O., M.C.

**Saxifraga oppositifolia var. latina**, A.M., 10th April 1951. One of the large flowered varieties of *Saxifraga oppositifolia*, it produces a wealth of bloom of a bright pink shade. The flowers, which are cup-shaped and sit close to the green cushion formed by the shoots, are more than half an inch across. The finest of this group. Ex. by Mr. R. S. Masterton, Aberfeldy.

**Shortia uniflora var. grandiflora**, C.C., 10th April 1951. This variety is more compact than the type and usually of a deeper pink, the flowers too are larger, often more than an inch and a half across. Widely funnel-shaped with toothed margins, they are borne singly on three inch stems. A tufted plant whose leaves colour a reddish brown throughout a good part of the year. Awarded to Mr. R. S. Masterton, Aberfeldy.

**Soldanella alpina**, A.M., 10th April 1951. A popular favourite with all alpine plant growers, although many are not successful in flowering it well. A small plant with kidney-shaped leaves of glossy green, the stems carry one or two flowers of a deep purplish blue with deeply cut margins. Ex. by Mr. A. D. Reid, Edinburgh, and Mr. Henry Archibald, Carnwath.

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## Show Reports

### AYR

The Bulb Show, on 7th-8th March 1951, afforded a good opportunity to further the Club's activities in Ayrshire. Although the date was a little early to allow a wide choice of material, a collection of over 65 species and varieties of rock garden plants, dwarf shrubs and conifers was assembled. The exhibit was awarded a Gold Medal and noticeable interest was shown, bringing in 12 new members.

Among the thirty species of bulbs and corms on show the miniature tulips, especially T. Kaufmanniana varieties, were admired. The earliness in the year suited the dwarf cyclamens **C. Atkinsii**, with white and rose blotched flowers, and **C. Coum**, with miniature rose flowers: **Iris reticulata** was also on show. Among the dwarf varieties of narcissus the sweetly scented **Narcissus juncifolius**, **N. triandrus** (Angels Tears) and **N. cyclamineus** and **N. minor** were represented. A few pans of species of **Grocus**, **Muscari**, **Scilla**, and **Puschkinia**, **Sisyrinchium**, etc., completed the collection of bulbs.

Dwarf conifers provided an ideal background for the bulbous and alpine plants, and dwarf winter heaths provided another splash of colour with **Erica carnea** varieties, **King George**, **Springwood White**, and the dark-foliaged **Vivellii**, as yet in bud, and hybrid **darleyensis**. The saxifrages of the Kabschia and Engleria sections contributed the full effect of the miniature: they included the varieties **Iris Prichard**, **Cranbourne**, **marginata**, **xJenkinsii**, **apiculata**, **Schleicheri**, and **pseudo-Kellereri**.

Early flowering Primulas, including some from Logan House, enabled this important genus to be represented. Among the Petiolarid section **Primula gracilipes** and hybrid **x Pandora** were much admired, as was **Primula Clarkei**, only a few inches high. The more common vernaes section included **Primula Juliae**, **Wanda**, and **P. amoena** from the Caucasian mountains. Other genera on show included **Anemone**, **Synthyris** and **Draba**.

The valuable assistance given by Major and Mrs. Walmsley, and the loan of plants by some local members, enabled the exhibit to be a worthwhile effort. The majority of plants were loaned by the County Representative, who was responsible for staging the exhibit.

A. L. W.

### DUMFRIES

In spite of bad weather and an earlier show members supported it well, with over 260 entries and an attendance of over 800: a number of new members joined.

The show was opened by Lady White of Torhousemuir, a most charming lady and a Club member; Bailie Mogerley, Parks Convener of Dumfries, proposed the vote of thanks.

The George Forrest Medal was won by **Primula Boothii** in the stand of Messrs. Longmuir and Adamson, Holywood, and the Club's Bronze Medal for most points in section 2 by Mr. J. L. S. Campbell, of Dumfries. The Misses Young, Rockcliffe, gave three special prizes, two in Section 1 for the best softwood and the best hardwood exhibit (excluding Forrest Medal winner) and one for best exhibit in Section 4. The prize for best softwood went to Mrs. McConnel for a fine **Primula Allionii** and that for the best hardwood to Major and Mrs. Walmsley for **Rhododendron repens**. A very fine flowering plant of **Soldanella alpina** was shown by Mr. Alex Reid. Mrs. McLellan's special prize for the best Cactus or Succulent in

Section 2 went to Mr. A. Gilmour, while in the non-competitive section Mrs. McLellan's own fine display of Cacti gained an Award of Merit, an award also given to the Crichton Royal Institution for a display of hardy but seldom seen rock plants. A large Gold Medal went to Messrs. Longmuir and Adamson for a very fine display, with *Primula Boothii* in the centre, a good representation of the petiolaris section of *Primula*, and *Anemones*. Messrs. Bannatyne and Jackson had a very fine exhibit which included a magnificent *Saxifraga* "Faldonside" in full bloom, *Primula Edgeworthii* v. *alba*, *Primula hirsuta* "Elpinor," *Ranunculus calandrinoides* v. *rosea*, and *Viola gracilis*, recently reintroduced by Mr. Wall. A very handsome display of bulbs, including many species of *Tulipa*, *Crocus*, and *Narcissus*, was shown by Messrs. Harper of Stranraer. A Gold Medal was awarded to Messrs. Oliver and Hunter, whose stand included a number of fine varieties of *Heath*. The three judges, Messrs. M. MacDonald, J. Adamson and J. Wall, gave a short talk on plants exhibited and their cultivation with a view to encourage newer members to compete in Section 2 another year.

The Secretary takes this opportunity of thanking all exhibitors and trade members for their great effort in such a trying season.

## EDINBURGH

The Edinburgh Show of 1951 represented a marked change and at the same time something of a gamble. For various reasons we had to transfer from the Waverley Market to the Music Hall and Assembly Room in George Street, and since the new site was off Princes Street it was doubtful whether the public would attend in sufficient numbers to maintain the "gate." The actual drop was about 18%, a loss of £27 on last year's takings, and there was a heavy decrease in stand rents so that the finances of the Show are somewhat doubtful.

The new venue was, however, apparently thoroughly approved by both the members of the Club and the public as well, judging from the comments made, with one exception, namely the light, which was really deplorable, especially in the Assembly Room where the competitive exhibits were staged. This will be remedied at subsequent shows if they are held in these rooms.

The Show was opened by the Marchioness of Graham at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, April 10th. In her opening speech Lady Graham spoke with regret of the adverse effect which the present rates of taxation had on the maintenance of so many of our most famous gardens. She made a plea for a remission of tax on garden expenses in the case of recognised gardeners and went on to speak of the cultural advantages of gardening, and commented on how it provided a common meeting ground for peoples of all nations. The vote of thanks was proposed by Kenneth C. Corsar, Esq.

The number of entries was higher than in previous shows, which was astonishing considering the inclement season, and the standard was very high. The display of primulas was particularly good, as were the androsaces and saxifrages. The bulb entries were good, if a trifle erratic, probably due to faulty ripening last summer. The entries of rhododendrons and other members of the Ericaceae were very weak, due to the lateness of the season, and gentians were non-existent. *Lewisia*, *auricula*, *polyanthus* and *primrose* classes were far below the normal standard again due to the season, but the number and standard of the entries in Section II were much better than at any previous show.

The Kenneth Corsar Trophy was won by Mr. Henry Archibald of Ogs castle with an exceptionally good "six," consisting of *Androsace pyrenaica*, *Primula aureata*, *Plagiorrhagma dubia*, *Saxifraga griesbachii*, *Wisley* var., *Shortia uniflora* and *Soldanella alpina*. Of these the primula and the androsace were really outstanding plants. The Carnethy Medal

was won by Mr. R. S. Masterton of Cluny, Aberfeldy, for three very fine pans of *Primula reptans*, *Shortia uniflora*, and *Soldanella minima*. The George Forrest Medal was awarded to Mr. Masterton for his pan of *Primula reptans*, which was excellently grown and flowered.

The Club's Bronze Medal, awarded to the exhibitor who gains most points in Section II, was won by Mrs. Peel of Eaglescarnie, Haddington.

The Council of the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society had a meeting of the Joint Awards Committee at the Show, and twenty-six plants were submitted for consideration; the Awards made were confirmed by a special Council Meeting of the R.C.H.S. held for the purpose at the Show.

One *First Class Certificate* was granted, and sixteen *Awards of Merit*, with one *Cultural Commendation*.

The non-competitive class (105) was very well filled, especially noteworthy being a display of really outstanding dwarf conifers exhibited by Mrs. Neilson. Two very striking and at the same time just visible primulas showing in the class were *Primula walshii*, a tiny primula with an even tinier head of pink flowers (Major and Mrs. Knox Finlay), and *Primula sapphirina*, surely one of the smallest, with deep blue, rather bell-shaped flowers about 1/10 inch across and a leaf rosette of size to match. This latter plant was shown by the Misses Logan-Home of the Edrom Nurseries.

The Trade Stands were, as usual, colourful and full of good plants. Messrs. Backhouse of York received a Large Gold Medal for their island stand, which comprised a display of spring bulbs and dwarf conifers: they also showed primulas and fritillaries. Notable on their stand were *Iris japonica* Ledgers var., and *Tanakea radicans*. Reginald Kaye Ltd., had a beautifully laid out small island stand, where the crevices between the rocks were "cemented" with saxifrages, drabas and androsaces. Especially fine was *Draba dedeana* which contrasted well with *Primula edgeworthii* on the other side of the rock and the background of dwarf conifers. This exhibit was awarded a Gold Medal.

Messrs. Barr and Sons of Covent Garden were awarded a Large Gold Medal for a very fine display of varieties of *Narcissi*. They showed some of the most recent developments in this well loved family as well as many of the older favourites.

Messrs. Young and Thomson had a fine display of heaths and spring bulbs backed by flowering shrubs, and the same theme was worked out on Donald A. Wintersgill's stand, where a feature was massed azaleas behind spring bulbs.

One of the most startling exhibits was on the Edrom Nursery's island stand—a box, no less, of *Primula reidii* in full flower, sunk in the peat and edged with moss: this *Primula* appeared last year in ones and twos in the competitive classes. At the other end of this stand was a massed display of *Tulipa kaufmanniana* in its varieties backed by dwarf azaleas. Messrs. Bannatyne and Jackson had a very fine display of saxifrages, spring bulbs and primulas interspaced with dwarf rhododendrons and a good group of *Sanguinaria canadensis* in full flower. They, too, backed their stand with flowering shrubs, special features being *Camellias*, *Magnolia stellata* and *Fabiana imbricata*, the latter being especially well flowered.

The foregoing stands were in the Music Hall, while in the Assembly Room, beside the competitive classes, were two more stands, those of Jack Drake and the Six Hills Nurseries. Jack Drake, who was awarded a Large Gold Medal for his exhibit, showed his usual fine display of plants in pans. These included a group of European and Asiatic *Primulas*, the former including his form of *P. marginata* (which gained an A.M.) and the latter *Pp. bhutanica*, *sonchifolia* and *edgeworthii alba*. Other exhibits of note were fine pans of *Draba polytricha*, saxifrages and androsaces. The Six Hills Nurseries gained a Gold Medal for a display of primulas and saxifrages in pans, especially notable being Mr. Barker's pans of *Primula allioni* and *P. a. alba* and some very fine pans of *P. belluensis*.

The National Cactus and Succulent Society had a remarkable display of their group of plants which showed the incredible range of forms which these plants assume. The Society also had a publicity stand where they displayed their publications and some very fine colour photographs. Mr. J. Buchanan Smart of Bellfield—George Forrest's old house, incidentally—staged a striking exhibit of young cactus and succulent plants which aroused much interest. Mrs. A. R. Sturrock showed a variety of beautiful hand-thrown flower pots, both plain and glazed, for the growing of house plants and her exhibit aroused much interest.

Messrs. Melvin Bros. showed a wide range of lawn mowers, from small hand machines to large motor mowers, and various other mechanical aids to gardening. Owing to the weight of their machines they had to select a strategic spot on the ground floor, where they set out their machines to their best advantage. The Lavex Co. had a stand entirely different from any they have had before. They showed us their sand and peat mixtures ready for combining with loam to give the standard John Innes Composts and also the various sands which they can supply. In addition to this they staged an excellent display of Narcissi and Polyanthus which they had for sale. Mr. William Brown, the Bookseller, had a very striking display stand where they showed a variety of books on all aspects of gardening, simple, advanced, and specialised.

Last, but not least, we must thank the City Gardener, Mr. A. T. Harrison, for his kindness in decorating the platform for us with a floral display which was much commented upon—the plants were very finely grown and flowered.

During the Show three demonstrations of the construction of a rock garden and the methods of crevice planting were given by Mr. James Aitken of Barnhill, Perth. Mr. Aitken is a genuine artist in the use of stone and the placing of plants to enhance the effect. An explanatory commentary was given by the Show Secretary. These demonstrations attracted large audiences and seemed to be much appreciated.

On Tuesday evening we had the pleasure of a lecture from Mr. David Wilkie on "Some New and Rare Plants," which was illustrated by a large number of his magnificent slides. This was a most interesting lecture and it was most surprising to find how long ago some plants which are still in the title category were first introduced. The following evening we had a most interesting and racy talk by Mr. Peter H. Davis on "Plant Hunting in the Eastern Mediterranean." Mr. Davis is one of our younger plant collectors who has already a number of very fine introductions to his credit, and he showed us slides of some of them and of the terrain in which they grow and of the people who live there—two most enjoyable evenings as a close to two busy days.

H. T.

## GLASGOW—CONFERENCE SHOW

Glasgow felt greatly honoured in being asked to provide the Show in connection with the 1951 Rock Garden Plant Conference, and in the McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, on 1st and 2nd May, a Show well worthy of the occasion was the result. The Show was well supported by the A.G.S. and this was greatly appreciated by the Show Secretary, and his Show Committee.

The Show was formally opened by the Lord Provost of Glasgow, Sir Victor Warren, and the Trophies and Medals were graciously presented by Lady Warren. During the run of the Show there was a constant stream of visitors and it was pleasing to welcome so many from overseas.

With over 500 entries in the competitive classes, and all the space allocated to the Trade occupied, the two large galleries presented a magnificent spectacle. In some classes over a dozen entries were staged, and quality and rarity were outstanding. This was especially so in the Primula

classes, where some great rarities were on view. It was fitting that *Primula Reidii*, exhibited by Edrom Nurseries, Coldingham, should receive the George Forrest Medal, for the most meritorious pan in the Show. For 6 Pans Rock Plants, in Class 1, Mr. Henry Archibald, Carnwath, was awarded the Dr. Wm. Buchanan Memorial Rose Bowl and Silver Medal, for well grown and staged plants of *Sanguinaria canadensis* fl. pl., *Nomocharis Mairei*, *Corydalis cashmeriana*, *Primula aureata*, *Mertensia coriacea*, and *Primula X Linda Pope*. Mr. Masterton, Aberfeldy, who was runner-up, had good plants in *Polemonium confertum* and *Primula xanthopa* L.S. 21230. Third was Mr. Buchanan, Bearsden, who had an especially large and well flowered plant of *Phyllodoce coerulea*, and the rare and beautiful *Omphalogramma delavayi*. The Class for 3 Rock Plants of different genera was a particularly difficult class to judge, 9 very fine collections being on show. For *Lewisia tweedyi*, the rare *Primula strumosa* (well illustrated in Dr. Clay's book), and the dainty *Arcterica nana*, Mr. R. B. Cooke, Corbridge, was awarded the Henry Archibald Rose Bowl. Mr. Masterton, who was second, had nice plants of *Cassiope lycopodioides*, *Meconopsis sherriffi*, and *Primula xanthopa*. The third award went to Major and Mrs. Walmsley, Garlieston, who staged *Rhodothamnus chamaecistus*, *Primula rotundifolia* and *Phyllodoce nipponica*. The classes for Rare, New and Difficult plants were well supported and in the 3 pan class Mr. Reid, Edinburgh, had a notable win with *Primulae forrestii*, *rockii* and L.S. 17268. The single pan class went to Mrs. Macduff Liddell, Pitlochry, with a very fine specimen of the rare and beautiful *Paraquilegia anemoneoides*. There was a large turn-out in the class for 3 *Primulas* (Asiatic), and R. B. Cooke took the honours with *strumosa*, *calderiana* (possibly a hybrid form) and the rare and beautiful *umbratilis alba*; also of note were *P. sessilis* (General Murray-Lyon) and *P. Wollastonii* (Mrs. Crewdson). In very hot competition the single plant class was secured by R. S. Masterton with a well grown plant of *P. obtusifolia*; Mr. Cook was second with *P. calderiana* and Dr. Tod, with *P. forrestii*, was third. Against strong competition, in the class for 3 *Primulas* other than Asiatic, General Murray-Lyon took first prize with *Pp. Ethel Barker*, *hyacinthia* and *farinosa*, and in the 1 pan class Mr. Reid took the honours with *P. suffrutescens*. It is quite impossible in the space allotted to detail all the plants exhibited in the other classes, but the following are worthy of mentioning:—*Androsace cylindrica x hirtella* (Mr. C. H. Hammer), *Anemone vernalis* (General Murray-Lyon), *Fritillaria citrina* (Mrs. MacConnell), *Bongardia chryso-gonum* (Mr. Masterton), *Fritillaria x pyrenaica* (Major Walmsley), *Lewisia Tweedyi* (Mr. Lamb), *Cassiope selaginoides* (Mr. Cook), and three quite exceptionally good specimen conifers, *Picea nigra pygmaea*, *Pinus edulis*, and *Pinus beauvronensis* (Mr. Wm. Buchanan).

In Section 2 there was an exceptionally heavy entry and the competition was very keen. Mr. Biggart, competing for the first time, annexed the Festival of Britain Silver Quaich, kindly presented by Lord Provost Warren for the most points in the section, and also obtained the Bronze Medal for the best plant in the section, with *Lewisia tweedyi*. It was very pleasing that a schoolboy Member should be runner-up for the Quaich, and Master J. Taggart, Helensburgh, deserves to be commended.

*Primulas* were again a feature in the non-competitive Section 3, and *Pp. waddellii*, *sessilis alba*, *macrophylla*, *reidii*, and L.S. 1949 were all on view. For a very fine display of plants shown on a staging 12 ft. X 4 ft. 6 ins., Mr. Edward Darling, Port Glasgow, was awarded the Club's Certificate of Merit. Notable plants were *Gentiana clusii*, *Draba dedeana*, *Shortia uniflora grandiflora*, *Schizocodon macrophylla*, and a very fine form of *Sax. griesbachii*. The Club was again indebted to Mr. David Wilkie for displaying his famous photographs of rare plants and to Major and Mrs. Walmsley for their fine collection of water colours.

It is quite impossible adequately to describe the wonderful displays staged by the Trade; in quality, quantity and rarity they surpassed

anything yet seen since the war. For a fine collection of plants in pans, Mr. Jack Drake, Aviemore, was awarded the Large Gold Medal, and a very fine pan of the rare *Primula sonchifolia* was noted, which, having had glass protection, was lighter in colour than is usual with plants grown in the open. Messrs. Bannatyne and Jackson, Hamilton, were awarded the Gold Medal for a nice display, and three fine specimens of *Primula aureata* were much admired. It was of interest to learn that the plants had been purchased by one of the overseas visitors, thus helping the export drive. It was pleasing to note the return of the Daisy Hill Nurseries, Newry, Ireland, and in a stand of beautiful plants *Asperula suberosa* was in evidence. Edrom Nurseries, Coldingham, were well to the fore with a nice collection of plants and it is evident that they have found the secret of making *Primula reidii* happy. As is usual, Mr. Reginald Kaye's exhibit was beautifully planned and planted, and a clump of *Ramondia nathaliae* attracted much attention. Mr. D. Wintersgill, Kennished, was again forward with a bright display in which Kurume Azaleas—which make such a beautiful show in the rock garden—were outstanding. A very colourful display was staged by Miss Guthrie Smith, Castlehill Nursery, Helensburgh and very satisfying was the pale blue of the dainty *Myosotis rupicola*. A newcomer to our Show was Mr. Barclay Boyd from Barrhead, and judging from this, his first effort, a great deal more will be seen of him in the future. In a display that had many well grown plants *Primula Garryarde Guinivere* was worth noting. Another newcomer to Glasgow was Mr. Harper of Stranraer, who received a Large Gold Medal for the best exhibit of *Narcissi* ever seen in the city. All the varieties shown were of exceptional size and quality, and were beautifully staged. The specialists were greatly enamoured of Chinese White, a flower of great size and refinement, but the price is still a little beyond the ordinary grower.

In sundries it was pleasing to find Messrs. Lavex, West Calder, who exhibit regularly at our Edinburgh Show, and their exhibit of composts and ingredients was of much interest. Mr. Ralph Haven, Airdrie, had his famous "Scotsmoss Peat" on show and also peat blocks. In Messrs. Jackson, Son & Co. Ltd., of Glasgow, we welcomed very old friends who again staged a fine display of Rock Garden Books, together with other books on Gardening.

The Cacti Society had a very attractive display of cacti and succulents, and it was evident from the interest shown that more people are becoming keen on this interesting hobby.

Altogether this was a most memorable Show, which will be remembered by the keen plantsman, especially, for many years to come.

It only remains to thank Mr. G. D. Taylor, Hon. Show Secretary, and his small Show Committee, consisting of Mr. Darling, Miss Gibson, Mrs. Jamieson, and Mr. J. Young, for all the long hours they worked together, in framing such a successful Conference Show.

G. F. L.

## ABERDEEN

An Exhibition of alpine plants, cut flowers and shrubs was held in the Music Hall, Aberdeen, on the 10th and 11th May, 1951. The "George Forrest" Memorial Medal was awarded to Mrs. MacDuff Liddell, Pitlochry for a pan of *Paraquilegia anemonoides*, which had about twelve flowers in bloom. The Club Bronze Medal was awarded to Mr. H. Esslemont, Aberdeen, for his exhibits in Section 2.

The judges were Dr. M. A. H. Tincker, Aberdeen, Mr. A. P. Boissier, Haddo House, and Mr. R. E. Graham, Echt. Certificates of Merit were awarded to Mrs. G. B. Duff of Hatton, for a fine display of *narcissi*; to Cruickshank Botanic Garden, Old Aberdeen, for a large exhibit of alpine and shrubs, and to Mr. D. M. Baird for a varied exhibit.

Trade exhibits were shown by Mr. Jack Drake, Aviemore, and Edrom Nurseries, Berwickshire. The former was awarded a Gold Medal. The

competitive section drew few entries, prizes being awarded to Mrs. MacDuff Liddell, Mrs. Cozens-Hardy, Mrs. Gordon Thomson, Mrs. Boyd-Harvey, Mr. H. Esslemont and Mr. D. M. Baird. Non-competitive exhibits were shown by Cruickshank Botanic Garden, Lt.-Col. Mitchell, Mrs. E. Anderson, Mr. H. Esslemont, the North of Scotland College of Agriculture, Mrs. G. B. Duff, Mrs. Gray, Mrs. Cozens-Hardy and Mr. D. M. Baird. Entries numbered 60 and admission tickets numbered 360, a big drop from last year.

Lady members of the Club again assisted with the Show, and special thanks are due to Mrs. E. Anderson, Mrs. Gray, and Mrs. Gordon Thomson.  
D. M. B.

## PERTH

The Perth Show was opened in the Lesser City Hall on June 6th by Major George Sherriff. Members were honoured to have the Show opened by one of our leading plant collectors, and it was most happy that Major and Mrs. Sherriff were able to see in cultivation some of the fine plants introduced by "L. & S." Major Sherriff commented on the compact arrangements of the exhibits and on the friendly and informal atmosphere, reflecting much hard work by Miss Oonah Anderson and her Committee.

The standard of cultivation was high, and there was adequate representation in most classes. The current trend towards wild garden plants and very full representation of Primulas was less marked than usual. There is, however, still room for more small plants, especially those of pulvinate or caespitose habit, which are ideally suited for small gardens. First prize in Class 1 and the Dundas Quaich went to Mr. R. S. Masterton for *Glaucidium palmatum*, *Schizocodon soldanelloides*, and the interesting *Celmisia* x *Verbascum* hybrid. In this class Major Walmsley showed a flowering plant of *Primula Kingii*, and Mr. and Mrs. Renton exhibited *Boykinia glabella* and a very well flowered plant of x *Ranunculus Arendsii*. *Meconopsis primulina* won first prize in Class 2 for Mr. and Mrs. Renton. This plant was sent from Bhutan by Ludlow and Sherriff under the name *M. lancifolia* var. *concinna*, but this was later corrected. *M. primulina* is a dwarf monocarpic species, and has not previously been flowered in cultivation. *P. umbratilis*, another L. & S. introduction from Bhutan, was shown by Major Walmsley. This plant appears to be well established and has set seed in some gardens.

Class 3, Plants of Easy Cultivation in the Open, was found difficult by the judges. A gardener from Wigton might submit *Asteranthera ovata* and one from Inverness might show *Omphalogramma vincaeflora*, both of which would qualify *if the locality was stated*. Otherwise it is a class which should be deleted. The class for plants of silver grey foliage is also difficult to interpret. Some competitors evidently thought it included plants of white or hoary foliage.

Native plants, as usual at our shows, were poorly represented. At this and other shows one has seen plants wrongly named and plants which are not native of any part of Britain. Some good native plants which could be shown include x *Salix Boydii*, *S. arbuscula*, *Sagina Boydii*, *Linnaea borealis*, *Loiseleuria procumbens*, *Arenaria norvegica*, *Primula scotica* (endemic to Scotland), *Arctostaphylos Uva-Ursi*; *Arctous alpina*, *Myosotis alpestris*, *Scilla verna*, *Mertensia maritima*, many ferns, orchids, etc., etc. Saxifrage are not usually outstanding at our Shows, but Mr. Douglas Innes won Class 9 with a good plant of *Saxifraga cochlearis major*. In Class 10 for Cushion Plants, Colonel Dundas won with a fine plant of *Draba mollissima* and Mr. Masterton was second with *Minuartia stellata*.

Mr. and Mrs. Renton won the class of three pans of Primulas with *P. flagellaris*, *P. Dickeana*, and *P. Reidii* x *Wollastonii*. *P. flagellaris* was a very well grown and well flowered specimen sent from Bhutan by Airmail in 1949. It showed the characteristic stolons of this species and is likely

to remain in cultivation by reason of this convenient habit even if it fails to set seed. *P. Reidii* x *Wollastonii* is a fine hybrid made by Mr. R. B. Cooke and has rather greater vigour than either of its parents. *Androsace villosa* won Class 13 for Mr. E. Wallace, and *Aquilegia pyrenaica* shown by Major Walmsley was placed first in Class 14. This plant is well established on one mountain cliff in Scotland, where it was introduced many years ago. *Ranunculus Lyallii*, the best of the genus, was well grown from New Zealand seed by Mr. and Mrs. Renton, and won first prize in Class 15.

It is only possible to mention some of the good plants in the other classes, but the following attracted my attention—*Sparaxis tricolor*, shown by Major Walmsley. *Rhodohypoxis Ruth*, a very fine plant with large white flowers of good substance named after, and shown by Mrs. McConnel. *Campanula Aucheri*, shown by the Misses Anderson, and *Sempervivum arachnoideum*, shown by S/Ldr. L. Boyd-Harvey. *Allosorus crispus*, our native Parsley Fern, a deep rooter and not usually very happy in pots, was shown by Major Neish. *Juniperus communis* form was shown by Mr. Douglas Innes. Many dwarf forms of *J. communis* masquerade as *J. sibirica* which is soft to the touch. All are good garden plants.

In the Novices Classes there were many well grown specimens, and the competitors had wisely restricted themselves to well known plants of easy cultivation. The Club's Bronze Medal for the Novice with the highest aggregate points was won by Mrs. Grace Jack, St. Andrews. In all classes there were good plants which did not show to full advantage because of inadequate preparation. Show plants should be groomed as carefully as show animals.

The Club is greatly indebted to trade exhibitors for the consistent support they have given us. There were several excellent stands at Perth, and after long consideration the judges awarded a Large Gold Medal to Messrs. Bannatyne & Jackson for a skilfully constructed and well stocked model rock garden. A few of the interesting plants in this stand include: *Petrocoptis lagascae*, *Pratia angulata*, *Iris attica* "Little Treasure," *Mimulus primuloides* and *Meconopsis Quarriston* hybrids. In the centre of the stand there was a very well flowered plant of *Jankaea Heldreichii* which won the Forrest Medal. Mr. Jack Drake had his usual impeccable stand of pan and pot plants and he was awarded a Gold Medal. *Primula Wollastonii*, *P. eburnea*, *Calceolaria Darwinii*, *C. Fothergillii*, *Haberlea virginale* and *Spiraea Hendersonii* were some of his fine specimens. Edrom Nurseries and Messrs. G. McOmish staged colourful and interesting stands of mixed rock plants, and Mr. J. R. Aitken had a rock garden with a pool and stream which was skilfully constructed in a small space available. Messrs. Dickson & Turnbull had a stand of most useful Garden Sundries. The Stage was decorated with *Gladioli*, Sweet Peas, *Hydrangeas*, *Tulips* and *Schizanthus* by Messrs. Alexander & Brown. This exhibit won a Gold Medal.

H. F. D.

## ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW

June 19th-22nd 1951

"The Nine Men's Morris is filled up with mud." So wrote Shakespeare many years ago, but one cannot help thinking he must have foreseen the Royal Highland Show of 1951 held at Hazelhead, Aberdeen.

The weather was threatening on the Tuesday when the Show opened, but it was not until the Wednesday that the real trouble came. About noon on that day the heavens opened and torrential rain fell for two hours. Quickly the various roads and alleyways became raging torrents, only all too soon to be turned into rivers and lakes of mud from the traffic of lorries and the tramp of hundreds of feet. The state of the ground was indescribable, and the Flower Tent, being at the lowest point, got the worst of it. The sun certainly shone on the Thursday and Friday, but this only had the effect of turning the liquid mud into a compound that closely



resembled treacle in its stickiness. But despite these disadvantages the Show was, in every other respect, a great success; and not the least successful part was the flower show. Here the Scottish Rock Garden Club was represented by a small rock garden, to furnish which various plants had been lent by members. The Club owes a great debt of gratitude to Mr. Douglas Baird, who organised this exhibition, collected the materials for it, and built it. Grateful thanks are also due to those ladies and gentlemen who took "watches" at the stand, and answered the many questions put to them. Indefatigable in this were the President and his wife.

On the right hand corner of the exhibit, high up, was a well grown specimen of *Rhododendron radinum*, which was much admired. This was balanced on the left by an excellent pan of *Lewisia Cotyledon*. Between these two, but at a lower level, were many plants, amongst which stood out *Aquilegia pyrenaica*, *Phyteuma comosum*, *Saxifraga "Tumbling Waters"* and a nice group of *Primula suffrutescens*. Not far away was another excellent group of *Primula Wollastonii*, which did not fail to catch the eye. Good specimens of *Ramondia pyrenaica* and the variety *rosea* were also shown. Pans which were generally noticed were those of some of the newer seedlings of *Rhodohypoxis Baurei*. "*Baurei Improved*," "*Ruth*," "*Wendy*," and "*Margaret Rose*" were amongst those on view, and many questions concerning them were answered. In the centre of the stand was a well grown *Nomocharis Mairei*, whose maroon-purple markings attracted much attention. These and many other plants made up a goodly show, and the Rock Garden Club benefited by the enrolment of fifty new members.

A. P. B.

## County Activities

### ANGUS

**LECTURES:** A season of winter lectures held in University College, Dundee, was well supported by Angus, Fife and Perthshire members.

A well attended joint meeting with the Dundee Horticultural Society on 18th October did justice to our distinguished Hon. Member, Major George Sherriff, O.B.E., when he gave a Cine-Lecture on "Plant Collecting in Bhutan."

On 6th November Major J. C. I. Neish gave a Cine-Lecture on the construction of, and the plants in, his fine rock garden at Tannadice, near Forfar.

A Members' Night on 4th December proved most successful. Messrs. W. S. Philip, Leslie Kinnear and Stewart Mitchell gave short talks, the respective subjects being "Primulas I have grown," "The construction of my peat wall," and "A visit to my garden," the latter illustrated by colour-slides. (This type of meeting can be recommended to all C.Rs.).

The meeting on 5th February was favoured by Major W. G. Knox Finlay showing a selection of his beautiful colour slides taken in his famous garden at Keillour Castle, Methven. The commentary was most interesting and instructive.

To wind up the session Mr. J. L. Mowat, Curator of University Botanic Gardens, St. Andrews, gave an instructive lecture on 5th March entitled "The propagation of alpine plants and shrubs." This expert talk proved most interesting, being illustrated by actual specimens, and was particularly opportune for members intending to raise alpinines from seed.

**VISITS TO GARDENS:** The Group had three most successful and well attended outings.

On 5th May an evening run was made to Tannadice, where, in spite of the late season, a splendid show was seen in Major Neish's rock garden there.

Another evening excursion was on 16th May, to Keillour Castle, where a most pleasant and instructive conducted tour was given by Major and

Mrs. Knox Finlay round their delightful garden, followed by a friendly chat over their very generous hospitality in the Castle.

A delightful afternoon trip to St. Andrews on Saturday, 26th May, was much enjoyed. The party visited Mr. and Mrs. P. M. Boase's lovely garden at Law Park, then after tea went to the University Botanic Gardens. Mr. Mowat was our leader at St. Andrews and his local members were also most helpful. A large number of car owners met the Dundee train and carried the members in great comfort from place to place, adding greatly to the pleasure of all. The death of Mr. Boase a week after our visit was learned with much regret by all our members.

The C.R. would like to put on record his indebtedness and his sincere thanks to all who contributed in any way to a most successful season's activities.

S. M.

## AYRSHIRE

Some members joined the visits of the Glasgow & District Branch outings to Ayrshire this summer. An attempt was made to fill a private bus on the two visits but a very poor response to the circulars sent out made such outings impossible. The details of the gardens visited in Ayrshire will be seen under the Glasgow & District Branch outings.

A. L. W.

## DUNBARTON, GLASGOW and RENFREWSHIRE

The winter activities were much the same as last year. We met on the first Monday of each month in Miss Buick's Tea Rooms, 19A Renfield Street, Glasgow. More than one hundred members attended one or more meetings, and the average attendance would approach 45.

Each evening two talks of 10 or 15 minutes were given and discussion followed thereon. Mr. John T. Wall obliged on two occasions, on (a) Primulas, (b) Propagation of Alpines. Mr. Buchanan talked on "Shrubs suitable for the Rock Garden." Dr. Gibson talked on "Plants in the Rock Garden that bloom in late Summer and in the Autumn." Mr. A. L. Winning had for his subject "Rock Plants suitable for a Wall Garden," Mr. P. Crow, "Plants for the Scree," and Mr. Knox, "Bulbs for the Rock Garden."

During the Summer the following gardens were visited :—

- (1) GLENARN, RHU (Mr. J. E. A. Gibson), and the NURSERIES, HELENSBURGH (Miss Guthrie-Smith), on 5th May.
- (2) WOODBURN, ALLOWAY (Misses Stevenson), and NORTHCOTE, TURNBERRY (Mr. W. Urie), and CULZEAN CASTLE, on 12th May.
- (3) DOONHOLM, AYR (Mrs. Norman Kennedy), and KNOCKDOLIAN, COLMONELL (Mrs. McConnell), on 2nd June.
- (4) ST. ANNS (Mr. Ian Laird), CRAIGMARLOCH (Mrs. Sherriff), TORRIDON (Mr. Laird)—all gardens in KILMACOLM, on 23rd June.

All of the outings were well attended, and our sincere thanks must go to the owners for the great privilege of visiting such lovely gardens.

Next winter the meetings will be held again in Miss Buick's Tea Rooms, 19A Renfield Street, Glasgow, at 7.15 p.m. on the first Monday of each month, commencing in October and finishing in April, 1952. In January, 1952, the meeting will be held on the second Monday.

County Representatives for Dunbartonshire, Glasgow and Renfrewshire will post to their members a circular giving fuller details of these meetings.

E. D.

## EAST LoTHIAN

The outstanding feature has been the great increase in membership, rising from 10 members in 1948 to 92 at time of printing. To keep in touch with this large membership the C.R. has formed a sub-committee of 7 members from Dunbar, North Berwick, Dirleton, Gullane, Longniddry, Gifford and Haddington.

Winter lectures, mostly in private houses, were held in various districts and included "Screes" by Mr. R. J. R. Measham, "Dwarf Shrubs for the Rock Garden" by Mr. Adam Mackie, "Primulas" by Miss Logan Hume, "Bulbs for the Rock Garden" by Mr. G. M. Taylor, "Rock Garden Plants for East Lothian" by Mr. B. T. Barrett, "Showing" by Dr. H. Tod. To stimulate the interest of the general public Mr. David Wilkie gave a lantern lecture on "Gentians" in a hall in North Berwick and several new members were enrolled.

During May and June members visited groups of gardens which were extremely varied, and many good ideas could be gathered by those who are reconstructing or extending their rock-gardens; and who isn't? There was Mrs. Peel's lovely *Primula* garden beside the burn, and her formal terrace garden; Mr. and Mrs. Bell's rock outcrop on a hillside, and Mrs. Bathgate's double wall for scree and cliff dwellers. Most Longniddry gardens are sandy and swept by sea winds but Miss Sawers' centuries-old garden was a haven of clipped box and yew with ancient fruit and yew trees, while Miss MacGregor, at North Berwick, had cleverly contrived shelter by excavating the site of an old greenhouse; Mrs. Bailey's sheltered garden was given to shrubs and woodland plants and Miss Maxwell's to bog plants round a lily-pool. The late Mr. H. G. Younger's collection of sub-tropical shrubs at Belhaven was visited, and Mr. Sanderson's garden of semi-scorched walls with their cliff dwellers. During these visits teas were provided by Mrs. Peel, Miss Sawers, Miss Maxwell and Mrs. Bowe. A red-letter day for members was a visit in July to Keillour Castle, Methven, when Major and Mrs. Knox Finlay conducted the party round their incomparable garden.

The lectures and garden visits have been well attended, but it is felt that more members should exhibit their plants at the various Club Shows. The East Lothian Committee have therefore decided to hold an Autumn Rock Garden Plant Show, confined to East Lothian members, in Haddington on 15th September, to give them experience and confidence so that they may be keen to show in Edinburgh and elsewhere in 1952.

Mention must be made of the good publicity given by the County newspaper, which has always printed our 500-word reports of meetings and visits in full. This has without doubt contributed largely towards the increase in membership, and we are now fortunate in having the owner of the paper herself as a member.

L. C. B. H.

## EDINBURGH and MIDLoTHIAN

On Saturday, 31st March, members visited the alpine houses of Dr. and Mrs. Davidson, Linton Muir, and Mr. Cunningham, Hazlieburn, West Linton. Although snow was on the ground there was much of interest in the alpine houses.

At the end of June six members made a four day botanical excursion to Sutherlandshire, where, in spite of the fact that there was still a good lot of snow in the gullies and on the ridges, many interesting native plants were found. These included *Azalea procumbens*, *Armeria caespitosa*, *Arabis petraea*, *Cornus suecica*, *Dryas octopetala*, *Juniperus nana*, and *Mertensia maritima*.

W. R.

## FIFE

As a result of the position and shape of the county, Fife members tend to divide into two sections, those in the North and East gravitating to Dundee and the meetings there, while those in the South and West more or less look on Edinburgh as their centre.

A colour film lecture by Major George Sherriff arranged for 1st February in St. Andrews unfortunately had to be postponed owing to the lecturer's indisposition, but a fortnight later, on 15th February, Major Sherriff gave a most interesting talk to a packed audience which included many Fife members and quite a few from outwith the county.

On 16th May several members joined Angus members in a visit to Major and Mrs. Knox Finlay, Keillour Castle, Methven, and on 26th May they again met Angus members who visited Law Park, the garden of Mr. and Mrs. Philip Boase, and the University Botanic Garden, St. Andrews. Little more than a week later members learned with shocked sorrow of Mr. Boase's death after a very short illness. The hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Boase and the beauty of their garden were known to members from much farther afield than Fife and Angus.

One very noticeable feature in the county is the great interchange of friendly visits going on continually amongst many members; sometimes these visits almost assume the proportions of organised outings.

J. L. M.

## KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE

On March 8th Kirkcudbrightshire members attended a very interesting and informative demonstration of rock garden construction and planting by Mr. D. S. Anderson (The County Horticultural Adviser) in the garden of Mr. and Mrs. Penman, "The Ridge," Rockcliffe. Unfortunately the day was bitterly cold, and consequently only 10 of the 22 members who were expected turned up. Mr. Anderson, who was assisted by Mr. Glass (Kirkcudbright) gave a wonderful practical demonstration, and created and planted a small rock garden where none had been before. This was very much appreciated, and a great deal was learned by everyone. Afterwards Mrs. Penman provided an excellent and very welcome tea.

On Saturday, 19th May, 21 Kirkcudbrightshire members went by bus to visit Major and Mrs. Walmsley's garden at Garlieston (3 or 4 members also went independently). The day was fine, and an interesting time was spent admiring the many varied, rare, and lovely rock plants at "Culderry." The rock garden was particularly interesting in that it ranged from peat beds to scree. Major and Mrs. Walmsley raffled three very fine rock plants, all of which were won by Kirkcudbrightshire lady members. A generous tea provided by Mrs. Walmsley was much appreciated.

Four gardens in Rockcliff were open to members and their friends on Saturday, 26th May. Over 40 members visited the gardens, starting at "Whinneyknowe" (Lady Reed and Miss Robson), and "Colbeine" (Mr. and Mrs. Cater), these two natural rock gardens adjoining each other; then to "Glenluffin" (Major and Mrs. McLellan)—cacti and other succulents there, and finally the gardens at "Castlehill," where the Misses Young provided a splendid tea. Three of the visitors came from Edinburgh, and several from Garlieston. The gardens were all very lovely and colourful, and a very happy time appeared to be had by visitors and garden owners alike.

M. E. and W. L.

## LANARKSHIRE

If members wishing monthly meetings throughout the winter for discussion and exhibits will communicate with their County Representative, Mr. J. T. Wall, he will make a further attempt to arrange such a series in Hamilton. In the Flower Show at Hamilton on 15th September are classes for one, two, or three Alpines or Cacti and a class for one plant of Autumn Gentian: the Secretary's address is 24 Cameron Crescent, Hamilton.

J. T. W.

## ROXBURGHSHIRE

On 28th June members from Roxburghshire, Selkirkshire, and Northumberland visited Floors Castle gardens at the kind invitation of the Duchess of Roxburgh. The twenty-one members present were most interested in the rock garden, which is now being re-stocked after the losses of the war years. Old-established shrubs were very fine, particularly *Potentilla Farreri* in full bloom. After visiting the gardens and peach houses the members were invited into the Castle to view the tapestries and portraits. Tea was at Ednam, and then Northumberland members visited the rock garden at Old Craden, Kelso, which they thoroughly enjoyed, thus completing a most successful outing held in perfect weather.

E. D. S.

## NORTH-EAST ENGLAND

At 5.30 p.m. on Thursday, 27th September, at the Blue Bell Hotel, Belford, Mr. David Wilkie will lecture on "Gentians." All members are assured of a most interesting evening.

M. K.

## NORTH-WEST ENGLAND

On March 14th, 1951, Major George Sherriff gave a lecture in Kendal on "Plant Collecting in South-east Tibet and Bhutan," illustrated with his lovely colour films. Needless to say, this was greatly appreciated and enjoyed by all those members of the Scottish Rock Garden Club, and Alpine Garden Society, who were able to be present.

C. M. C.

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