

The Journal
OF
The Scottish
Rock Garden Club



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No. 13—September 1953

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The Journal

OF

The Scottish

Rock Garden Club

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



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Editor's Notes

AT A GROUP meeting of Club members this spring one was overheard remarking pawkily to some others : "You'll aye remember 1953 as the year we had our summer in February." For many parts of the country this description of the year has turned out only too true.

After the exceptional drought and warmth of earlier months what should have been our summer has been for many of us a long-continuing spell of cold, sunless days, even when dry. When the rain did come it came not as soft summer showers to refresh the thirsty plants but as destroying torrential downpours that were often as much hail as rain. By that time many plants had succumbed to the ravages of greenfly and similar pests, and the subsequent heavy rains soon began to take toll of cushion plants so that we heard of one member who in an effort to save them had brought his glass covers from storage and put them to an unseasonal use.

Though not coming of age till next year the Club shows every sign of adult and robust vigour with a membership now some 2,300 strong and a very healthy activity going on in many widespread areas of the country. This continued growth of the Club means that since last year many new members have joined ; to them we extend a very warm welcome and the assurance that they have come among friends, and older members will be only too pleased to help and advise them in every way possible. Might we ask some of those members who have graduated into specialist lines to be prepared to forego a little their concentration on their own particular branches, to welcome and help beginners and the less-experienced with their gathered stores of knowledge acquired through years of trial and error.

Not all new members want to plunge right away into the cultivation of small-growing rarities or 'difficult' plants. More stress might be laid on good plants which are neither too difficult to obtain nor to grow successfully when obtained. A frequent complaint heard from many members is that so many of the plants seen at our shows, particularly among the prize-winners, do not seem to appear in any of the nursery catalogues they know, and their query is : "Where can we get these plants ?"

Here of course another thought comes to mind. If the beginner or novice could get these more select plants easily, before he had acquired some degree of cultural experience by practice with less difficult but still good plants, he would probably lose them again very quickly and perhaps lose heart. This is where more knowledgeable 'old hands' can be of great assistance in advising those of less experience but boundless enthusiasm. In this connection we would like to see many

more plant notes and much more discussion in the pages of the *Journal* ; it is the Club's own magazine and as such is at the service of every member, so, New Members, do not hesitate to write in about any of your doubts or difficulties.

One member, who is the possessor of a very small garden but is at the same time a remarkable plantsman, has placed his skill at the service of fellow-members in his area in the following way. He has decided to reconstruct his garden to make room for more plants and has notified his fellows round about that he is so doing so that they can 'be in on' anything which may be of interest to them. A true gardening spirit !

Next year a Club Show is to be held in Dundee instead of in Perth as has been usual in past years, and it is hoped that all members will rally round to make this venture a great success. For a season or two there have been suggestions that the Club Show for the north central area of Scotland might be held alternately in Perth and Dundee, the members of the two counties concerned co-operating to some extent to help in the running of the Show, and it is now definitely arranged for Dundee in 1954. The Marrayat Hall, a fine hall, central and convenient to all stations, has been booked for 28th and 29th April next, and the C.R. for Angus earnestly hopes that all members of the three neighbouring counties—Angus, Perthshire and Fife—will come out strongly in keen competition and give a lead which will be followed by members from further afield. Further notice of this Show will appear in the Year Book but we make this early notice so that members can plan ahead and make their preparations in good time.

The more fortunate members with large collections may be able to look around their garden a few weeks before a show and select quite a number of worthy exhibits ; but with the ordinary member and the smaller garden this is not so easy. Except for a few plants which happen to be just right at the right time most of our average members with limited space have to plan a good way ahead and make timeous preparations to produce worthy specimens for the show bench with any degree of certainty. It is therefore not too soon to begin thinking what plants are likely to be in condition towards the end of next April and to plan accordingly.

The names of very few Angus members have appeared among the winners at Club shows to date ; we look to them to alter this state of affairs at Dundee. And of course after that there will be no excuse for them not trying their fortunes farther afield. So go to it, Angus members !

And now may we air a "grouse." Members are quick to complain if a Club publication falls behind time, but are they always as prompt in sending in their material to the editor ? There has been a disappointing lack of reports from many districts, and in other cases reports of shows and county activities arrived late after reminders had been sent. Reports always seem likely to be brighter reading if

written while the subject to be reported is still fresh in the memory ; and we would imagine could be much more easily compiled within a week or two of the event than after the lapse of several months. Do some members ever give a thought to what this dilatoriness in sending in matter for publication costs the Club in postages, and the editor in extra work ?

Having got this out of our system we proceed to a more cheerful note by recording our thanks to all those whose articles and notes make the Club *Journal* what it is. A specially warm welcome is extended to the several new names which appear in our steadily increasing list of contributors and we would plead that many others follow their example. Many members here at home have expressed a keen desire to hear more from their fellow-members overseas—any local activities there may be among themselves, or their local conditions and rock-gardening successes and failures. Will our distant friends please note.

We conclude with the suggestion that all members make up their minds to ensure that 1954, the coming-of-age year of the Club, will be a record year in every way, with increased entries at all our shows, increased membership, extended activities, and numerous new contributors to the *Journal*.

And all articles and reports sent in up to time !

September 1953.

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Soliloquy

By R. E. COOPER

THE EDINBURGH Rock Garden? Ah, yes! I reckon I've sweated more for that, than anyone living; over half the world in fact. In my first knowledge of it there was a kind of "howf" in the centre, the remains of a Winter Garden House. It appears complete in an old oil painting, that hangs near the Garden Library, of the view from Inverleith House. In the beginning, i.e. c. 1820, the land about the Rock Garden was the Caledonian Horticultural Society's Experimental Garden. The Superintendent's house was, and still is, called "Experimental Cottage." Their Council Hall is now the Herbarium. Promenades, east to west, were laid out between the Winter House and Council Hall. The golden yews now clumped at the Herbarium entrance were even in 1912 placed separately and alternately with Pampas grasses, a novelty introduced in 1843, along one of them. In those days the trunk of a large fossil tree from Craigleith Quarry, *Araucarioxylon Withami*, lay in front of the Council Hall. Now it is at the Lab.

In 1865 the Experimental Garden was ceded to the Crown and incorporated in the "Botanics." Only a wall separated them. It was pulled down except for the piece—stone based and brickfaced for warmth—by the ladies' cloakroom. "In order to usefully dispose of the material (in the words of an old Guide by Professor J. H. Balfour), a rock garden was commenced immediately behind the Winter Garden House."

It was 190 feet long and 85 feet wide. It was arranged with a northern aspect having a uniform terraced slope of 18 feet. The higher points were crowned with Araucarias of different sizes. The *Gardeners' Chronicle* of those days gives delightful illustrations of this newly formed Rock Garden. Scotland took it to its heart and contributed materially: giving Basalts from the Giants Causeway and Staffa and black Hecla or Lava stones. "Some carved stones which formed part of the old Bank of Scotland buildings at the Mound were used in its construction, while the steps of the two end compartments of this Rock Garden were formed out of the well-worn steps and landing of the old School of Arts in Adam Square (see Fig. 25).

"The grass step, throughout it as well as the grass mounds about the Aracucarias were filled with early flowering bulbs—snowdrops, dwarf squills, Puschkinias and Erythroniums, the dog's tooth violets."

In 1888 Professor (Sir) Isaac Bayley Balfour assumed the Keepership, and when I arrived at the R.B.G. in 1910 great replenishments with huge slabs of red sandstone and mighty blocks of a purple pudding-stone or conglomerate were going on. On one occasion we laboured to throw up a large mound of earth to I.B.B.'s satisfaction and stood,

mostly out of sight, while he considered it with Curator Harrow and foreman Dyker. "No ! I think it would look better here," (a matter of 50 feet away) he said. We sweated to do so in one day, for he was a grand master. Back he came and duly considered it again while we rested on our shovels, well pleased with our good work, and hoping he'd be the same. The verdict this time was : "It doesn't look well there. It was better before. Put it back." . . . There was a lovely sunset that day. The mound became the west horse-shoe mound. But the earth-shovelling was fairly easy sweating. Handling the rocks was harder. Huge slabs of sandstone were split to form the broad steps from the Wild Garden down to the path by the outside railings. It was a tricky job. They broke at the slightest jar, while squashed toes and skinned fingers were commonplace. A stocky Orcadian probationer named Smith 'ganged' that job and had the unique asset of two tongues—Gaelic and Scots—in which to express himself. His strength and temper enabled him at times to shift slabs in adjustment the necessary few inches, single handed !!! We were a gang of five ! Those steps were still there in 1950.

It was only in later years that I tumbled to what I.B.B.'s conception of a rock garden seemed to be. It was a magnificent one and can be seen looking south from above the north scree, as a central peak, from which water cascaded down to a bog among dwarf rhododendrons, flanked by the two horse-shoe mounds. From the latter two ridges meander down to the flat by the bog from the south-east and south-west. The outermost sides of these ridges sloped into an eastern, dry plant valley, and a western moist plant valley, each contained by the outermost ridge which swings right round to make the so-called north face of the rock garden. The southern slope base was held by an eight-foot wall of dressed sandstone to provide a border for slightly tender shrubs. The view from the north gives the only satisfactory photograph of the rock garden as a whole, dwarfed by the big church facade in Inverleith Terrace (see Fig. 26). The area of the present Heather Garden was another scene of sweat in my day when it received its present hollowed form. Trees were lowered, raised and moved, and a number of tree ferns and *Trachycarpus* palms from the Palm house installed. It looked very well, but in spite of wrapped crowns during winter, they all went out during the first war.

I embarked overseas as a plant explorer in the Himalayas on behalf of the same man who had sent out George Forrest and Kingdon Ward on similar hunts, A. K. Bulley. I was soon sweating up the Himalayas in various places over the years ; Sikkim, Bhutan in the east, and Kulu and Lahoul in the western Himalayas. Although the seed came home in the war years, some plants from them ultimately reached the rock garden. *Rhododendron nivale* survived and flowered annually until 1937. A special primula, *P. Calderiana*, named after C. C. Calder, B.Sc., Aberdeen, then Superintendent of the Indian Botanical Survey, showed its rich maroon purple flowers. There was a Cooper's

form of *Meconopsis simplicifolia* and a plant from Lahoul which figured as *Gypsophila cerastioides* in Ben Wells' catalogue, but upside down. Bigger shrubs like *Viburnum grandiflorum* went into the main garden. A plant called *Rosa Cooperi*, raised from seed I sent home from Burma, grew overlooking those steps I'd helped to build. In 1930 L. B. Stewart became Curator and made the northern scree to its present size, incidentally inspiring the jingle in the A.G.S. Bulletin for December 1933 which was devoted to "Scree Gardens." In that same year the Scottish Rock Garden Club was started through the enthusiasm of a small group of interested people.

King George's Jubilee Year saw the various tufts of heaths-heathers gathered together in the one-time Fern-Palm glade to make the Heather Garden (J.S.R.G.C., Vol. 4, p. 162). The ground at its entrance from the main path was sloped up the incline and given outcrops of sandstone about which dwarf shrubs were put, making each one a small rock garden (see Fig. 27). The big sandstone blocks at the south-west corner were also reset (see Fig. 28). All of it the inspiration of W. G. MacKenzie. The south bank, apart from a blaze of poppies in the autumn, was of little account. There were tremendous amounts of stone in the Balfourian piles. These were used in a reorganisation of the whole of the bank from end to end. Balfour's walls for half hardy plants were pulled down. Professor Hope's monument to Linnaeus was transferred again to the vicinity of the plant houses. The work took two winters, 1939-40. The propagation of plants for it was more intense than that required for the Heather Garden. It embraced that splendid southern scree, contrasting in so many ways with the other. After the war the great elm on the north face, facing the Herbarium, was disrupted. Its removal allowed the development of the north-west corner of the Rock Garden on its present lines. The Rock Garden had expanded from 190 feet by 85 feet in the 1870s to over 6 acres of ground in 1950 and was now certainly the biggest artificial rock garden in the world. It had become famous as having the broadest collection of alpine plants in it and was the Mecca of all lovers of Rock Garden plants, but, believe me, as it grew it put years on us all.

ALPINES



H. DAVENPORT JONES

WASHFIELD NURSERIES,

HAWKHURST, KENT

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



LIST ON APPLICATION

Screes in North-east England

By G. E. SELBY

IT IS WITH considerable diffidence that an almost complete beginner ventures to differ from such an experienced rock gardener as Miss Dorothy C. Pape ; but I feel that her comments on the use of screes in N.E. England (*Journal* No. 10, 1952, p. 58) may unduly deter novices from experimenting with them, possibly with some success.

In the following account of the use made of screes in a Durham garden, I would stress that the plants are known to be common and likely to succeed anywhere with reasonable treatment ; but the fact remains that many of them seem to be happier in the scree than elsewhere, and this is surely the chief criterion whether a scree is fulfilling its purpose or not.

I regret that I don't know "Mr. Ingwersen's prescription" (can it be found in print, please ?) ; it therefore seems necessary to describe the construction of my two screes. Both face due south and are built on a slope, No. 2 being much steeper than No. 1. The subsoil is mainly heavy to medium clay.

No. 1 is a small affair, two or three square yards in area, intended to represent the bed of a small stream, which wanders nearly from the top of a small rockery to nearly the bottom. Its base is 9 ins. of brickbats and rubble, covered with a thick layer of decaying leaves, then some 3 ins. of Springwell stone (a local variety of sandstone) 1 in.-3 ins. chips, and finally about 2 ins. of $\frac{1}{2}$ in. whinstone chips and $\frac{1}{2}$ in. of small granite chips. It will be noticed that by intention no soil of any kind has been put in this scree ; but it has shared the usual spring top-dressing of sharp sand and sifted leaf-mould, and of course a certain amount of soil, sand, and vegetable matter has drifted into it from its surroundings.

This scree has provided a congenial home for the following plants : *Achillea tomentosa* (a good 'anchor' for the bottom of the scree), x *Aethionema armenum* Warley Rose (very happy here), *Allium cyaneum*, *A. farreri*, *A. ostrowskianum*, *A. purdomi*, *A. zebdanense* (all these seem to flourish in the sharp drainage), *Alyssum podolicum* (this may pop up anywhere), *Androsace primuloides chumbyi*, *Arenaria caespitosa aurea* (much happier than elsewhere), *Armeria caespitosa* (covered with flowers), *Asperula lilacina caespitosa* (is spreading fast), *A. suberosa* (is doing the same), *Crassula* sp. Basutoland, *Dianthus deltooides* Bowles' var. (as good as on a dry wall), *Globularia cordifolia*, *G. incanescens* (both spreading), *Helichrysum bellidoides* (this seems to move about quite a lot, but is very welcome to), *Linaria aequitriloba* (this is spreading far and wide, but seems to do no harm, and is so attractive that I hesitate to stop it), *Muscari azureum amphibolis* (seedlings everywhere, of course), *Myosotis alpestris* Ruth Fischer

(would this be better in a richer soil ?), *Narcissus nanus*, *N. jonquilla minor*, *Nierembergia rivularis* (does this too prefer a richer soil ?), *Papaver alpinum*, *Silene schafta*, and seven varieties of thyme, including *T. serpyllum citriodorus argenteus* and *aureus*, both very attractive to me.

Scree No. 2 is a little larger in extent, covering perhaps eight square yards ; in shape it is intended to suggest a slope of detritus which spreads out fanwise as it slides downwards. Its base was about a foot of coarse rubble, again covered with several inches of decaying leaves ; over this four different mixtures were used, in approximately equal areas. Top left is 'plain and poor'—6 parts whinstone chips, 2 parts gravel, and 1 part leafmould ; top right is 'chalk'—3 parts chips, 3 parts mortar rubble, 2 parts sharp sand, 1 part leafmould ; bottom left is 'peat'—6 parts weathered boiler ash, 2 parts sand, 1 part peat, 1 part leafmould ; and bottom right is 'plain'—6 parts ash, 2 parts fine sand, 1 part leafmould. A 2-3 in. layer of $\frac{1}{2}$ in. whinstone chips covered with $\frac{1}{2}$ in. of coarse grit is over all.

As may be guessed, these mixtures are experimental, and intended for different kinds of scree plant ; so far they seem fairly successful, and my failures are probably to be attributed more to an excessive slope than to the mixture provided. This scree is of recent construction and planting, and I cannot therefore be so certain that the plants in it are doing better than they would have done elsewhere.

The top left section harbours *Arenaria nevadensis* (a tight green pincushion), *Asperula capitata*, *Dianthus myrtinervis* (seems very happy), *Galium olympicum* (a spreading carpet), *Silene acaulis*, and one *Kabschia saxifrage* (*Semmleri*), which would almost certainly be happier in the next section, but was put here as an experiment.

The top right section has some two dozen varieties of *Kabschia saxifrage*, the great majority of which seem happy and have flowered well, and also *Gypsophila aretioides* (an attractive cushion like a miniature head of cauliflower), *Potentilla nitida Alannah*, and *Silene acaulis* again.

The bottom left section has *Asperula rumelica*, *Campanula pseudoraineri*, *Draba norvegica* (very flourishing), *Goodenia repens*, *Iris ruthenica* (at the side, against a rock), *Saponaria caespitosa*, *Silene acaulis* (yet again !), and *Valeriana montana*.

The bottom right section has *Asperula hirta*, *Draba bruniaefolia*, *D. lactea*, *D. norvegica* (all these *drabas* are very happy here), *D. rigida* (a delightful pincushion), *Geranium Farreri*, *Morisia hypogaea*, and *x Saxifraga Irvingii* (like *S. Semmleri* above), but as yet no *Silene acaulis*.

So far I can see no difference between similar plants in different sections, such as *Draba norvegica*, *x Saxifraga Irvingii*, and *Silene acaulis*, but this may well become evident later.

I hope that I have shown that scree in N.E. England can serve a useful purpose; admittedly the dry conditions,* and in particular last year's abnormal drought, may prove trying to scree plants, but I feel that they may have at least as good a chance of flourishing in scree conditions as they have in other parts of the rockery.

Miss Pape writes approvingly of small alpine in stone troughs; unfortunately I have no experience of these as yet, but those I have seen have certainly been very attractive. However, I still think that a grey scree flowing between rocks, studded with cushions of green which at certain times are almost covered with flowers, is a sight which well repays the labour spent on its construction, even in drier parts of the country.

*Average precipitation—Durham (300 ft.), 25.22 ins.; Edinburgh, 25.0 ins.; Holyhead (26 ft.), 34.9; Dumfries (140 ft.), 36.8 ins., Greenock (199 ft.), 61.6 ft.

Western America 1952

By M. E. COX

I WAS FORTUNATE enough to make a second trip to British Columbia, Oregon, and Washington last June and July.

The season was a fairly late one, with a good deal of rain in Vancouver and only slightly less in Victoria during June. This of course meant further snow in the mountains. Although Victoria is only eighty miles from Vancouver across the Straits of Georgia, its annual rainfall is 27 inches, compared with 58 inches in Vancouver. Vancouver, with its enormous and very beautiful harbour, lies so close under the Coast Range Mountains that it attracts this 58 inch rainfall against 33 inches in Seattle, approximately 100 miles south.

When we drove up the Fraser and Thompson River Canyons in 1938 and saw the difficulties of building road and rail, even from the modern point of view, I felt proud to belong to the same Scottish race as these two pioneers of the Far West, not to mention Sir Alexander MacKenzie, the first white man to cross the Canadian Rockies, which he did in 1793, reaching the Pacific at Bella Coola, British Columbia.

On July 13th 1952 we crossed from Victoria to Port Angeles and spent the week-end in the Olympic Mountains. The road is kept open all the year round, and in a matter of two hours we were up the 5757 feet to Observation Point. Here we collected various *Pentstemon* spp. and *Lutkea pectinata*, and just below Hurricane Hill *Erythronium montanum* and *E. parviflorum*, of which there were literally acres (see Figs. 29 and 30). In the meadows round here we saw *Aquilegia formosa*, *Delphinium glaucescens*, *Douglasia laevigata*, *Phlox diffusa*, *Lilium columbianum* and the "Scarlet Paintbrush." From the public

camping-ground here there was a very fine view southwards with Mount Olympus and its attendant peaks showing clearly in the evening light.

We drove along Hurricane Ridge and spent the night in sleeping bags at a small water hole just below the tree line. Although the mosquitoes were not as bad as I had anticipated, the moon moving through the jack pines was so beautiful that I did not sleep much in the early part of the night.

In the morning we went as far as Obstruction Point, 6440 feet, where the road ends, but it was not botanically exciting.

Returning along the narrowest part of Hurricane Ridge, where there was only room for the road on a knife edge, I spied a specially good brake of *Campanula Piperi*, and below that *Spiraea Hendersonii* grew. Half way down the mountain at Whisky Bend we had a further look round and collected some fine dwarf and stunted *Abies lasiocarpa*. The twin flower, *Linnaea borealis*, carpets the forest in such spots.

And so to Victoria.

Vancouver Island is beautiful by any standard but its trees are notable and can generally be seen to advantage. In Victoria itself, famed for its man-made gardens, much use has rightly been made of the native oak—*Quercus Garryana*, whose range is from Comex, Vancouver Island, along the coast to southern Oregon. There are still fine stands of cedar and hemlock not far from the city. More beautiful to my mind than the famous Redwood Forest (*Sequoia sempervirens*) in Northern California are the virgin timber stands of Douglas fir and *Thuja plicata* in Cathedral Grove between Qualicum and Port Alberni, because the road follows the edge of a lake and the size and quality of individual trees can be appreciated.

In May 1938 my chief recollection of Vancouver Island was of miles of *Cornus Nuttallii* covered with blossom; in June 1952 it was of the trees I have already mentioned and of very old arbutus. One in particular grew right on the rocks of the sea shore and had been incorporated into the lounge of an hotel.

Next I spent three days in Seattle, Mr. Mulligan, of the University of Washington Arboretum, and my kind hosts, Dr. and Mrs. Connar Grey, arranging two separate day trips to the two sides of Mount Rainier and one forest trip. On one of the Rainier days we found a whole rock face, the crevices of which were crammed with *Penstemon rupicola*, a sight never to be forgotten. The *Cassiope Mertensiana* around Jakima Park grows just as heather does in Scotland. It seemed to be everywhere just above the timber line.

Inspired by Mr. Gabrielson's book ('Western American Alpines'), I had long wanted to visit the Willowa Mountains in North Eastern Oregon, so Mrs. Coultas, my friend in Victoria, agreed to take me there. On arrival we found that we should have to camp at the higher lakes to find the *Ranunculus* and other plants we were after. We therefore decided to make a dash north to the High Rockies after

spending a day around some of the more accessible creeks and a visit to Hat Point, above Hell's Canyon on the Snake River.

It was almost dark as we sped North through the ranching country of the Grande Rhonde, hoping for beds in Leweston as it was full holiday season, when we saw an extraordinary gold glow in the distance ; we had reached the wheat country. The contrasts are just like that in this part of the world, one moment nothing but green hills, then as though the division was drawn with a ruler, all these golden fields. The wheat harvest was about to begin.

Our objective was Mount Assiniboine, 11,870 feet, the Matterhorn of the Rockies. To reach it one must camp on the way or fly. We meant to adopt the latter course to save precious days. The small aircraft failed to return to Banff, however, having crash landed at the take-off field at the foot of Assiniboine. I made a mental note that mountain flying with no regular airfields is still dangerous.

We got the last available beds in Banff that night in the Hospital, where I slept like a log in spite of the fact that the central heating was going full blast and impossible to turn off.

Riding or walking is undoubtedly the way to see the countryside, especially in mountains ; and although we were so stiff on reaching Sunburst Lake at the foot of Assiniboine that we were literally lifted off our horses, Wonder Pass can only be appreciated in this way. There are three lakes at different altitudes, and therefore all different colours, which one looks down on from the Pass. The weather too was kind, our ride having started in rain, the mountain was uncovered for our descent next morning.

Returning to Vancouver round the famous Big Bend of the Columbia River, a very rough two hundred miles, which completes the Trans-Canada Highway, we stopped at Lake Kinbasket, near the top of the Bend, to collect a very large form of *Dryas octopetala*. I now have found three sizes of this very charming plant, the smallest on the West Coast of Sutherland, again in the Pennine Alps, and now this one in British Columbia.

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Learning from Mistakes

By D. P. LAMBERT

IF THE repetition of many mistakes has been prevented it has been thanks to keeping a garden notebook, a practice as valuable as it is humiliating. If I were to begin again I should buy a bigger book and space the entries more, leaving room for later jottings. And I should enter notes on individual plants in a separate looseleaf notebook with a page to each species. It is easy to arrange such notes and to adjust them to changes in nomenclature.

DESIGNING THE GARDEN.—The first thing to settle is the plan of the paths. Unless one has good access to all parts of the garden, and can dig, weed, water and do the thousand other jobs without too much trouble, artistic construction and perfect drainage will be of no avail. In the flatter parts of the garden separate weeding stones may be needed. These should be firmly set, big enough, and not too far apart. Weeding should be a pleasure, not a gymnastic exercise. I have suffered more in my own person from this than from any other mistake.

Colour is delightful and colours should blend; but form and foliage are more important and give pleasure all the year round, unless the plants winter below ground level. Many do, and catalogues and books are often silent on this point. Plants that disappear during winter should not occupy key positions. I am very fond of species bulbs, especially for growing amongst cushion forming plants or through carpeters, but I depended on them too much. Something more permanent is needed to give contrasting shape amongst the cushions and carpets.

DRAINAGE.—Good drainage is essential, but drainage can be overdone. Mine is a light, naturally well drained soil. The addition of extra drainage turns it into a little Sahara fatal to everything but *Sempervivums* and other hardy xerophytes. Now I leave the soil alone, except for the sparing addition of fine leaf mould or of bone meal, and occasionally of trace elements. Most plants do well enough, if not in one corner then in another, not always where one expected them to. Where specially sharp drainage is necessary I have found it better to grow the plants vertically than to manipulate the soil; except that for species prone to rot at the collar I pack chippings round the neck of the plant and spread them on the surface of the soil for a little way round.

BUYING AND PLANTING.—It may be ideal to see plants before buying them, but one seldom can. One has to depend on catalogues, tempering their enthusiasm with books. Most nurserymen are very reliable, but good plants cost money. Avoid Bargains: "There's nothing dirt

cheap but dirt." Again, many firms specialise, and it usually pays to buy special plants from specialist firms. Not always, specialists may run short of stock, and may then indulge in the annoying practice of sending out three or four seedlings put together to look like one plant. If these are planted as a single plant they invariably die ; but if they are treated as seedlings, pricked out, shaded and brought on later, one gets three plants for the price of one. I once got five.

Some advise one to put in plants as they come from the nursery with the ball of soil intact ; others say one should knock the soil off and tease the roots out before planting. I have tried both ways and have had fewer losses with the latter method. Besides, I like to see what sort of roots I am buying ; and there is no other way of finding out whether one is getting seedlings. Most books tell one to plant in February or in March, or in autumn. For a cold upland district like the Yorkshire Pennines February is too early and April is better than March. I soon gave up autumn planting ; losses were too high.

WEEDS.—There ought to be a well illustrated book on weed seedlings. I have cherished too many weedlings in the hope that something I had paid three shillings and sixpence for was coming up again in spring. By the time the weed was unmistakable the choice plant was choked, or it suffered fatal damage when the weed was dealt with. I know the common local weeds now, but strange ones still defeat me.

SUITABILITY.—Though I have lost plants through not knowing, when I planted them, that they were doubtfully hardy or unsuited to a limestone soil, some plants that ought to have died lived. Now if I particularly want to grow a tender plant I try it in one or two positions, and invariably I try it vertically. *Draba mollissima*, for example, dies on the flat, no matter how well drained it is, but flourishes in a retaining wall. As for lime haters, some, like *Gentiana sino-ornata*, are absolutely calcifuge ; others, like *Rhododendron impeditum*, do not seem to object to lime as such, provided there is enough leafmould or other good food round their roots. In nature many reputedly calcifuge plants grow on limestone formations, usually in good leaf humus. Such are always worth trying : it does not do to be put off by what it says in the books. Most books seem to be written by gardeners who have worked in the South of England, and plants will succeed on cold wet northern limestone that would die promptly on hot southern chalk. Conversely, reputed lime lovers do not always do well here. The note "Likes sun and lime" always makes me doubtful. I can only be sure of providing the lime. But if it is a desirable plant one can only try, faithfully record one's failures, and try again. One success with a really choice plant outweighs twenty failures.

Giggleswick, Yorkshire.

MEMBERS' SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Hon. Treasurer wishes to remind members again that membership subscriptions should now be sent to the Hon. Secretary, S/Ldr. J. J. Boyd Harvey, Boonslie, Dirleton, and not to himself.

Lilies for the Rock Garden

By A. E. SMITH

WHILE seldom planted in a Rock Garden, Lilies, if judiciously and discreetly used, can be a great embellishment and, moreover, considerably extend the period of gay colouring, blooming as they do after the main rush of Spring and early summer Alpines, but restraint must be carefully exercised. Too many Lilies planted in a smallish space might look out of keeping. Surprise groups just here and there should be the aim and selectivity is most necessary. In a really large rock garden the placing is easy, in fact what would be a more lovely picture than large plantings of the superb eight to twelve foot *Lilium giganteum*—or rather *Cardiocrinum*, as Botanists tell us we must now call it—arising from suitable undergrowth amid open spaces in the lower reaches of woodland hillsides. A sight worth travelling far to see.

A season or two ago Inverleith achieved a glorious effect by planting a very large 'outcropping pocket' at the base of the Rock Garden, with a considerable quantity of the *Philadelphicum x dauricum* hybrid "Glow." The reddish-orange, cup-shaped, four inch flowers did not belie the name, but each shone with the typical soft glow, presenting a most pleasing sight against the surroundings of rock and close-cut lawn. While such effects are quite beyond the scope of the small rock garden owner, there are many exquisite smaller gems among lilies which will add much joy and interest.

The *Nomocharis*—even if not true lilies—are all of surpassing beauty, all eminently suitable and, where amenable to cultivation, are my first choice. Unfortunately they are difficult but worth every effort to establish. Scotland appears to suit them fairly well. All who have seen *Lilium Mackliniae* blooming in the peat beds in Edinburgh Botanic Gardens will wish to include this dwarf *Nomocharis*-like gem. Named after Mrs. Kingdon-Ward (*nee* Macklin), her very knowledgeable husband regards this as the winning find of their joint Manipur expedition. I suppose it sounds presumptuous to say I fully agree.

Alphabetically first on the list, *Lilium amabile* grows 1½ to 3 feet and, at its best, has Martagon shaped flowers of grenadine red heavily dotted dark brown, and is indeed, the 'Pleasing' lily—*luteum* is a good yellow form. Both bloom in July and require gritty, loamey soil with the shelter of a small shrub. *L. pumilum*—bright vivid scarlet, 'Golden Gleam'—clear golden orange, and *L. cernuum*—rosy lilac with wine purple spots and lilac pollen, are three delightful little Turkscap lilies of 12 to 18 inches with slender wiry stems, that flower in June or July. *Lilium concolor* and its varieties too, are well worth a sunny position.

L. dauricum, with its upright, vase-shaped flowers, blooms in June or July also, and though only growing 12 to 30 inches, still strikes me

as more suitable to the herbaceous border than the rock garden, being somewhat coarse after the style of a dwarf Orange Lily (*L. Croceum*). However, this is merely a personal opinion and there are some very good and showy varieties such as the apricot-yellow "*paradinum*." The same applies to the 'Thunbergianum' group, so-called in catalogues, but more correctly *L. maculatum*, syn *elegans*. Of this type "Glow" would be my unhesitating selection, though *L. 'Thunbergianum' sanguineum*, with deep red flowers, spotted black, is quite striking.

In my view, *L. Maxwell* (*L. Davidi Maxwell*) quite supersedes the weak-stemmed *L. Willmottiae*. Reputed to grow from 5 to 6 feet, with me, it most fortunately achieves about half that height—possibly due to my poorish soil. As such, it is most welcome, as its light stiff stems bear many gay flowers of bright orange-red spotted with darker hue, recurving most attractively on their stiff pedicles. They also have the virtue of remaining in bloom over a long period.

L. formosanum Pricei, while short-lived, is a really outstanding lily. I have had it as dwarf as 9 inches, with its long, pure white trumpet, externally streaked with red, actually touching the ground, but it can also go as high as 2½ feet. Plant this one facing south or the lovely blooms will seek the sun and turn away from you. This is a variety that is easily raised from seed, but only permit that which is required to form, otherwise the huge pods will exhaust the rather small bulbs and they may succumb to so herculean an effort.

L. japonicum ! Well—grow this exquisite pink trumpet lily in the open if you can, for it is lovely beyond words. For my part, I pamper it in pots in a cool greenhouse as being far too precious to expose to the hazards of slugs and our winter wet. *L. Duchartrei* includes in its varieties Farrer's Marbled Martagon which is pure white marbled inside with chocolate-purple. *Lankongense* is similar but carries rose coloured flowers profusely spotted with a darker shade. All grow about 1 to 2 feet high and like moist cool conditions, yet with plenty of light. They will ramp about and increase if they like you, but just will not do a thing if they don't. *L. martagon album* with its solid pure wax-white Turkscap flowers and prominent antlers is really beautiful and in the more woodland part of the rock garden associates so well with ferns, non-dwarf Aquiligias, and Primulas, etc.

L. monadelphum, particularly var. *Szovitsianum*, is extremely lovely with exquisite pendant large bell-shaped flowers of really canary yellow and is slightly and very pleasantly fragrant. My plants are seedlings and, so far, have not grown too tall, but they can run up to as high as 4 to 6 feet. But they are so lovely that it is worth procuring young bulbs and when the clump becomes too tall and lush, transplanting out of the rock garden, even if *monadelphum* does resent shifting and will sometimes sulk for a year afterwards. *L. pomponium* has reflexed pendulous flowers of a vivid letter-box red and is really

spectacular but—and it is an overriding ‘but’ with me—has a most horrid smell. It is rather like bad meat on a hot day. Never plant near the house. Two far Easterns, *L. Bakerianum* (*Lowii*) and *L. nepalense* are uniquely attractive, but hailing from Burma, etc., require a sheltered garden and, though they have both been successfully grown in the open, are an undoubted risk.

L. rubellum eclipses even *L. japonicum*. While by no means an easy lily, yet planted in good loam, leaf mould and sand over sharp drainage, it is not nearly so intractable as *japonicum*, and is perhaps hardier and even more beautiful. The warm rose-pink flowers are funnel-shaped with pointed tips that slightly curl back as the bloom expands and they are delightfully fragrant. They are borne on a slender rigid stem of from 18 to 30 inches as early as May. Because of this precocity the plants require protection from frost by a small shrub. It is worth every trouble to try to establish and in addition to its very many virtues, adds that of being easily raised from seed.

L. tsingtanense bears clusters of flowers of a very bright orange red with dark green whorls of leaves. In fact, in the past, it has been confused with *L. medeoloides*, the Japanese Wheel Lily, so called because of the wheel-like habit of growth of its foliage. *Medeoloides*' blossoms vary from apricot to scarlet on 2 foot stems, being about the same height as the preceding. Both require lime-free soil and are well worth growing. *L. philadelphicum* is dainty and most brilliant, as is also *L. Catesbaei*. Each of these lilies has upright cup-shaped flowers with very highly coloured, widely separated petals attractively dotted with brown spots. Both are eminently suited to the surroundings of a rock garden, BUT both bear the catalogue caution ‘Difficult to establish in British gardens.’ I heartily agree with this warning, but they are so intriguing.

L. Parryi also is far from easy but is really an exceptionally lovely member of a lovely race and bears quite large funnel-shaped flowers of clear citron yellow, of slightly reflexing form and a perfectly heavenly perfume. Projecting antlers of a warm rust shade add to its charm. A native of California, etc., *L. Parryi* requires and appreciates shelter from cold winds and likes deep sandy soil containing plenty of peat, over sharp drainage. In fact the bulbs like being planted on little hummocks, free from stagnant wet but in a position where the strong roots can find their way to ample moisture. This is such a treasure that to help in establishing it is worth quoting Purdy's description of its native habitat. “At high altitudes of 6,000 to 10,000 feet in S. California and Arizona it is a dwarfed plant of 1 to 2 feet with one or two flowers, with a small bulb; there, it is in granitic sand mixed with leaf mould in moist flats or along cold streams. Lower down, it is confined to large streams of rich moist flats; it is at its best where the stream has thrown up a deep alluvial deposit of sand, silt, grit, leaves and charcoal, where it develops into a noble plant of 5 to 6 feet,

and is many flowered." I am sure there is little danger of it growing too lush for our purpose in our gardens.

These are some of the best of the Lilies for planting in the Alpine garden, but they are by no means all the suitable species.

Little has been said in these notes regarding culture, for reasons of space saving, but good catalogues give most explicit cultural notes and excellent books are available. Two most authoritative ones, both of recent publication and to which the writer is greatly indebted, are: 'Lilies of the World,' by Judge Drysdale Woodcock and Mr. W. T. Stern, and 'Lilies in the Home,' by Mrs. Alice Constable Maxwell, both mines of information to expert and novice alike.

Just a final warning. Never plant *Lilium* in screes—they hate it.

Belfast.

Trousers and Coats

By "LOCUM TENENS"

I DO NOT know whether this subject produces controversy in other families. It certainly does in ours.

I used to think that a garden was the one place where something comfortably old, torn and perhaps dirty could be worn with impunity. I am not so sure now.

I had a tweed coat. It was a really old friend, but one afternoon I could not find it. I hunted everywhere and it was not until my wife came home from a tea party that I discovered that she had sent it off to a local jumble sale, which was to be held the next day. I went straight off to the organizer of the sale and was lucky enough to buy it back privately. But it cost me five shillings.

Recently I bought a pair of trousers, which I had seen advertised in a newspaper. I thought they were grand. They were very cheap in price and made of some sort of hard cloth. The colour was a dark cloudy grey, which could not possibly show any dirt. I will admit that their shape was a bit odd. I fear that my delight in them was short-lived, because after I had worn them for only a few weeks my wife refused to allow me to come into her presence in the house until they had been removed. I shall not even go to the next jumble sale.

Oddly enough, husbands seem to have less authority than wives when it comes to criticising what the other wears. I have been trying for months to forbid my wife to appear in the trousers that she puts on for gardening. I will not refer to them in any detail because they are not nearly as bad as her so-called raincoat, which is a terrible thing,

though she loves it dearly. I do not quite know what I can do. It ought to be burnt, when she is not looking, but I have not got the courage.

Not long ago I thought I had found a solution. A certain gardening lady, who lives in England, owned a light coat. It was quite respectable, though a trifle old, and she was prepared to part with it. So she sent it off by post and it duly arrived (according to plan) when my wife was away. But the fates were clearly against me. On its journey the parcel must have come into contact with some noxious black liquid, which seeped through the brown paper and ruined the coat inside. Even the cleaners have failed to restore its original beauty.

So now I fear that I shall have to give up the unequal contest and endure in silence. I can comfort myself (to some extent) with the fantasy that all the plants and flowers that do their best and grow so delightedly for my wife, have, in the course of years, come to recognise from afar her peculiar garments and might resent it if she appeared in anything else, and that would be a tragedy.

Among the Kabschias

By J. E. STEWARD

AT FIRST sight, September may seem a strange month to consider Kabschias, with their flowering period so far away; but on reflection it has much to recommend it. If the tasks of the summer have prevented one from giving them the attention they need, which is not unlikely, September is a good time to repair the omission. Also it is a suitable time if the purchase of new ones is contemplated, for in my experience plants secured in the autumn are usually better ones and settle down quite happily. But is any reason needed to consider Kabschias at any time of the year, for they provide a perennial source of interest, as fascinating in their rounded domes and compact 'cushions' as they are beautiful in their tight buds and often tinted stems leading to flowers so varied in form and colour.

They have the further advantage of being an ideal plant for the beginner, combining the advantage of a real alpine appearance with ease of cultivation, ease that is, compared with, say, some of the androsaces, and equally rewarding. This, I am afraid, will savour of heresy to some. For the more experienced they offer endless opportunities of cultivation and a never ending source of delight. I think that those who have grown them extensively would agree that their 'Kabs' would be among the last of the plants they would wish to part with if there had to be a drastic reduction in what they could grow.

And kabschias are hardy, given the right position and treatment, and are equally at home on the rock garden, sink or frame. For those that are grown on the rock garden or in a sink, in addition to the soil mixture there is one special requirement. I find that in very sunny weather they do seem to suffer from scorching, chiefly caused by afternoon and early evening sun. For this reason on sink or rock garden I find it very beneficial if they can be given the shade of a highish rock, which will protect them from the strongest summer sunshine.

While equally at home on the rock garden or sink, kabschias are excellent subjects for culture in pans, particularly if they can be brought into a cold greenhouse during their flowering period. Here one is able to enjoy their beauties at eye level and contemplate their diversity more comfortably than when bending over them on the rock garden with a keen east wind whipping round one's legs and sending uncomfortable shivers through the whole body.

As regards soil on rock garden or sink, one of the chief requirements is that it should be gritty. Loam and leaf-mould in equal parts and two parts composed of a mixture of chippings and old mortar seems to meet their case. As far as my knowledge and experience goes, no kabschia is averse to lime, with the exception of lilacina, which seems better without it. They do well on the scree if there is some protection from burning sun, but somehow to my pernickety mind they never look 'quite right' there. They do seem to need the background of rocks and if accommodated in scree pockets or along ledges, with a generous surfacing of chippings, their appearance is enhanced and their 'naturalness' is beyond question.

For those grown in pans, a similar mixture, as before mentioned, with a good top-dressing of chippings, should keep them happy. They also appear to appreciate very small pieces of tufa mixed with the soil. On one occasion I gave a most unhappy and miserable looking plant of *Myra* a top-dressing of fine tufa and from that point it never looked back, slow-growing as it is. It may not be cause and effect, but it looks like it, and it is certainly safe to prescribe it.

During the summer, kabschias grown in pans need some protection from the sun. It was my intention, when I had a fair number of plants in pans, to winter them in a frame facing S.W. Then for the summer to move them to frames facing N.E. The frames were certainly made, and as certainly occupied, but not by kabschias. Dwarf rhododendrons and seedling primulas had hurried in and established themselves first and I hadn't the heart to move them. I was a little worried, for the frames facing S.W. caught nearly all the sun, especially in the afternoon and evening, and I feared for the inhabitants. As a merely temporary measure I made some slatted lights to cover them when the sun was hot, with the intention of finding cooler accommodation for them as soon as possible. However, with occasional waterings they seemed to thrive quite happily, apparently enjoying the sun, tempered as it was

by the slats. That summer was, I remember, a very hot and dry one, but with this slight protection there was no drying or scorching. They grew well without getting lush or out of character and it was borne in on me that they benefited by this dappled shade and throve better in these conditions than if I had fulfilled my original intention. It is rather amusing sometimes to ask the less knowledgeable to put their hand on a humped dome of a kabschia and watch the surprise that is registered on finding it so hard and firm and not soft and cushiony, as it appears.

During the winter, from November to March, windolite frames are substituted for the slatted ones. All this happened more than six years ago and so far I have no reason to regret the frames, intended for the kabschias' summer quarters, being occupied by other plants.

All kabschias, wherever grown, benefit greatly by a top-dressing of fine chippings and sand, with a suspicion of leaf-mould. It should be worked in among or below the rosettes—a thing easier said than done. I have found a little funnel, made of stiff paper, helpful in getting the mixture where one wants it. The best time for this top-dressing is after they have flowered, though for me this is often a counsel of perfection.

In making any selection of kabschias one is confronted with a veritable 'embarras de richesse,' for there are so many, while confusion is worse confounded by the fact that some hybrids are very much alike. My own feelings are inclined to be against many hybrids in most alpines, but in the matter of many hybrid kabschias I only too willingly admit their beauty and validity. So any choice is largely a matter of personal taste and fancy.

The easiest to grow are of course *SS. apiculata* and its form, *alba*, *Elizabethae*, and *Haagii*. Of these, I think I like *Elizabethae* best though my introduction to the family was by way of *apiculata*.

Of the species that I would select, there is *sancta*, from Greece and a parent of *Elizabethae*. It needs a starvation diet. *Scardica* comes from Macedonia and its flowers, white, sometimes flushed pink, usually appear in June. Its variety, *erythrantha*, is also worth growing. *Marginata* serves as the type for a group of attractive kabschias which spread eastwards from Italy. The more eastern varieties usually have smaller rosettes. *Coriophylla* is a condensed form, with more silvery leaves than the type; *Rocheliana*, another compact one, with smaller flowers and, with me, rather shy in flowering. *Rocheliana lutea*, which appears to be a garden hybrid—but I mention it here—differs only from the type in having yellow flowers. *Lilacina* is a wee treasure and worth the extra trouble sometimes needed to make it happy. Coming from the Himalayas, it needs some shade and moisture and no lime. It is interesting as being a parent of nearly all the pink, reddish and purple hybrids among the kabschias. *Caesia* would not be everyone's choice. It is a very modest, dense spreading plant with slender stems

bearing small white flowers freely. Its chief needs seem to be semi-shade, moisture and lime. *S. Burseriana* and its forms are perhaps the most commonly grown and provide some of the aristocrats of the species. The type has white flowers opening from pink buds. Other forms are *major* and *macrantha* from which, by selection, the fine hybrid *Gloria* was produced. Another variety, *crenata*, is most attractive with its frilled edges. Hailing from Italy is the variety *tridentina*. It often appears in catalogues as *tridentata*, though why, goodness only knows. This varietal name is derived from the City of Trent, near which this saxifrage makes its home. It was in this city that the Council of Trent met in the 16th century and from which were issued the famous Tridentine Decrees. It is a robust grower, its red stems contrasting pleasantly with the whiteness of its flowers and is a parent of the later large-flowered hybrids. More difficult, but equally rewarding, are *SS. diapienoides*, very slow growing; *tombeanensis*, with dense cushions and white flowers; *Vandellii*, another slow grower.

The hybrids, being many, present even greater difficulties of choice and any selection is largely arbitrary. Among my favourites is *Arcovalleyi*, bearing soft pink flowers on grey tufts. One of its parents is undoubtedly *lilacina*, but the other is given variously as *Burseriana minor* or *marginata* var. *Rocheliana*. Whatever its parentage may be it is well worth growing. *Buttercup* one does not see so often today, but I find it a very good doer, particularly on the rock garden. I like it for its good, rich, yellow flowers, set off by its dark green spiny leaves.

Chief among the hybrids of *S. Burseriana* are: *Brookside*, with large flowers of fine form; *His Majesty*, white, flushed pink, and *Gloria*. One that pleases me very much and which is always a joy on the rock garden is *Burseriana sulphurea*. It is like the type, but with soft yellow flowers. It appears to be a hybrid of unrecorded parentage. *Cranbourne* is a beautiful hybrid raised by Pritchard of Christchurch from whom came some of the best of the kabschia hybrids. It forms an encrusted cushion on which appear almost stemless large, clear pink, flowers, the colour deepening at the base. On a plant last year in only a 4 in. pot I counted 26 blooms which practically covered it. *Iris Pritchard* is another delightful hybrid hailing from Christchurch. Its only known parent is *Godroniana*, though I once saw *lilacina* cited as the other possible one. It is an uncommon colour for a kabschia, being a rosy buff or in catalogue language, 'apricot rose.'

Irvingii and *Jenkinsii* (or is it *Jenkinsae*?) might be taken together as they appear to come from the same cross (*Burseriana* x *lilacina*) and are very much alike. But both are well worth having, for covered with their pale pink flowers (pinkish white with deeper eye would be perhaps more accurate), they are always a breath-taking sight. In the experience of many growers *Irvingii* is a more regular and consistent flowerer than *Jenkinsii*. *Kellereri* is desirable if only because it is usually one of the first to flower. More than once I have found a

small pan of it showing its red bud in mid-December. In addition to its early flowering it bears soft pink flowers on 2 to 3 in. stems. The influence of *Stribrnyi* in its parentage places it on that narrow borderline between *Kabschia* and *Engleria*. Be that as it may, it is well worth having. *Kewensis* has for its parents a *Burseriana* form and a *porophylla* type and though to some not outstanding, is a good plant with long, grey leaves in neat rosettes and bears sprays of clear pink flowers. *Megasaeflora* in full flower amply justifies its specific name. I place it high among the desirable ones and with me it never fails each year to make a brilliant show with its large pink flowers. *Myra* is rather a heart-breaker, for its cherry red flowers, both large and attractive, make it very desirable, but it is a slow grower and needs time and patience to establish it. My plants now seem to be settling down and are slowly increasing, but it has taken them a long time. In fact, one sometimes wonders if its constitution is a robust one. It is thought to be a cross between *S. scardica* and *lilacina*.

Petraschii in habit stands mid-way between its parents *SS. tombeanensis* and *marginata Rocheliana*. It is one of Sunderman's hybrids and very reliable. Its white rounded flowers come early in spring and it does very well on the rock garden. It is one of the older hybrids and perhaps for this reason is neglected. Farrer describes it as 'an excellent and hearty grower.' *Riverslea* is an outstanding hybrid with its deep crimson purple flowers. They have been described as sombre, though I think this does them less than justice. It is a good grower and makes a close hard dome to display its flowering charm.

And now, looking through the hybrids that have been mentioned, I am conscious of *Faldonside*, *Hocker Edge*, *Perle Rose* and a good few others crying out 'And what about us?' The best reply that I can think of is that of Kanga: 'We'll see.'

Aylesbury.

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JAMES R. AITKEN

ORCHARDBANK NURSERY, BARNHILL, PERTH

A Selection of Dwarf Shrubs—*continued*

By A. EVANS

CERATOSTIGMA (Plumbaginaceae). This genus is almost entirely confined to the orient and certainly those species which are grown in our Rock Gardens hail from the East. Perhaps some would argue that this is not a shrubby genus but it is only our climate which makes it herbaceous in habit. In their native haunts, four to five feet is quite a normal height for certain species. The flowering period lasts from July to November, but in addition brilliant autumn tints are produced as the foliage changes colour. In Scotland a dry sunny situation, high amongst the rocks where the plants may spread at will, is most suitable. This genus may be increased by division of the woody rootstock in Spring.

Ceratostigma plumbaginoides can grow to a height of eighteen inches but will not always reach this maximum. The flowers are tightly packed in axillary and terminal clusters and in shape resemble a wheel with the long corolla tube forming the axil. They are bright blue in colour.

Ceratostigma Willmottianum has lighter coloured flowers than the previous species, but is never-the-less a handsome plant. Here the light green leaves are more hairy and have a more distinct reddish brown margin. In the warmer parts of the country *Ceratostigma Willmottianum* may reach four feet, but at Edinburgh the shoots are cut back to ground level by frost every year. This does not seem to impair its flowering abilities and strong shoots grow up from the base every Spring.

CISTUS (Cistaceae). Confined to the Mediterranean regions where dry sunny conditions prevail, the Rock Roses demand similar conditions in cultivation. They must have full sun and succeed well in light sandy soil. Feeding in any form is bad. On the whole, the plants are short-lived, some lasting but a few years before succumbing to one of our winters. Fortunately cuttings taken during July and August root readily, thus making the task of renewing the stock a comparatively easy one except that these rooted plants must be potted up singly. Young plants should be put out early before they become pot-bound, otherwise it will be impossible to make them secure in the ground when planting. Flowers opening in the morning last barely a day, but so floriferous are the *Cistus* that this rapid petal shedding is hardly noticeable on the plant although the ground soon becomes strewn with petals.

Cistus crispus, a native of the western Mediterranean, has rose magenta flowers more than an inch in diameter. During June and July, this plant will be smothered in many flowered clusters, making it most colourful. *Cistus crispus* has a spreading habit and can measure as much as two and a half feet through.

Cistus laxus is of hybrid origin and has flowers which measure two and a half inches across. These are white with yellow centres and are produced in rapid succession during June and July. At first, the whole plant—shoots and leaves—is pubescent, a character passed on by one of the parents, *Cistus hirsutus*.

Cistus pulverulentus has densely hairy foliage which gives the plant a grey appearance. It is a natural hybrid between *Cistus albidus* and *Cistus crispus* and has magenta flowers.

Cistus Silver Pink must be one of the finest in the genus, having large silvery pink flowers which can be three inches across when fully open. The shrub itself is usually only two to two and a half feet high and the flowers seem large in comparison. *Cistus Silver Pink* is a garden hybrid.

Cistus villosus creticus albus has large, pure white flowers in the centre of which are clustered the bright yellow stamens. It has a close growing habit and covers itself in bloom during June and July.

CLEMATIS (Ranunculaceae). One usually thinks of trellis work and arbours when *Clematis* is mentioned, but there are a few species very well suited to the rock garden. If a fairly steep bank or a large stone face can be made available, one of the species may be planted at the top and be allowed to tumble over the edge. *Clematis* should be allowed full sunshine so long as the roots have ample moisture during the summer months. Although these plants will grow in any type of soil, *Clematis* are more at home in one containing lime. Therefore, providing there are no calcifuges in close proximity, a mixture containing lime rubble will be beneficial.

The operation of pruning must be carefully done otherwise all the flower buds are liable to be cut away. To know when and how the plant flowers is all important. If the flowers are produced early in the year as in the case of *Clematis alpina* (*Atragene alpina*) no cutting should be done until after the flowers have faded. All that will be necessary then is a light thinning of the oldest shoots. On the other hand, *Clematis tangutica*, which flowers on shoots of the current year, may be severely pruned in February. It will bloom all summer and from early autumn will be made more attractive as the large silky seed heads develop.

Clematis alpina (see Fig. 31) flowers during April and May on one year old wood. The large nodding flowers consist of blue to violet sepals and attractive creamy petals which protect the stamens and stigmas. These appear in great quantities all along the shoots, to be followed later in the season by the silky seed heads. This species is a native of Europe and S. Asia and once established will produce shoots four feet in length.

Clematis macropetala closely resembles the previous species but differs as the name suggests by having slightly larger flowers and stems which are tomentose, particularly at the joints. The flowers are of a

deeper shade and the plant is just as free flowering. Both these species look their best when hanging over a rocky face and demand a very well drained situation. The plants will be partially stunted and so be less inclined to smother their not so robust neighbours in the rock garden.

Clematis tangutica hails from Siberia and China and closely resembles a plant hung with dainty yellow lanterns. It is a very strong growing species, but its growth can be curtailed by severe pruning in February. *Clematis tangutica* comes into flower towards the end of July and continues to bloom until late autumn. Both flowers and seed heads appear at the same time. Here the yellow coloured sepals are the attraction and these remain half closed for a considerable period. Although a native of Asia, this species has been in cultivation for more than 60 years.

COPROSMA (Rubiaceae). New Zealand and Australia are the homes of this genus, but most of the species are tall growing shrubs. There is one, however, which forms a carpet of green and can be an outstanding feature in any rock garden. It enjoys a place in the sun, where it will closely follow the contours of the rocks over which it likes to tumble.

Coprosma Petrei is not a plant to be admired for its ability to flower, but for its habit of growth. It is a low growing species and very soon becomes a tangle of closely interwoven shoots. New Zealand is its country of origin. It is supposed to produce dark purple berries, but these are rarely seen in cultivation. Of course, the species is dioecious and therefore male and female plants would have to be grown together before fruit could be formed.

CORNUS (Cornaceae). This genus embraces medium sized trees as well as lowly herbaceous plants. Many species are grown for their flowers, some for the colour of their bark in winter and still others for their foliage. Whatever their attraction, they each rank high in their own class.

Cornus Hessii is not a common plant, but this is due to scarcity and not to any detrimental character in the plant. It is a slow growing species and because of the density of the branches maintains a neat habit. Although the leaves are deciduous the attractive character is in its foliage. This is a deep coppery purple and the lanceolate leaves are crowded round the extremities of the branches. In winter, when the shoots are bare, this compact shrub takes on an air of great age. *Cornus Hessii* is of unknown origin and grows best under acid conditions.

Edinburgh.

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From the Show Secretary's Point of View

(CONTRIBUTED)

I am not and never have been a Show Secretary. I have, however, on occasions helped one and so have seen some of his troubles.

On one occasion a certain Show Secretary handed me a telegram he had just received which seemed to have not only pleased but surprised him. It was merely informing him that a certain exhibitor had found she would have to scratch her entries for certain classes. Apparently it was not at all usual for exhibitors to be so thoughtful. I wonder if exhibitors who scratch without informing the Show Secretary, and those who send in their entries days late, realise the extra work and trouble they cause.

I doubt it, otherwise they would not do it ! The tables have to be marked up for the classes in accordance with the entries, and if there are a lot of last minute scratchings, some admittedly unavoidable, there will be unsightly gaps on the tables. Late entries, on the other hand, will probably mean jamming in extra entries on an already full table, or else they will entail a big rearrangement.

I wish 'Locum Tenens' had written an article on this subject ; he would have made it most amusing, but also to the point. However do give a thought to the Show Secretary and his troubles, and try not to add to them.

The American Rock Garden Society

Probably most members are aware of the existence in the U.S.A. of a Society comparable with our own. Some members may have wished to join this Society, but have been deterred by the apparent difficulty of transmitting their subscription.

We understand that this difficulty is not insuperable. Permission has to be obtained from the Exchange Control in the first place and evidence has to be supplied of the existence of the Society and its membership fees. Having secured sanction, the member obtains a draft from his Bank and forwards it to the Society. In practice it would probably be best first to consult one's Bank, which could supply advice and the appropriate forms.

The annual subscription is 3½ dollars, or 10 dollars for three years if paid in advance, and the Secretary, who will send further particulars, is Mrs. D. E. Hansell, 19 Pittsford Way, Summit, New Jersey, U.S.A.

In addition to its bi-monthly Bulletin, the American Society has a Seed Exchange in operation and issues special plant leaflets under the name of Saxiflora.

Plants and Problems

11 Primrose Avenue,
Urmston,
Manchester.

20/5/53.

To the Editor of the Scottish Rock Garden Club *Journal*.

Dear Sir,

I had almost made up my mind to resign membership of the Club which I had joined with high hopes a few years ago, but before taking such a drastic step (in the interests of economy, let me hasten to explain) I would like to lay my troubles before my fellow-members.

Two years ago, moving from Wooler, Northumberland, to a charge in Manchester, I left behind me a large and sunny garden (with other advantages also of soil, etc.) for a tiny plot of ground overshadowed by the house and a high wall, but with what seemed like reasonably good soil. Hoping for the best, I had brought with me a selection of my Wooler plants, all of which looked in high spirits, except for *Potentilla fruticosa*, and settled down happily to wait in a small frame—this in spite of being trodden upon, run over by motor wheels, and having sundry things poured over them.

I got to work, dug out a selected area, cemented the floor thereof, built up a small pond and prepared the remainder for marsh-cum-alpine lawn, peaks and ridges, with moraine (all on a very small scale, of course). The soil was (as I thought) suitably lightened up with various ingredients, including some peat in the pond area. Rocks, of a sort, were set in their places, more or less correctly stratified, and with due regard to the provision of pockets, ledges, shady corners, etc. The plants—still quite healthy to all appearances—were then removed to their new homes.

All those in the marsh-cum-alpine lawn promptly died. Others, on higher ground, followed later, the only finalists being saxifrages (mossy, silver, some cushion and oppositifolia, which latter has played hide-and-peek with me ever since), the orange Geum, *Potentilla* 'Miss Wilmott,' and a white shrubby *Veronica*. The last named, after a period of similar hide-and-peek, has now given in its gun (my wife's expression).

What was the trouble? Cement poisoning was a possibility; I also suspected the lumps of peat I had used; there were factors like the fumes from various chemical works. But experiment did not support any of these suggestions. I went on trying, putting in a few more plants, including Heathers, three Conifers, Thymes for the lawn, Sedums and Sempervivums, *Lithospermum*, *Linum narbonense* and *arborescens* and later alpinus, *Aetheonema* 'Warley Rose,' an Androsace, *Leontopodium*, and others, while I sought to raise seedlings from the

Club seed distribution (under great difficulties). Some of the latter did very well, including *Aquilegia glandulosa*, *Anemone baldensis*, and a Catch-fly; others flourished exceedingly but perished miserably during the winter. Of the other plants, *Linum narbonense* flowered like a weed, but has since died (also *arboreum*, of course), whereas *alpinum* has survived in moraine and is in full bloom now. *Leontopodium* has done and is doing first class. Miss Willmott died but left behind healthy seedlings. *Lithospermum* is still going but hardly strong. *Parnassia rupicola*, raised from seed, is in full flower. The Heathers and Conifers seem quite at home. But the Thymes, etc., are a complete failure, with other carpeters; robust things like *Alyssum saxatile* and Aubretias will not grow—of a number of healthy *Alyssum* seedlings only one survived the winter, and that has made only a pretence of flowering. A number of others, like *Aetheonema*, kept budding and withering off and finally died. The general evidence seems to point to cold (which I can't do anything about) and wet. It might be worth while taking all the plants up and working in large additional quantities of grit and sharp sand. The most puzzling feature, however, is that while Sempervivums—including *arachnoides*—are doing well, Sedums (except *spurium* group) will not live at all, not even *Sedum acre*. Also, while *Amemone sulphurea* has lived (but not flowered) *pulsatilla* has faded right out. Nor are Primulas any good. Gentians look like living; but whether they will flower is questionable. Geums are also very hesitating.

Commonsense suggests that I fill the garden with what does grow and flower, and call it a day; but I am loth to admit failure and equally loth to give up membership in the Club, though hardly justified. What would members suggest?

(Rev.) ERNEST L. LODGE

CROCKING

I WAS much interested in the note by L.C.B.H., which appeared under this heading, on the subject of perforated zinc 'worm-excluders.' At the time of receipt of the autumn number of our *Journal* last year, I was engaged in repotting a large number of small plants from 3-inch pots in which I had used these pieces of zinc. I found that in each case the zinc was enclosed in a mass of roots, BUT in hardly a single case had the roots gone *through* the zinc; all had gone *round* the edges and it was comparatively easy to work the zinc out sideways without damage. The plants included seedling lilies as well as alpiners.

I have just (April 1953) re-potted a number of plants that I had neglected last autumn, and have again found the same condition. Not a single root had gone through the zinc.

Hants.

D. G. L.

SEED HARVESTING

To judge by seeds received through the Club's distribution scheme, some members at least have very effective methods of cleaning seed after it has been harvested. As a novice in the collection of seed from alpine, I should be very grateful for any hints and tips members may be able to give me for harvesting and cleaning. My present practice is to collect seed pods in envelopes when the seed appears to be ripe, and then to sieve the whole through one or more of a number of coffee-strainers and tea-strainers of various meshes. After this it is usually necessary to remove a considerable amount of chaff from the seed, and I have found no more effective method than the tedious one of using tweezers. I have tried blowing on collected seed in various shapes and sizes of container, to get rid of the chaff; but if this is a practical method I haven't learned the knack of it, since blowing strongly enough to remove the chaff in my case entails removing the seed as well. I should therefore be very grateful for help in this matter, either through the *Journal* or by letter.

G. E. SELBY, Durham.

AQUILEGIA PYRENAICA

I HAVE just read Mr. Corsar's interesting and instructive article on Dwarf Aquilegias. Whatever may have been written in the past, I cannot agree with his statement that "*A. alpina* . . . is indistinguishable from *A. pyrenaica*." To my mind they are quite distinct! *A. pyrenaica* is a plant of the high screes. It is a much smaller plant than *A. alpina* with smaller and more delicate foliage, a character that was maintained in the garden by plants brought home from Gavarnie in 1949—as long as they lasted.

Between Gavarnie and Gedre, and also near Luchon, a fine blue Columbine is plentiful, which at first sight seems to approach *A. alpina*, but it is not *A. pyrenaica* which, as already stated, occurs only on the high screes. It is presumably a fine form of *A. vulgaris*, though in his book 'Plant Hunting in Europe' Dr. Roger-Smith refers to it as being *A. alpina*.

Hants.

D. G. L.

MECONOPSIS TORQUATA

I HAD the satisfaction of flowering this *Meconopsis* in my garden this year. It gave me quite a thrill, too, I admit, for as far as I have been able to find out I am the first person to have succeeded in flowering it out of doors. It has been flowered in a cool house in the R.B.G., Edinburgh, but indoors the flowers refuse to open properly and the petals remain only partly open, and are rather crumpled up.

I got the seed from Major George Sherriff on 15/4/50 and sowed it at once in J.I. seed compost plus a little leaf mould and grit.

The seed germinated quite well and the seedlings were pricked out into boxes and wintered in a cold frame. About fifty per cent got through the winter, but more were lost in spring and summer from slugs and just rotting away. In September 1951 I planted out four, and potted up four and kept them in a cold frame. The four planted out were given different sites to see what suited them best : (a) scree—thrived through two winters and then died in spring of 1953 of, I think, drought ; (b) semi-shade in "humusy" soil—died first winter ; (c) similar to (b) but better drained—died second winter ; (d) in well drained soil with plenty of leaf mould, but moist and cool, being at the foot of a wall which protected the roots from the midday sun—this is the plant which flowered in May 1953, almost exactly three years after the seed was sown.

The scape was four and a half inches high when the first flower opened but grew to fifteen inches as the other flowers opened. The first flower was at the top and the others, twelve of them, opened successively downwards. This habit of flowering from the top downwards detracts from the beauty of the plant, for the upper flowers are rather bedraggled, if not fallen, by the time the lower ones open.

The flowers are a pretty pale blue although the petals are perhaps a little thin in texture, and being rather narrow, do not meet. Having been cross-fertilized with pollen from a plant grown under glass in the R.B.G., the top seed capsule began to swell nicely, but the plant suddenly died before the seed had time to ripen. The R.B.G. plant did not set seed at all.

Judging by my own and other people's experience it does not seem likely that this *Meconopsis* will ever make a good garden plant.

The form of the plant, lack of side shoots, and thong type of root suggest that it is monocarpic.

Edinburgh.

D. M. MURRAY-LYON

Editor's Note.—Major A. Walmsley also writes : "One of the *Meconopsis torquata* attempted to flower out of doors at the beginning of July. The colour was a good deep sky-blue, but none of the flowers opened properly and therefore no seed was set."

MERTENSIA VIRGINICA

NO PLANT of the high Screes, the Purist would perhaps not favour the inclusion of this lovely subject in the Rock Garden. But we all know the trouble that can lie ahead for one asking "What is an Alpine?" As for me—well, I apply "Pragmatic Sanctions," grow what I like, and very gladly welcome this old friend, satisfying whatever purist conscience I have by remembering that the late Mr. William Robinson stated, "it grows on mountains in its native North America."

Mertensia virginica is definitely a subject for the semi-shady part of the rock garden, planted among the larger *Aquilegias*, etc., as it is described as growing from ten to eighteen inches in height. With me it does not exceed the former dimension.

The leaves alone are most attractive, being, like all the plant, smooth and, moreover, beautifully lined and of a most refreshing slightly glaucous hue, clothing the firm but light stem almost to the refined clusters of most lovely hanging flowers, which are trumpet shaped, each about an inch long, and of a most satisfying tender shade of azure blue. Foliage and flower tone to perfection, providing a cool, lovely picture. If ever a plant showed "quality" this one does so and my pen is quite inadequate to describe it.

I might liken its effect to that brought by listening to beautiful music, but in beautiful music there is nearly always a trace of sadness and nostalgia, while this *Mertensia* represents nought but happiness and joy. Only the brush of a great floral painter could do it justice.

But, after all, for so little one can acquire the plant itself, and enjoy its loveliness at first hand.

Plant this good perennial away from cold cutting winds, in half shade in decent, well-drained, lightish soil and it will look after itself, merely requiring to be lifted and replanted in fresh soil every four or five years. At such times careful division can be effected, if necessary, or desired. Blooms each April or May will amply repay the trouble taken.

Grown in six or seven inch pots in a cool greenhouse *Mertensia virginica* is of even greater beauty because of the protection afforded and seems, somehow, to embellish the colours of all the plants growing with it.

And naturalised in woodland sites in quantity?—well, I could imagine nothing of greater beauty or appeal. It would be as near to perfection in planting as one can get.

And this lovely subject is no rare novelty requiring tremendous cultural skill, but a good-tempered and very old friend, probably viewed with pleasure by some of the Pilgrim Fathers. It was once known as *Pulmonaria virginica*, and spoken of as the Virginian Cowslip, despite there being nothing cowslip-like about it.

Just one concluding warning. It is herbaceous and quite disappears for its resting period. So do not fear it has died—nor bisect it with a careless spade. Mark the spot where it grows and leave well alone.

Northern Ireland.

A. E. SMITH.

SOLDANELLOID PRIMULAS

MAY A *Primula* beginner be allowed to suggest an amendment to an article written by an expert? On Page 79 of *Journal* No. 10 on the winter treatment of *Primulas* of Section *Soldanelloides*, Jack Drake says that they should be covered with glass from October until growth

is well advanced in Spring. Promptly on October 1st, therefore, I put on their completely efficient rainproof covers.

I do not know when Spring arrives at Jack Drake's garden in the Far North, but in East Lothian it was here on 17th February ; summer seemed to be just round the corner, and there was no doubt at all about growth being well advanced in *Primula Cawdoriana* and *P. eburnea*. Nothing could therefore stop an optimist from uncovering the covers. *P. Reidii* and *P. Wattii* had barely started into growth, so were allowed to retain their shelters.

The blow fell in March. Saddened but wiser, may I now offer the following amendment : “. . . until the end of April or until all danger of frost be past in your part of the country, whichever date occurs the later.”

A most peculiar thing happened to the frosted flower-buds of *P. Cawdoriana*. Instead of opening as half-opened mauve parasols, they turned into a cluster of vegetative buds. When sliced off with a razor-blade and stuck into sand, these grew roots and became plants. Garden tragedies may often become triumphs.

East Lothian.

L. C. B. H.

SEDUM DASYPHYLLUM var. GLANDULIFERUM

WE HAVE had *Sedum dasyphyllum* in the garden for several years, and are delighted by its pinky-grey leaves and pale pink flowers. Some time ago the Hon. Treasurer gave us a plant labelled *Sedum dasyphyllum* var. *glanduliferum* VERY FRAGILE.” This is even lovelier than the type plant. It has tightly-packed blue-green leaves, and is covered all over with minute glistening hairs. We left it in its pot for a long time, hardly daring to touch so frail a plant.

Eventually it was planted out on a bank under the shelter of an overhanging rock. Here it increased quickly and grew well out beyond its protecting roof.

Then came the thunderstorm and cloudburst when an inch of rain fell in twenty-four hours. That part of the plant which had dared to expose itself to the open sky looked as if it had been skimmed off with clippers, and all the fat little leaves which had broken off had cascaded down on to the alpine lawn. This happened on a Friday and by the following Tuesday the bare branchlets had sprouted new leaves and the plant was beginning to look as good as ever it was. After a week, each broken-off leaf lying on the ground was growing a root and two minute specks of leaves. Now we have the original plant restored to full beauty, and a blue-green cascade of it growing down to another plant at the bottom of the bank.

It has occurred to me that the fragility of this plant is its strength. It has never flowered for us, and its appearance suggests that it grows in the high and arid places of its Corsican home, where insect visitors may be few and far between. Because it is so brittle, and because its broken pieces have so strong a will to live, it can survive and increase without being dependent on the attentions of pollinating insects.

East Lothian.

L. C. B. H.

THALICTUM KIUSIANUM--an addendum

WITH reference to the plant note on *Thalictum kiusianum* appearing in the April *Journal* (No. 12), Mr. Stuart Boothman writes to say that it thrives quite well with him on chalky soil and with chalky water. The writer of the note hopes he has not scared off any chalky soil gardener.

M-L.

American Primrose Society

The QUARTERLY contains interesting and instructive articles on Primulas by well-known growers in U.S.A. and in Europe.

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NEW MALDEN, SURREY.

Review of the Year

THE YEAR 1952-53 has again been a successful one from all points of view. Our activities, in addition to shows, have in many areas included winter meetings, visits to gardens, etc., and there is no doubt that these local functions, where County Representatives are able to organise them, do much to increase the interest of members. It is not possible to suggest any standard form which such activities should take, since what suits a closely populated area may well not be practicable in a widely scattered county with difficult communications, but I would appeal to County Representatives to do all they can to bring their members together and enable them to get to know each other and exchange information.

We now have County Representatives in every county or group of small counties except Stirlingshire. Will no member in that county offer his or her services?

Our membership has again risen and now stands at 2,340. It is particularly satisfactory that the rise in our overseas membership has been maintained.

Our financial position is also, so far as can be judged at the date of writing, satisfactory. The Council early in the year appointed a Sub-Committee to consider our probable income and expenditure during the current Club year and prepare a budget. This action was intended to prevent over-spending in any department which might result in a deficit in the Club's accounts at the end of the year. I think that this action has proved well worth while.

When writing my review for 1951-52 I referred to the heavy burden thrown on our Office-bearers, and in particular on the Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer, as a result of the Club's expansion. It was found necessary early this year to rearrange the duties of these two officials and to provide increased financial assistance for the Hon. Secretary, to enable him to employ additional paid help when necessary to allow him to carry out his much increased duties. This arrangement appears to be working well.

Under Mr. Mowat's editorship the *Journal* has, it is agreed on all sides, steadily improved.

The Seed Exchange was again successful, though it threw a heavy burden on Mr. Masterton during the period of the year when it was in operation. It may be that the Club will have to face further expenditure in this connection.

General Murray-Lyon also carried out his duties as Publicity Officer with great success.

To all its Office-bearers the Club owes a real debt of gratitude.

When in the autumn of 1952 the Alpine Garden Society decided that it was no longer able, on grounds of expense, to continue to co-opt a member of the Rock Garden Club to its Committee, it was



Photo.—R. E. Cooper.

FIG. 25—This was the site of the original Rock Garden, Edinburgh, The saxifrages are not in flower; the effect is caused by frost on the rosettes. Photo 1930. (See page 222).



Photo.—R. E. Cooper.

FIG. 26—The Balfourian concept of the Rock Garden, R.B.G., Edinburgh, viewed from above the northern scree, before the sprays go up in May. (See page 223).



Photo.—R. E. Cooper.

FIG. 27—Sandstone outcrops up the incline, at the approach to the Heather Garden. The hoar frost on the grass gives much of the effect. (See page 224)



Photo.—R. E. Cooper.

FIG. 28—Great slabs of Balfour's sandstone at the South West Entrance. The Sax. rosettes might be the eye and teeth of a samaurian! (See page 224).



Photo.—M. E. Cox.

FIG. 29—ERYTHRONIUMS IN THE OLYMPICS. (See page 227).

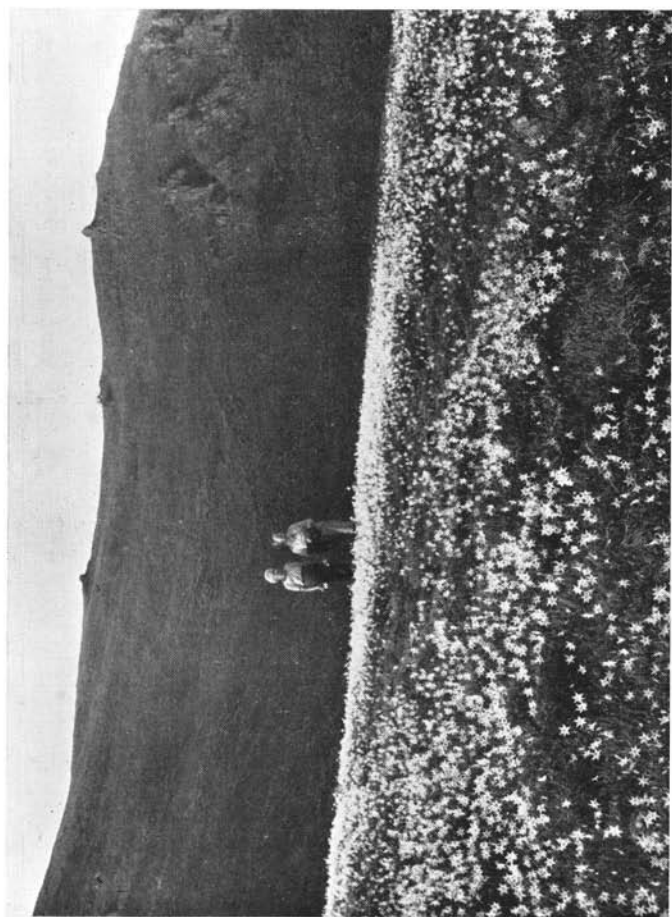


Photo.—M. E. Cox.

FIG. 30.—A MEADOW OF ERYTHRONIUMS NEAR HURRICANE HILL. (See page 227).



FIG. 31—CLEMATIS ALPINA. (See page_242).

Photo.—D. Wilkie.



FIG. 32—CASSIOPE WARDII. (See page_257).

Photo.—H. Tod.



FIG. 33—RHODODENDRON ELIZABETH. (See page 258). *Photo.—H. Tod.*



FIG. 34—ERINACEA ANTHYLLIS. (See page 259). *Photo.—H. Tod.*

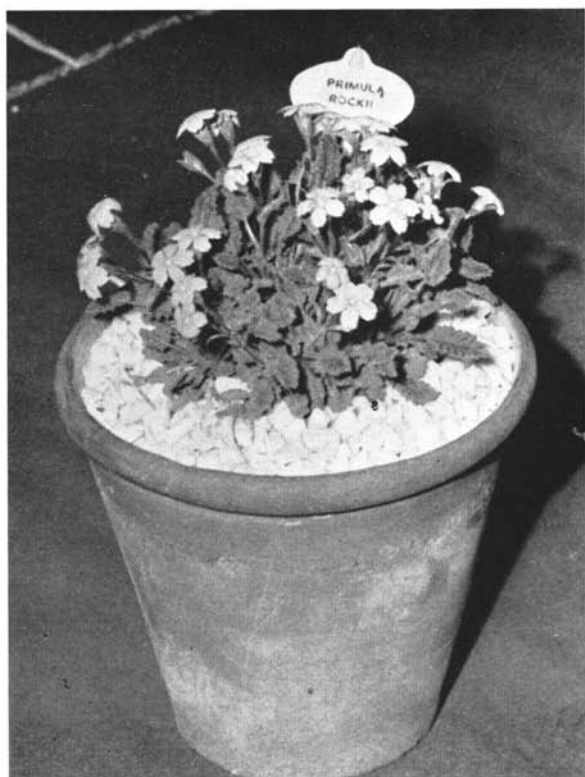


FIG. 35—PRIMULA ROCKII. (See page 257).

Photo.—H. Tod.

found possible to arrange that the A.G.S. should be represented at our Council Meetings by a member of their Committee, and we at their Committee Meetings by a member of our Council, without cost to either body. We have thus been able to continue, or even improve, the liaison which has in recent years grown up between the two bodies. Mr. Bradfer Lawrence has represented the A.G.S., and Mrs. McConnell the S.R.G.C. We are grateful to them.

Four Club Shows, one Club Exhibition and two County Shows were held during the year.

At Dumfries, under the guidance of Mr. Forbes, our new Show Secretary, a most successful Show was held in April, both the quantity and quality of exhibits shewing a marked improvement over 1952.

At Edinburgh, later in the month, with Dr. Henry Tod once more acting as Show Secretary, a very successful Rhododendron Show organised in conjunction with the Gardens Committee of the National Trust for Scotland was included for the first time. In the Rock Garden plant classes the number of plants staged fell considerably below the numbered entered owing to the peculiar weather which prevailed just before the Show. The quality was, however, well maintained. This, I regret to say, was the last occasion on which Dr. Henry Tod will act as Show Secretary. It has been in large measure due to him that Edinburgh Shows have been so successful and we offer him our grateful thanks. He is being succeeded by General Murray-Lyon.

At Perth on 30th April and 1st May Miss Oonah Anderson once again had a very good Show, many plants being of outstanding quality. It was a pity that the Novice classes were so badly supported. If only novices would realise that their plants are as good as those of other people and not be so shy about showing, our benches would be better filled.

At Glasgow early in May Mr. Darling once more staged a really good Show. Here again some 20 classes for cut rhododendrons proved an added attraction. The Rock Garden plants were well up to standard. The financial difficulties attending the organisation of a Show in Glasgow are exceptional, and Mr. Darling and his Committee are to be congratulated on the financial result, due largely to their hard work prior to the Show.

At Aberdeen, owing to a clash of dates, it proved impossible to hold a Show, but on 17th April an Exhibition was arranged under Colonel Mitchell's guidance at which many interesting plants were on view, including some from Nurserymen in England. It is hoped in 1954 to hold a full Show.

The East Lothian County Show in September 1952 shewed how great was the interest of local members in the Club. It was a pity that the open classes were not better supported by members outside the county.

The Fife County Show at Dunfermline in June was an unqualified success. The school children's classes were again an outstanding

feature. The Carnegie Trust, which gave help, and other donors of trophies are due our thanks.

All our Show Secretaries and their Committees are deserving of much gratitude, as are those members who acted as Judges at our Shows.

It is hoped that next year it will be possible to continue to show rhododendrons as cut plants at our Edinburgh and Glasgow Shows, and discussions with the Gardens Committee of the National Trust for Scotland have been taking place with this end in view. After all, rhododendrons are pre-eminently plants of the mountains—even if it does take a very large rock garden to include a '*Sino grande*'!

At the Highland Show we again had a stand in the Flower Show which was very much admired, and which produced 48 new members. Of plants submitted to the Joint Committee of the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society and the Rock Garden Club during the year, two obtained Awards of Merit and two, Cultural Commendations.

Our thanks are due to those members who opened their gardens during the year and to those who lectured on various occasions.

In conclusion, may I be allowed to say that each year I feel that the Club is more and more justifying its name "Club." It is a **Club** designed to bring its members together and to help beginners in their efforts to grow rock garden plants. It is **NOT** a Society for experts only. If beginners would care to make more use of our Information Service the Hon. Secretary will be only too glad to answer their queries or to put them in touch with someone who can.

JAMES C. DUNDAS,
August 1953.

SEED DISTRIBUTION, 1953-54

MAY I once again appeal for seed for the S.R.G.C. Seed Distribution? Last year a great deal of good and valuable seed was sent in by members, and I hope we will continue to have as high a standard this year.

Seed of Alpine and allied plants, no matter in how small quantities, should be sent to the undersigned by **30th October, 1953**. Members sending in seed will have priority in the distribution of the rare seeds.

R. S. MASTERTON,
Cluny House,
Aberfeldy.

It Costs You Nothing

but it helps to pay for the *Journal*, if when ordering plants, etc., as a result of an Advert. in the *Journal* you say so.

THE SECRETARY SUGGESTS . . .

THE CLUB year begins on 1st September, but some members seem to have difficulty in remembering that their subscriptions fall due on this date. On the 1st of March last there were many subscriptions still unpaid, and reminders were sent out. Nearly all those members who responded sent me an apology for forgetfulness. May I suggest that, if you are one of those people who lead busy lives and/or have difficulty in remembering dates, you should make arrangements with your Bank to shoulder this burden for you? The Bank will probably charge you sixpence a year for this service, but you will be saved the cost of a cheque or postal order, a postage stamp and an envelope, not to mention your own time and trouble.

Some members forget that they have paid and send in their subscriptions twice over, others are now sending subscriptions for 1954, having forgotten about 1953. Banks are less likely than most of us to make mistakes of this kind.

The cost to the Club this year of sending out reminders was £6 for stationery and stamps. I have made no mention of the large amount of extra work in which I and my two helpers were involved in sending out these reminders, in dealing individually with each late subscription, and in packing up publications for them instead of having it done under contract by the printers.

Banker's Orders are inserted in the Club's Publications or may be obtained from County Representatives or from me. Should you decide to make use of this facility you will earn my gratitude and you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you are helping the Club by causing no unnecessary work. After completion, the Banker's Order form should be **SENT TO ME** and **NOT** to your Bank.

Footnote : I hope that the member who returned my March reminder with a 10/- note but no name and address will reveal his identity so that I may send his belated membership card. The postmark was Guildford, Surrey, but there is no unpaid member in that town. The only clue I have is a specimen of the member's handwriting.

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

It Helps Our Club

if, when ordering plants from an advertiser, you mention seeing
 the "Ad" in our *Journal*.

Show Reports

DUMFRIES

BEING an early season, Dumfries was fortunate in having a lot of plants in bloom at the time of the Show, which resulted in a large entry of over 400 exhibits, many being shown in perfect condition.

The Show was opened by Mrs. W. Duncan, Newlands, Dumfries, herself a noted exhibitor. There was a large attendance at the opening but the "gate" on both days was below that of the previous year.

A vote of thanks was proposed by Lieut.-Colonel Dundas.

Mrs. Duncan presented the George Forrest Medal to Mrs. Ruth McConnel, Knockdolian, Girvan, for her pan of *Cassiope rigida*, and the Club's Bronze Medal to Huntingdon Horticultural Centre, per Mr. R. Forbes, for the most points in Section II.

Special prizes presented by the Misses Young, Rockcliffe, for the best hardwood and softwood plants were won by Mrs. McConnel and Mr. Reid, Edinburgh, respectively, who showed *Cassiope rigida* and *Primula Rockii*, both in excellent condition.

The special prize presented by Mrs. McLellan for the best cactus or succulent in Section II was won by Mrs. W. Duncan, Newlands.

The trade was well represented by several stands on which many fine alpiners and bulbous plants were on view.

Messrs. Bannatyne & Jackson, Hamilton, were awarded a Large Gold Medal for their stand of a built-up Rock Garden containing many fine dwarf shrubs. Rhododendrons in bloom gave colour, with Magnolias and Heaths as a background and many fine primulas, *Gentiana verna*, *Tulipa* species and miniature *Narcissi* in the foreground, all set off in Westmorland rock.

The Gold Medal exhibit of Messrs. Longmuir & Adamson, Dumfries, contained excellent shrubs, alpiners and bulbs in bloom. The shrubs, *Forsythia intermedia* "Lynwood," *Corylopsis pauciflora*, *Clematis Spooneri rosea* and *Cassiope lycopodiodes*, were all very fine. Also on view were *Lilium rubellum*, bordered with double primroses, and many fine primulas, *P. irregularis*, *P. helvetica alba*, *P. Boothii*, and *P. aureata*, all in excellent condition, *Phlox Blue Ridge*, and the scarce *Anemone Pulsatilla Mrs. Van der Elst* (pink).

Messrs. Harper & Son, Stranraer, again provided a large display of *Narcissi* and bulbous plants which gained a Large Gold Medal award. This was one of the most colourful exhibits in the Show. Many new and rare trumpet *Narcissi* were on view, also large and small cupped varieties, species tulips and miniature *Narcissi* and bulbs suitable for the rock garden.

Edrom Nurseries, Berwickshire, gave a display of dwarf Rhododendrons, miniature bulbs, Polyanthus and double primroses. Many Primulas, including *P. gracilipes*, *P. Malvern*, *P. bhutanica* and *P. sinopurpurea alba* were also on view.

Lavex Products, West Calder, showed spring bulbs and polyanthus grown in their potting composts, all of a high standard.

Floral Handicraft, London, showed colourful flower brooches suitable for ladies' wear.

Mrs. McLellan, Rockcliffe, got a Certificate of Merit for a very fine display of forty pots and pans of Cacti and succulent plants, many of which were in flower, and much admired.

The large table of specimen pots and pans of alpines displayed by the Crichton Royal Institution also received a Certificate of Merit. The collection contained many seldom-seen specimens. Pans of *Meconopsis integrifolia* were very fine, *Haberleas* and *Lewisias* by the dozen, *Sanguinaria* and *Fritillaria* and miniature bulbs. *Androsace imbricata* and *Draba mollissima*, smothered with bloom, and many fine Primulas such as *Pp. Edgworthii*, *bhutanica* and *frondosa*.

Section III contained eight entries. A pan, in flower, of *Briggsia L.S.* 19266 aroused much interest.

In pot plant and cut flower exhibits there were some extra fine pots of *Amaryllis*, *Azalea* and *Lachenalias* on view.

Competition was keen in the Children's sections.

Judges of Alpines were : Miss Logan Home, and Messrs. Wall and Marchbank ; in the cut flower section : Messrs. Bane and Milligan, Dumfries.

The Secretary thanks all exhibitors and members who helped to make the Show a success.

L. F.

EDINBURGH

THE 1953 Edinburgh Show was again held in the Music Hall and Assembly Rooms, George Street, on April 14-16, 1953. A new feature was the Scottish Rhododendron Show which was held in conjunction with the Gardens Committee of the National Trust for Scotland.

The Opening Ceremony was performed at 2 p.m. by the Earl of Stair, who deputised for the Countess of Stair, since she was unable to be present. After declaring the Show opened, Lord Stair presented the Club's Trophies and Medals, and then as he had himself won the Stirling Maxwell Cup for the highest aggregate of points in the Rhododendron Show, was in turn presented with the Cup by Mr. Cox.

The Corsar Trophy, the Carnethy Medal and the Forrest Medal were all won by Mr. A. D. Reid of Oxbgangs Road, Fairmilehead, Edinburgh, with two very fine groups of plants. The "six" for the Corsar Trophy were *Primula rockii* (see Fig. 35), (which also gained the Forrest Medal), *Primula aureata*, *Cassiope selaginoides*, *Corydalis cashmeriana*, *Androsace imbricata* and *A. x pubescens*. His "three" for the Carnethy Medal were a magnificent pan of *Pleione formosana*, *Rhododendron imperator*, also in exceptional flourish, and the *Primula aureata* seedling first shown last year. Mr. R. B. Cooke, the runner-up, had a really wonderful plant of *Cassiope wardii* (see Fig. 32) which was

so close for the Forrest Medal that it took the Judges a very long time to decide between them, and the Cassiope was awarded a Certificate of Merit. Another notable plant in Class 2 was *Wulfenia orientalis*, shown by Mrs. Peel of Eaglescairn, Haddington. In the class for one pan of "new, rare or difficult" plants Mr. Reid had a pan of the very uncommon *Primula flagellaris*; while Mrs. Bell of Bolton Muir, Gifford, gained the second prize with a beautifully-flowered pan of *Omphalogramma vincaeflora*.

Mrs. Peel won the Henry Archibald Rose Bowl for three pans of easy plants grown in the open. Her three were just the type of plant for which this class was designed; *Erica darleyensis*, *Primula* 'Frank Neave' and *Armeria caespitosa*, all easy and tough plants that anyone can grow.

Other plants of note were a very fine pan of *Primula scotica* shown in the "native" class by Dr. Davidson of West Linton, and Mr. Reid's *Dionysia curviflora* which, a few weeks earlier, had over forty flowers on it, but by the date of the Show was past and had to be entered as a cushion plant.

Dr. Hannay of Edinburgh showed a remarkable pan of *Androsace x halleri-laggeri*, which was very nearly disqualified in the class for *Androsace*, for it was flowering so freely that it was at first mistaken for an *Armeria* in full bloom.

This year the entries in the bulb classes were much better than last year; the *Lewisias* were weak, however, and the *Rhododendrons* moderately good; the classes for *Ericaceae* were better this year, due largely to the good quality of the *Cassiope*s shown. There was one really outstanding entry in the class for *Rhododendrons* in Section II. This was the new hybrid Elizabeth (*Rh. forrestii x Rh. griersonianum*) (see Fig. 33), a plant in perfect condition and completely covered with its scarlet flowers.

In this Section (II) the Club's Bronze Medal was won by Mr. W. R. M. Adams with a number of very good plants which gained the maximum number of points, and it was a particularly good effort as it was the first time he had competed.

In Section IV the entries in the *Auricula* classes were extremely good, as were also both the double and single primroses, two classes which are happily returning to popularity after something of an eclipse which always seemed a great pity as they were such good plants and so well worth growing. The writer has always regretted the dropping of the "six pans of polyanthus" class when six-pan classes were barred except for Trophies, and the three pan and single pan classes which were retained (with difficulty) have been waning recently as the primrose classes did earlier, but it is to be hoped that they, too, will stage a come-back, especially as such fine colours are now freely available both as seed and as plants.

The *Narcissus* Classes were good, with more entries than in previous years. The Gold Medal for twelve vases of *Narcissi* was won by Mr. Bell of Bolton Muir, Gifford.

Incidentally, it would be most useful if some completely authoritative information were made available, preferably in the *Journal*, as to which named Narcissi and Tulips are varieties of species and which are hybrids, as a number of otherwise fine plants have had to be disqualified in the competitive classes as not being species. One of the most controversial is Narcissus W. P. Milner, for no-one seems to be quite definite as to whether it is a hybrid or a variety of, perhaps, *N. minor*.

Most of the unevennesses in the classes mentioned above were due to the very odd season. About three weeks before the Show everything was about six weeks early, and then a sudden cold snap, followed by fairly continuous cold weather, checked all growth, so that, while all the earlier plants were long past, the next plants were not yet out. As a result many gardens had a complete blank as regards flowers (the writer had literally *one* plant flowering at Show time) and in some cases all entries except the like of foliage plants and sempervivums had to be cancelled.

The standard of the competitive exhibits was as high as in previous years, and the number of exhibits was about twenty higher than in 1952. The actual number of entries was much less than last year, but the number of cancellations was less also, which was rather surprising when one considers the abnormal season and the fact that, as mentioned above, there were several block cancellations of entries. The number of competitors was 36, a decrease of 10 on last year.

The exhibits put up by the Trade were, odd season or not, well up to standard and, as usual, were the centre of great interest. Large Gold Medals were awarded to Messrs. Bannatyne & Jackson Ltd. of Hamilton (built-up rock garden), Jack Drake (rock plants in pans), and Messrs. Thomas Harper & Son Ltd. of Stranraer (floral display). Gold Medals were awarded to the Edrom Nurseries (built-up rock garden), the National Cactus and Succulent Society (plants in pans), and Messrs. Dobbie & Co. Ltd. (floral display).

Messrs. Bannatyne & Jackson Ltd, had an exhibit of rock plants with a striking background of magnolias and other shrubs in flower, which included the uncommon *Fabiana* and *Fothergilla*. The plants they showed included *Phyllodoce drummondii* and *Townsendia exscapa*, and a really wonderful specimen, covered in flowers, of that rather difficult plant *Erinacea anthyllis* (see Fig. 34), the Hedgehog Broom, which most of us know as *Erinacea pungens*.

We were glad to welcome two newcomers to the Show in Mr. Fred Jeffrey of Barnton, who showed flowering and foliage shrubs and dwarf conifers, and the Newstead Nurseries of Duns, who had a colourful stand of primulas, rock plants, polyanthus, and species tulips, backed by azaleas and rhododendrons, the latter including *Rh. canadense*, a pleasant little deciduous shrub which, for some reason, is very seldom showed or even advertised.

Shrubs were also exhibited by Messrs. Young & Thomson of Edinburgh, notably the flowering cherry *Hizakura*, surrounded by aubrietia, saxifrages, anemones and gentians. They, too, showed a fine shrub which is only too seldom seen, *Daphne blagayana*, which will form a cartwheel of entirely prostrate shoots, each tipped with a cluster of sweetly-scented white flowers over a long period in very early spring.

The Edrom Nurseries again showed a fine strain of Polyanthus on an island stand near their other exhibit. This latter had a background of Rhododendrons, notably some good plants of "Christmas Cheer" and *Rh. ledoides*. In front of these were dwarf bulbs, mostly species tulips and narcissi, and some good clumps of double white primroses and of *Primula sinopurpurea*.

Mrs. Laing of Hawick had a good range of coloured primroses and polyanthus, as well as a number of good saxifrages and dwarf bulbs, while Jack Drake of Inschriach, Aviemore, had a fine display of primulas, androsace and anemones, particularly *A. vernalis* and some good varieties of *A. pulsatilla*. In the line of dwarf shrubs there were cassiopes and phyllodoce, and the most notable primulas were *PP. atrodentata* and *jonardunii*.

This year we had only two floral displays, from Messrs. Thomas Harper & Son Ltd., and Messrs. Dobbie & Co. Ltd. Both these firms put up fine displays of narcissi, Messrs. Harper & Son including a good range of dwarf narcissus species and hybrids suitable for the rock garden.

The Lavex Company showed their range of Sesame Compounds which can be added to loam to give composts of the John Innes type, and also peat and sand. Their stand was decorated with very fine tulips—surely an excellent testimonial to their wares!

Messrs. Melvin Bros. displayed grass cutters from the sizes suitable for the small garden, through a range of types for all needs up to the big machines needed for wide lawns and rough-cut grass in parks. Their exhibits of equipment for mechanisation in the garden are always interesting and show how hours can be saved by the use of suitable machines.

Lastly, we had two more newcomers whom we were glad to welcome. They were Floral Handicrafts of London, who had floral perfumes and floral brooches and ornaments for us to see, and the London Engineering Co., who had most ingenious garden chairs of the deck-chair type to demonstrate. These, by means of a series of hinges and joints, were self-adjusting and represented an entirely new idea in garden furniture.

We were sorry that Messrs. Dobbie & Co. Ltd. were not able to take up their usual sundries stand, for in the past they have let us see all those little odds and ends that one needs and always forgets to buy when in a shop.

The usual programme of lectures and demonstrations was followed. On Tuesday evening Mr. J. L. Mowat of the St. Andrews University Botanic Garden gave us a talk on the Rock Gardens and some of the

plants in them which are in his care. This talk was illustrated by coloured lantern slides. On Wednesday afternoon Mrs. K. S. Hall gave us a talk on her rock garden and its plants, showing what can be done in a suburban garden by real enthusiasts, this talk, too, being illustrated by coloured transparencies. On Wednesday evening Mr. David Livingstone selected some plants from the Show benches and discussed them from the aspect of culture and habit, providing an amazing amount of information which members found most useful and helpful. On the three afternoons of the Show demonstrations of the construction of peat walls and methods of planting them were given by Mr. Evans of the Royal Botanic Garden, and the Show Secretary. The lectures and demonstrations were well attended and seemed to be appreciated.

The total "gate" of the Show was almost identical with that of last year, but it was noticeable that during the severe snow-storm of Wednesday morning the numbers fell a couple of hundred below last year's figures, so that if the weather had been kinder we probably would have been at least that number up on last year. The fact that we managed to equal last year's figure even with that drawback was probably due to the very generous "press" we got, especially when one considers that we had to share the newspapers with such a competitor as the Budget !!

HENRY TOD,
Hon. Show Secretary.

GLASGOW

THE McLELLAN Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, again housed the Show on Tuesday and Wednesday, 5th and 6th May, 1953. The opening ceremony was performed by Her Grace, The Duchess of Montrose. In her remarks she stressed the good work done by the Club in fostering a love for rock garden plants among all classes of the community throughout Scotland and northern England and even further afield. She also drew attention to the new section in the Show schedule for the larger types of Rhododendrons and expressed her pleasure that growers in the West had whole-heartedly supported this new venture which she hoped would become a permanent feature of future Shows.

Financially a credit balance of some £12 is shown this year. This may be deemed satisfactory until you take into consideration the fact that the local branch of the Club subscribed £55 by efforts at the meetings held during the winter, and almost £10 was donated as prize money for the Rhododendron section. It has become evident in past years that without these special efforts a Show in Glasgow cannot be run without incurring a loss. The rent of the Galleries before the war was £14 2s 6d. It is now £65 2s 6d. Hire of tables has increased by fifty per cent, and the tendency all round is for further increases. This year, despite all efforts to advertise the Show, the

sum taken at the door was fully £30 less than last year. A census was kept on the first day of the Show of members who were admitted free of charge and showed that close on four hundred members availed themselves of the privilege. New members enrolled numbered thirty-two.

The total number of entries for the various classes was close on four hundred, which is more or less the same as last year if we make allowance for the entries in the Rhododendron section. In Section I competition was strong in most Classes and exhibits were well grown and staged. Entries in Section II were most disappointing. Seventy-five per cent of our members are qualified to compete in this section, but a mere handful availed themselves of the opportunity. How can we overcome this reluctance to stage an exhibit or two ?

The George Forrest Medal for the best plant in the Show was won by Messrs. Bannatyne & Jackson Ltd., Hamilton, with *Syringa microphylla*. The Buchanan Memorial Rose Bowl was again won by Mr. R. S. Masterton, Cluny House, Aberfeldy, with the following six plants : *Meconopsis Sherriffii*, *Rhododendron fastigiatum*, *Androsace cylindrica*, *A. hirtella*, *Phyllodoce empetriformis*, *Omphalogramma vincaeflora* and *Primula strumosa*. Mr. A. D. Reid was second with good plants of *Syringa palabiniiana microphylla*, *Rhodohypoxis platy-petala*, *Primula forrestii* and *P. redolens*. Mr. A. D. Reid was successful in winning the Henry Archibald Challenge Rose Bowl with *Saxifraga cebenensis*, *Gentiana verna* and *Rhododendron radicans*. Mr. J. Taggart, Helensburgh, was second with *Andromeda polifolia compacta*, *Lithospermum oleifolium* and *Veronica bombycina*. Mr. R. S. Masterton was third with *Omphalogramma Delavayi*, *Cassiope Wardii* and *Androsace hirtella*, three choice and well grown plants. Mrs. McConnel, Colmonell, was successful in the class for three new, rare or difficult plants with a *Jonquil* species from the Balkans, *Vaccinium sp. L. and S.* 21260 and *Alyssum sp.* In addition she scored in Class 18 with nice plants of *Ranunculus gramineus* and *R. amplexicaulis*, and in Class 27 with *Gentiana verna angulosa* and *G. pyrenaica*, a rare and difficult plant, well budded and which would be in good flower a week later. Mr. A. D. Reid, among his other successes, had a very fine plant of *Dionysia curviflorum* in Class 9, and in the same class Mrs. Jamieson was second with a well grown cushion of *Draba Sundermanii*. There was a very poor display in the classes for saxifrages, the only plant of note was *Saxifraga pasumensis* shown by Mr. Reid. One of the outstanding exhibits of the Show was three pans of *Rhodohypoxis* staged by Mrs. Garnett Botfield of Wolverhampton. For this exhibit, in addition to winning First Prize, she also received a Certificate of Merit. The President, Lieut.-Colonel Dundas, was successful in Class 34 with *Lithospermum oleifolium*.

Other prize winners were Mrs. Boyd Harvey, Mr. Biggart of Kilmacolm, Mr. J. Taggart of Helensburgh, Mrs. D. Tweedie of Dirleton, Mr. W. Gilchrist of Carluke, Mr. J. Collee of Bo'ness, Dr. Gibson of

Milngavie, Mr. A. Todd of Bearsden, Mrs. Hiddleston of Whitecraigs, and Mr. E. Darling of Port Glasgow.

A Certificate of Merit was well earned by Mr. W. Urie, Turnberry, who in the non-competitive class staged some forty pans of well grown rock plants, notable among which were *Globularia bellidifolia* (Horts. variety), *Lewisia cotyledon hybrid*, *Helichrysum virgineum*, *Paronychia nivea*, *Tiarella Wherryii* and *Daphne retusa*.

An added attraction to this year's Show was provided by Major George Sherriff, O.B.E., of Kirriemuir, who kindly loaned some four dozen of his photographs of the rare alpinists he had come across in his plant hunting expeditions in Tibet and Nepal.

In Section II Mrs. David Fraser of Cove won the Bronze Medal for most points, and Miss P. S. Allan of Milngavie was a good second. The entries for Section III (not for competition) showed a marked increase this year and many of the rarer alpinists were seen here.

This year at the request of certain members in the West there was added to the schedule a section for the larger Rhododendrons. This consisted of twenty classes and entries were received for each class. In some classes there were as many as eight entries. The Duchess of Montrose won most first prizes. Other successful exhibitors were Sir John Stirling Maxwell of Pollok, Mr. J. F. A. Gibson, Glenarn, Rhu, Mr. G. H. Christie of Ross Priory, and Mrs. J. Hally Brown of Skelmorlie. Mr. H. H. Davidian of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, who was one of the judges, has undertaken to give a more detailed account of this new venture.

As in previous years the stands of nurserymen, etc., played a prominent part in the success of the Show. This year the Daisy Hill Nurseries, Newry, Northern Ireland, intimated on the day before the Show that they were unable to exhibit this year. Their stands in past years have always been admired and patronised by the people in the West, and it is the earnest hope of us all that next year we shall again be favoured by this firm. Messrs. Jackson & Son, West George Street, Glasgow, as in former years, had a most select and comprehensive collection of books on every aspect of horticulture from Farrer's "English Rock Garden" to a proof copy of "Alpines Without a Garden," by Lawrence D. Hills, a book which must have a great appeal to the majority of members of the S.R.G.C.

Mr. Jack Drake, Aviemore, is in a class by himself as far as the culture of Alpines in pans is concerned. His stand never fails to evoke admiration, often tinged with wonder and a trace of envy, at the skill and patience he possesses to stage so many rare and precious Alpines. By his displays at the various Shows he has done much to improve the exhibits on the Show bench, and for this the Club is much indebted to him. A fourteen-inch pan of *Cassiope lycopodioides* excited general admiration. There was an unusually large selection of *Androsaces* in excellent condition, including *A. hirtella*, *cylindrica* and *imbricata*; and *Primulas* in many varieties, including *P. eburnea*,

rotundifolia, *cawdoriana* and the Garryarde family. *Meconopsis primulina*, *M. integrifolia*, *Omphalogramma vincaeflora* and *Corydalis cashmeriana* were amongst other outstanding exhibits.

Messrs. Bannatyne & Jackson, Hamilton, were successful this year in winning the Large Gold Medal for their display and in addition gained the George Forrest Medal for the most meritorious plant in the Show with *Syringa microphylla*. The background consisted mostly of flowering shrubs, the taller *Rhododendrons*, *Acer dissectum purpureum*, *Cytisus* in variety and many of the *Azaleas*. Rock plants, various and profuse, were skilfully built into the stand, among them being well-grown plants of *Primula aureata*, *Juliae* x "Crimson Queen," the scarce *Sedum Purdomii*, *Daphne collina* and *Cassiope fastigata*.

The Lavex Company of West Calder, Midlothian, are specialists in composts and compost materials. They rightly emphasise the importance of texture in the open border as well as in the glasshouse and cold frame. They had on their stand a display of plants showing how easy it is for the amateur to make satisfactory composts with ordinary soil. They have a soft fibrous peat and a clean coarse sand which blend to produce a perfect soil texture. Altogether, this firm maintains a most useful service for both professional and private gardeners.

Messrs. William B. Boyd, The Nurseries, Barrhead, were again successful in winning a Gold Medal with a stand skilfully planted with a great diversity of flowering shrubs and rock plants, featuring especially the dwarf roses which can now be obtained in many varieties, e.g. Perle de Montserrat, Little Princess, Jos. Wheatcroft, Bo Peep and Perle D'Alcanda. Drifts of one variety were most effective, and these included many of the new varieties of *Rhodohypoxis*, *Phlox Blue Ridge*, and a most comprehensive collection of European Primulas and their hybrids.

Messrs. Harper & Son, Stranraer, had as usual one of the most outstanding displays in the Show, which earned them another Gold Medal. This year, owing to the late date of the Show, their stand was made up mainly of the late flowering varieties of *Narcissus*. Especially noteworthy were *Fermoy*—a huge orange and white; *Blarney*—with a pure white perianth and tangerine orange centre; *Mary Copland*—semi-double, red and white; *Portrush*—white perianth, with white centre and deep green eye; *Rosy Sunrise*—creamy white petals with salmon pink trumpets; *Shirley Temple*—double white; *Aleppo*—brilliant red and white, small cup; and *Lord Nelson*—with large tall flowering yellow trumpets.

The Castlehill Nurseries (Miss Guthrie Smith), Helensburgh, were again prominent with a very original and artistic exhibit which was much admired. A perfect lawn was backed by a stone wall which had *Azaleas* in many bright colours along the top of it and a bright array of *Auriculas* and *Bellis Rob Roy* at the foot. The lawn sloped gently down to a clear limpid pool beside a miniature chestnut tree.

Other plants included the dwarf Rhododendrons *R. keleticum*, *R. glaucum* and *R. violaceum*.

The Kennishead Nurseries (D. A. Wintersgill), Thornliebank, always have a most attractive stand. They specialise in shrubs suitable for rock gardens and for general garden purposes, and one could not but admire well grown specimens of *Malus Hillierii* and *Viburnum Carlesii* and the Japanese Azaleas *White Princess* and its beautiful contrasting *Esmerald*.

The stand of Edrom Nurseries (Misses Logan Home), Coldingham, Berwickshire, had a background of flowering shrubs and Rhododendrons interspersed with a variety of Primulas including the Garryarde group, *P. ioessa* and *P. obtusifolia*. There were also some well grown plants of *Meconopsis integrifolia* and *Fritillaria meleagris*. In addition to the stand there was a separate collection of large flowered *Polyanthus* in many colours.

Messrs. Dobbie & Sons, Edinburgh and Glasgow, staged a magnificent collection of Tulips which caught the eye as one entered the Galleries. Among the Darwin group the following were outstanding: *Aristocrat*—lilac and large flowered; *Reine Claude*—a good purple that holds its colour; *Royal Flush*—bright crimson with strong stems; and *Sarawak*—a golden yellow of good substance. Among the Cottage Tulips were *George Grappe*—deep mauve with large flowers on strong stems; *Gay Hussar*—bright terra-cotta, a good type for cutting; and *Rosy Wings*—deep china pink, quite a new shade.

In the Triumph class *Gertrude Pfitzer*—a bright scarlet with strong stems, and *Climax*—mauve in colour, caught the eye. Among the newer introductions of Lily flowered tulips *Maytime*—rosy lilac, calls for special mention and is really an outstanding variety, and *Alladin*—bright orange-scarlet, attracted much attention. A Gold Medal was awarded for this display.

Two years ago, when Mr. Taylor resigned the Secretaryship, the present Secretary took over temporarily. He finds the work rather too much for him, and would be pleased to hand over his duties to a younger member living in the Glasgow area, who can be assured of loyal support from a hard working committee. This opportunity is taken of thanking Mr. George F. Laurie, Hon. Show Secretary for many years before the war, for his able assistance in organising the actual Show and in clerical preparations beforehand.

EDWARD DARLING,
Hon. Show Secretary (pro. tem.)

PERTH

ENTRIES for the Show on 30th April and 1st May were much higher than usual, but bitter weather during the last two weeks of April reduced the actual entries to normal numbers. The standard generally was very high, but some otherwise excellent exhibits suffered from inadequate grooming. As in previous years, the Show was most

capably organised by Miss Oonah Anderson and her Committee, to whom congratulations on its success and the Club's thanks for all their hard work are due.

At the well-attended opening ceremony the President of the Club in introducing Muriel, The Lady Forteviot, who opened the Show, remarked how appropriate it was that the Show should be opened by a keen rock gardener. He announced that the Club's membership had increased by 300 during the past year. He was very pleased to note many new exhibitors, but regretted the comparatively few exhibits in the novices' section. He reminded them of the "Second Day Competition" experiment to be tried on the following day, and appealed to novices present to support it. Lady Forteviot paid tribute to the indomitable plant hunters who, by their hazardous and difficult expeditions, so richly enhance our gardens, and to the assiduous attention given to their introduction by members of the Club to ensure their establishment in cultivation.

The George Forrest Memorial Medal for the Best Plant in the Show was won by Major Walmsley with a very fine plant of *Kalmiopsis Leachiana* exhibited in Class 41. Its companion in this two-pan Class was an outstandingly good specimen of *Andromeda polifolia compacta* of a deeper pink than is usually seen.

The three pan class for the Dundas Quaich attracted several fine exhibits. The Quaich was won by Major and Mrs. W. G. Knox Finlay with *Primula Tsariensis*, *Corydalis cashmeriana* and *Cassiope tetragona*, all in splendid condition. Other notable exhibits included a strikingly floriferous *Cassiope lycopodioides* and *Androsace imbricata* in full flower and excellent condition, shown by Mr. R. S. Masterton, *Anemone obtusiboba patula*, shown by Mr. H. Archibald, and *Cassiope selaginoides*, shown by Mr. J. C. Weir. The class for rare, new or difficult plants was won by Mr. Masterton with a comparatively young plant of the difficult *Cassiope Wardii* on which all the older growth was well flowered. *Viola yakusimani* in bud and *Primula petiolaris* were also shown.

The classes for plants native to Scotland attracted better support this year and amongst the prize-winners was the delightful *Primula scotica*. A fine specimen of *Helichrysum virgineum* shown by Mr. Archibald won the silver foliage class. The neat *H. frigidum* was also shown. In the saxifrages noteworthy exhibits included *S. pasumensis* *S. caliciflora* and *S. Grisebachi-Wisley variety*

Major and Mrs. Knox Finlay's exhibits in the three pan Asiatic primula class were outstanding, well-flowered specimens of *P. Reidii*, *P. Wigramiana* and *P. umbratilis*. Mrs. Crewdson showed *P. muscarioides*, *P. Wigramiana* and *P. Cawdoriana*. It was surprising to find *P. Viali* and *P. nutans* on show so early. The single pan class was won by Major Walmsley with *P. eburnea* and other exhibits included *P. bellidifolia* and *P. Buryana*. The first prize in the European or American section was awarded to General Murray-Lyon for a very

well flowered *P. viscosa alba*. Noteworthy also were *P. pubescens Rufus* and *P. frondosa*.

The Androsace classes attracted very good entries, including several of *A. imbricata*. Mr. and Mrs. Renton showed a most attractive pink species with a carmine eye, resembling a very neat *A. macrophylla*, still under Major Sherriff's collecting number. *Paraquilegia anemonoides* was exhibited in Class 18. In the classes for bulbs, corms or tubers *Tulbaghia acutiloba* was shown and we again saw *Corydalis cashmeriana*. In the composites were a well flowered plant of *Erigeron aureus* and *Helichrysum orientale*. The gentians were another striking feature. General Murray-Lyon exhibited a fine plant of *G. verna angulosa*. Also very good was *G. dinarica*.

In the well-supported classes for dwarf shrubs the standard was exceptionally good. Mr. Archibald was very successful, gaining first prize for dwarf rhododendrons with *R. impeditum* and in both classes for dwarf conifers. Outstanding plants seen included *Arctericia nana*, *Leiophyllum buxifolium*, *Veronica tetrasticha*, *Rhododendron imperator*, *Vaccinium nummularia*, *Cytisus Ardoinii*, *Daphne rupestris* and *Salix reticulata*; *Erinacea anthyllis* was also shown, but there are forms of a better blue. In the novices' section for dwarf rhododendrons a good specimen of *R. racemosum* (*Rock's form*) was shown. Of the entries in Section 2, the most outstanding plant was probably the excellent *Schizocodon soldanelloides* shown by Mrs. Dalziell.

Once again in Section 3 for non-competitive exhibits, we had the pleasure of seeing meticulous paintings of flowers by Captain Paul Furse, R.N., who was awarded a certificate of merit. His subjects included species of crocuses, fritillarias, anemones, aquilegias, tulips and codonopsis. Plants shown in this Section included *Meconopsis Sherriffii*, *Rhododendron fastigiatum* and an interesting collection of primulas. An unusual feature was two tanks of fish, one tropical and one temperate, shown by the Perth and District Aquarists' and Pond-keepers' Club.

In Section 4 entries were few, but special mention is deserved of the very fine double white primula shown by Major and Mrs. Knox Finlay, Polyanthus Garryarde Guinivere shown by Colonel Dundas, and Mr. Moon's exhibits of Narcissi.

For his trade stand Mr. James R. Aitken, Barnhill, Perth, won a Large Gold Medal for an attractively built Rock Garden containing a very good specimen of *Rhododendron racemosum*, *Schizocodon macrophylla*, *Trillium grandiflorum*, *Cassiope tetragona*, *Gentiana verna* and *Acer dissectum purpureum*.

Thomas Harper & Son Ltd., Stranraer, won a Large Gold Medal for a stand of beautifully staged narcissi. Of the many excellent varieties shown, special mention might be made of Chinese White and two robust strong-stemmed varieties, Limerick and Duke of Windsor, which both stand up well to the sun and garden conditions.

Edrom Nurseries, Coldingham, won a Gold Medal for a built up Rock Garden containing several fine plants of *Primula Reidii* with *P. gracilipes*, *P. chionantha* and *P. algida*, and a very black self show auricula, "Craig Dhu."

Lauries of Dundee showed a large flowered polyanthus seedling, "Ninewells Glory," with azaleas and dwarf conifers. The Lavex Manufacturing Co., West Calder, Midlothian, exhibited various composts, really sharp horticultural sand, and an inexpensive electrical soil heater for frames. "Floral Handicrafts" from Cornwall offered charming "3D" floral brooches hand-carved and hand-painted in perspex.

The Perthshire County Librarian deserves praise for providing a large selection of books of the widest horticultural interest.

There were no exhibits for the "Second Day Competition."

A good steady attendance throughout both days ensured the financial success of the Show and thirty new members were enrolled.

R. G. D.

DUNFERMLINE

ONCE AGAIN the Music Pavilion, kindly lent by the Carnegie Dunfermline Trust, made a delightful setting for the Fife County Show, held on Friday and Saturday, 12th and 13th June 1953. The number of exhibits was some eighty more than last year and the whole Show, in spite of the season, was extremely colourful.

Our President, Lt.-Colonel J. C. Dundas, D.S.O., D.L., introduced Mr. W. S. Johnston, President of the Institute of Quarrying, who, after a short speech, declared the Show open.

In all, only six classes were unrepresented but, as these included Androsaces and the Ericaceae, the absence of some at least may be attributed to the poor season. A few classes had but one or two entries, but on the whole competition was good.

The Institute of Quarrying Quaich for the highest aggregate of points in the Fife Section was won by Mr. C. J. Halley. One might point out that Mr. Halley was also exhibiting in the "novice" section.

The Carnegie Dunfermline Trust Trophy for the open section was won by Mrs. W. Bell, who scored the highest aggregate of points in Section 3. The Mrs. W. B. Robertson Cup for three pans of rock plants of distinct genera, in Section 3, was won by Mrs. L. C. Boyd-Harvey, who showed *Delphinium nudicaule*, *Dianthus haematocalyx* var. *alpinus* and *Globularia cordifolia*. The six entries in this class made one of the highlights of the Show, especially as only two out of the eighteen plants were duplicated.

The award for the best plant in Section 1 went to a very fine specimen of *Phyteuma comosum* shown by Mr. J. C. Weir, and in Section 2 to *Nomocharis Mairei*, shown by Mrs. I. W. Thomson. It is gratifying to have Devonhall exhibiting once more. In Section 3, the award was made to *Calceolaria Darwinii*, shown by Mr. A. D. Reid. This outstanding plant was adjudged the best in Sections 1, 2 and 3, and

accordingly became the winner of a special prize donated by Mr. W. S. Johnston.

In the native classes, *Primula scotica*, as usual, attracted a great deal of admiration. *Orchis maculata* and *Armeria maritima* also showed to advantage.

Some of the more outstanding exhibits included *Campanula aucheri*, *Edrianthus pumilio*, *Allium narcissiflorum*, *Primula nutans*, *Silene Hookeri* and *Aquilegia saxemontana*. Seedlings of the latter in one of the miniature gardens were particularly dainty.

Miniature gardens were shown in all sections. Lichen-covered stones and a great variety of plants in one case drew a lot of praise.

Mention must also be made of *Convolvulus Cneorum* and a fine old *Thymus nitida* that dwarfed everything round about it.

The schools section was bigger and better this year. The mounting of the miniature gardens presented quite a problem. These fell into two categories, the ingenious, which specialised in such things as the washing on the line and the dog with its bone, and the horticultural, which ranged from a true miniature garden to floral patterns. The collections of wild flowers were not big, but in some cases showed study and painstaking effort. The paintings and coloured drawings covered more than the allotted space and if at times art and accuracy were not closely allied, the whole effect was pleasing and colourful.

The trade stands as usual proved very attractive. The Maryfield Nurseries, Leslie, and the Edrom Nurseries, Coldingham, were awarded a Large Gold Medal and Gold Medal respectively for their built-up rock gardens. Mr. Jack Drake, Inshriach Nursery, Aviemore, showed a fine collection of rock garden plants in pots for which he was awarded a Gold Medal. Other exhibitors included the Lavex Manufacturing Co., showing a range of soil composts and a fine display of Gladioli; the Fife Redstone Quarry, showing a variety of garden chips; H. T. MacPherson, Dunfermline, with a range of books on alpinism and rock gardens in particular and gardening in general. Thomas Black, Dunfermline, showed a small aquarium.

C. I. S.

REPORT ON MEMBERS' EXHIBITION HELD AT ABERDEEN

Friday, 17th April 1953

THE EXHIBITION was held in the Music Hall, Union Street, Aberdeen, and was attended by Members and others throughout the day.

The Schedule consisted of Twenty-One Classes, each of which was divided into an Open and a Novice Section, and one Class for Exhibition only. It was the Committee's hope that a number of members would show in the Novices' Sections, and in this they were considerably heartened by the response which was forthcoming; although still hoping for better support next year, the Committee are appreciative of the efforts of those members who sent in exhibits both for the Novice Classes and for the Open Classes.

Judging was carried out by Dr. Tincker, M.A., D.Sc., F.L.S., who is the Principal of the North of Scotland College of Agriculture, and the following members participated in the Prize List :

Open Classes : Mrs. Anderson, Mr. Baird, Mrs. Cozens-Hardy, Mr. Esslemont, Mrs. Gray.

Novice Classes : Mrs. Barclay Milne, Mrs. Oxford, Mrs. Sutherland.

Special Prizes were awarded for the best exhibits in the Show ; these were awarded to Mrs. Cozens-Hardy for a very attractive exhibit of *Daphne arbuscula*, to Mrs. Gray for a fine plant of *Primula elisae*, and to Mrs. Barclay Milne for two very good pans of *Gentian* entered in the Novice Class.

Entries which won prizes were : *Primula aureata* ; *Arnebia* ; *Anemone Pulsatilla* ; *Paraquilegia grandiflora* ; *Helichrysum virgineum* ; *Androsace hirtella* ; *Draba aizoides* ; *Narcissus juncifolius* ; *Rhodo. microleucum* ; *Phyllodoce empetriformis* ; etc., etc.

Exhibits in Class 22 for Exhibition only were staged by : Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. Cozens-Hardy, Mr. Esslemont, Lt.-Colonel Mitchell, Mrs. Ross, Dr. Robertson and Mrs. Gray. Cut Flowers were shown by Mrs. Barclay Milne and Mrs. Gordon Gray. A special exhibit of dwarfed Trees was on show by The Hon. Anthony Cochrane of Elgin, and the British Cactus and Succulent Society had a display of Cactus. A very fine exhibit was shown from Cruickshank Botanical Gardens, Old Aberdeen.

Trade Exhibits were on view by the following : Messrs. Edrom Nurseries of Coldingham, who have supported us for a number of years now, and from our local member who specialises in Double and Single Primroses, Mrs. McMurtrie, of Springbank Lodge, Manno-field, Aberdeen.

A new feature this year was a number of very fine plants sent in for exhibition by a number of Trade Exhibitors. The following took advantage of this means of publicising their plants and the specimens submitted were greatly admired. We are greatly indebted to these firms in England for so courageously risking their plants on the long journey, and for the care taken in packing them.

Six Hills Nursery Ltd., Stevenage.

MacPenny Nurseries, Hants.

Reginald Kaye Ltd., Carnforth.

Stuart Boothman, Maidenhead.

An exhibit of Floral Brooches, etc., was staged by Messrs. Floral Handicrafts of London.

For 1954, will members please note that the dates for the Annual Show in Aberdeen will be Thursday and Friday, 13th and 14th May. The Show will be held in the Ball Room of the Music Hall, Union Street, Aberdeen. Needless to say, it is hoped that as many members as possible will send us their exhibits, and we hope to be able to welcome some more exhibitors from amongst the members in other Counties.

W. MITCHELL (Lt.-Col.),

Hon. Show Secretary.

County Activities

ABERDEENSHIRE AND KINCARDINESHIRE

It is planned to hold a series of meetings during the winter and spring months, together with informal visits to members' gardens. Members will be notified when these arrangements are completed.

The new county representative, Dr. Hamish Robertson, 26 Gladstone Place, Aberdeen, would welcome any suggestion which would help to increase the County Activities, especially with a view to holding some meetings in a locality other than Aberdeen.

HAMISH ROBERTSON.

ANGUS

LECTURES: A Members' Night on 3rd November 1952 paved the way for a well attended series of winter meetings. These were held in University College, Dundee.

The first lecture, illustrated by slides, was given by Dr. Henry Tod, F.R.S.E. Dr. Tod is well able to explain in simple language to ordinary gardeners the scientific aspect of their work. The lecture dealt with constructional work of various kinds in a practical and authoritative manner.

The "Peat Garden" was the subject at the February meeting, also illustrated, and given by Mr. Alfred Evans, Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, an acknowledged expert on the subject. That many of our members found this of interest and value to them was evinced by the numerous practical problems put to Mr. Evans, for quite a number of members are trying a small bit of peat garden these days.

The March meeting took the form of a lecture and demonstration on "Showing and the preparation of plants for exhibition." This was given by Mr. Charles McDermott, University Botanic Gardens, St. Andrews. Here we had another expert, and proof of his ability was forthcoming in the small Members' Show which followed on 20th April.

At this little Show, with only twelve classes, there was an entry of over sixty plants. Mr. McDermott was prevented by illness from witnessing the result of his lecture, which would have given him much satisfaction. His place as judge was taken by his Chief at University Botanic Gardens, St. Andrews, in Mr. Mowat's usual able way. The members were first of all invited to take part in a judging competition and plants donated by members formed the prizes. Mr. Mowat then judged the entries, and after the tea break we had a most instructive commentary on the exhibits by Mr. Mowat, who went over the classes, giving reasons for the various placings, which was another fine lesson by example. Incidentally it brought to the notice of the many novice members the value of their exhibits for showing purposes, most of

them being of a high standard. Quite a number of these members were thus encouraged to compete at Perth Show with most satisfactory results.

As year follows year, these winter meetings are becoming more useful as the members get to know one another, and the real Club spirit is growing well. Incidentally, by various means, the expenses of running these meetings was almost completely met locally.

VISITS TO GARDENS : We had three visits, all very well attended. Owing to the growth of the membership these were confined strictly to members.

On 2nd May we went to Glendoick, Perthshire, where there was a great variety of interesting plants and, as one might expect at Mr. E. H. M. Cox's estate, Rhododendrons formed the major attraction, although in the small glen where most of these find a congenial home, a fine specimen of *Cornus Nuttallii* in full bloom almost stole the show.

On our visit to Major Sherriff's garden at Ascreavie, Kirriemuir, Angus, the interest was also varied. The biggest selection perhaps was amongst the Primulas, suitable homes being provided for a wide range of these. Rhododendrons, Heaths, Liliiums and Meconopsis were also well represented, as well as a good general collection of rock garden plants. Although a fairly new garden, it contains already a tremendous amount of interest, including many of Major Sherriff's own introductions.

Our Fife visit this year was to Lady Stewart Sandeman's garden at Kenlygreen, St. Andrews, where there is also much of general interest. The planting of fine shrubs and trees in the den was most beautiful. As usual we visited the University Botanic Gardens after tea, and although this has become an annual visit, we never fail to find our time there all too short. Fortunately these gardens are open to the public, and many of our members once introduced to them find their way back again when in St. Andrews. We are again indebted to Mr. Mowat for his co-operation, and members will find him and his staff equally helpful on a private visit.

Generally I would like to record our thanks to the speakers who have made our winter session so successful. To those members who so readily opened their gardens to our large parties and welcomed us with such hospitality, we are very much indebted. The evident pleasure and satisfaction of their visitors must show our hosts how well their great service to the Club is appreciated.

S. M.

AYRSHIRE

THE AYRSHIRE BRANCH has had an active year and the membership has risen to over a hundred. Lectures have been held regularly during the winter and the session ended in June with the Annual Business Meeting.

The first lecture was given by Dr. Dovaston, Head of the Department of Horticulture at Auchincruive, whose subject was "Starting With Alpines." He dealt with methods of cultivation, composts, sites, etc., and illustrated his remarks with his own coloured slides. Mr. Arrol Winning of the Ayr Parks Department lectured on Propagation. Those present found his practical advice of great assistance. A Brains Trust was held in January. The members of the team were Dr. Dovaston, Mr. Winning, Mr. Buchanan of Bearsden, with Mr. Hannah as Question Master.

Mr. Wall of Bannatyne & Jackson, Hamilton, chose "Preparing Plants for Show" as his subject. He demonstrated the art of preparing, cleaning, and repotting some of the interesting plants he had brought with him. A lecture on "Rock Gardening in Ayrshire" was given by Mrs. McConnell of Knockdolian. She gave advice on the best varieties of plants for the climate of the West of Scotland and suitable sites for the more rare alpines. Her talk was illustrated with coloured slides.

The group was honoured in April by a visit from Major George Sherriff, who brought the lovely coloured films of his expeditions to the Himalayas. This was a public meeting and the hall was filled to overflowing. We were most grateful to Major Sherriff for coming such a long way to give us so much pleasure.

VISITS TO GARDENS : The members were invited by the West of Scotland Agricultural College to visit the gardens at Auchencruive in April, which were at their best. Towards the end of the evening Dr. Dovaston gave a demonstration of propagation which was of great value to the members. By kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Urie members and friends visited the well-known rock garden at Northcote, Turnberry. In addition to the many rare rock plants members also appreciated the wonderful shrubs, conifers, and beautiful lawns.

Major-General and Mrs. McConnell opened their gardens to members and friends in June. The outstanding feature of the rock garden was the beds of *Rhodohypoxis* which were in full bloom and were an unforgettable sight. Members enjoyed the walled garden, herbaceous borders, shrubs and magnificent trees.

AYR CENTENARY SHOW : An exhibit staged at the Ayr Centenary Flower Show was a great success and attracted many new members. The organisers of this were Mrs. Gairdner and Mrs. Hannah. Some plants were donated by members and grateful thanks are due to the following firms :

Messrs. Gemmell Bros.
 Messrs. Oliver & Hunter.
 Messrs. Thyne.
 Messrs. Longmuir & Adamson.
 Mr. Jamieson.

The Branch is most grateful to all the lecturers who made the meetings both interesting and instructive ; to those who so kindly opened their gardens and provided tea ; and finally to the members of Committee who have worked so hard to bring the year's activities to a successful conclusion.

J. B. F.

DUNBARTON, GLASGOW AND RENFREWSHIRE

AS IN FORMER years the members met on the first Monday of each month, beginning in October 1952, and ending in April 1953. All meetings were well attended. In some cases well over one hundred members were present. Keen discussion was often continued after tea and cakes had been handed round.

Written questions pertaining to difficulties or problems affecting members in their rock gardens were submitted at the beginning of each meeting and the answers given at a convenient time during the evening. On some occasions so many questions were submitted that the answers had to be postponed until a later date.

Many of the members make a boast of having attended all the meetings during the Winter Session. They have been the means of creating many new friendships and cementing old ones, and so long as that happy state of affairs continues we can look forward to next Winter Session with pleasure and confidence.

At the October meeting the entire evening was taken up by a resumé of the activities of the Branch for the coming season, and balance sheets for the Glasgow Show and summer outings were submitted and approved.

At the November meeting Mr. D. G. Taylor, B.Sc., of the West of Scotland Agricultural College, talked on "Lime-hating and Lime-loving Plants."

The December meeting was unfortunate so far as the weather was concerned. The talk that night was on "Floral Decorations in the Home" and was given by Miss Smart and Miss Gardner, members of the staff of Messrs. Dobbie & Son, and through the goodwill of Mr. A. S. Mair.

Mr. J. T. Wall of Bannatyne & Jackson, Hamilton, was prevented by illness from giving his talk on "Shrubs Suitable for the Rock Garden" at the January meeting. He found an able substitute in a young apprentice who read his paper and who proved himself most knowledgeable at question time.

At the February meeting Mr. Donald A. Wintersgill of the Kennishead Nurseries talked on "Screes—Their Construction and the Choice of Suitable Plants." Well over one hundred members were present on this occasion.

The March meeting was perhaps the best attended meeting of the Session. A talk given by Dr. Dovaston of Auchincruive on "Cyclamens" was illustrated by his own magnificent slides.

As the first Monday in April was the Glasgow Spring Holiday the meeting was held on Tuesday, 7th April. Major-General Murray Lyon was the speaker and his subject, "Walls and Wall Plants," aroused much interest and has already inspired several members to follow his example and build for themselves a wall as described by him.

The joint lecture on Wednesday, 8th April, this year to the West of Scotland Horticultural Society and the S.R.G.C., was to have been given by Mr. David Wilkie of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh. His serious illness prevented him from speaking, and Mr. E. Darling of Port Glasgow filled the breach and spoke on "The Twelve Most Popular Plants for the Rock Garden"—the result of a census of members taken some two years ago. This talk was illustrated by slides kindly loaned by Mr. David Wilkie.

There has been a marked increase in attendances at monthly meetings this year, so much so that on one or two occasions accommodation was severely taxed. The situation of Rosalind's Tea Rooms in Gordon Street is most suitable and central. The rent two years ago was £1. Last year it was increased to £2. This year the proprietors demand £3. Can we afford it? Last winter efforts of members raised £55 towards meeting the rental of the McLellan Galleries for the Spring Show.

During the summer months the following excursions were made to noted gardens in various parts of the country:—

1. On Saturday, 23rd May, we visited the gardens of Viscountess Weir at Eastwood, Giffnock, and thereafter the lovely walled garden of Miss J. W. Young, Greenbank House, Clarkston. After visiting Mrs. Jamieson's lovely rock garden, we finished the afternoon at Boyd's Nurseries in Barrhead. Some sixty members were present.

2. On Saturday, 6th June, we visited the garden of Mr. Douglas Innes, Callander. The garden is small and is attached to a council house. It was an object lesson, however, to most of the members present, for every inch of ground was used, and it contained many rare alpines exemplifying the owner's skill in cultivation. A small alpine house and several frames contained many more treasures. Our next stop was Killin, where we had an excellent lunch, and then proceeded to "Dalchenna," owned by Mr. E. Stuart Wallace. Here we feasted our eyes on many more treasures set in natural surroundings at the foot of a precipitous rock face and revelling in scree conditions. At Aberfeldy we were welcomed by a cup of tea at Cluny House, graciously provided by Mrs. Masterton. It would need a special article in the *Journal* to describe all the treasures to be found in this wonderful garden, which is still in the making. *Primulas*, Asiatic and European, were everywhere. There were great drifts of gentians, healthy clumps of *Lewisia*s in every variety, *Rhododendrons* and *Meconopsis* in profusion, and many other treasures too numerous to mention. Suffice it to say that this garden, provided its owner retains his keenness, his health and his strength—for it demands all these—will be one of the choicest of alpine gardens north of the border. We enjoyed

high tea at a neighbouring hotel, and arrived back in Glasgow at 10 p.m.—a perfect day.

3. Our last excursion was to the Border Country, on Saturday, 27th June. We had lunch at the Waverley Hotel, Melrose, and our first stop thereafter was Duns, where we visited the lovely garden of Mrs. Dorothy Deas, Hardens Hill. We all regretted that our stay here was all too short.

We hurried on to Coldingham, where after an excellent tea we visited the gardens and nurseries owned by the Misses Logan Home at Edrom. A natural setting of coniferous and deciduous trees gives the ideal conditions for the growing of as fine a collection of Asiatic and European primulas as is to be found anywhere in Scotland. Miniature gardens in the form of troughs of all shapes and sizes held treasures that we read of but seldom see. We were loth to leave, but the long journey home lay ahead, and by 8 p.m. we were crossing the Lammermoors.

This winter our meetings will again be held on the first Monday of each month, commencing in October and ending in April, 1954. They will be held in Rosalind's Tea Rooms, 33A Gordon Street, Glasgow, at 7.15 p.m. All are welcome from any district.

Provisional arrangements have been made to visit, next summer, the garden of Mr. Kenneth C. Corsar, Mauricewood, Milton Bridge, Midlothian, and one or two other gardens in this district. A second outing will be to Dunfermline on the Saturday of their Show, when the opportunity will be taken of visiting one or two gardens, or exploring the beauties of Pittencrieff Glen. Both of these outings will be in June.

Sometime towards the end of May an afternoon outing will be arranged to visit the garden of Mr. W. G. Buchanan, 3 Dougalston Avenue, Milngavie, and another garden in the vicinity.

E. D.

EAST LoTHIAN

THE COUNTY activities for the year again opened with the Autumn Show at Haddington. Four lectures were held during the winter months, at which the speakers were Mr. Kenneth Corsar on "European Primulas," Mr. David Wilkie on "Saxifrages," Mr. G. M. Taylor on "Unusual Plants for the Garden," and Major-General Murray-Lyon on "Walls and Screes." To ease transport difficulties, these lectures were arranged at Gifford, Dunbar, Aberlady and North Berwick, so that all members would have the chance of reaching at least the one nearest to their homes. Those who came were most enthusiastic and have all made good use of the information given to them. They are grateful to these acknowledged experts for so generously passing on their advice and knowledge.

A new venture in the County was a Members' Discussion Meeting, which was held at Haddington in March. With Dr. Henry Tod in the Chair, Mr. C. W. Sanderson, Mr. J. Cockburn, and Mrs. Boyd-Harvey gave short talks on subjects in which they were interested, and after each speaker there were questions and general discussion.

Later in the month another enjoyable Bring and Buy Sale was organised by Mrs. MacFarlane at Somnerfield House, Haddington. Surplus plants and seedlings changed hands, and coffee was served afterwards. Members were delighted with their purchases and the result financially was highly successful. The proceeds will go towards paying the expenses of the next Autumn Show.

Garden visits during this summer have been to Mr. and Mrs. Bell's garden at Bolton Muir, the Northumberland gardens of the Earl Grey of Falloden, Mrs. Brunskill, and Mrs. Cawley, and to Miss C. Nisbet's garden at Stobshiel House. It was a great privilege to be invited to see these beautiful gardens and interesting plants, and the owners are thanked for their hospitality and their kindness in showing members round. Members were disappointed that Mrs. Kelly, the County Representative for North East England, was unable to meet them during the Northumberland visit, but very much appreciated her kind thought in providing tea for them.

In addition to supporting their own local Show, members have been visiting and exhibiting at S.R.G.C. Shows in other parts of the country, and plants from East Lothian gardens have appeared on the show benches of Edinburgh, Perth, Glasgow, and Dunfermline. Trophies which have come to the County this year are:—

The Henry Archibald Rose Bowl (Edinburgh) : Mrs. Peel.

The Mrs. W. B. Robertson Silver Cup (Dunfermline) : Mrs. Boyd-Harvey.

The Carnegie Trust Silver Trophy (Dunfermline) : Mrs. Bell.

L. C. B. H.

EDINBURGH and MIDLOTHIAN

Following upon last Winter's very popular Evening Meetings, the County Representative has again arranged for these to be held at Messrs. Brown (Booksellers), George Street, at 8 p.m. on Wednesdays, 11th November, 20th January, and 17th March. No charge is made for admission, but coffee and biscuits will be served at 2/- per head. There will be informal Talks and Discussions upon garden problems. Members please note these dates.

It is hoped also that Members will have an opportunity of seeing the film and coloured slides taken during the National Trust cruise to West Highland gardens last May. This will probably be in February, and an announcement will be made in the Year Book in January.

W. R.

FIFE

FOLLOWING on the two very successful illustrated lectures in the earlier part of the winter by Mr. Stewart Mitchell and Mr. David Wilkie, the first meeting of the new year, on Friday, 6th February, was something in the nature of an experiment. That it turned out so highly satisfactory was entirely due to the members present. Questions and answers, agreement and disagreements, personal experiences and difficulties, followed freely one on another till practically all members present had contributed towards the success of the evening. One item which arose was a discussion on next winter's programme, when a request was put forward for a meeting to go over the Club's Seed Distribution List before members' "desiderata" had to be sent in, as many items listed were unknown to most members. In response to a further request for advice on preparing for Shows, it was decided to have an extra meeting on 27th March when members should bring plants and stage a small show. Further discussion led to a decision to make this a "Judging Competition Night."

Mrs. C. I. Smart's talk of 6th March, on her experience of alpine plants in their native habitats in the Swiss and Austrian Alps, created great interest among members present and her slides were much enjoyed.

The Judging Competition on 27th March turned out a great success. The 60 odd plants brought forward were grouped into 7 or 8 classes, lettered and numbered individually, and members had the opportunity of each writing on slips of paper their placings in each class. A panel of judges then went over the classes, giving reasons for their decisions and answering questions as they went along. Those whose placings came nearest those of the judges were declared winners.

Thanks are due to the lady members who organised a most successful Coffee Morning on Saturday, 9th May. In addition to the pleasure and enjoyment it gave, and the opportunity of acquiring new plants, a substantial sum was raised towards the expenses of the Dunfermline Show.

On Friday, 5th June, about 30 members had a most enjoyable evening at Keillour Castle, the garden of Major and Mrs. Knox Finlay. The privilege of seeing such a collection of plants under the expert guidance of Major and Mrs. Finlay is a never-failing thrill to members, who return home determined to try out some of the plants and ideas they have just seen. The evening was one of the few (very few) perfect ones this summer, and our hosts' usual lavish hospitality after our tour of the garden capped a memorable outing.

Several members took advantage of the invitation to join with St. Andrews Horticultural Association in an evening visit to the University Botanic Garden on Thursday, 11th June. Again the weather was kindly and granted us a pleasant evening.

We all look forward now to our visit on Friday, 28th August, to the nursery of Mr. Neil Lyle at Leslie, where we are assured of a warm welcome.

Fife members in the northern part of the county are privileged to be able to attend meetings of the Angus group in Dundee, where they always receive a friendly welcome and are sure of an interesting evening.

Fife members are always delighted to welcome fellow members visiting the district and making contact with the C.R.

J. L. M.

FIFE—WEST

A START was made in Dunfermline early this year by having regular winter meetings for West Fife members, the results of which were most encouraging.

On 18th February Dr. Henry Tod, F.R.S.E., of the East of Scotland College of Agriculture, gave us a most interesting and instructive lecture with slides on "Rock Gardening, How and Why." Afterwards full advantage was taken of question time. On 18th March Dr. C. I. Smart, Limekilns, Fife, gave a delightful talk with slides and photographs taken by herself of "Alpines in Switzerland." This was enjoyed by a very appreciative audience. On 8th April Mr. Lyle, Maryfield Nurseries, Leslie, gave us a most entertaining and helpful talk with demonstrations of preparing plants for the Show Table, the result of which was very apparent at the Dunfermline Show.

After each lecture members were able to meet each other while tea and biscuits were served. New members were enrolled at each meeting, at the Dunfermline Show and the "Highland," and we shall look forward to meeting them at the next season's winter activities in the Women's Centre, Abbey Park Place, Dunfermline. Members from Kinross and Clackmannan will be very welcome again, as always.

The Assistant C.R. very sincerely thanks all who helped in any way in the success of the winter's activities.

E. D. W.

KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE

THE FOLLOWING Meetings, Lectures, etc., were much enjoyed by all members and friends who attended them.

26th September 1952.—An Exchange of Plants was held at Colvend Church Hall. In addition to the "Exchange," Mr. Glass of Townend Nursery, Kirkcudbright, sent a generous collection of cuttings, also seeds to be distributed among members, and Mr. McKnight, also of Kirkcudbright, sent a lot of young rooted *Primula* seedlings, also for distribution. Appreciation of these kind gifts was expressed by all present. Tea was provided by local members.

22nd November.—At St. Andrew's Church Hall, Castle Douglas, Miss Gertrude Biggar gave an interesting and helpful talk and actual demonstration on seed sowing, planting-out, and potting-on, taking cuttings, and general Autumn care of the garden. Miss Biggar very kindly distributed lots of Blue Poppy Seedlings, and other plants.

31st January 1953.—A Meeting was held at Colvend Church Hall for talks on "Showing Plants," by Mr. MacDonald (Crichton Royal Gardens), Mr. Forbes and Mr. Marchbank. The talks on correct potting and tidying-up for Show purposes were illustrated by suitable plants, and were responsible for several members "showing" at the Dumfries Show for the first time. Mr. Marchbank distributed cuttings and rooted cuttings with advice on propagation and cultivation. Tea was provided by local members.

21st March.—A Meeting was held in the Constitutional Hall, Kirkcudbright, when Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Marchbank again very kindly came from Dumfries, and gave talks on Cultivation and Propagation respectively, both dealing with Alpines, and illustrating their talks with various types of cuttings, and lovely specimens of alpines. This was the first meeting to be held at Kirkcudbright, and thanks must be made to Mr. McKnight for making all arrangements in regard to the Hall. We hope for more meetings in the future.

29th April.—A visit was arranged to the Crichton Royal Gardens by courtesy of Mr. MacDonald, who with Mr. Marchbank showed members round the beautiful gardens, particular interest naturally being shown in the extensive rock garden and glasshouses, where nearly every kind of rock and greenhouse plant seem to thrive. The gardens were looking lovely.

16th May.—Two gardens were visited in Kirkcudbright: first, Townend Nursery, by kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Glass, who apart from their nursery garden had, within a year, laid out a garden of 180 sq. yds. This was to show what could be done with a small piece of land, and it comprised most types of garden, including rock garden, and was wonderfully laid out. There were about 40 species of Iris and some wonderful heaths—of great encouragement to those with only a small area to work on. Mr. Glass gave a short talk and much advice on making a rock garden, and on heaths and Iris. After this Mr. Glass had arranged for a visit to Broughton House Garden (Broughton House and Garden were bequeathed to Kirkcudbright by the late Mr. Hornel). Mr. and Mrs. Erskine very kindly showed members round. It was very interesting and unexpected to see in the House some of the fine and famous paintings of the late Mr. Hornel, and many interesting manuscripts. Then through the garden, which again is an amazing one; rock garden, water garden, trough gardens, and very interesting trees and shrubs—a large and beautiful magnolia, and a climbing Hydrangea which completely covered an expanse of wall about 25 feet in height.

30th May.—Two Colvend gardens were visited—Barnbarroch House by kind invitation of Miss King and Miss Paton, and Orchard Knowes, by kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. McLellan. Both gardens are beautifully situated and were looking quite lovely. The peat garden was an especial attraction at Barnbarroch. Rhododendrons and Azaleas made lovely splashes of colour at both gardens. Herbaceous and rock plant at Orchard Knowes were in full bloom, and finally Mrs. McLellan provided a very welcome tea for the 44 visitors.

On the 11th April I was asked to stage an exhibit representing the Kirkcudbrightshire branch of the S.R.G.C. at the Horticultural Spring Show in Kirkcudbright. This I did with the help of plants lent by local members, and also with the great assistance of Major Walmsley, who very kindly brought many of his valuable and prize-winning plants from Wigtownshire. This is the third year we have done this.

M. E. McLELLAN

PERTSHIRE

ON NOVEMBER 4th Major Knox Finlay gave an extremely interesting lecture on "Autumn Colour." This was published in last April's *Journal*. On February 9th Mr. E. H. M. Cox lectured on "Rhododendrons suitable for the Rock Garden." A party of forty were the guests of Major and Mrs. Finlay at Keillour on June 4th. The garden, with its many rare plants, was much admired, especially by those who had not seen it before.

Over twenty members made an excursion to Creag an Lochain on June 27th. It was a lovely day and with the help of Mr. Colville, Mr. Dow and Mrs. Sandie, the following plants were noted: *Alchemilla alpina*, *Arenaria* sp., *Armeria vulgaris* (white form), *Astragalus alpinus*, *Cerastium alpinum*, *Dryas octopetala*, *Narthecium ossifragum*, a dwarf asphodel, *Rubus Chamaemorus*, *Saxifraga aizoides*, *S. hypnoides*, *S. oppositifolia*, *S. stellaris*, *Sedum roseum*, *Silene acaulis*, *Thalictrum alpinum*, *Trientalis europaea*, *Vaccinium Vitis-idaea*. This was a popular excursion and I shall try to organise something similar next year.

Our ever-increasing membership is most encouraging.

M. E. C.

WIGTOWNSHIRE

THROUGH the kindness of local hostesses monthly meetings, with an average attendance of 25, were held during the winter. Illustrated talks that were greatly appreciated were given at two of these meetings by Mrs. McConnel on "Some Palestine Flora" and "Some Plants I have grown in Ayrshire." Mr. Harper (Stranraer) also gave a very interesting talk on "Some Bulbs for the Rock Garden."

In April, under the organising ability of Mrs. Christie, local members arranged in Newton Stewart a Coronation Exhibition of Flowers and Flower Paintings. This was most successful, thanks to the whole-hearted support of all the local garden owners and artists. This was followed in the evening by some of Major Sherriff's beautiful colour films of his plant hunting excursions in Tibet and Bhutan. Not only was this lecture very greatly appreciated but also the fact that Major and Mrs. Sherriff had come all the way to Wigtonshire to give it.

In the late Spring garden visits were arranged to see Mr. Harper's bulbs, and two rock gardens in the Stewartry.

L. W.

Plants to which Awards have been made

Colchicum luteum, A.M. 4/3/53. This was a good orange-coloured form of the rather uncommon plant which comes from Northern India and Afghanistan. The normal colour of the flowers is a rather acid yellow; they are carried in spathes, partly sheathed by the shining dark-green leaves. The plants exhibited were extremely well flowered and in perfect condition. *C. luteum* is quite hardy, but would probably appreciate a baking in summer. Exhibited by General D. M. Murray-Lyon.

Draba polytricha, C.C. 4/3/53. The plant exhibited was a well-grown specimen of this rather difficult plant, which has a neat tufted habit and pale yellow flowers. The plant seen was well-covered with flowers, and in fine condition. Like all Drabas, it appreciates scree conditions and is rather intolerant of winter wet. Exhibited by General D. M. Murray-Lyon.

Daphne x Thauma, A.M. 7/7/53. This is a natural hybrid (*Daphne striata* x *D. petraea*) found by Farrer on Cima Tombea. This was a well-grown and finely flowered specimen, with terminal clusters of pink scented flowers with long tubes and dark green leathery leaves on drooping stems. It was a fine specimen of an extremely difficult dwarf shrub, which *can* be grown, but seldom flowered as well as this one was. Exhibited by A. D. Reid., Esq., Oxfangs Road, Edinburgh, 10.

Briggsia muscicola, Cult. Comm. 7/7/53. This is a Ludlow and Sherriff introduction, and was in beautiful condition, though unfortunately the flourish was just past. It forms a green, rather wrinkled rosette of leaves, resembling a small *Streptocarpus*. The flowers are white bells with tiny purple spots inside, and in the plant shown the developing seed pods were beginning to project beyond the lip of the bell. Exhibited by A. D. Reid, Esq.

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