

The Journal OF The Scottish Rock Garden Club

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



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PUBLICATIONS

MEMBERS of long standing know the pleasure and profit to be derived from a re-reading of the *Journals* which the Club has published over the last 30 years. It is impossible to detail the wealth of advice, wisdom, humour and enthusiasm which appears in a complete run of the *Journals*. A complete run is unobtainable at present.

However, small stocks of most numbers remain in the Club's hands and are available for sale as follows :—

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Nos. 7/14, 18/20, 22/26, 28, 30/39 at 5/- each, post free

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Other issues of the *Journal* are in such short supply that it is necessary to maintain a waiting list. This is being done and members are asked to make their needs known.

The Club will be prepared and indeed will welcome the opportunity to buy (or be gifted) *Journals* of any issue provided they are in good condition.

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The Journal

OF

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Editor's Notes

SINCE the last issue of our *Journal* three areas of activity have suffered a great local loss which in each case has also been a loss to the Club as a whole. One who will be greatly missed in the Glasgow area, Mr. George Laurie—a founder member—had been ill for some years and died in the fullness of time after long and valuable service. The others, Mr. Stewart Mitchell and Brigadier George Hutchinson, died suddenly—though in each case not without warning—in the height of active participation in Club affairs. Both, in addition to being Group Conveners for their own areas, were also engaged in central administration and were very lively members of Council, bringing to it an enthusiasm and driving force that was both a strength and example to their colleagues. Much as the Club may mourn their loss, our sympathies must go out to all their relatives, whose loss is so much greater than ours.

A general complaint with all concerned in garden activities—rock gardeners included—has been the abundant and constant recurring growths of weeds this year. The early warmth of February got them off to a good start. Coming after last year's wet summer when so many weeds were able to produce massive quantities of seeds with little control possible owing to the weather conditions, this summer, with its warm sunny weather and the occasional wet day interspersed to keep things going, must surely have ensured that every weed seed got its chance to germinate. Thick and fast one crop has followed another faster than most gardeners could cope with them, except perhaps in open ground where the hoe could be used. In the rock garden, of course, this method is not possible, and trying to keep pace with them by hand has been no easy task.

Those members with town gardens may have got off a little more lightly, but in country gardens the abnormal invasion of field weeds has been astounding. Willow Herb and ragwort seemed to spring everywhere, even in gardens where they had not been known before. Every plant and dwarf shrub seemed to have its surrounding circle of infant willow herbs where the blowing seeds had been trapped by the foliage of the plant. We even saw what had been quite a good lawn thickly dotted with young ragworts recently.

Periodically one or another remembers to record the great debt of thanks due to the Club's Show Secretaries for all their labours in organising our fine Shows in various parts of the country. These

secretaries in their turn invariably record their debt to all their helpers even though their names are never mentioned in print. This is as it should be. Only those people who have taken an active part in Shows can have any conception of how much is involved in running a Show, how much spade work has to be done before the final objective is attained—the Show itself on Show Day.

But what of those others without whom no Show could ever be produced? How often do we give any thought to those who provide the Show—the exhibitors? It cannot be expected that all will have the courage to risk the harm or perhaps loss of their favourite plants if they have to be lifted from the ground and potted up to be exhibited at a Show—even though articles of advice on how to do this and what precautions to take have appeared in various numbers of the *Journal*. But if there were none with sufficient courage to produce plants for exhibition there could be no Shows.

Surely then the gratitude of us all is due to those consistently loyal members who regularly exhibit the results of long and patient effort for the delectation of their fellow members. True, they get their reward in vying with one another in friendly rivalry to produce the best for display to the rest of us, but none-the-less let us try to think what it would be like without them and render our thanks for their public spiritedness. And, knowing most of these faithful enthusiasts, we feel sure that the thanks they would appreciate most would be if a goodly number of other members would join them in competition at the show bench.

The judges' comments on the Photographic Competition will be seen a few pages later. Quite a number of really excellent entries were received and we are truly grateful to all those who did enter. There must still be a large number of members who are good and keen photographers—we know several ourselves—who so far have not entered. We ask them to try next year, if the Competition should be continued.

On a later page members will find a most interesting letter from a Japanese member—Mr. A. Masuyama—which the editor received. It is the outcome of the report in the last *Journal* of Major-General Murray-Lyon's very interesting talk on Japanese plants at the Discussion Weekend at North Berwick last Autumn. It is incidents like this, which are not uncommon, which make one realise the ramifications of the Club and the wide interest taken in members' doings by

their fellows in the many countries throughout the world. We would like to say to overseas members that articles and notes from them are of very great interest to home members and always eagerly read. We appeal for more to give us the privilege of sharing their experiences.

We all know what a modest and unassuming person W. C. Buchanan was in spite of his wealth of knowledge concerning plants and their cultivation. At one time it seemed as if no portrait of him existed, much as the Club would have liked one to put on record. However, through the good offices of Mrs. James Davidson and the courtesy of *The Scotsman* it has now been possible to reprint a head and shoulder picture taken from a group of judges in action at one of our Shows (see fig. 74).

Members may be shocked when we tell them that there was nearly no *Journal* this Autumn due to lack of contributions. This was the result of a number of cancellations, each with reasonable justification in themselves and some quite unavoidable, but the combined result almost led to a *Journal* which in pages would have barely attained double figures. That this has been avoided is entirely due to those members who so nobly responded to the editor's last minute appeals. We are deeply grateful to them and would plead to members as a whole to put their rock gardening experiences, their ideas, or their problems, on paper and so help or interest their fellow members.
St. Andrews, August 1967.

Postscript :

Since the above was printed the Club has suffered the further loss of two more outstanding members. John Renton, C.B.E., Perth, died after a lengthy illness on 16th September, and on 20th September appeared the sad news of the death of Major George Sherriff, O.B.E., D.L. Appreciations of both these well-known members will appear later.

Slide Library

AN UP-TO-DATE list of 2 in. × 2 in. colour slides—comprising approximately 1400 species, varieties and hybrids—is now ready, and will be sent to members on request. This cancels all previous lists. There is no charge for the loan of slides, but applicants are reminded that they must **PAY OUTGOING, AS WELL AS RETURN POSTAGE.**

The following **TAPE-RECORDED LECTURES** are also available :—

“Early and Late Flowers for the Rock Garden”, by Major-General D. M. Murray-Lyon, D.S.O., M.C., S.H.M.

“Adaptation to Environment”, by Mrs. L. C. Boyd-Harvey.

Each recording is accompanied by a set of slides, charge : 7/6. Full particulars from the Hon. Curator.

Typescript copies of the lectures, with slides, but without recordings, can also be supplied, charge : 3/6.

Club Christmas Cards

THIS YEAR'S Club Christmas Cards will be of the four colour plates (figs. 67, 68, 69 and 70) in this *Journal*. They will be supplied in lots of **NOT LESS THAN ONE DOZEN**, either all of one kind or mixed, as desired. It will be sufficient to give figure numbers when ordering, which should be **as soon as possible** to the Hon. Treasurer : David Elder, Dalmarra, Carslogie Road, Cupar, Fife, enclosing the necessary remittance. The price, including envelopes, is 10/- per dozen, post paid.

Costs of production and postage of the *Journal* can be offset to some extent by your support and participation in this Christmas Card Scheme.

Seed Distribution, 1967

THE arrangements of the Seed Distribution Scheme will be on the same lines as those of previous years, but members should bear in mind that this year packets or promises of seed should be addressed to :

Miss M. ROBERTSON,

Portkil Cottage, Kilcreggan, Dunbartonshire, Scotland.

Obituaries

STEWART MITCHELL

FROM THE time he joined the Club in 1946, Stewart Mitchell entered whole-heartedly into its affairs with zest and enthusiasm ; nothing which could contribute to its good and the welfare of its members was too much bother for him (no one who knew him could imagine him otherwise). Few people, other than his wife who must have been a constant source of strength to him, can know how much of his time and energy he devoted to its affairs, or can realise how indefatigable he was in making and maintaining contact with an incredibly large number of its members both at home and abroad. He was of a warm-hearted, friendly nature and a great believer in the personal touch and the development of 'Club spirit' and spared himself nothing in the furthering of this ideal.

In a very short time after joining his enthusiasm landed him in office and he became Group Convener for Angus in 1948, then Club Treasurer in 1951, then a member of Council, and at the Annual General Meeting 1953—Show Secretary for Dundee. Into all these duties he threw his boundless energies with a meticulous attention to detail and a forthrightness at meetings that sometimes led to misunderstanding and heated words. With his own straightforward and generous nature he could not understand why people could not agree to differ on points of procedure or the like without getting overheated and making a personal issue of such matters. No one could be more penitent than himself when he found that some disagreement over an affair of administration had hurt someone's feelings.

In Council matters he was a stickler for correct constitutional procedure and spared himself no pains in the study of this subject and the application of it to all matters which came under discussion. It came to be admitted that his interpretation was usually right (though perhaps sometimes awkward) ; when it seemed it might be otherwise he would be the first to admit that he was wrong and seek the remedy. As a general appreciation of all his work for the Club he was appointed Vice-President in 1959.

He was a very keen and first class photographer, and his skill in this direction was at the call of many members whose gardens he was always eager and willing to visit when there were plants to be photo-

graphed. He contributed largely to the Slide Library and helped out members who would borrow particular slides to illustrate their lectures or articles to the *Journal*.

Some few years ago Mr. Mitchell had a sudden and severe illness, but after a spell of slow recovery and a warning to take things easier he began to itch to get back into active work in Club matters again, even if only on a reduced scale. This, of course, he did, as anyone who knew him would expect, though he recognised the wisdom of keeping within the limits set to him. Though he had to cut out some of his more demanding activities, he gave as much thought as ever to Club affairs and his mind was on its business right up to the end, which came suddenly.

Always modest and unassuming throughout, his passing came as a great loss to the Club and to a very large circle of personal friends made in the pursuit of his chosen hobby.

BRIGADIER G. F. HUTCHINSON

BRIGADIER HUTCHINSON could not be termed an old member of the Club in either years or in length of membership, having joined the Club in the year 1956. However, his nature was such that he was not long content to remain just a passive member. When helpers were called for in local, and then more general, Club affairs he was a very willing volunteer.

In a very short time (1963) he had been pressed into the Group Convenership of Kirkcudbrightshire and then only last year, under the new constitution, he was elected Chairman of Group Conveners. He was a very modest man about his own qualifications and ability for Club matters, but whenever asked to do something was always 'willing to do his best' and that 'best' was invariably of a very high standard and more than satisfactory. In Council matters his advice and ideas became increasingly sought-after and accepted.

Plantwise his great interest was dwarf rhododendrons, which he grew exceedingly well and exhibited very successfully. He had gathered together quite a representative collection of these and members will remember an article he wrote in a comparatively recent *Journal* on the rhododendrons he had grown in his garden at Rockcliffe, Dalbeattie. His sudden death has created a loss which the Club can ill afford.

MR. GEORGE F. LAURIE

THE DEATH took place on 24th July 1967 of Mr. George F. Laurie, Laurel Villa, Bishopbriggs. A Vice-President of the Club, Mr. Laurie had been a member since the formation of the Scottish Rock Garden Club in 1933, and took a most active part in the restoration of the Club following the last War. Interested in all aspects of gardening, but especially in the growing of alpines, Mr. Laurie took a leading part in the Glasgow branch of the Club, serving as Show Secretary for Glasgow Shows for many years and acting for a period as Group Convener for Lanarkshire. He was also a member of the Panel of Judges.

Mr. Laurie was an ex-Director of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Horticultural Society, of which he was a Vice-President.

An able grower, his garden at Bishopbriggs was full of wonderful plants—Primulas, Saxifrages, Pleiones, Lilies, etc., being among his favourites. At all times Mr. Laurie liked to give help and advice to those embarking on the cultivation of alpines and aid to those coming perhaps to exhibit at a Show for the first time.

For some time, because of ill-health, Mr. Laurie was unable to attend meetings of the Club, but those visiting him would find him surrounded by gardening books, Club *Journals*, magazines and catalogues, always interested in all aspects of the Club and everything pertaining to the growing of alpines.

Photographic Competition

1st : *Cnicus* sp., by Mr. M. J. Hackney, Glenshalloch, Newton Stewart, Wigtownshire.

2nd : *Tropaeolum polyphyllum*, by Mr. Robert John Mitchell, 3 St. Gregory's, St. Andrews.

3rd : *Oenothera caespitosa*, by Miss D. M. Holford, The Grange, Chetnole, Sherborne, Dorset.

Comments :

The quality of the entries, photographically, is much higher than last year's and the number greater. Doubtless the lure of colour film is almost overwhelming in flower and plant photography ; nevertheless the skilful use of monochrome often presents the stronger challenge.

The 1st prize-winning entry has extracted the utmost potentiality from the black and white film. The silvery character of the foliage is

enhanced by the choice of background which admirably delineates the flowers.

Mr. R. J. Mitchell's entry (2nd prize) shows a satisfyingly long tonal scale from the bright flowers and subdued background to the luminous shadows cast by the foliage on the stonework.

The 3rd prize-winner has done a fine job in rather difficult conditions, successfully retaining the surface sheen on flowers and leaves notwithstanding the poor lighting.

JOHN CAMERON

Mr. M. J. Hackney, Glenshalloch, Newton Stewart, Wigtownshire. "Rolleiflex" 3.5 Agfa xx film. U.V. Filter 1/50 sec. f 11 stop. Light yellow filter. Lens hood. 3-4 subject.

Subject : *Cnicus* sp. (species not identified by Botanical Survey of India. Specimen in their herbarium in Calcutta). A fine thistle with bright purple flowers and shining silver foliage. Growing on new scree by Sisso Vala at 1,400 ft. in Lahul, Himalaya. Height 2½-3 ft. Not known in cultivation. Not subject to S-W Monsoon rains in summer.

M. J. HACKNEY

Robert John Mitchell, 3 St. Gregory's, St. Andrews.

Edixa Reflex with Macro Kilar Lens. Kodak Panatomic-X 35mm. Film. Exposure 1/25 sec. at f 22 at a distance of 12 ins.

Tropaeolum polyphyllum is a rarely seen hardy herbaceous plant whose rhizomes often reach a depth of 3 ft. or more in the soil. It likes a sunny exposure where its blue-green shoots can trail. The flowers produced on long stems are yellow to yellow-orange and are produced in early to mid summer. The plant is a native of Chile and Argentina.

ROBERT J. MITCHELL

D. M. Holford, The Grange, Chetnole, Sherborne, Dorset.

Contaflex Prima F.P.3 1/30 sec. F. 11. Daylight.

Oenothera caespitosa var. *macroglottis*. Flowers white measuring around 4 ins. across. These turn a delicate pink as they begin to fade. Darkest green leaves and not coloured on the reverse. Enjoys a sunny position where it spreads by underground runners if happy and flowers continuously throughout the summer.

D. M. HOLFORD

Dwarf Conifers

by

H. G. HILLIER

This booklet by H. G. Hillier is a much extended and revised version of a paper read at the Third International Rock Garden Conference of 1961.

The work done by the author in trying to disentangle the chaos existing among dwarf conifers and to bring his references up to date makes this an invaluable booklet for garden lovers, particularly those interested in rock gardening. Its eighty-two pages are well illustrated with twenty-five black and white photographs of individual conifers.

Price 10/6 post free.

ORDERS SHOULD BE SENT TO:—

D. ELDER, Esq.,

Dalmarra, Carslogie Road, Cupar, Fife

Alpine Potting Mixtures

By JOHN B. DUFF

WHEN a decision has been taken to start growing Alpines in pots within cold frames or an Alpine House, it becomes necessary to learn something about potting mixtures. If he is lucky the beginner will have an acquaintance who can initiate him into the art ; if not, how does he go about it ? He can, of course, go round the Club Shows asking successful exhibitors about the composition of the mixtures used for particular plants, but he stands the risk of getting replies meant to be helpful but which are not very informative, such as "Oh, gritty" or perhaps "Plenty of humus". Resorting to Plant Notes in the *Journal* does not necessarily get him any further, as illustrated by the following extract from a contribution by a member describing how his plant won a Forrest Medal : ". . . as all my potting mixtures are not made to any set recipe but consist of adding various ingredients until the mixture looks and feels right . . .". He can be advised to buy books which contain all the information required, but our beginner is not quite at that stage, as he is feeling his way and probably needs all his spare cash for frames, pots and pans, etc. At any rate he will develop an expensive taste in literature soon enough.

The following notes describe briefly how I deal with the problem of potting mixtures. Far from being a tiresome chore, I find this part of gardening quite an enjoyable exercise. I have nothing original to offer on the subject, but I have a method which is easy to operate and which a beginner could adopt to get started. Later, with experience, he will no doubt develop his own system.

I should perhaps mention that I have made very little use of the "NO LOAM or SOIL" type of compost advertised so much nowadays and I have a feeling that it will be a long time before any of the existing successful growers will be prepared to consign all their favourite plants to the same monotonous mixture of peat and sand. This method may be suitable for seed composts or for growing-on young plants in the nursery, but for long term potting I, for one, will continue to use the time-honoured method of soil mixtures, until someone wins a major award with a magnificent specimen grown in a soil-less—I nearly wrote soul-less—mixture.

The normal ingredients of soil mixtures for potting are Loam, Leaf-mould, Peat and Coarse Sand. We are told that the loam should

be top soil from under turf, stacked and rotted for a year at least and then broken down and sterilized. I do not mind the small amount of work (nor the risk of being caught in the act) involved in collecting leaf-mould and sand in the wild, and peat can be bought easily, but I falter at the thought of digging and processing loam. So, ready prepared sterilized loam is also purchased, though I doubt sometimes if it is top soil.

In practice I use six different soil mixtures, albeit some of the six may have a very limited use. This may seem an unnecessarily large number of different composts, but I have arrived at this conclusion after studying books of various authors on the subject. I will show later how, in practice, I make up only two mixtures and obtain the others when necessary, by further dilution.

Table 1 shows the composition of the six mixtures and includes, for comparison, that for John Innes Potting Compost. It was considered that it might be of interest to show the proportion of sand and grit and this has been included in the last column.

TABLE 1

	<i>Loam</i>	<i>Leaf Mould</i>	<i>Peat</i>	<i>Sand & Grit</i>	<i>Proportion of Sand & Grit</i>
J.I. Potting Compost	7	—	3	2	17%
Mixture A (Ordinary)	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	33%
do. B (Gritty)	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	50%
do. C (Very gritty)	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	4	67%
do. D (Rich)	1	1	1	1	25%
do. E (Rich & Gritty)	1	1	1	2	40%
do. F (Very Rich)	1	3	1	1	17%

As mentioned above, I make up only two bins of compost, viz. : Mixture A (Ordinary) and Mixture D (Rich). The other four mixtures can be obtained very easily and quickly when required, from these two as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Using Mixture A (Ordinary) or D (Rich) to obtain any other mixture

Mixture B (Gritty)	=	3 A (Ordinary)	+	1 Sand
do. C (Very gritty)	=	1 A (Ordinary)	+	1 Sand
do. E (Rich & gritty)	=	4 D (Rich)	+	1 Sand
do. F (Very Rich)	=	2 D (Rich)	+	1 Leaf Mould

If a limy mixture is required, limestone grit is added in place of all or some of the sand. Limestone grit as sold by some nurserymen for carnation composts is ideal but not always readily procurable.

The same grit can sometimes be obtained from grain merchants, who supply it as fowl grit.

Mixture C is the one used for high alpiners, such as androsaces, and granite or limestone chippings are added instead of sand, depending on the requirement of the species being potted.

Tufa lumps added to a mixture will count as grit.

Some gardeners add charcoal to their potting mixtures to help to keep the soil sweet. Others believe in including a modicum of cow manure for the plants, which grow naturally in the alpine meadows where they are well nourished by the plentiful supplies of "pâte de vache".

Crushed and screened crock, if it can be obtained, is a good form of grit as it absorbs moisture. With patience and a heavy hammer, broken flower pots can be reduced to grit. I believe it was once possible to purchase a small machine for grinding pots but it is no longer on the market.

Sandstone chippings are also absorbent and therefore excellent, but they may be difficult to procure. In Scotland granite and whinstone chippings are usually easy to get and are perfectly satisfactory except where lime is required to be added, in which case limestone chips are used.

A small amount of John Innes Base fertiliser should be added to each mixture, but the amount is not too easy to estimate for small quantities. I add $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. (i.e. one level tablespoonful) of fertiliser per 2 gallon pailful of compost of my two basic mixtures A or D. This is only half the strength of fertiliser per volume of mixture, compared to J.I.P. No. 1 Compost, and of course a further weakening takes place when other mixtures are formed from these two basic mixtures by the addition of sand or leaf-mould. This is all to the good, however, as the plants to be grown in the diluted mixtures are not generally the type that should be fed too well with artificial fertiliser.

If a supply of J.I.P. No. 1 Compost (without lime) is available, this can be used instead of loam to prepare the mixtures, as shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3

Using J.I. Potting No. 1 Compost (without lime) instead of loam

	<i>J.I.P. No. 1</i>	<i>Leaf Mould</i>	<i>Peat</i>	<i>Sand & Grit</i>
Mixture A (Ordinary)	12	4	—	5
do. D (Rich)	12	7	4	5

As the J.I.P. Compost will already contain John Innes Base fertiliser, no further fertiliser need be added.

Purchased J.I.P. Compost contains peat but no leaf-mould. It is better, perhaps, to include some leaf-mould in the mixtures as peat is inclined to pack if allowed to get too dry ; this can happen very easily during the winter when watering is reduced to a minimum. The amount of leaf-mould added in Table 3 results in mixtures with leaf-mould and peat in roughly equal proportions, except where Mixture F is formed from Mixture D. Mixture F is used for ericaceous plants and is arranged to have its humus in the proportion of three of leaf-mould to one of peat.

The advantages of using J.I.P. Compost instead of loam will apply only to the small user and are :—

- (a) On the assumption that J.I.P. Compost is required for purposes other than alpine mixtures, the accommodation problem is eased by dispensing with a bag or container of sterilized soil.
- (b) No messing about with fertilisers is necessary.

The J.I.P. Compost method is a slightly more expensive way but for the small user the difference in cost is negligible.

It will be noticed that in both methods very little peat is used—none at all for Mixtures A, B and C when using J.I.P. Compost as a basic mixture—and as a small quantity only of peat need therefore be stored, it should be the best obtainable such as Sorbex.

The six mixtures described in the foregoing will serve the needs of the vast majority of plants, but there are some exhibitors specialising in the higher alpins and producing exceptional specimens who have no doubt developed their own special mixtures for these rare and difficult plants. On the whole, however, a large number of our alpins are remarkably tolerant of soil mixtures and for them fussiness in the preparation of composts is quite unnecessary. At the same time, if the growing of alpins in pots is to be taken up seriously, some method must be introduced into the potting process so that notes may be made of mixtures used and lessons learnt from subsequent successes and failures.

For anyone who intends to adopt the culture of alpins in pots as a hobby, a potting shed is essential. I manage quite comfortably in a shed 6 feet wide by 8 feet long, well lighted by a long window on the bench side and lined on the opposite wall with steel racking and shelving where empty pots and pans are accommodated. On the floor under the bench are round plastic bins, 12 ins. wide by 13 ins. high, to accom-

moderate the various ingredients and the two mixtures, A and D. A strong steel basin which started life in an army kitchen serves as a mixing bowl.

Organised in this way, and if the various bins are not allowed to become empty, a plant can be potted or re-potted in a very short time—whenever, in fact, there are a few minutes to spare.

In a future issue of the *Journal*, if space is allowed, I will describe the culture of a few of my favourite alpine plants. These will be easy plants to grow and suitable to form the basis of a beginner's collection.

Be in the Fashion

By J. C. LAWSON

NEW ZEALAND plants have in the last few years been brought to the notice of rock garden enthusiasts mainly by Professor Philipson's book, "Rock Garden Plants of the Southern Alps", and also the thirst for new and more unusual plants. In the following notes I should like to mention a few of these plants which we have obtained and have found possible to grow in our rather difficult climate at Inshriach. Plants from the North Island are not hardy in the Highlands, with one exception, namely *Leucogenes leontopodium*, which does appear in a few places at the north of the South Island.

Unfortunately, many of the plants from New Zealand have either white or yellow flowers, but the shape and leaf form more than make up for this. *Ourisia caespitosa* 'Gracilis' is no exception; it forms mounds of small bright green leaves on creeping shoots which root as they go and bear the most delicate white flowers one inch across with a pale yellow eye, on a two-inch stem, appearing in May. It is a plant which enjoys a damp corner in semi-shade, ideal for a peat wall or stream side where it is found in nature. It also makes an ideal pan plant growing into an award winning plant in quite a short time. It has proved to be quite hardy, having survived the last two winters out in the open garden, with no protection. Propagation is simply a matter of cutting off a piece of rooted stem and replanting in another place. Seed is freely produced for those who prefer raising plants by this method (see fig. 91).

Another plant with very similar creeping type shoots and the most charming pale pink flowers carried on three-inch stems is *Lobelia*



Photo—D. Holford
Fig. 67—Eiger, North Wall,
with *Pulsatilla sulphurea* in foreground



Photo—K. Mitchell
Fig. 68—Botanic Garden and Pool, Lautaret

linnaeoides. A gem for a shady corner where slugs and mice can be kept at bay. In nature this summer-flowering gem grows in grassland, but in cultivation it appears to thrive in semi-shade or a peat wall, in fact under the same conditions as the *Ourisia*. Propagated in the same way as the *Ourisia*, it also produces quantities of seed.

The *Raoulias*, commonly known as Vegetable Sheep, are plants which test the alpine gardener's skill in cultivation. Out of about twenty species found in New Zealand, I have chosen two, which have been in cultivation for a number of years, to discuss in these notes. The first is *Raoulia mammillaris*, a plant growing from rock crevices in the Canterbury area, where it is fairly plentiful. In cultivation it is the easiest to propagate, but the most difficult to keep through the winter, damping off very quickly if any water is allowed to lie on the very silvery, rather downy rosette-like leaves. As a plant ages, so it needs increasing skill to keep it in good health. It is an ideal alpine house subject which appreciates being plunged during the winter.

Raoulia buchananii is known as the Blue Vegetable Sheep and is one which forms hard compact masses, being extremely slow-growing ; it takes many years before a plant is big enough to detach a few rosettes for propagation. The main point in the cultivation of both these *Raoulias* is to keep them well supplied with water during the growing season. To let them become dry is certain death. During the winter months they should be kept just moist.

The Mount Cook Lily, better known to us as *Ranunculus lyallii*, is an exceedingly handsome plant growing to a height of about three feet, bearing huge, leathery, shield-like leaves above which form the most beautiful white flowers almost three inches across, giving an effect of being semi-double. An ideal plant for the wild garden or stream side, appreciating a good rich soil with peat and manure added to give it the necessary nourishment. Propagated by seed which must be sown as soon as it is ripe. If you receive seed from New Zealand, sow it immediately on arrival ; although it may not germinate at once, keep the seed pan for at least two years. Your patience will no doubt be repaid the following year as, if this seed becomes dry, it may take up to two years to germinate.

The few plants I have mentioned are but a handful of the beautiful and intriguing plants growing on the other side of the world ; perhaps in the future I shall pen further notes on the cultivation of these plants which we attempt to grow at Inshriach.

Plants for an Autumn Show

By HENRY TOD

IN 1968 the Dundee Show will be held in the beginning of October and the Royal Horticultural Society has agreed to hold one of our two Joint Awards Committee Meetings at that Show. We have had early autumn Shows for years and latterly a couple of later ones at the Weekends, but several members have asked just what would be available for such a late Show and it was suggested that an article on this topic might be prepared for the *Journal*.

In collecting the material for this I have included plants which flower from late August onwards, for quite a bit can be done towards retarding plants by keeping them below a north wall, cool, and so on—it does not always work but it *can* be done ! The plants included are not necessarily readily available, in fact I do not know where some can be obtained, but a bit of diligent searching may meet with success.

Autumn Shows usually have classes for “plants in fruit”, for “autumn-tinted foliage” and for “silvers”. This last class is rather odd, for usually silver-leaved plants are far better late in the season than earlier on for some reason which I do not know. Silver-leaved plants are self-evident and I have not listed them—most rock gardens have some and one can get ideas—and perhaps cuttings—from other gardens when they are visited. I have listed the plants alphabetically for convenience, but I have split them into three groups, first bulbs, next foliage and fruit, and lastly flowering plants. As I do not want to go on to inordinate lengths I will not give detailed descriptions of the plants.

In the group of bulbs, corms and tubers, we have first *Colchicum*. The commoner purple ones are reliable but awkward to show, as they get easily “drawn”; the less common “minor” forms are easier to keep within bounds. The great genus *Crocus* has a number of autumn-flowering species, mostly blue to purple, with one or two whites and a rather uncommon yellow. These are all good and worth a try. *Cyclamen* suitable for this time are *cilicium*, *europaeum* and *neapolitanum*; these should be, if possible, bought as pot-plants rather than dried tubers. *Lapeyrouisia*, which used to be *Anomatheca*, usually flowers late enough for this date; in addition to the ordinary red there is a scarce deep blood red and a white. A tiny gem is *Leucojum*

autumnale—a good pan of this in full flower would be a real winner. It is one of the daintiest of all bulbs—and not too easy to keep. One *Merendera*, *M. montana*, sometimes called *M. bulbocodium* and at others *Colchicum montanum*, departs from the family habit and flowers late. It is good, but I fear very rare. *Rhodohypoxis* has a long flowering period and a little careful “coaxing” should keep them in flower really late—it is a genus that I, personally, have had a lot of difficulty with and very little success, but some people seem to grow them like chickweed. Finally, we have the very lovely *Sternbergia lutea*—if you can grow it. I have tried and failed, and it is “spot on” as regards date.

So much for some bulbs ; now for foliage and fruit. The genus *Arctostaphylos* includes a number of natives and several exotics, most of which have quite striking fruits and, treated fairly hard, brilliant autumn colour. One New Zealander I have seen doing well as an autumn-fruiting plant at Shows is *Coprosma* ; there are, I think, several species, none entirely hardy, but attractive. I have a vague recollection of seeing *Cyathodes colensoi* at one autumn Show, I think in fruit but just possibly in flower. The little *Fuchsia procumbens* has astonishingly large and striking purple fruits and occasionally fruit and flower at the same time. I grew it many years ago but do not have it now ; the flowers are like anything but a Fuchsia ! *Gaultheria* is another very fine fruiting genus, the curious fleshy fruits ranging from sky-blue through reds and purples to white according to the species, and some of them colour well in foliage also. Much the same can be said of the *Pernettyas*, though they stick more to reds and pinks as far as I know. A rarer fruiting shrub is *Pimelea*, another New Zealander, I think, which sometimes turns up at late Shows, and of course *Vaccinium* provides fruit and autumn colour from natives and exotics just as does *Arctostaphylos*. Some of the very dwarf forms of *Berberis* can do likewise, but even the dwarf forms occasionally go berserk and shoot up to feet instead of inches, so beware !

Some forms of the dwarf *Astilbes* have very late-flowering varieties. I had one in my last garden which used to go on and on to November as I recall ; it might have been *Astilbe crispa* var. ‘Perkeo’ or var. ‘Peter Pan’. Two *Campanulas*, *C. atlantis* and *C. caespitosa*, are usually late-flowering, but it is a genus which for no particular reason I am not enthusiastic about, so I know little of them. *Celsia acaulis* is a real little beauty with its red buds and yellow flowers and it often is very late. A shrubby but slightly tender *Crassula*, *C. sarcocaulis*, is a

long-flowering subject and is usually in full flower right up to the frosts, when it must be taken in or else (in my experience) lost.

For really good blues the *Cyananthus* are hard to beat, though occasionally one gets a rather dull purplish blue which should be discarded; they are tricky brutes to exhibit, for they tend to make "cartwheels" and either droop all over neighbouring exhibits or else take up too much room to please the Show Secretary. I have an idea that some of the tidier *Eriogonums* might make a good display, not of their flowers, which are earlier, but of the faded flower-heads which are a rich red-brown colour and persist for a long time. In my last garden some of the *Erodiums* used to go on to very late dates, but whether this is normal I do not know, but many are neat and colourful.

For blues the one and ideal genus is of course *Gentiana*—in fact, a Gentian Show has been suggested several times and the "Asiatics" could very nearly fill a good-sized Show alone—and they don't do so well in England, remember!—so a range from the little tubby *G. ornata*, if anyone still has the real plant, which I doubt, to some of the big majestic *sino-ornata* hybrids and the like is a "must" for this Show.

Grevillea alpina sometimes shows its scarlet flowers at autumn Shows, as do in a variety of colours some species of *Linaria* and *Linum* as well. I seem to recall seeing some species of *Lithospermum* flowering in late autumn in my last garden, where they did very well, but again my memory has let me down as to the name. Two really magnificent plants for this time are *Lysionotus pauciflora*, which is an awful misnomer, for it covers itself with little foxglove flowers—it is very tender and needs a frost-free alpine house—and the rock-hardy *Malvastrum coccineum*, a sub-shrub with flowers in shades from pink (not so good) to blazing orange and a full scarlet. I have seen miles of roadside lined with this plant in the Rockies at from 7000 ft. up, a really wonderful sight.

The labiates provide a number of little shrubby subjects, usually with scented leaves such as *Micromeria croatica*; an odd plant, more herbaceous than shrubby, which I have as *Origanum* "Hybridum" with brilliant pink flowers and bright green leaves; several species of *Teucrium*, dwarf shrubs with flowers ranging from pink through purples to blues; and *Satureia subspicata*, the late-flowering Savory, more commonly grown in the Herb Garden!

A very obvious group are the heaths and heathers, so many of which are in flower at the appropriate time. Here the difficulty with *Calluna*, *Erica* and *Daboecia* species is that they tend to attain rather

ungainly proportions or else lean away to one side so that good presentation is often extremely difficult. Careful pruning and shaping is the cure, but the difficulty is to shape and prune without removing the flowering parts of the plant. This really requires some preparation well in advance.

The *Nierembergia* species flower at this time usually, but they are just on the border of hardiness and require watching and some protection in severe conditions. *Omphalodes luciliae* shows its lovely blue flowers and is hardy and much the same colour is shown by the surprising pea-flower, *Parochetus communis*, which is commonly reported as flowering while still encased in ice. It comes from the Himalayas and should be hardy and behave as is described, but I never have been able to keep it. It flourishes with Major-General Murray-Lyon in Central Perthshire, but it does *not* seem to appreciate Midlothian. Any attempt, however, to grow it is well worth while, for it is a beautiful thing in flower. One unfailing stand-by is *Polygonum vacciniifolium*, which gives its spikes of pink flowers and good autumn tints, often simultaneously. It is a strong grower and will soon fill a pan, but can be easily kept under control. *Potentilla fruticosa* in its various forms is usually still in bloom, but many of the forms are on the big side for showing. I have never tried them in a pot—perhaps restriction might have a “bonsai” effect to some extent.

The genus *Primula* has one very late member in *Primula capitata mooreana*. This, however, is not entirely reliable as it sometimes starts to flower in August, while in other years it may be more than a month later. There are two Composites that are really late and might well be *too* late to be ready for October. These are *Serratula shawii*, with dark bronze foliage, deeply cut, and purple corn-flower-like blooms, and the tiny *Solidago brachystachys* with its bright golden flowers on stems a few inches high (I believe the botanists have been changing the name of this plant in the last few years, but that is the name under which I know it).

How can one classify the *Sedum* species and hybrids and the Sempervivums likewise? They flower freely, some in the summer, some in the autumn; some colour well in the autumn, some do not; they form magnificent pans and have classes all to themselves, but are they foliage plants, flowering plants, succulents or what? Perhaps one can just say they are sedums and semps and leave it at that, but they are good “bets” if they are well grown, no matter what the month of the year!

Occasionally *Wahlenbergia pumilio* flowers late or remains in flower to a late date ; if it obliges it makes a beautiful pan, and last, but far from least, I have kept that little gem *Sorbus reducta*. A tiny rowan, when growing well it has corymbs of brilliant red fruits and the most entrancing autumn colouring of the leaves ; in many ways it epitomises the best of autumn in the rock garden.

The Gardener's Prayer

O Lord, grant that in some way
It may rain every day, say from about midnight
till three o'clock in the morning ;
But You see, it must be gentle and warm,
So that it can soak in ;

Grant at the same time
That it would not rain on campion, alyssum,
helianthemum, lavender and others that
You know in Your infinite wisdom are
Drought-loving plants—I will write their names
on a slip of paper if You like—

And grant that the sun shine all day long, but
Not everywhere (not, for instance, on spirea, or
on gentian, plantain-lily, and rhododendron),
and not too much ;
That there may be plenty of dew and little wind,
Enough worms, no plant-lice and snails, no mildew,
and that once a week
Thin liquid manure may fall from heaven.
Amen.

Note :

“From a pencilled memorandum of Karel Capek's poem found among the papers of an avid gardener, my father, Dr. Charles Frederick Menninger”.

[Dedication to the book : *Flowering Trees of the World for Tropics and Warmer Climates*, by Edwin Menninger.]

Recent Acquisitions

By DAVID LIVINGSTONE

THE WORD "recent" in the title to these notes applies to plants I have acquired for the first time or have obtained again within the last three years or so. All of them are grown in pots in two cold frames, but many of them need not be grown in pots or given frame protection. I keep them in pots for a purely private reason.

Readers will no doubt be surprised that I give pride of place to a houseleek, but then the pleasure in having this plant is quite irrational. It is a *white*-flowered form of *Sempervivum arachnoideum* collected by Professor G. Pontecorvo two years ago in the Alps. I cannot remember the location, but when he gave me five tiny "rosettes" of it last Autumn he told me that he had never before seen it in all his many excursions in the European mountains. I saw one plant of it this year in the "natural" alpine botanic garden at Valnontey in the Cogne valley and it was labelled "very rare". My little "rosettes" were so small, little bigger than pinheads, that I used a magnifying glass throughout the winter to keep observation on them, but despite my care a slug made a meal of one of them. I hope it died of indigestion! The other four are now each the size of a silver three-penny piece, but in early August there are no signs of any new offsets being formed. The leaves are a very pale green, unlike the type, which has a good deal of reddish-brown on the outer leaves, but there is the typical cob-web in the centre. My plant is growing in a compost which consists mainly of $\frac{1}{4}$ inch granite chips with a dash of soil, peat and coarse sand. The surface of the pot is dressed with gravel from the shores of Loch Lomond. I also have a very small form of *S. arachnoideum* which I collected at Verbier in Switzerland and which also gives me great pleasure. It was growing in a pad of moss in a slight hollow in a rock and the whole plant came away complete under pressure from a stout knife blade. I planted it as it was in a five-inch shallow pan in the compost stated above and it has retained its character, the individual rosettes remaining small and very closely huddled together. In June it produced half a dozen flower stems about two inches long, each bearing four or five red flowers with golden pointed stamens. The judges at the Glasgow Show last April gave it a first prize against competition from bigger pans of much larger sempervivums. This leads me to a thought. When is *S. arachnoideum* in

character and when is it not ? I have been guilty when judging at a Show of saying that a plant was not in character, but this year on holiday in Cogne *S. arachnoideum* was so variable in size and appearance, depending on situation and soil, that it was difficult to form a judgement as to what was typical. I shall not be so rash in future in questioning whether a plant is in character or not !

The genus *Primula* has been a great favourite of mine since I bought *P. pubescens* 'Mrs. J. Wilson' as one of my first twelve rock plants thirty-seven years ago, and quite naturally there are a few primulas amongst my recent acquisitions. Two of them belong to the *Minutissimae* section, members of which are rather rare in cultivation. *P. reptans* comes from the Western Himalayas and is found at great heights—13,000 to 16,000 ft.—growing in moss on bare mountain slopes. It is quite tiny, no more than one inch high, and spreads out slowly by stolons which root as they go, making a dark green mat of small round leaves deeply cut at the margins. Its flowers are quite large for the size of the plant, about the size of a two-shilling piece, and are rich violet in colour with a pronounced white eye. I believe it flowers but sparsely in its native habitat and I know that Mr. Will Ingwerson once recorded that, although he could grow it well, he never succeeded in flowering it. With me *P. reptans* has flowered well once and I think Mr. R. S. Masterton once showed it very well flowered. I have tried with little success to propagate it by detaching rosettes and I am now trying to increase my stock by cutting through the creeping stems with surgical scissors and leaving the little rooted ends of the stolons undisturbed for several months to allow them to become established on their own roots, which are like very fine silky hairs. *P. pusilla* is found at similar heights and in similar conditions, but in the Eastern Himalayas. It is not stoloniferous, but makes rosettes of leaves which are spatulate, about an inch long, and are deeply serrated at the tips. It multiplies reasonably quickly and the rosettes, which seem almost to move away from one another to find room for growth, can be carefully detached and potted on. The flowers, two or three to a two-inch scape, are not very big and are violet in colour. A distinguishing feature is a pompom of white hairs in the centre of the flower occluding the throat. This is a dainty and desirable species for careful cultivation in a frame or alpine house and it is, or was, recently obtainable from Mr. Jack Drake. My third Asiatic primula is a hybrid of the *Soldanelloides* section, *eburnea* \times *reidii williamsii*, given to me as a seedling by Mrs. E. G. Cairns, Berwickshire. These seedlings

have the typical bell-shaped flowers of the section and they vary in colour from white through to dark blue. They usually flower twice in the year—late April and August—and the blossoms are sweetly scented.

My list of Asiatic primulas is completed with another two species of the Soldanelloides section, neither of which is easy, but they can be flowered and kept going in a frame or alpine house. Success is best achieved by keeping all these primulas comparatively dry throughout the late Autumn and Winter. *P. cawdoriana* forms flat rosettes of hairy leaves from which rise three- or four-inch scapes carrying up to half a dozen or so longish tubular flowers lavender in colour. I have seen the flowers described as violet-mauve, but mine have never been as dark as that. *P. wattii* is somewhat similar to the last named, but the leaves are longer, not so serrated on the edges, and are rather more upright. The flowers are also bell-shaped, deep violet in colour, and are carried on a four- or five-inch scape in a tight head. When the scape first appears the stem and calyces are a very deep purple, almost black in fact.

Both species can be propagated by careful division and if seeds are set they can with skill and attention be reared to flowering plants. All of these Asiatic primulas are growing in a compost approximating to John Innes No. 3, but roughened up quite considerably by the addition of coarse silver sand. Partial shade in summer is beneficial and dryish conditions are necessary in winter. And now to European primulas, which are generally easier of cultivation and which like a bit more loam and less peat in their compost.

P. tyrolensis is closely related botanically to *P. allionii* and is found in the Italian Tyrol growing on limestone cliffs, usually in crevices. It is a small plant growing but slowly, and although it is not difficult it has not been very generous with its flowers, which are rose-like with a white eye. They are borne one or two on a very short, almost non-existent scape and are slightly larger than a shilling. The leaves, in compact rosettes, are round and glossy, and occasionally there is a whitish sheen suggesting a deposit of lime. In recognition of its limestone habitat I have a few limestone chips in its pot. Unlike *P. allionii*, it appears to have no objection to being exposed to the elements for six or seven months in the year. The specimen of *P. glaucescens* which I have was collected by Professor Pontecorvo. It too is a native of limestone regions and is usually found in moist, shady places. It is said to be endemic to the Alps of Bergamo and the Judicarian Alps.

The leaves, in compact rosettes, are round and glossy and about two inches long. The rosettes multiply quickly and my plant, which looked like a one-year-old seedling a year ago, has now five or six growing points. The flowers, carried in heads of up to six on a two- or three-inch scape, are rose-purple, and may be as large as half a crown. Although found in shady places in the wild, my plant does not seem to mind full sun. *P. wulfeniana*, closely related to *P. glaucescens* botanically, occurs chiefly in the South Eastern Alps, again on limestone. The leaves, again in compact rosettes, are long and narrow, sharply pointed at the tips. The rosettes multiply quite quickly and the plant can soon become quite congested. This can affect the flowering and therefore the plant should be divided every two or three years. The flowers, rose-red in colour, are carried on two-inch scapes and there may be up to three on each. I have a few limestone chips in the compost in which *P. glaucescens* and *P. wulfeniana* are growing, but I do not know whether they are necessary. Certainly neither plant appears to take them amiss.

My last primula is a hybrid raised by Jack Drake at Inshriach, Aviemore. It is *P.* 'Diane', the parentage of which I do not know, but my guess is that there is *P. minima* blood in it and perhaps also *P. rubra*. It is quite dwarf, not unlike *P. x fosteri* in habit, but its leaves are dark green. The flowers, borne several to a short scape, are comparatively large and are deep purple in colour. This should prove to be a good plant for April Shows or in good Springs even for late March. It is a good grower and appears to increase reasonably quickly.

Saxifragas have also been a favourite genus with me for a very long time and are excellent for frame or alpine house culture in pots. This does not mean that they are unsuitable for the rock garden, but as most of them are small and flower early, their full beauty can be more easily achieved and more readily appreciated in frames or in the alpine house. Those I am about to mention are growing in a gritty compost with a liberal addition of small limestone chips. *S. burseriana* 'Major Lutea' of the Kabschia section is a comparatively new form which was given an Award of Merit in 1963. It has large soft yellow flowers of good form borne on short crimson stems. It is not at all difficult and it flowers freely. This is a fine plant which should find a place in every collection of saxifragas. Another striking plant of the same section is *S. erythrantha*, which is sometimes found in catalogues as *S. scardica erythrantha*. It has large attractive yellow-green leaves which are very distinctly pitted with lime. The flowers, carried two

or three to a stem, are white, fading to pink. *S.* 'Myra' Cambria variety, also of this section, has darker red flowers than the older hybrid 'Myra' and flowers more freely. This is an excellent companion for that outstanding pink hybrid *S.* 'Cranbourne', which has been used to good purpose by exhibitors at early Shows. My next saxifraga is classed as an Engleria and again it is in my opinion an improvement on the form which has been in cultivation for many years. It is *S. porophylla thessalica* 'Waterperry Variety', first distributed a few years ago by Miss Valerie Finnis of Waterperry Horticultural School, Wheatley, Oxford. It makes small silver rosettes all huddled together, from which in April rise three-inch stems carrying a number of very dark purple flowers. This is a striking plant which has been exhibited at the Glasgow Shows with considerable success. My last saxifraga is one with both Kabschia and Engleria blood in it, as I understand it is a hybrid between *S. burseriana* 'Major' and *S. grisebachii*. This hybrid, which I believe is of recent introduction, is called *S. x* 'Marie-Theresa' and is still scarce. It has pleasing little rosettes and carries its clusters of pale pink flowers on scarlet stems. This should be a good show plant but as yet I have not seen it at any S.R.G.C. Show.

Lewisia tweedyi has long been regarded as the best of the genus, but it is now in my opinion overshadowed by the form I now grow. *L. tweedyi* 'Rosea' Inshriach form is quite distinct from the type, being smaller in the rosette with wavy edges to the darker leaves. The flowering stems are shorter and they carry three or four bright pink flowers which make this an outstanding plant. It requires a gritty compost with coarse sand or gravel round its neck and it should be kept on the dry side during winter. This plant should, I think, prove to be at its best in a frame or alpine house.

Harrimanella stelleriana, once classed by botanists as a *Cassiope*, is a delightful little plant with trailing stems clothed with Empetrum-like small leaves. The flowers, white in colour, crowned by a red calyx, are carried singly on thread-like stems from the tips of the growth. It requires a peat or leaf-mould soil and presents no more difficulty than a cassiope. Seeds are set and new plants may be raised from them, but as the seedlings are tiny and rather fragile they require careful handling for the first year or two. Surprisingly it is a scarce plant and not very often offered for sale.

Campanula glomerata acaulis is a dwarf form of the alpine meadow plant *C. glomerata* which is, so I am told, found wild in England, and

which is often grown here in herbaceous borders. This dwarf form is sometimes offered as 'Nana'. It is similar in every way to its big sister except in height, being only a few inches high. Farrer called it a freak, but in flower it is rather a pretty freak and as it blooms in early August it is a quite valuable plant for the rock garden, where it requires no special care or attention. A different kettle of fish is *Campanula piperi*, which is quite small with dark green holly-like leaves and upturned steely blue flowers of a size appropriate to the plant. It is a native of North America and, I believe, is found mainly growing in cracks and crevices. In cultivation it requires a gritty compost and once established it should be left alone, except for an occasional top dressing, to increase by underground stolons. This is a plant well suited to pot cultivation and it may also be grown in a trough or select spot in scree, as it is not invasive.

About eighteen months ago I was given, by Dr. Norman Holgate, two newly rooted cuttings of dwarf hybrid rhododendrons and already they have made nice plants of six or seven inches high. They are full of buds and should make a nice show next spring. *R.* 'Pink Drift' is upright in its growth and carries its large flat pink flowers in great profusion. It will grow slowly to about eighteen inches high. *R.* 'Sapphire' is more spreading in its habit and eventually makes quite a big bush. The flowers, light blue in colour, are freely borne in clusters. Both would appear to be good subjects, at least for a time, for pot cultivation, but they do well in a peat or leaf-mould soil in the rock garden or dwarf shrub border. Dr. Holgate grows both these hybrids under the latter conditions here in Bearsden on the outskirts of Glasgow. They are in full sun and grow and flower well.

These are most of my more recent acquisitions and, needless to say, they give me great pleasure. Most are housed in a 5 × 4 ft. span roof Critall frame raised from the ground on a 2 ft. brick wall. The plunging material is red blaze and the tops of the pots are almost level with the top of the brick wall. In this way they are easy to handle and they are more easily appreciated since the plants are nearer to eye level. The lights are removed in late April and put back again in early October. Little or no watering is required in winter and in summer the glass of the side walls is painted with Summer Cloud for shade. This frame holds between 70 and 80 pots, varying in size from 2½ to 6½ inches. Even one frame of this type can give untold pleasure without being a burden.

I regret to report that as I was writing these notes my garden was flooded to a depth of $4\frac{1}{2}$ ft. by water from a burst main. So far only *Saxifraga erythrantha* has completely collapsed, but only time will tell what damage has been done to the roots of other rock garden plants. Damage to dahlias, gladioli, annuals and roses was quickly apparent but of course my main concern is my rock garden plants. The trials and tribulations which beset a gardener !

BOTANICAL CLASSIFICATION

“ IN 1694, appear'd M. Tournefort's first Work, intitl'd, *The Elements of Botany*, printed at the *Louvre* in three volumes. The Design of it is to bring into order that prodigious number of Plants so confusedly scatter'd all over the Earth, and even beneath the Waters of the Sea ; and to distribute them into Genera and Species, so as to make the Knowledge of 'em easy, and spare the Memory from being overloaded with infinite numbers of Names.

This Order, so necessary, is no way established by Nature's self, who has prefer'd a noble Confusion to the Conveniency of the Philosophers.

It seem'd to be very much approv'd of by the Majority of the Physicians. He was indeed attack'd in some things by *M. Ray*, a celebrated English Botanist and Natural Philosopher : M. Tournefort published an answer in 1697, being a Latin Dissertation address'd to *M. Sherard*, another ingenious Englishman.

The dispute was carry'd on without the least Gall, nay, with extreme Politeness and Good-breeding on both sides, which is a thing to be observ'd. Perhaps you'll say, the Subject was scarce worth while to be warm for ; the question being only, whether the Flowers and Fruits were sufficient to designate the Genera, whether such a certain plant was of this or that Genus. 'Tis no such uncommon thing, however, for Men, especially the Learned, to fly into a Passion on light occasions. *M. Tournefort*, in a subsequent Work, bestows great Praises on *M. Ray*, and even on his System of Plants.”

(From “The Elogium of M. Tournefort”, by M. Fontanelle)

Two *Meconopses*

By STEWART MITCHELL

Meconopsis horridula (Fig. 75). Under this name are gathered together as one species many forms which had previously been given specific rank, such as *M. prattii*, *M. rudis*, *M. racemosa* and *M. sinuata*, etc. Sir George Taylor in his "An Account of the Genus *Meconopsis*", published in 1934, comes to this conclusion as he found they could not be clearly separated botanically.

This, however, still leaves the plants grown under this name with the varying characteristics which for one reason or another had attracted these separate specific names. This seems only to be expected as they have a very wide geographic range—roughly from Nepal to Western China. In addition they are found at altitudes of from 10,000 ft. to 19,000 ft., which in itself is enough to produce variations, even in a quite restricted area.

The form shown in the illustration may well be the one known as *M. prattii*, which in the East of Scotland has settled down as a good easy plant with a good deep blue flower. Rogues do, of course, still appear. It is possible that in this area they all originated from the same source. Isolation and some selection has helped towards the production of this most satisfactory form.

One wonders, if after the lapse of thirty-odd years since Sir George Taylor's book was published, it might be possible to have a new assessment of the genus, if this sort of thing has happened elsewhere. It may well apply to other species in the genus. Or will hybridisation have made the confusion worse confounded with some of them?

M. horridula belongs to the Series *Aculeatae*, which are monocarpic, have tap roots, and most of them have stiff spiky bristles or spines on leaves, stems, and bud cases. *M. horridula* is perhaps the species most fiercely furnished with this array of spines. This characteristic has been taken as an indication that it would prefer dry conditions. It does appear that they are mostly scree plants in nature, but in this area, with rainfall normally of just over 30 inches, the best grown plants are invariably found in peat gardens, or in woodland soil, and even appreciate filtered shade at height of day.

I have only seen the form with an erect flowering stem of up to 2 ft., and not those consisting of basal flower stems only. Of course, well grown plants here, such as that illustrated, photographed at St. Andrews University Botanic Gardens in the month of July 1963,

have both the erect and basal flower stems, making a very satisfactory plant.

The flowers may vary considerably in number of petals, said to be from four to eight, but I have usually seen plants with five-petalled flowers. The colour of the flowers varies, too, but as indicated, selection can produce a good deep steely blue without any trace of purple. This is most attractive with its central group of golden stamens. Ruthless discarding of inferior colours will improve the strain.

The leaves are long with rounded points, wavy and slightly lobed edges, liberally set with spines on both sides. These start off with a basal rosette where leaves can be up to ten inches long, including their stalks, and continue up the central flower stem getting smaller with shorter stems, and very few towards the top.

Flowering starts at the top of the 2 ft. central flower stem, and this untidy system results in ripening seed capsules at the top before the lower flowers open. The photograph excludes the top of the spike for this reason, although it spoils it as a complete botanic illustration. This position results in some self-sown seeds, even before the tidy gardener gets busy with his scissors.

This is quite a suitable meconopsis for the small rock garden, a small group does not occupy too much space, and will give a little height where needed. Good sized drifts look well in the larger garden.

For many, self-sown seedlings will keep the stock going, but seed germinates freely, seedlings transplant easily, and they die back to their tap root in autumn, so avoiding any trouble from winter wet. When planting out they can be spaced about 8 to 10 inches apart. It often blooms in its second year, but some seedlings may wait until the third year. All the best-coloured flowers have been seen in gardens free from lime, and the type of soil will almost certainly have a bearing on the purity of the good blue tones desired in its flowers. With its wide distribution in nature, it is found sometimes on limestone, but I can find no record of colour variation in such circumstances.

Meconsopsis aculeata (Fig. 76). This meconopsis is the type-species of the Series Aculeatae. Like others in this Series, it is monocarpic, has a tap root, and is furnished with spines.

The general habit of the plant is similar to *M. horridula*, but I have never seen so sturdy a central flower stem in *M. aculeata*, and usually it does not exceed 18 inches in height, although a well grown plant would also have a considerable number of basal flower stems. The leaves are quite distinct, being well cut into irregular sections or

lobes, with a certain amount of waviness at the edges, the sections set at slightly varying angles giving quite an interesting outline. The deeply cut lobes distinguish it from *M. horridula* and *M. latifolia*, which are the other related species most likely to be seen. These leaves with their stalks are about 8 inches long at the basal rosette position and smaller and shorter stalked higher up, but do not appear to grow so far up the central flower stem as in the case of *M. horridula*, the stem itself, of course, not being so robust. All are covered with spines, not quite so "horrid" as in its relative, and the spines are lighter in colour.

The flowers usually have four petals, Reginald Farrer is quite dogmatic about it *only* having four petals, and certainly I have never seen one with more. These are set regularly and have an almost round outline. Their colour varies, and Samson Clay gives it a very bad name, recommending the non-specialist to have none of it, if he has others of these spired species. What I have seen in this area are usually of the form referred to by Reginald Farrer as "of a crumpled pale-blue silk, filmed with diaphanous iridescence of violet—against their golden spray of stamens, a colour indescribable in its pure beauty, like a sky of dawn remembering very faintly the first touch of amethyst in which it died the night before." That description cannot be bettered and such a form is indeed a lovely sight.

It seems to have a more restricted geographic range, being found only in the North-Western Himalaya. The altitude range is lower and is given as 8000 ft. to 14,000 ft., which may have a bearing on its culture in our gardens.

M. aculeata was first flowered in this country at Kew as far back as 1864, but is not so commonly found in gardens as its two relatives mentioned above. It is not such an easy species to please and is found only well grown in the gardens of the more able cultivators, and then as a scree plant. Its native habitat is said to be amongst damp rocks and screes, and along stream sides, but it seems to prefer a rich scree in this area, with good top drainage. The photograph was taken at Branklyn, Perth, in early June 1965, and shows a small group at the foot of the steepest scree in this garden and at the edge of a path. Here it would get some extra surface moisture, and tall trees to the south would give a little shade at noon.

This species also starts to bloom at the top, but the picture shows quite a group of flowers out at the same time, including some on the basal flower stems.



Photo—D. Holford

Fig. 69—*Primula auricula* and *Erica carnea*, Wengen Area



Photo—D. Holford

Fig. 70—*Polygala chamaebuxus*, Wengen Alp

I have not grown this species, as I was satisfied with one example of the Series in my small garden—I also feared hybridisation, and was quite content with *M. horridula*. I understand that the group in the photograph arrived as self-sown seedlings. The scree conditions would help this and the establishment of the seedlings. I understand it will come readily from seed and will prosper if given a suitable place to develop. I am assured that it dies back in autumn in the first few years of its life, and may bloom in its second or third year from seed.

Lines to the Clay Pot

Oh ! bonnie, sonsy, couthie pot
 Of thy same kind a graidly lot
 In ilka size I have a store
 Will last me mony a season o'er.

I canna thole these plastic yins !
 I'm share it's no a gairner's sins,
 But raither only siller's lack
 That gars him buy them, red or black.

A pot o' plastic cracks in twa ;
 It is na ony use at a'
 There's naithing ye can dae wi' it—
 Ye dang it in the rubbish pit !

But gin a puir auld clay pot brak
 Then every single bit I tak
 An' wi' it crock anither yin.
 Bless me ! its use is never din !

Oh ! had I but a mound o'clay,
 I'd mak' my ain pots ony day.
 An' never gie a tinker's dash
 For a' that lifeless plastic trash !

Bridging that Winter Gap (with Bulbs)

By R. J. MITCHELL

MOST rock gardens tend to be devoid of flower colour during the dull winter months. Certainly there is plenty of colour from the many shades of green supplied by the evergreen shrubs and dwarf conifers and by the autumn colours of fruiting capsules and deciduous shrubs.

Plants like *Polygonum affine* and *P. vacciniifolium* are a wonderful asset to the rock garden, for the autumn colour of the leaves lasts till the resurgent young growth appears in the Spring. The flower spikes, too, if retained after flowering provide a russet red colour.

There are a few plants which provide the odd flower well into the winter, i.e. *Lithospermum diffusum* 'Heavenly Blue', *Asarina procumbens* (syn. *Antirrhinum asarina*), *Ceratostigma willmottiae* and *Iberis gibraltarica*, to mention only a few.

One can have flowerings all the year round by careful choice of the many varieties of heaths and heathers, but although they are fine plants from the alpine zone, they are generally regarded as a class apart and grown on their own.

The merits of the evergreen shrubs or the autumn tints cannot be overstressed, for there is a great need for colour of any description in the rock garden in the winter, and by planning a pleasing effect can be produced. Not only is the overall interest in the rock garden maintained, but they also provide an excellent background on which to show off small plants, or to provide shelter to more tender specimens.

The autumn and winter flowering bulbs could come into this category, for although the flowers are generally frost hardy, the ravages of wind and rain do, alas, blemish the blooms and they last but fleetingly. This group or collection of bulbs maintains the sequence of flowering and acts as a slender bridge between late autumn glories, such as the Gentian tribe, *Astilbe simplicifolia*, *A. glaberrima* 'Saxatilis', *A. crispa*, *Saxifraga fortunei*, *Cyclamen neapolitanum* and *Serratula shawii*, and the spring flood of *Kabschia Saxifrages* and the hosts of bulbous plants which begin to appear in early February and continue for several months.

Although this tiny group of autumn and winter flowering plants is limited in number they provide an interest in the dull days when little else appears to be growing. It is surprising that this little select band should have been overlooked for so long, for most of the species are prettily coloured.

The mention of Autumn crocus conjures up the genus *Colchicum*, which is unsuited to the small rock garden, for although they provide a fine show of flower in the autumn, the leaf growth which follows in the spring smothers anything in close proximity. Some of the colchicums are less rank in this respect than others—*C. aggripinum* comes to mind, but even in this instance the leafy habit develops, though a little less conspicuously.

However, the plants to which I refer are not the *Colchicum* species at all, but the autumn flowering crocuses. Of these *Crocus speciosus* is the most commonly grown. It is an easy doer and spreads about by detached cormlets and by self-sown seeds, producing a carpet of colour in a short time. This crocus, some 3-4 ins. tall, grows quite happily in the moister soils under shrubs, and flowers even pop up through small rock garden plants from late September onwards. On sunny days their pale lilac, purple-veined flowers open fully, showing the white throat of the petals and the spectacular reddish-orange feathery stigma and yellow anthers.

Quite similar in flower and habit to this species is *C. pulchellus*, which if anything flowers a little later and is a little paler in colour. This is not a good identification, for *C. speciosus* is a very variable plant and there are several varietal forms of it. However, *C. pulchellus* is probably more easily identified by its white anthers and yellow throat. It does not, however, spread so rapidly as *C. speciosus*, so can be confined to an area to flower more profusely.

Crocus kotschyanus is perhaps the earliest of the autumn flowering crocus species. It starts to flower in mid September and is almost as prolific in its flowering as the other two already mentioned. It, too, is worth growing for its neat habit and, as it spreads freely by detached cormlets, it is another welcome coloniser. To me *C. kotschyanus* is intermediate between *C. speciosus* and *C. pulchellus* in floral resemblance, but it has conspicuous orange marking at the base of the petals which marks a clear distinction. It is often grown under the name *C. zonatus*.

Crocus asturiensis var. *atropurpureus* is not so spectacular in its flowering, but its season of late October and November helps to provide a sequence of flower colour. Its purple-coloured petals look drab on dull days but take on a lustre against a backcloth of fallen leaves in the sunlight. It is slender-stemmed, so must be given a sheltered corner, for the wind and rain tend to cause havoc with this species. With us this crocus flowers well into November, when *Iris unguicularis* unsheaths its first flowers.

This iris is a worthwhile rhizomatous addition to the winter flowering bulbous plants. It might be a bit on the tall side for the small rock garden, but for providing this additional floral interest in the winter months it is worth while including if at all possible. I have seen it growing happily beside the path in front of a large rock and flowering extremely well in late January, but there are the odd blooms throughout the winter from November onwards.

Iris unguicularis is a tall (12-18 ins.) light purple flowered iris with lavender, yellow and white marking on the throat. The form *alba* is free flowering but loses some of its interest by being white, while the form *lazica* is similar to the species but has broader leaves.

Galanthus nivalis sub. sp. *reginae-olgae* is another autumn flowering plant. It will start to flower in October, but generally the greater proportion flower in November. As the name suggests it belongs to the common snowdrop and some authorities maintain that its only difference is in its autumn flowering habit. However, be that as it may, it is a welcome companion to those already mentioned.

Well before Christmas *Crocus laevigatus* and its variety *fontenayi* start to flower and continue throughout the winter despite the inclement weather. Very frequently the flowers are covered with snow, only to appear again when the snow melts, to continue the sequence of flowering. The lilac-coloured petals are heavily feathered with purple veining and in sunny weather the flowers open fully to the sun, exposing the orange stigmas. Being of small habit—no more than 2 ins. tall—the flowers are more or less impervious to the winds and rain. However, another species flowering just after Christmas—*C. imperatii*—has flowers 3-4 ins. high and, having a slender tube and globular flowers making it somewhat heavy headed, this species does unfortunately suffer from the vagaries of the weather. For this reason it is definitely a species for the sheltered corner. It is a pretty flower, having the outer three petals buff-coloured with purple veining, while the inner three petals are pale purple with deep purple veination.

At the turn of the year *Crocus korolkowii* is probably the first species to flower out of doors. It is quite hardy but seems to do best in some sheltered corner and where in the summer the soil is baked with the sun to ripen the bulbs. Where the bulbs have been well ripened this species is hard to beat for sheer numbers of flowers, for there must be five or six or even seven flowers for each corm. The outer petals are yellow with conspicuous deep mahogany veining, while the inner petals are yellow.

We appear to have two forms of this plant, for one flowers in early January while the other follows later by some two to three weeks. Both, however, are very floriferous and between them we get flowering over a long period.

Towards the beginning of February *C. fleischeri* comes into flower. This slender white species, beautifully marked with a purple blotch at the base of each petal and feathery orange-scarlet stigma, is also quite hardy. It is taller than *C. korolkowii*, being some 3 ins. high, and gives a fine show of flower which brightens up the rock garden.

Another interesting little crocus flowering at the same time is the dainty lavender coloured *C. sieberi*. This little species which has a short flower stem is one of the best for standing up to the vagaries of the climate and like *C. laevigatus fontenayi* can be covered with snows only to appear again unblemished when the snows melt.

C. sieberi 'Violet Queen' has the same short habit but is darker in flower, being a violet blue in colour. It is equally as good as the species.

At this time several other plants like *Cyclamen orbiculatum* and its associates provide extra flower colour from January to March. Not only are the flowers welcome (for they produce in abundance), but there is also interest in the marbled variegations of the leaves. Nor should the two Hepaticas be overlooked. *Hepatica triloba* and *H. transsilvanica* are welcome in the rock garden, provided a cool, shady spot can be found, and this shouldn't be too difficult.

From the foregoing notes it should be realised that there is no excuse for a rock garden to be without flowers even in winter. The plants mentioned here are not the only species which can be grown. There are many more which are worth growing but perhaps may be a bit more difficult.

A. Annabel

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Is your Rock Garden really necessary ?

By "VIDE"

THIS YEAR I have been looking at gardens. There's nothing new in that. I've been doing it for most of my adult life. But this year I've been looking at gardens—and particularly rock gardens—*critically*. What brought this on was, I think, the fact that I have recently acquired a very small rock garden myself. No credit to me ; it was here when I came. And, despite all my efforts to mould it nearer to my heart's desire, it still remains, and looks like continuing to remain, a not altogether satisfying entity. So I've been going around to see how other folk have managed.

The result has been vaguely disappointing. The old mature ones, with notable exceptions, have generally run-of-the-mill stuff, easy-going plants that would have done equally well (or almost) without rocks. In many cases, in fact, the rocks had almost disappeared under the plants and, while the result was undoubtedly pleasing, they didn't look altogether like "rock" gardens. The newer ones, on the contrary, were often too much rock, so much so that the effect (again with notable exceptions) was rather artificial. Admittedly these will improve in time, but it could be a long time.

Now I well know that suitable rock is, in most places, expensive and/or difficult to get. Except in mountain areas, just about the only sources of supply are certain coast-lines and quarries. On the coast the stones are, I suppose inevitably, very assorted, and picking and choosing suitable ones is a slow and tedious job. Transport also can be quite a problem. Cars can seldom be taken close to the rocks ; lifting, even if there are two of you, is really hard labour, and the rock-carrying ability of the average car is limited. Three or four fairly large ones and the springs begin to sag. You could, of course, get a contractor to do it, but that generally means taking what he brings, and he, naturally, brings the first that come to hand, not the best and most suitable. A quarry will deliver (and you'll need a few tons for even a small rock garden) but quarry stone is harsh, raw looking tuff, and takes an awful long time to acquire a mature look. You may be lucky enough to find a quarry master who will try to find and send suitable pieces for you, but, by and large, you take what you get. Also and moreover, it will almost certainly be dumped at your gate, or in your drive, and the moving of a few tons of assorted stone

before you can get the car in—or out—can be a little trying on the back, the knuckles, the finger nails, and the temper. Furthermore, it costs money ; quite a lot of money. So is it worth it—the time, the trouble, the bawbees ? I doubt it.

I realise that this will appear sheer heresy to many ardent and experienced rock gardeners, who will maintain—and rightly so—that many Alpine plants look their best when growing among rocks. To that I certainly agree, but I would add the proviso, only if the rocks are appropriate to the plants, to the situation, and to the district.

If you garden in the hills, where you may be even fortunate enough to have outcrops of rock appearing, that's fine. You're half way to a first class rock garden already. But—and this applies to most of us —if your garden is the usual rectangle of more or less level ground, bounded by a fence, a hedge, or a wall, do you really need a rock garden ? Ninety-five per cent. of the best Alpines can be grown almost equally well on the flat, or on a slope, without stone, and will look just about as attractive there. Many of the others are the awkward ones, which are best left to the specialist, or the gardener who gets his or her greatest satisfaction in triumphing over difficulties and succeeding where others fail. The ordinary gardener, who just wants colour and variety, can even put them at the front of the herbaceous border. The plants are the essential things ; the rocks are secondary.

Now I am not advising people not to grow Alpines. I'd better emphasise that. They are (mostly !) lovely things and well worth trying to grow well. I'm not even saying that you shouldn't build a rock garden if you want to. All I'm suggesting is that you don't *need* rock. Many a potential Alpine gardener is, I am sure, put off, perhaps even permanently, by the lack of assurance of this fact.

Summing up, then, I would say : if you already have a rock garden, make the most of it. You'll get a tremendous amount of pleasure, and can, with a little ingenuity, grow almost all the Alpines you want, even the more difficult ones.

If your garden is naturally hilly and/or rocky, by all means build a rock garden. Even if there isn't enough to satisfy you on your own plot, excellent suitable stone can usually be collected close at hand, and will look natural and at home. I can think of several first class rock gardens made—or in the making—in situations like this. If you're an enthusiastic Alpinist and want to grow the more difficult High Alpines, build a rock garden. The time and trouble won't bother you, and the successes you have will be ample recompense. (It could

be, of course, that you'd do better by building an Alpine House, but that's another story).

If you want to impress the neighbours and have something the others haven't got, and you don't mind the extra labour and expense, go ahead and build a rock garden. You can also add pools, screes, bogs, electrically operated streams, waterfalls, fountains, the lot!

But, if your garden is the usual town or suburban one, flat or nearly so, thirty yards by ten, and the nearest natural rock is miles away, don't *begin* by wasting your substance on stone. Buy plants instead. They, or at least most of them, will flourish just as well, you can vary the contours with plants of varying heights, and a few pieces of flat stone, picked up anywhere, and laid down as stepping stones, will enable you to walk among them and admire them at "close-up". Eventually, if you're keen and enthusiastic enough, you probably will build a rock garden. By then, with the knowledge and experience you'll have acquired, you're likely to make a much better job of it and you'll have more idea of what you're letting yourself in for.

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Oncocyclus Irises

By HAROLD ESSELMONT

ONCOCYCLUS IRISES were regarded until recently by most of our Scottish members as rare and unobtainable plants, almost impossible of cultivation. Then exciting transparencies of these handsome irises were shown by James Archibald and Brian Mathew to some of our local groups. Our appetites were whetted and when a fortunate few received "live" material flown from Iran, the question of their cultivation became an immediate one.

This article must necessarily be considered a tentative one, as it is based on very limited experience. It is written in the hope that it may encourage others to come forward and share their experiences with us. I can find very little literature on the subject to guide us.

A short note appears in the *A.G.S. Bulletin*, Vol. 27, page 269, which states: "Professor W. A. West gives them a thorough ripening in summer. If they are to be flowered well, he writes, they must be dug up as soon as the foliage dies down and be stored in dry sand. They should be planted as late as possible (toward the end of December), protected by a frame in pure sand-dune sand well enriched with cow manure, over very sharp drainage, for these irises will not grow in poor soil. Neither are they a success for long in heavy loam soils which were recommended in the past". This may seem rather drastic treatment, but it does stress the necessity for a thorough ripening of the rhizomes.

A helpful leaflet is issued by the *British Iris Society Species Group entitled "Suggestions for the cultivation of *Oncocyclus* and *Regelia* Iris and *Junos*". It is emphasised that this is not a set of rules, but rather a basis for further experiment. Agreed necessities are:—

- (1) A long summer resting period with all possible warmth to ripen the rhizome.
- (2) Superperfect drainage.

The method of culture suggested is free-standing box-beds with removable lights. Successful examples of this type of cultivation may be seen at Wisley, where sliding Pluie frames are erected on the top of brick walls. Few of us have these facilities, however, and will have to grow our irises in pots.

A fellow member who is interested in these plants is experimenting with me in their cultivation. We can claim at least that our methods

have produced a few flowers ! My friend has the advantage of a small frost-free house in addition to his cold alpine house. This is valuable as in winter, 20 miles inland, he may experience up to 30° of frost. This is much colder than my coastal area, where I have seldom more than 15°. April frosts too, with him, can be devastating to young tender growth. Obviously local conditions must be taken into account.

The dry and practically rootless rhizomes of collected plants are potted up immediately on receipt and the pots are plunged in dry sand in the frost-free house. Bottom watering is not commenced until October. The soil mixture is a gritty one, say John Innes No. 1 plus one-third sharp sand, with a surface covering of gravel. Drainage must be excellent.

The advantage of the frost-free house, with its minimum temperature of 40°, is that in starting the rhizomes it allows the soil to be kept moist from the beginning. This encourages root action and gets the plants moving. Control plants in the cold house have to be kept drier and in some cases the rhizomes perish before root action begins. Established plants are plunged in sand in the frost-free house in the colder district and in the cold house in the coastal one. Watering of the sand only around the pots commences towards the end of October and bottom watering is begun in March when growth appears to be more active. One or two applications of liquid fertiliser are given throughout the growing season.

A number of the plants flowered this summer. One of the most striking was M & T 545, exhibited at Dunfermline. This had white standards and rich brown falls fully 6 ins. through and the Standards 6 ins. high. Mr. Mathew informs me that this is *Iris iberica* or, if one follows Russian splitting of hairs, *Iris elegantissima*—the latter has incurving standards. Among others were A.C.W. 1863 (illustrated) with black markings on a mauve ground, and J.C.A. 3163, probably *Iris acutiloba* (fig. 77).

In July, or earlier in warmer districts, when the foliage begins to yellow, water is gradually withheld and in August the plants are transferred to a frame exposed to the maximum sun. There they remain until they are returned to the alpine house in October. Long tom pots are used for established plants and small pots for those which have not yet made a root system. It may be that a certain amount of root restriction is desirable, but this has not yet been determined. Brian Mathew, writing in the *Gardener's Chronicle*, recommends frequent division of rhizomes and replanting in new soil

to maintain vigour and that pot plants should be repotted every year at the end of the dormant season. He goes on to say : "Few of that glorious race are what one would call easy to grow, but by reproducing their natural climate as closely as possible reasonable success can be assured."

Plantmen will accept the challenge in the knowledge that the rewards of success are well worth while.

*The Species Group of the British Iris Society. *Hon. Secretary* : Mrs. A. Marchant, Stort Lodge, Hadam Road, Bishops Storton, Herts. Membership 5/-.

THE RARITY OF ROCK PLANTS

"WHENEVER I happen'd to be on the edge of a Precipice, instead of pretending to regulate my Horse's Motion, I shut my eyes, that I might not see the danger, or else alighted with my Friends to search after Simples.

Our Pains were generally recompens'd with some new Plant, and these sorts of Plants are call'd rare, only because they who apply themselves to Botany, rarely take the trouble of going to such wild Places ; it is more natural to walk about in a Wood. In the first Ages of the World, the Plants called usual or Common Plants, were only in use, because of the facility Men had in coming at 'em. It is no easy task to account why those Vegetables which grow in the Cliffs of a Rock are so different from such as are produc'd in a pleasant Spot of Ground : to refer it to the difference of the nutritious Juice, is making us just as wise as we were before ; it is tumbling out of one Difficulty into another, the common Fault of Physicians."

(From a letter from Tournefort to Monseigneur the Count de Pontchartrain, Secretary of State, etc.)

Comment on an Eastern Saying : "Buy Hyacinths to feed thy soul"

Let others praise a favourite flower with honours free
 In virtue of its colour, form or scent ;
 LILY, were I bereft of every bloom save thee
 Yet would I be content.

JEAN ARRÉ

They're good - but need watching

By HENRY TOD

I THINK we all know plants that are just a little too exuberant and must be kept in check—the following are some that I have found come into this group.

First, there are a couple of Composites, both nice plants but apt to swamp their weaker neighbours. *Dimorphotheca barberiae* 'Compacta' has good, clean green foliage, is compact, keeps low and has big purplish daisy-type flowers on about six inch stems. It does not usually set much seed, but when it does it is in the two shapes indicated in the generic name. Its trouble is that the very tough shoots work steadily out from the parent plant and are liable to pop up in quite unexpected places—and it takes quite a bit of digging out. A careful trim round each year will check this, but if you forget to do so you can land in for some steady solid excavation. The second is *Eriophyllum lanatum*, which forms dense greyish-green domes of foliage topped by bright yellow flowers. Again this is a delightful plant, but one which is apt to spread quietly and insidiously. It does not seem to seed much, but when the clump overruns another plant it is so dense that that is the end of the invaded one. It behaves best when it is really starved and in full exposure, especially to the sun ; under these conditions it can be a mound of glowing gold.

A third composite which I am sorry to say I completely misled several members about is the form of *Hieracium villosum* introduced by the late Donald Lowndes. I grew it for several years and never saw a seedling anywhere—it seemed to have all the pleasant attributes of a hoary-leaved dandelion, with big yellow flowers and handsome leaves. Recently, however, it has lapsed quite considerably and is apt to scatter its seed fairly widely. The seedlings are easy to recognise and to pull out, so a watchful eye in early summer is all that is needed.

The genus *Anemone* has two rogues—or potential rogues—in the species *A. rivularis* and *A. sylvestris*. The first is a Sherriff introduction (G.S. 2650) and is a very good plant with tallish stems carrying an umbel of white flowers with pale blue back to the petals. The foliage is basal with deeply cut leaves and, unfortunately, deep-diving roots which are extremely tough and wiry. Each flower sets a number of seeds, each provided with a small hook on one end which makes the seeds, when ripe, catch on to tweeds or other soft cloth. In addition

the ripe seeds drop from the seed-head and germinate freely. These mechanisms distribute the seeds very effectively, but the cure is simple—nip off the seed-heads before they are fully ripe. As attractive a plant is well worth this small trouble, for once established they are extremely difficult to dig out.

The second, *Anemone sylvestris*, has, by contrast, running roots and spreads slowly but efficiently. Suitably controlled and confined, this is a really lovely plant with big white—or rather, ivory—blooms on the top of six- to nine-inch stems. These are single blossoms and I have never, as far as I know, had trouble with the seed, only the running root mat which weaves its way very freely through the rough stony soil in which it is growing.

The next problem plant is one which I am loath to class thus, our own native thyme in all its colour variants. Its lovely scent and solid mat of flowers make it a “must” as a carpenter, but it can and does overrun and strangle out weaker-growing plants. This particular entry in the list has been prompted by the fact that, in my garden at any rate, last year was so wet that weeding was virtually impossible. As a result, the thymes did not get their usual cutting back and I found I had lost quite a few plants under their damp, close cover. The same circumstances showed me that those reliable old stand-bys for steady colour for months on end, the Helianthemums, can also overstep their bounds badly and cover less robust plants with a poultice of petals and dead leaves. Fortunately no amount of chopping seems to deter them seriously, with the possible exceptions of “The Bride” and most of the doubles, none of which grow anything like so strongly, and which do not need anything like so hard treatment as is needed by most of the others. One odd development in my present garden is the relatively free seeding of the Helianthemums, which seem to throw two colours of seedlings, the yellow form like the native plant and a strange, deep orange, a colour I have never seen in any of the cultivated varieties. This is rather odd, because I had a wide range of these plants in my last garden and *never* saw a single seedling anywhere.

Quite recently I had an invasion of moles in my garden and, to my horror, they riddled the rock garden banks before we could do anything about it. This had one rather odd sequel, for wherever they went they were followed by the suckers of willow-herb—which did not particularly surprise me—and of *Rosa spinosissima*, which did. This had always been most well-behaved with me and was rather a pet plant of mine, staying in nice compact patches and flowering very

freely. It is a very fine, dwarf form collected for me a number of years ago on the Kincardine coast but, thanks to the moles, it is now just a bit *too* widespread on my rock garden and it will have to be chopped back severely.

The genus *Ephedra* can be quite a problem, too, for some species range far and wide like *E. vulgaris* from the Alps and a rather nice species introduced by Mrs. Tweedie from Patagonia. Both these will bore their way through anything (the latter has broken up through thick tarmacadam !), while a species of *Ephedra* collected by Col. Lowndes in Nepal has formed a neat, tidy footfall on my peat walls and has never wandered an inch out of position. I have one or two other species as seedlings and I will keep a *very* close eye on their progress.

Can anyone have an ill-will at *Rubus arcticus*? It ranges far and wide and covers yards, but it is such a delicate little thing with such lovely big pink blooms and is so easily pulled up that I doubt if anyone could seriously class it as a menace. Its hold on the soil is too slight for it to cause any serious harm. Strangely enough, at one time *Linnaea borealis* was a menace in one "rich scree" bed which it covered—slaying anything that got in its path. The bed, most unfortunately, became invaded with a very vicious running moor grass and had to be cleared out—since when *Linnaea* has just hung on and no more, all of which is somewhat odd.

Gypsophila repens makes a lovely pale-greyish-green mat of foliage studded with little pink flowers for weeks on end, *but* it spreads and spreads, slowly and steadily, and anything in the way has no chance unless it is an upright shrub, for its mat is so close and firm that it provides a complete ground cover and the same goes for *Hypsela reniformis*, though it is not so dense. It is, however, very brittle and hence difficult to get out of the soil completely. This is also the case with *Linaria cymbalaria* which, with *Euphorbia cyparissias*, form a pair of plants that I will NEVER AGAIN have anywhere near my garden. I spent three or four maddening and exhausting years digging to get that appalling and vicious pair out of my previous garden and never will I forget them.

Lastly, I would list a delightful aromatic shrub, *Teucrium chamaedrys*. This is normally blue-flowered, but Dr. Peter Davis introduced a charming pink variant from Turkey. Both these need watching; they flower freely and late in the season at that, so that they are very useful, but they do form spreading tough thickets of shoots and the travelling roots are best controlled regularly.

These are results from my own experience ; others with differing soils and climates may find the habits of the plants described to be quite different, but be warned—beauties can sometimes be a source of trouble !!

A Neglected Corner

By "CIRTEM"

THE MOST common error the Do-it-yourself man makes is to over- or under-estimate quantities of material required for the job. Our error was to order an excess of Sand—Builders'. We contemplated building a small pond, laying new paving stones and re-making and extending old paths. All satisfactorily completed, we barrowed the surplus sand to a corner at the north-west gable. In this corner nothing grew in the shade of the high dense privet hedge keeping light from the west, and the house itself obstructing all sunshine from the south. The sand heap dumped here, practically out of sight, remained available when required—a play spot for children drawn by the fascination of the tiny pool, with its tadpoles, frogs, toads, goldfish (while they survived !) and the essential aquatics and marginal plants. The pile diminished, trampled and scattered, but still inert and lifeless over a few years. Then came a Spring when a spear of green with central white stripe gave promise of a crocus. As the nearest spring flowers were some distance away, doubtless this bulb had been dropped by a mouse or vole scurrying to safety from the owl by night or the kestrels circling overhead by day. Later, other signs of growth appeared, so the builders' sand, washed by rains and snows, treated by frost and thaw, maybe getting wind-drift of fertiliser from the lawn, obviously was due for better use.

Certain paths in the garden were kept generously supplied with $\frac{3}{8}$ in. red gravel and our reaction to this method was somewhat mixed. Easily hoed, certainly, but the surface provided ideal rooting conditions for weeds—using this term to cover "any plants growing in the wrong place"! Thus wild violets, pansies, sedums, *Veronica filiformis* (a menace), etc., appeared anywhere prolific nature might choose. Root systems would win first prizes were such offered !

So, continuing the apparent utility of the sand pile, now much reduced, and the gravel in ample supply, a patch was prepared on the one-time cinder path at the sunless corner. The cinders dug over, a depth of gravel was put down and topped with sand. This became an

experimental nursery for cuttings and to date has provided quite a selection, including mossy saxifrage, armeria, helianthemum, dianthus, and even now a few small tip-cuttings of erica are looking fresh and healthy.

We read articles, listen to talks or watch demonstrations relating to propagation, mainly by experts in their own field doing things on a scale beyond the needs of the average amateur or home gardener. The "box of cuttings" is not for everyone. The nursery garden proper has its own special purpose for bedding plants and so on. For the odd bits and pieces, taken from particular plants, or received from friends—for the propagation of these we think we have found the ideal answer in the hitherto neglected corner, facing nor'-nor'-east.

BOTANISTS

"BOTANY is not a sedentary idle Science, that can be attain'd at one's ease by the fireside, like Geometry, History, etc. A Botanist must scour the mountains and forests, climb steep rocks and precipices, and venture down abysses. The only books that can thoroughly instruct in this matter, are scatter'd up and down the whole face of the Earth, and not to be gather'd up without fatigue and peril. Hence it comes that so few excel in this Science : a degree of Passion sufficient to make a Virtuoso of another kind, is not sufficient for making a great Botanist ; besides, there is required a Stock of Health that can follow it, a Strength of Body to answer it. M. Tournefort's constitution was lively, laborious, athletick ; an exhaustless fund of unaffected Gayety supported him in his travels, and both in Body and Mind he was cut out for a Botanist."

(From "The Elogium of M. Tournefort", by M. Fontanelle)



Photo — M. J. Hackney

Fig. 71 — *Cnicus* sp. ? (not *C. Wallichii* D.C.)
Sissu Vala, Lahul



Photo — R. J. Mitchell

Fig. 72 — *Tropaeolum polyphyllum*



Photo — M. J. Hackney

Fig. 71 — *Cnicus* sp. ? (not *C. Wallichii* D.C.)
Sissu Vala, Lahul



Fig. 72 — *Tropaeolum polyphyllum*

Photo — R. J. Mitchell



Photo — D. Holford

Fig. 73 — *Oenothera caespitosa* v. *macroglottis*



(By courtesy of The Scotsman)

Fig. 74—Wm. C. Buchanan at the Show Bench



Photo—S. Mitchell

Fig. 75—*Meconopsis horridula* (see page 304)



Photo — D. Holford

Fig. 73 — *Oenothera caespitosa* v. *macroglottis*



(By courtesy of The Scotsman)

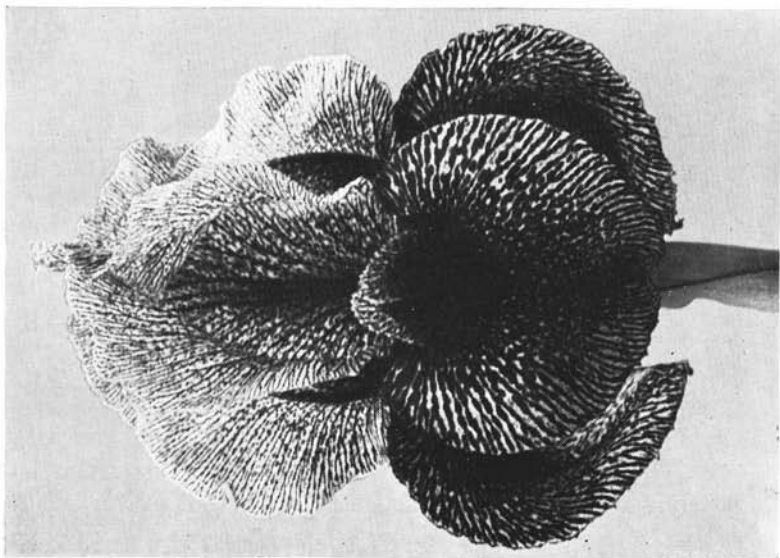
Fig. 74—Wm. C. Buchanan at the Show Bench



Photo—S. Mitchell
Fig. 75—*Meconopsis horridula* (see page 304)



Photo—S. Mitchell
Fig. 76—*Meconopsis aculeata* (see page 305)



Photo—H. Esslemont
Fig. 77—*Onocyclus Iris* (see page 316)



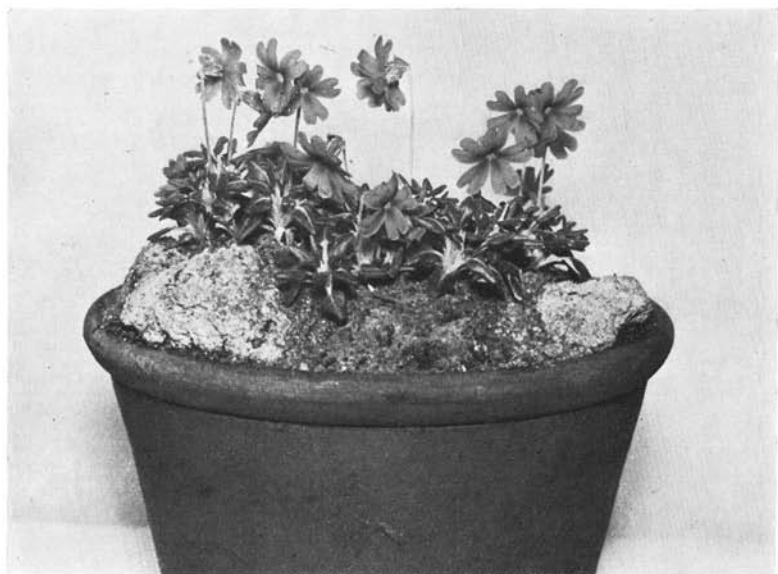
Photo—G. Finney

Fig. 78—*Leucogenes leontopodium*, Forrest Medal, A.M., and C.C.,
Edinburgh



Photo—H. Eslemont

Fig. 79—*Primula sonchifolia*, Forrest Medal, Penicuiik



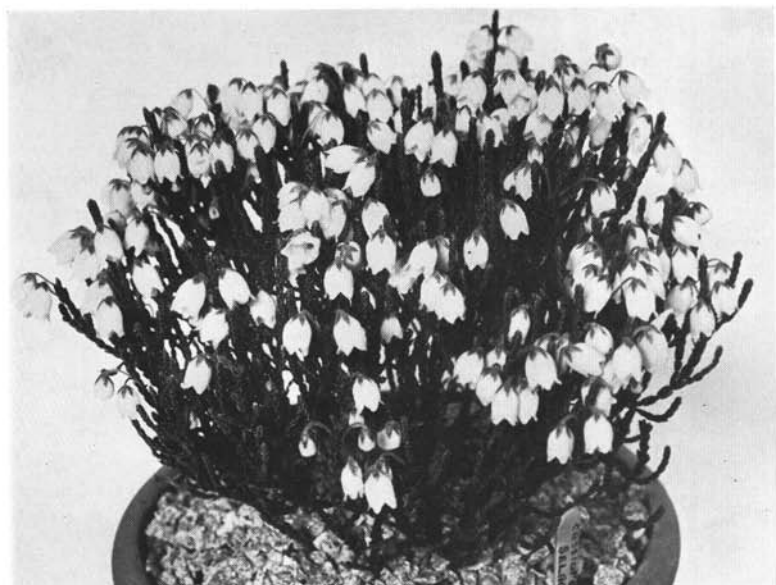
Photo—J. Crosland

Fig. 80—*Primula dryadifolia*, Forrest Medal, Aberdeen



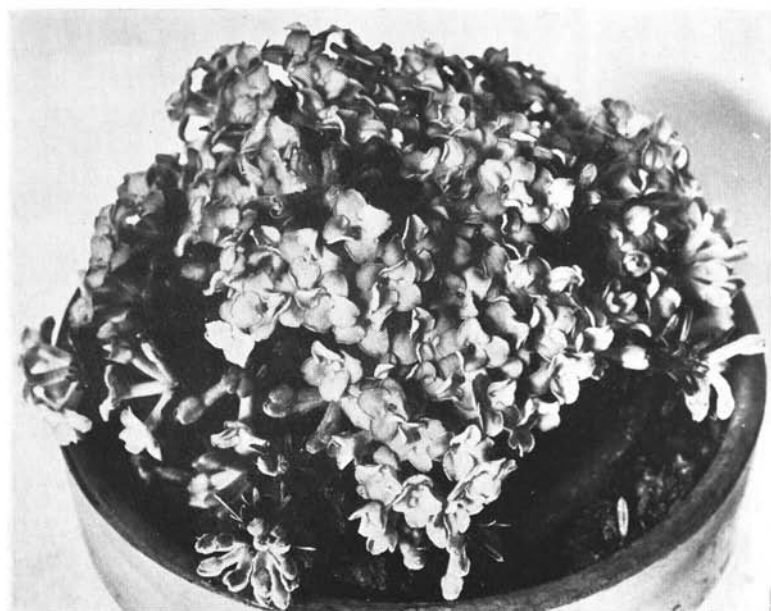
Photo—J. Watt

Fig. 81—*Kalmiopsis leachiana*, Forrest Medal, Perth



Photo—J. Watt

Fig. 82—*Cassiope selaginoides*, C.M., Perth

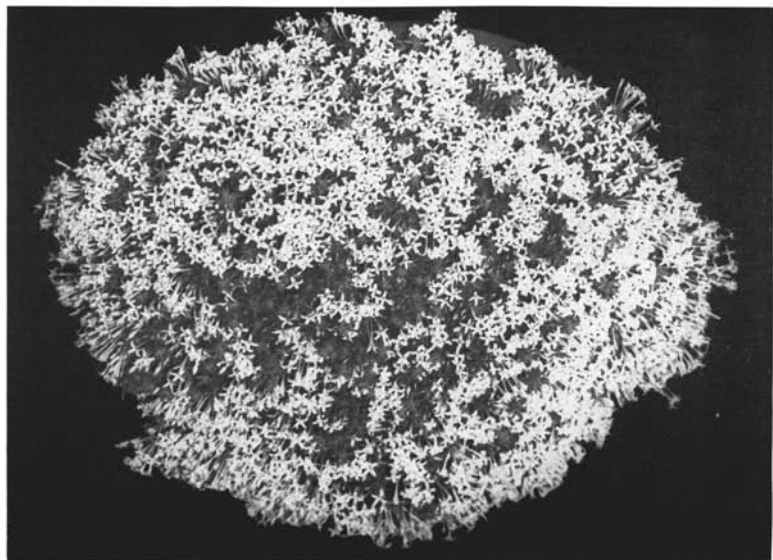


Photo—J. Watt

Fig. 83—*Daphne petraea* 'Grandiflora,' C.M., Perth



Fig. 84—*Vaccinium delavayi*, Forrest Medal, Dumfries



Photo—R. J. Mitchell

Fig. 85—*Asperula arcadiensis*, Forrest Medal, Dunfermline



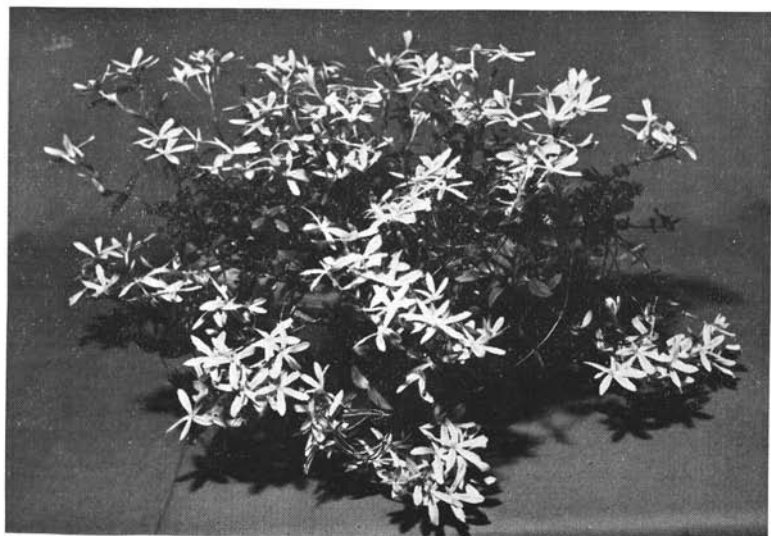
Photo—G. Finney

Fig. 86—*Calceolaria darwinii*, C.M., Edinburgh



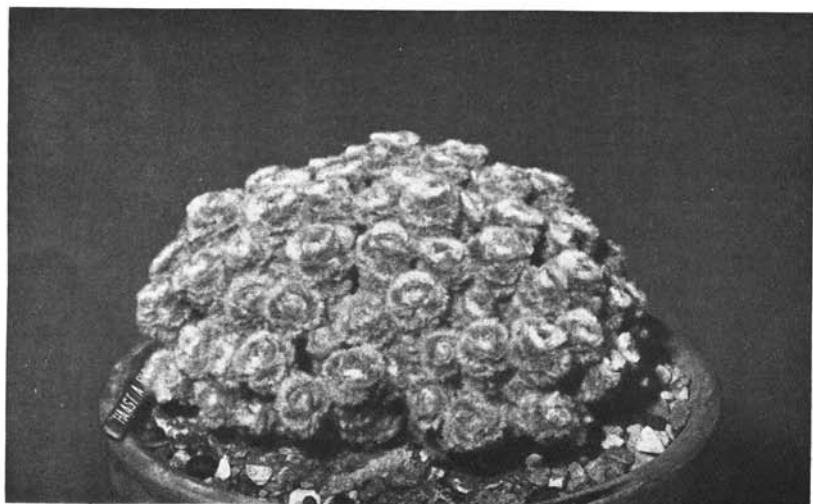
Photo—G. Finney

Fig. 87—*Primula forrestii*, Bhutan Cup and C.M., Edinburgh



Photo—G. Finney

Fig. 88—*Phlox adsurgens* 'Wagon Wheel,' A.M., Edinburgh



Photo—G. Finney

Fig. 89—*Haastia pulvinaris*, A.M. and C.C., Edinburgh

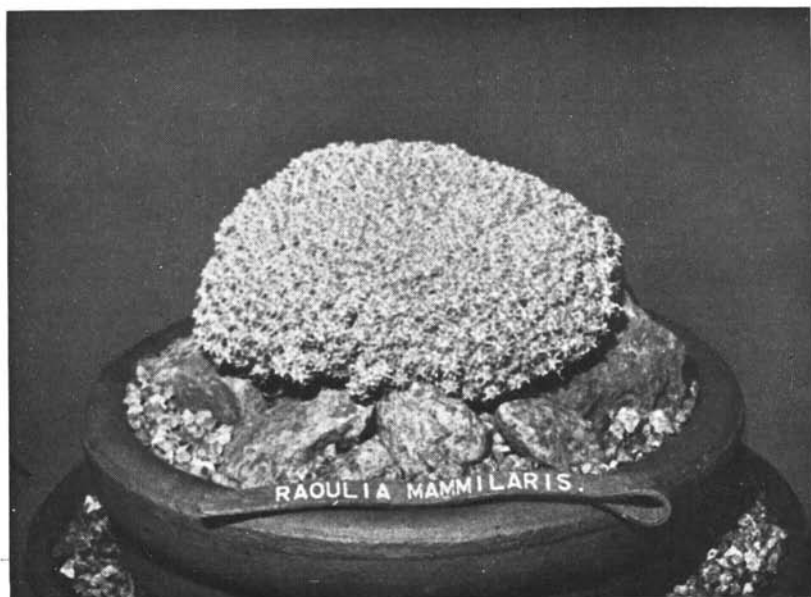


Fig. 90—*Raoulia mammillaris*, A.M., Edinburgh

Photo—G. Finney



Fig. 91—*Ourisia caespitosa* 'Gracilis'

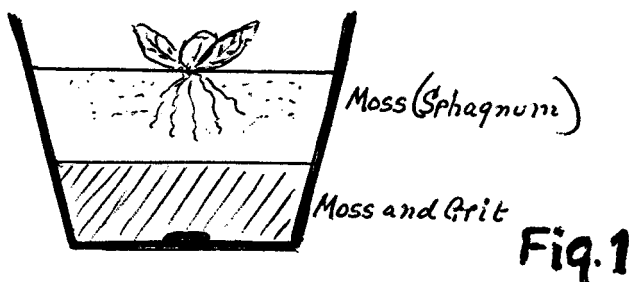
Photo—J. Lawson

A Letter to the Editor

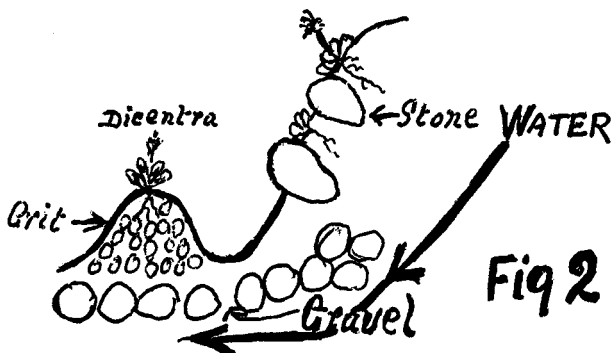
Dear Sir,

I am very glad, as a Japanese, to see the article about Japanese plants in the last *Journal* (No. 40, 1967). I write now about the cultivation of *Primula cuneifolia* and *Dicentra peregrina pusilla*.

Primula cuneifolia is one of the most difficult Japanese alpine plants to grow at Tokyo. I have not cultivated it, but I do cultivate *P. nipponica*, which belongs to the same Section as *cuneifolia*, and the two primulas are both found in alpine wet meadows near the snow banks which do not melt in summer. It is planted as in Fig. 1. After it has flowered we cut off the flowers, divide the plants, and add a small amount of moss over them. We then put the plant in a semi-shady position, but in nature it is found in sunny positions where the wind blows strongly.



Dicentra peregrina pusilla is not so easy, but not too difficult at Tokyo. It is found among gravels where there is plenty of water underground. We cultivate it in pots with grit only, or in the rock garden. (See Fig. 2. The rockery in Japan is usually rather steep, and its composition contains much grit and gravels. In the case of mine



the compost is of grit, gravel, the trunk of tree fern, osmunda, and vermiculite). At the foot of the rock garden grit and gravel are piled up and there we put the plant of *Dicentra* on these heaps. Though we plant a tree at the west side of it for shelter from the sun, in your cool country the tree might not be necessary.

Our summer is as hot as it is in Alexandria in Egypt, and humidity in summer is very high. (Summer in Tokyo is not dry, but pots and rockery are soon dried up because of heat.) I imagine that these plants may not be difficult in Scotland.

Yours faithfully,
A. MASUYAMA

Plant Notes

LEUCOGENES LEONTOPODIUM

THIS PLANT, which when shown by Mrs. M. C. Clark at the Edinburgh Show on 30th May 1967 won the Forrest Medal, a Cultural Commendation and an Award of Merit, is shown in Fig. 78., where it can be seen in all its beauty as a flowering plant. The writer understands that it was lifted in bud from the open rock garden and exhibited in bud at the Dumfries Show. By the time of the Edinburgh Show these buds had opened to produce the effect seen. This plant rarely opens—or, for that matter, sets—flower buds and it is usually seen on the show bench as an entry in the “silver” classes as was one also in the Edinburgh Show, exhibited by Mr. Duff of Broughty Ferry. As these two plants were of comparable size, it seemed of interest to mention its two roles.

Midlothian.

HENRY TOD

OENOTHERA CAESPITOSA

Oenothera caespitosa is a lovely freely flowering dwarf “Evening Primrose”, coming from the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, stretching from Saskatchewan in the North to New Mexico in the South.

It belongs to the acaulescent group of the genus *Oenothera*, which are all very well suited to rock garden culture where light soils or scree conditions can be given to this plant. *Oenothera caespitosa* tends to be hort-lived, in fact it is reckoned by some to be biennial in habit.

This sudden desire to expire should be remembered by the grower, for seed should be sown annually to maintain the planting and to perpetuate the species.

It is rather variable in leaf shape, but the flowers, fragrantly scented, open from the bud stage pure white in colour, later turning to pink. They generally open in the evening.

It is featured in the Curtis Botanical Magazine t.1593 in 1814, and later in 1870 the variety *marginata* was illustrated t.5828, but it would appear that this plant is not so very well known outwith rock garden circles.

One suggestion as to the reason for this is the abundance of names for members of the genus, which like so many today are being changed. *Oenotheras* in various times have been called *Lavauxia*, *Pachylophus*, *Anogra*, *Kneiffa*, *Megapterium*, *Sphaerostigma* and *Taraxia*. Thanks to some person unknown, but definitely a great friend to many, who was a "lumper", they are all confined to *Oenothera* for the time being.

However, in a recent Flora, I notice the "splitters" are at it again and our plant *Oenothera caespitosa* in this instance becomes *Pachylophus caespitosus*. Nevertheless, whichever name this little floriferous plant gets, it is certainly well worth growing (see fig. 73).

East Fife.

R. M.

POLEMONIUM DELICATUM

OF THE many dwarf Polemoniums recently introduced into cultivation in this country, *P. delicatum* is perhaps the dwarfest and most attractive. The stems, on which neat, small leaves are arranged in typical "Jacob's Ladder" formation, rarely exceed three inches in height. The flowers, carried in loose sprays above the leaves, are a pleasant shade of cool, lavender blue.

The plant is said to inhabit rock crevices in high mountains of Western U.S.A., and would probably be shown to advantage in a crevice or wall. Here, it has to be content with scree mixture in a trough, where it has settled down happily and produced a succession of flowers over a long period.

Peeblesshire.

C. E. D.

TROPAEOLUM POLYPHYLLUM

Tropeolum polyphyllum is a native of Chile and Argentina and was introduced into this country in 1827, although it had been known and was described by Cavanilles in 1797.

The plant was much sought for, and appeared to grow well under the expert care of garden lovers in its early years, for it was featured in *Curtis Botanical Magazine* t.4042 in 1843 and in *Paxton's Magazine* of the same year.

Although it has been known for over 150 years it still remains a comparative rarity. This might be due to its inability to set much seed or to produce any seed at all.

It is slow to start into growth in early summer, but then the trailing blue-green shoots are quickly produced and the orange-yellow flowers appearing along the stem give a fine display in June and July. Then the leaves turn yellow, the plant withers, and they are gone by mid-August.

A deep, well drained soil suits this plant admirably, for the tubers can reach a depth of 2-3 ft. in the soil. However, when planting the tubers, which are attainable in the Trade, a depth of 1 ft. will suffice.

We find that planting in a semi-shaded corner of the rock garden is perfectly suitable for this plant, *provided* the trailing shoots can find the sun, for, like *Tropeolum speciosum*, it is a sun lover, preferring its roots in the shade, with its shoots growing into the sun.

On a sunny exposure the plants thrive well enough, but the growth is less vigorous and the flowers fewer in number (see fig. 72).

Fife.

R. J. M.

Become a Member of the
**Royal Caledonian Horticultural
 Society**

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Form for Application for Membership may be obtained from : John Turnbull, Esq., D.S.O., D.F.C., C.A., Secretary, The Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society, 44 Melville Street, Edinburgh, 3.

Review of the Year

By THE PRESIDENT

THE MEMBERSHIP of the Club has continued to increase during the past, year, but I would again emphasise the importance of a still further rise and ask our members to help in every way by trying to introduce new people whom they know to be interested in rock gardening. Beginners in this fascinating branch of gardening are especially welcome and many people may not be aware of the benefits which can be obtained in the way of advice, lectures, the Seed Exchange, and numerous other activities.

The past year has indeed been a sad year for the Scottish Rock Garden Club through the loss it has suffered by the death of a number of our prominent and active members. All were dedicated to the Club and its well-being. They gave much of their time to a multiplicity of strenuous duties in promoting its various activities.

The late Lt.-Colonel J. C. Dundas, D.S.O., D.L., of Ochertyre, our President from 1951-55, was a staunch supporter and guiding spirit in our affairs. The sudden demise of Mr. Stewart Mitchell and Brigadier G. F. Hutchinson was a great shock to us all. They were taken from us, one might say, at the height of their activities. Stewart Mitchell was for a number of years our Honorary Treasurer, a post which he held with distinction. After his retiral from the treasurership he still continued his activities in a variety of ways. In fact, he was devoted to the Club, which appeared to be one of the great interests of his life.

Brigadier Hutchinson had entered a phase of considerable importance as far as the Club was concerned and we were all looking forward to his sound advice and careful guidance. But, alas, this was not to be.

The late Mr. C. W. Sanderson was an active member of the East Lothian Group and for a number of years was the able Show Secretary of the North Berwick Show—always a successful and happy Show.

Mr. George Laurie, one of our oldest members, died only recently after a long illness, during which he even still retained considerable interest in our affairs. During his active years Mr. Laurie did a great deal to further the work of the Club in the West of Scotland.

The Seed Distribution is still on the increase, but we are sorry to lose the services of the Seed Distribution Manager, Miss Joyce Halley,

who has had to retire after giving us much of her time in the very hard work of the Seed Distribution during the past three years. We are all most grateful to her and I would express my appreciation and sincere thanks for all she has done for our members, both overseas and in this country. She is succeeded by Miss M. Robertson of Kilcreggan, and we look forward to a continued happy relationship between the Seed Exchange and members. The Seed Distribution is one of our important activities and the Scottish Rock Garden Club is much indebted to Mr. Masterton of Aberfeldy who was the originator of this service and who carried on the work for a number of years.

The Slide Library continues to grow and there are now over 2000 transparencies (35 mm.) available for the use of members. The year has been a busy one owing to reorganisation of the collection and the steady flow of applications for the loan of slides. Tape recordings of talks with accompanying slides are being organised for lending purposes. The Honorary Curator is also considering the question of improved facilities for the lending of slides to overseas members.

The Shows during the past year have been up to their usual high standard. In fact, some were better than ever. I would like to impress upon members the amount of extraordinary hard work which these Shows entail on the part of the Show Secretaries. I say this because at times the attendance of members and the public at some of these Shows could be very much better. I feel sure that members of local groups who do not attend their local Shows must miss a considerable amount of interest and instruction, quite apart from supporting their own local Show. Although there has been an increase in the numbers exhibiting in Section II, I would again ask members who have not yet exhibited at our Shows to enter plants for this section. It is only by doing this that the Shows will continue to flourish. After all, we all must make a beginning sometime !

The Joint Rock Garden Plant Committee of the Royal Horticultural Society met this year at the Glasgow and Edinburgh Shows under the Chairmanship respectively of Mr. W. G. Mackenzie of Chelsea Physic Garden and Sir George Taylor of Kew. At these meetings a number of plant awards were recommended. Further details of these will be found elsewhere in this number of the *Journal*.

Finally, I would like to thank the Office Bearers, Group Conveners and Show Secretaries for all they have done to promote the interests of the Scottish Rock Garden Club during the past year.

The Royal Horticultural Society Joint Rock Garden Plant Committee

GLASGOW—11th APRIL 1967

AWARDS TO PLANTS

FIRST CLASS CERTIFICATE

To *Primula* 'Linda Pope' as a flowering plant for the rock garden or alpine house, from John B. Duff, Esq., Cairndhu, Broughty Ferry, Dundee.

AWARD OF MERIT

To *Primula macrophylla* H.78 as a flowering plant for the rock garden or alpine house, subject to its being a distinct clone and to being given a clonal name, from Messrs. Jack Drake, Inshriach Nursery, Aviemore, Inverness-shire.

AWARDS FOR EXHIBITS

CERTIFICATE OF CULTURAL COMMENDATION

To John B. Duff, Esq., for a fine pan of *Primula leucophylla*.

To John B. Duff, Esq., for a large plant of *Primula* 'Linda Pope'.

To David Livingstone, Esq., 13 Cluny Avenue, Bearsden, Glasgow, for a well-flowered plant of *Primula pubescens* 'Rufus'.

EDINBURGH—30th MAY 1967

AWARDS TO PLANTS

AWARD OF MERIT

To *Raoulia mammillaris* as a foliage plant for the alpine house, from J. D. Crosland, Esq., Treetops, Torphins, Aberdeenshire (fig. 90).

To *Haastia pulvinaris* as a foliage plant for the alpine house, from J. D. Crosland, Esq., and from H. Esslemont, Esq., 9 Forest Road, Aberdeen (fig. 89).

To *Leocogenes leontopodium* as a flower and foliage plant for the alpine house, from Mrs. C. M. Clark, Hollytree Cottage, Mains Riddle, Dumfries (fig. 78).

To *Phlox adsurgens* 'Waggon Wheel' as a flowering plant for the rock garden and alpine house, from H. Esslemont, Esq. (fig. 88).

PRELIMINARY COMMENDATION

To *Lewisia* 'Carroll Watson' as a flowering plant for the alpine house from J. D. Crosland, Esq.

To *Ourisia macrocarpa* as a flowering plant for the rock garden, from Major and Mrs. W. G. Knox Finlay, Keillour Castle, Methven, Perthshire.

AWARDS FOR EXHIBITS

CERTIFICATE OF CULTURAL COMMENDATION

To J. D. Crosland, Esq., for a well-grown pan of *Calochortus maweanus*.

To H. Esslemont, Esq., for a very fine specimen of *Haastia pulvinaris*, a well-grown plant of *Nassauvia revoluta*, and a well-grown pot of *Cypripedium cordigerum*.

To Mrs. C. M. Clark for a fine and well-flowered specimen of *Leucogenes leontopodium*.

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 Lawrence Hochheimer, Ridge Farms Road, Norwalk, Connecticut 06850, U.S.A.

In addition to its *Quarterly Bulletin*, the American Society has a Seed Exchange in operation.

Show Reports

PENICUIK

THE Penicuik Show was held as usual in the magnificent Hall of Eastfield School, perhaps the best hall for a Show that the Club has available, as the light is quite excellent. The weather was dry but a really wild gale was blowing which made things trying for competitors bringing in their plants. This year the local Society's Bulb Show was very greatly increased, which was as well, for four competitors were unable through illness or other reasons to bring their plants forward, which meant that our Show was some thirty or so entries short, to go by the entry forms.

As the season has been so easy and so early many of our usual "strengths" were definitely weak, particularly Saxifrages, Crocus, Iris and Narcissus. Many of these were past, only a relatively few appearing on the Show benches compared with their usual numbers. The Fritillarias, however, were very well represented, especially the new introductions from the Middle East area, from the B.S.B.E., M & T, Furse and ACW expeditions. *Ff. pinardii*, *crassifolia* and *zagrica* were all represented, as well as several under collector's numbers. One striking one which caused much interest was a species under the number A.C.W.1628, which was about two inches high with bells of mahogany colour, tipped with brilliant yellow, some inch or so long and about three-quarters of an inch across. Another was shown by Mr. Aitken and caused considerable comment. It was *F. karelinii*, now, I understand, *Rhinopetalum gibbosum*, and looked exactly like a small *Nomocharis*; its blooms, in a spike, were widely open, of a good white with red spotting, a charming and most desirable plant.

The Forrest Medal was awarded to a 12-inch pan of *Primula sonchifolia*, just perfectly and evenly in bloom, exhibited by Mr. Esslemont, who was also awarded a Certificate of Merit for a very fine pan of *Primula allionii* 'Alba'. The Midlothian Vase for the best plant in Section II was awarded to Mrs. Maule for a very good plant of the very old Boyd hybrid Saxifrage "Cherry Trees". This plant is now very rare and of considerably weakened constitution, but this one was in perfect condition and full flower. Mr. Corsar had a very fine pan of *Primula clarkei*.

As will be gathered from the foregoing, Primulas were in excellent form this year, and this applied both to "Asiatics" and "Europeans

and others'' as well—dare we hope that this marks a returning possibility of growing this lovely genus after the trials and losses of the recent deadly dry springs? Cyclamen were also well represented by some very good pans, nicely presented and in fine condition, and the same applied to Anemones and Pulsatillas.

Two outstanding plants shown were *Paraquilegia grandiflora* (Mr. Esslemont) and *Kalmiopsis leachiana* from Mr. Crosland; both these were covered in buds, but unfortunately neither opened during the Show. Had it been a week later—but that is typically showing!

A Gold Medal was awarded to the Edrom Nurseries for a very good display of rock garden plants and bulbs in pots, and this Stand attracted a lot of attention from the large attendance of Members and the Public.

Altogether, the size of the Show may have been down, but the standard was, if anything, even higher than ever and with the really fine display of bulbs by members of the Penicuik Society the Show was very obviously appreciated just as, year by year, are the teas provided by the Industrial Section's ladies who organise the Bulb Show.

HENRY TOD

GLASGOW

THE GLASGOW SHOW was held in the McLellan Galleries on 11th and 12th April 1967. Late frosts again caused the later cancellation of the Rhododendron Section, but the entries for the rock garden plant classes were up, and the over-all quality was better than in recent years. Our good friends Mr. Harold Esslemont, Aberdeen, and Mr. Jack Crosland, Torphins, and their plants, were missed, but we were very happy to welcome Mr. J. B. Duff, Dundee, and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Baillie, Longniddry, and, needless to say, their plants.

The Dr. William Buchanan Memorial Rose Bowl for six pans rock plants was won by Mr. J. B. Duff with a well-matched set of plants. One of them, *Primula* 'Linda Pope', a magnificent pan, not only won the George Forrest Memorial Medal for the most meritorious plant in the Show, but also a First Class Certificate and Cultural Commendation from the Royal Horticultural Society's Joint Rock Garden Plant Committee. Mr. Duff showed another primula, the yellow *P. leucophylla*, also in very good condition, and it too received a Cultural Commendation. His remaining four plants were *Lewisia tweedyi*—the best of

this genus, but not the easiest ; *Draba mollissima*—a beautiful soft cushion with a goodly supply of yellow flowers ; *Phyllodoce nipponica*—a delightful dwarf shrub from Japan with white bell-shaped flowers, and last but certainly not least, *Cassiope* 'Edinburgh'—the tall upright hybrid raised at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, some years ago. Mr. J. McPhail, Greenock, put up a good show to take second place. He too had *P.* 'Linda Pope' and *L. tweedyi* in fine condition and a very commendable *P. pubescens* 'Mrs. J. H. Wilson'.

Mr. Duff also won the Henry Archibald Challenge Rose Bowl for three pans of rock plants. His group consisted of *Androsace imbricata*—difficult but by no means impossible in the Alpine House, *Rhodohypoxis* 'Pictus'—an easy bulbous plant from Basutoland with large white flowers tipped pink, and *Anemone vernalis*, looking a little drawn, perhaps, compared with the plants one can find at six or seven thousand feet up in the Alps. Mr. and Mrs. Alex. Todd, Bearsden, were second here with three good plants which many a time would have taken the red ticket : *P.* 'Linda Pope', again in fine condition, *Pleione limprichtii*, a popular hardy orchid which is proving not too difficult, and a shrub which is not often seen at Shows these days—*Erinaceae pungens*, the Spanish broom. Unfortunately, this shrub was not in bloom, although it had a considerable number of buds.

Competition for the William C. Buchanan Challenge Cup was keener this year and it was worthily won by Mrs. E. Clark, Kirkgunzen, who in her three rare, new or difficult plants, had two very good ones, *Azorella caespitosa*, as hard as metal but no flowers as usual, and the very tiny *Veronica pulvinaris*. Dr. James and Mrs. E. Taggart, Kilcraggan, were second, and of their three, two are particularly worthy of mention—*Hebe tetrasticha* with white flowers on the end of stems, and *Cyathodes colensoi*, a New Zealand shrub with bronze-grey foliage and white flowers which rumour has it are followed by berries, but certainly not in my garden. Mr. and Mrs. Alex. Todd, in their three, had *Boykinia jamesii*, not in flower, but in bud and that indeed is a triumph. How many of us have grown it for years and rarely seen a flower !

Salix boydii, that fine dwarf willow found only once in undisclosed location, took first prize for Mrs. E. Clark in the class for one rock plant native to Scotland, and with *Leucogenes grandiceps* she also won the premier award for a plant with silver-grey foliage. In this latter class Mr. and Mrs. Alex. Todd were second with a fine plant of the attractive *Helichrysum coralloides*, which did not quite match

up to the silveryness of the winner. Mr. Neil Morris got the red ticket in the cushion plant class with *Draba bryoides*, one of the easiest of this genus and a useful one for beginners to try before going on to the more difficult *Dd. mollissima* and *polytricha*. Saxifrages were good for the time of year. Mrs. K. M. Reed, Symington, Ayrshire, won the two pan class with *S. 'Chrystale'*, a hybrid from *grisebachii* and more prolific with its flowers, and *S. marginata 'Lutea'*, which I did not know. The one pan class went to Mr. and Mrs. R. Baillie with a very well-grown and flowered *S. media*. Mrs. W. McLean, Bearsden, was second with a small but good *S. diapensioides 'Lutea'*, which, like the white form, needs careful cultivation. The Baillies were again to the fore with *Primula aureata* in the Asiatic primula class and the second prize went to a good pan of *P. rosea 'Misca De Geer'*. What a wonderful colour the latter is ! The classes for European primulas were hotly contested and they made a fine splash of colour on the benches. Mr. Neil Morris in his winning three pans had very good *P. rubra 'Plum Red'* and *pubescens 'Mrs. J. H. Wilson'*. Second here were Mr. and Mrs. Alex. Todd, their best being *P. 'Barbara Barker'*, which they do so well, and the large-flowered 'Blue Wave'. The writer won first prize in the two pan and one pan classes with the collected species *P. rubra* and *P. auricula balbisii* and the strong growing hybrid with brick-red flowers, *pubescens 'Rufus'*, which received a Cultural Commendation from the Joint Rock Garden Plant Committee. Other plants noted in these two classes were by Mr. J. McPhail's *P. 'Ethel Barker'*, a hybrid from *P. allionii* and much easier, Mrs. May Lunn's *P. 'Bileckii'*, a hybrid from *P. minima* which flowers very freely, and Mr. J. B. Duff's *P. pubescens 'Marlene'*, a hybrid with darker flowers than 'Mrs. J. H. Wilson' and evidently just as free with its blossoms.

Mr. J. B. Duff took another first prize with a very well-grown and flowered *Androsace carnea x pyrenaica* in the class for one pan of that genus. Mrs. C. Allan, Strathblane, took two firsts with a very good *Anemone blanda 'White Splendour'* and two good pans of tulips *praestans* and a variety of *kaufmanniana*. Mrs. W. McLean again demonstrated how well she can grow the small bulbous plants for the rock garden by taking first with a variety of *Narcissus triandrus* and *N. nanus* and with *Tulipa kaufmanniana 'Heart's Delight'*, which has carmine red flowers edged with rosy white. She also had a second with *Tulipa praestans 'Zwanenburg'*, which is very well worth growing if only for its unusual orange colouring. Dr. James and Mrs. E. Taggart gained a red ticket with *Narcissus cyclamineus*, which will

stand more moisture in the soil than most of the small narcissus and which remains in flower over a long period.

A white *Erythronium* in splendid condition won its class for Miss Margaret Nicolson, Bearsden, who showed a good *Salix wehrhahnii* in her winning pair of dwarf shrubs. Mention must be made of a well-flowered pan of *Gentiana acaulis* exhibited by Mrs. Y. E. Black, Rowardennan. This species can be grown well almost anywhere, but it is another matter to bring it to flower.

Sempervivums and Sedums were again forward in good numbers and competition was keen. These are good genera for the beginner, as they are easily grown and their foliage provides colour throughout the year.

The classes for Rhododendrons and Ericaceous plants were also well contested. Amongst the prize winning Rhododendrons were noted *Rr. pubescens* and *fastigiatum* (Mrs. W. McLean), *microleucum* (Mrs. Y. E. Black), *racemosum* (Mrs. May Lunn), *fastigiatum* (Dr. and Mrs. Taggart), and the comparatively rare *impeditum pygmaeum* (Miss Margaret Thomson, Milngavie). Cassiopes were in very good condition in the class for one pan Ericaceae. The prize winners were Mrs. May Lunn, Mr. Neil Morris and Mr. J. McPhail, with *Cc. lycopodioides* 'Bearsden' raised by the late Willie Buchanan and 'Muirhead'. All three were much admired as was the sweetly scented little shrub *Arctericia nana*, which along with *Cassiope* 'Bearsden' won the two pan class for the writer.

Dwarf conifers were again forward in good numbers and those which won first prizes for their owners—Miss Margaret Thomson, Dr. and Mrs. Taggart and Mrs. W. McLean—were in splendid condition. As the authenticity of names on the exhibits was doubtful, I do not propose to give details. *Cyathodes colensoi*, as well-flowered as I have seen it, worthily gained the premier award for Mr. J. B. Duff in the class for a dwarf shrub excluding Ericaceae and Coniferae.

The so called hardy orchids—Pleiones—have become a feature of the Glasgow Show in recent years and this year was no exception. Mr. W. McMillan, Glasgow, won the two pan classes with *Pp. pricei* and *formosanum*, and Mr. and Mrs. Alex. Todd the one pan class with *P. limprichtii*. All were well-flowered and were the subject of much favourable comment by visitors. Mention must be made of one other exhibit in Section I. Mr. and Mrs. R. Baillie showed a piece of tufa planted mainly with silver Saxifragas, Sempervivums and Sedums which were well grown and in character, giving the kind of

pleasing effect which one gets on seeing these genera in their native habitat. The Crawford Silver Challenge Cup for the winner of most first prizes in Section I went to Dr. James and Mrs. E. Taggart.

There was good evidence in Section II (for beginners) that some of the exhibitors are ready to step up to the more senior section. Mr. R. Easton, Greenock, won the Wilson Trophy and Bronze Medal for the most points in this Section. Space does not permit of a note on all the good plants in this section. Amongst those which commended themselves particularly were the following prize winners: *Doronicum cordatum* and *Pp. pubescens* 'The General' and *rubra* 'Boothman's Var.' shown by Mr. J. Simpson, Barrhead. Mrs. K. M. Reed again exhibited in fine condition *Saxifraga thessalica* 'Waterperry Var.', which is much darker in colour than the normal form. Two well grown and flowered *Pulsatilla vulgaris* were put up by Mr. R. G. Small, Giffnock, and Mr. R. Dewar, Greenock. Their merits could not be separated and the judges were forced to award them first equal. Mr. J. McCrury, Clarkston, demonstrated his skill with bulbs with two very good pots of *Chionodoxa* 'Gigantea' and *Tulipa praestans* 'Fusilier'. That very fine pink natural hybrid *Primula* 'Fosteri' took a first for Mr. and Mrs. Jolly, Dalmuir. In this same class Mr. W. Scott, Eaglesham, gained a third prize with an exceptionally well grown *Primula rosea*, which was a picture with a mass of buds. Had the Show been a few days later it would have been very difficult to beat.

We were greatly indebted to the "Trade" for four splendid exhibits and we believe they were all rewarded by doing good business. Jack Drake, Inshriach Alpine Plant Nursery, Aviemore, showed his plants in pots and pans and was awarded a Large Gold Medal. There were many fine plants here: it will suffice to mention those which caught my eye. *Primula macrophylla*, a dark purple Asiatic, was outstanding and was given an Award of Merit by the Joint Rock Garden Plant Committee. Another Asiatic *Primula* of note was *P. petiolaris*, which is so free with its flowers that the leaves disappear from view under the blossoms. European primulas were well featured. Two hybrids raised at Inshriach appear to me to have a great future. These were *P. 'Diane'* which by the look of it has *P. minima* somewhere in its parentage, is quite dwarf and has large deep purple flowers, and *P. pubescens* 'Christine', which makes a good companion for the splendid old *P. pubescens* 'Mrs. J. H. Wilson'. These plants were named after Mr. John Lawson's daughter and wife respectively, and it was a pleasure to meet the two ladies in person at the Show. A

dwarf, compact, free flowering collected form of *P. marginata* was also very striking, as was *P.* 'Linda Pope', which was in good order throughout the whole exhibition. Other plants of exceptional merit were *Hepatica triloba* 'Rubra' with brilliant red flowers, *Saxifraga thessalica* and *Androsace carnea x pyrenaica*, which are both very useful for exhibition and miniature or trough gardens.

Edrom Nurseries, Coldingham, Berwickshire, also had their plants in pots and were awarded a Gold Medal. Strong features of their stand were bulbs and primulas. *Muscari* 'Blue Spin', which I had not seen before, had huge heads of typical grape hyacinth flowers, and *M. moschatum* 'Flavum', a really striking plant, had yellow and blue sweetly scented flowers. The yellow *Erythronium* 'Pagoda' was in good order, as was *Fritillaria pallidiflora*, which has pale yellow flowers peppered with black spots. The Lady Tulip, *T. clusiana*, with its slender stems and rosy red blooms was most attractive. So too was *Narcissus* 'Thalia', a cyclamineus hybrid, with two or three flowers to a stem. As always, Edrom Nurseries had a good selection of noteworthy Asiatic primulas. These included the well-known *Pp. aureata*, *boothii*, *edgeworthii* and *gracilipes*. Mention should also be made of the yellow *P. leucophylla* which, if my memory serves me correctly, is a Caucasian version of the Cowslip, and *P. frondosa*, which is similar to *P. farinosa* but stronger in growth and requiring less damp conditions.

Miss J. G. Izatt, Grovemount Nursery, Auchterarder, had a most attractive built-up stand which worthily gained a Large Gold Medal. I overheard a visitor say that only a lady could have built such a delightful display on a table! But her stand was not only well laid out, her plants were also well grown. The crowning glory of the display was a very fine dwarf willow, *Salix wehrhahnii*, covered in catkins. She made extensive use of *Lewisia*s in variety and dwarf tulip species. Dwarf conifers lent character and variety in shape and colour. Other notable plants were *Rhododendron pemakoense*, easy of cultivation and free flowering, *Primula rosea* 'Grandiflora', very colourful indeed and the European natural hybrid *Primula x 'Bileckii'*, free flowering and good for exhibition and sink gardens.

Mr. J. R. Ponton, The Gardens, Kirknewton, Midlothian, also had a built-up stand which received a Gold Medal. Here too various dwarf conifers were used effectively and *Rhododendron penakoense*, *racemosus*, and 'Blue Tit' gave height and colour. Although late in the season *Erica carnea* 'Vivelli', one of the winter-flowering heaths

with dark handsome foliage, was in first rate condition. It was interesting to me to see *Cassiope selaginoides* on display. This to me is the finest of a splendid genus and is at its best in the form which bears Ludlow and Sherriff's number 13285. The more commonly grown *C. lycopodioides* was also shown. The spring snowflake *Leucojum vernalis* and the dainty little *Narcissus rupicola* were amongst the bulbous plants exhibited. Mr. Ponton always does hardy orchids well and on this occasion he had strong, well-flowered specimens of *Pleione formosana*. The outstanding primula on the stand was *P. sino-purpurea*, one of the easier members of the difficult Nivalid section.

Our warmest thanks are due to Glasgow Corporation Parks Department for a very fine display of greenhouse pot plants from Queen's Park. The hall, in which the opening ceremony was performed by the Lady Provost, was transformed into an exotic paradise by the gay flowers. Most worthily did the display warrant the award of a Certificate of Merit.

D. L.

ABERDEEN

ONE IS immediately appreciative of the very high quality of exhibits at the above Show and the knowledgeable must find a good deal to admire in the patience and skill of the judges, Messrs. Lawson, Sutherland and Masterton, in what must prove to be a difficult task.

This not to say that there are only plants of interest to the expert ; far from it, whilst there are exhibits which must tax the skill of the experts, there are also many which are of universal appeal.

The Forrest Medal for the most meritorious plant in the Show went to a well grown and beautifully presented pan of *Primula dryadifolia*, which originally was known as *Primula jonarduni*, exhibited by J. D. Crosland, who also secured the Aberdeen Bronze Medal with a very well balanced six pans which included the Forrest Medal plant and an extremely well flowered plant of the rare *Kalmiopsis leachiana* (figs. 80. 81).

Mr. H. Esslemont secured the Walker of Portlethen Trophy for the most points in Section I. Amongst his many well grown entries were *Kalmiopsis leachiana*, 'Umqua River Form' and *Androsace imbricata*.

J. B. Duff of Broughty Ferry captured the three pan class with entries which included well flowered examples of *Lewisia tweedyi* and *Cyathodes colensoi*.

Haastia pulvinaris gained for Mr. Esslemont the rare plant class, whilst a nicely flowered and scented pan of *Primula reidii* from Mr. J. N. Aitken aroused a good deal of interest in the class for plants grown from seed by an exhibitor.

Class 7 for a rock plant with silver foliage attracted two entries of the extremely difficult and rare *Raoulia mammillaris*, the first prize going to Mrs. Maule all the way from Balerno.

Class 15 for a single pan of Daphne attracted a very nice entry, most of which unfortunately were with not fully opened flowers ; in another week they must have presented a glorious sight.

Cassiopes were much in evidence, but in many instances were not as well flowered as in former years, whilst miniature Rhododendrons were undoubtedly retarded by the prevailing chilly winds which had swept the area for weeks before the Show.

Mrs. Dyas gained a Certificate of Merit for a large flowered form of *Androsace imbricata* which gave every evidence of expert culture. Without wishing to attract artillery fire from the botanists, one feels that this naming is not an improvement on its former name of *Androsace argentea*. In the same class was an outstanding example of *Androsace muscoidea* shown by Mr. Esslemont. Nearby was a very nicely presented *Primula rubra* from Mr. Crosland which was placed second to a pan of the late Mr. G. H. Berry's hybrid *Primula x 'Hyacinthia'* from Mrs. Dyas. Close by was a very good pan of *Primula reidii williamsii* from Mr. Aitken, which headed Mr. Crosland's *Primula tzariensis* var. *porrecta*.

Two very nice pans of Soldanella were on view in Class 30.

Asphodelus acaulis from Mr. Esslemont in Class 26 occasioned as much interest for the size and depth of the pan as from the plant itself.

Classes 39 and 40 brought out a variety of Lewisias, all a tribute to the skill and culture of the exhibitors.

Rhodohypoxis 'Pictus' with flowers well over an inch and a quarter attracted attention from the knowledgeable and gained another first for Mr. Duff. Additional plants of interest noted on show were *Fritillaria karelinii*, the very rare and seldom seen *Calypso bulbosa* from Oregon very well presented in a wooden stump, *Pleione pogonoides*, and an exquisitely tiny *Trillium rivale*.

The top award in Class 2 went to Miss Brenda Gibson, who followed up her success in being runner-up last year with securing the Bronze Medal on this occasion. This young member of the Club exhibited many plants which had obviously received excellent and painstaking attention.

Once again we were glad to welcome the Trade stand of Mr. Jack Drake with outstanding examples of *Primula wattii* and *macrophylla*, *Lewisia*s in profusion of form and colour, and two forms of that intriguing Japanese Woodlander, *Glaucidium palmatum*.

On Mrs. McMurtrie's stand were good examples of the old double flowered Primrose which prompted the thought that in view of the many associations between the Aberdeen area and growers of double Primroses that the Committee might well consider in future years the provision of a class or classes exclusively for these old-time favourites.

The Cruickshank Botanic Garden, whose Principal, Professor Weatherly, opened the Show with a well directed and witty speech, had as always a very tastefully laid out stand full of interesting and well grown plants.

A. D. R.

PERTH

BLESSED with two days of glorious sunshine, the Perth Show, which is now held at Scone Village Hall, maintained the high standards of previous years, and with an entry about equal to that of 1965 demonstrated not only the continued support given to Club activities in the area, but also the loyalty of Dundee members and of those from Edinburgh and Aberdeen, who showed their best and also turned up at the Show with their friends.

The judges—J. L. Mowat, A. Evans and Mrs. Knox Finlay—awarded the Forrest Medal to a magnificent specimen of *Kalmiopsis leachiana* shown by J. D. Crosland, Torphins, Aberdeenshire, in Class 1 (6 pans of rock plants, distinct). Mr. Crosland also showed in this class a specimen of *Calypso bulbosa* and of *Tecophilea cyanocrocus*, but was awarded second place to J. B. Duff, Broughty Ferry, for the Alexander Caird Trophy (see fig. 81).

Mr. Duff's six pans of *Lewisia cotyledon*, *Rhodohypoxis* 'Pictus', *Anemone obtusiloba patula*, *Lewisia heckneri*, *Fritillaria meleagris* 'Poseidon', and *Rhododendron* 'Pink Drift' were exhibited in superb condition. Mr. Duff also won the Dundas Quaich with a lovely pan of *Primula reidii williamsii*, a perfect specimen of *Cassiope selaginoides* and a good plant of *Glaucidium palmatum*. The cassiope won a Certificate of Merit (see fig. 82).

Perthshire Group Convener, J. D. Youngson, by virtue of eight first prizes against Mr. Duff's six, and despite an equal pointage total, carried off the Middleton Trophy. Popular Ronnie Green, who renders valiant service as projectionist during the winter lectures,

carried off the Bronze Medal with an aggregate of thirty-one points.

Lewisiads were outstanding in several classes and the Asiatic Primulas were also good. Outstanding plants : *Pulsatilla* 'Albo-Violacea', shown by Major-General and Mrs. D. M. Murray-Lyon, *Daphne petraea* 'Gradiflora',* shown by Mrs. J. Dyas, Aberdeen, and *Romanzoffa unalaschensis*, shown by Dr. and Mrs. T. A. Stuart, Pitlochry. A fine pan of *Douglasia* was shown by A. S. Watson, Dundee, Miss G. L. Blackwood of Scone put up a fine pan of *Corydalis cashmeriana*, and Mrs. D. F. Booth's pan of *Nomocharis* was much admired.

In the bulbous plants section Mr. Youngson's fine specimens of *Rhodohypoxis* 'Dulcie', worthy of a prize in any Show, had to take second place to more rare specimens of *Rhodohypoxis baurii* and *Oxalis laciniata*, shown by Stewart Mitchell, Dundee, and *Trillium grandiflorum*, shown by J. Strachan, Perth.

Mr. James Aitken, the very busy landscape expert, took time off to put up a fine Trade stand. Mr. David Elder of Cupar put up a non-competitive display of show auriculas, and Mr. R. J. Brien of Pitcairngreen provided a good talking point with a display of Marl. This alternative to tufa proved very interesting to members who may seek to use it for lime-loving plants if they can discover a good source. Tufa is of chemical origin, whereas marl is formed as a plant deposit, although it appears to be almost wholly of lime content and suitably porous. Mr. Brien is seeking further information as to its past use and present location with a view to preparing a paper on the material so extensively used before the introduction of chemical manures and kiln-burnt lime in the late 17th century.

Altogether it was a fine Show—a credit to the Group and a great relief to the new Show Secretary, who was understandably worried early in the week by the lack of early entries ! Members would greatly help all concerned with the Show by the early indication of their intention to show, even if their list of class numbers should require a last minute revision, and those who have never shown before should remember that Show Secretaries will always welcome the odd entry even at the last minute to help fill the hall.

*(See fig. 83).

DUMFRIES

THIS SHOW, held on 5th and 6th May 1967 in the Y.M.C.A. Hall, Dumfries, was hardly so strong as usual in numbers, but our usual wide range of good plants made up a Show as successful as any we

have had and was visited by almost twice the "gate" of last year. It would seem that it is to our advantage to hold our Show to include a Saturday as it seems to be the best day for the attendance of the public.

Our judges were Messrs. Alfred Evans, R.B.G., Cameron Marchbank, C.R.I., Dumfries, and Robert Forbes, County Gardener, Dumfries, who for a number of years was our Show Secretary. The principal prize-winners were :—

Forrest Medal : Dr. M. E. Gibson with a large plant of *Vaccinium delavayi* in wonderful condition (see fig. 84).

Walmsley Cup (Class 1) : Brigadier G. F. Hutchinson with pans of *Ranunculus arendsii*, *Soldanella villosa* and *Lewisia brachycalyx*.

Summerville Trophy (Most points in Section I) : Norman N. Brown.

Club Bronze Medal (Most points in Section II) : Miss Margaret Rogerson.

Lewis Cup (Best plant in Section II) : Mrs. Margaret Clarke with a magnificent plant of *Leucogenes leontopodium*, which later went on to win the Forrest Medal at Edinburgh.

Entries were fairly evenly distributed over each section, and it was particularly gratifying to see our Section II well supported with some very fine plants. Due to the early season primulas were very few, rhododendrons, usually a strong feature at Dumfries, were very scarce, and saxifragas amounted to two entries. On the other hand, daphnes were good both in numbers and quality, as were sempervivums, sedums, and conifers. Polyanthus made a wonderful show.

In Class 1 Brigadier Hutchinson's Walmsley Cup trio were followed by Dr. Gibson showing *Cytisus ardoinii*, *Vaccinium nummularia* and *Androsace villosa* 'Arachnoides Superba', and by Mrs. Ellison Clarke showing *Arisarum proboscidium*, *Ranunculus arendsii*, and a lovely plant of *Corydalis cashmeriana*. Other plants of particular note in Section I were *Polygala chamaebuxus*, *Perezia recurva*, *Cyathodes colensoi*, *Pp. aureata*, *forrestii*, and a lovely *reedii* shown by Mrs. Hallett, Sedburgh, *Tulipa batalinii*, *Trillium grandiflorum*, *Lewisia 'Phyllellia'*.

Sempervivums, which I mentioned above as being very strong, were headed by two splendid pans from Mrs. Hallett. In Rhododendrons, *R. williamsianum* and *R. 'Prastigiatum'* were outstandingly good.

Other plants of note in Section 1 were *Daphne collina*, *Cassiope lycopodioides*, *Cassiope* x 'Edinburgh' also *Cc.* 'Muirhead' and *selaginoides*.

Conifers were strong, and William McGinley led in the two pan class with *Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'Minima' and *Cham. obtusa* 'Juniperoides Compacta', and the single pan class by Mrs. Ellison Clark with *Cedrus sargentii*.

In Section II plants shown included *Hutchinsia alpina*, *Rhododendron calostrotum*, *Trillium ovatum*, *Tiarella cordifolia* and *Celmisia ramulosa*, in addition to the lovely pan of *Leucogenes leontopodium* which won the Lewis Cup for Mrs. M. Clark.

In Section IV Polyanthus, as usual, were a show in themselves. The class was won by a fine plant shown by Miss Templeton.

Finally, I would like to thank all my Committee and others who helped to make the Show a success, particularly the ladies who helped at the Secretary's table, the Judges, whose decisions were well received, and the Crichton Royal for their invaluable help in setting up and dismantling the Show.

Since writing the above report, the Club in general and we in the South in particular have sustained a very great loss by the passing of Brigadier George F. Hutchinson of Rockcliffe. Everything he did, whether for his own Kirkudbrightshire Group or helping at our Show, was done with an enthusiasm which will be very much missed. Our deepest sympathy goes to Mrs. Hutchinson and family.

DUNFERMLINE

DUNFERMLINE SHOW, held in the Music Pavilion, Pittencrieff Park, on 19th and 20th May 1967, showed the adverse effects of the recent weather in a slightly reduced number of entries and a smaller presentation of really noteworthy plants.

Even in Class 1 (three pans) this was apparent, although there were some excellent plants. Mr. Esslemont was first with *Asperula arcadiensis* (also winner of the Forrest Medal), *Primula forrestii* and *Linum elegans*. Mr. Crosland came second with *Campanula rupestris*, *Fritillaria crassifolia* and *Orchis pallens*, and Miss J. Thomson third with *Campanula aucheri*, *Lewisia cotyledon* hybrid, and a *Gaultheria sp.*

In Class 2 Mr. Crosland with *Raoulia eximia* and Mr. Esslemont with *Iris persica* (Mathew 545) were adjudged first equal, followed by a fine *Lewisia leana* 'Alba'. Mrs. Murdoch won the native plant class

with an excellent *Cochlearia groenlandica*, and Mrs. Dyas Class 4 with a fine *Dianthus simulans*.

The best primula in Class 5 was a fine *Primula aureata* shown by Mr. and Mrs. Baillie, and in Class 8 Mr. J. R. Terris and Mrs. Maule both had excellent plants of *Lewisia* 'Phyllellia' and Miss Thomson a fine *Lewisia* 'Sunset'.

Mrs. Dyas won Class 12 with a very good *Lithospermum oleifolium*, followed by *Myosotis lyalli* shown by Mrs. Maule. In Class 14 *Carduncellus pinnatus acaulis* just beat two excellent *Anacyclus depressus* and the winner in Class 16 was the now less seldom seen *Erodium chamaedryoides* 'Fl. Pl.'. Mrs. Maule showed a very nice pan of *Calceolaria darwinii* in Class 19 and an excellently grown mossy *Saxifraga* 'Four Winds' was so eye-catching in Class 48 as to receive a Certificate of Merit. In the three-pan class 49 three excellent Sedums—*S. spathulifolium* 'Atropurpureum', 'Capa Blanca' and 'Aureum' shown by R. W. Rutherford were a very worthy first, and in Class 55 *Lewisia* 'Sunset' was adjudged best of a fine batch. (Lewisias were very fine throughout the Show).

In spite of the adverse and trying season it was a most praiseworthy Show and must have enheartened Mrs. Wilson and her team of helpers (see fig. 85).

EDINBURGH

THE CLUB SHOW, held in the Music Hall, Edinburgh, on 30th and 31st May 1967, was noteworthy for the number of excellent exhibits staged and for the over-all standard of the runners-up and also-rans.

In the six pan Class 1, the K.C. Corsar Trophy was won by Mr. Duff of Broughty Ferry with *Calceolaria darwinii*,* *Cypripedium calceolus*, *Linum elegans*, *Oxalis laciniata*, *Ramonda myconi* 'Rosea' and *Weldenia candida*—6 excellent plants. Mr. Crosland of Torphins was a very close runner-up with *Primula forrestii** (winner of the R. E. Cooper Bhutan Cup), *Calochortus maweanus*, *Corydalis cashmeriana*, *Lewisia* 'Carroll Watson', *Myosotis macrantha* and *Pinguicula grandiflora*. Mr. H. Esslemont, Aberdeen, came first in Class 2 (for the Carnethy Medal) with *Campanula rupestris*, *Phlox adsurgens* 'Wagon Wheel',* and *Verbascum dumulosum*, while Mrs. Naule, Edinburgh, with *Phlox triovulata*, *Verbascum dumulosum* and *Viola albanica*, and Mrs. J. T. Ferris, Kirkcaldy, with *Anacyclus depressus*, *Carduncellus rha-ponticoides* and *Lewisia* 'Phyllellia' were third equal. (*figs. 86-88).

The Elsie Harvey Memorial Medal (Class 3) went to Mr. Esslemont for excellent plants of *Haastia pulvinaris*, *Nassauvia revoluta* and *Pyxidantha barbulata*. Second came Mr. Crosland whose three included *Raoulia mammillaris* and *R. exima*, and third Mrs. Ellison Clark, whose plants included *Aciphylla crosby-smithii* and *Perezia recurva* (see figs. 89-90).

Class 4 produced the Forrest Medal winner—*Leucogenes leontopodium*—shown by Mrs. C. M. Clark; this plant later in the day received an Award of Merit and a Cultural Commendation. Another good specimen of this plant was placed first in Class 7. An excellent plant of *Primula reidii williamsii* shown by Mrs. Simson Hall in Class 15 received a Certificate of Merit, as did a plant of *Cypripedium cordigerum*, shown by Mr. Esslemont in Class 29.

It is still disappointing that not more good dwarf ferns are to be seen at our Shows. Many people do not seem to realise that ferns with their beautifully graceful and delicate looking fronds in delightfully varied shades of green can give beauty in a rock garden over many months instead of a splash of colour for a week or so as is the case with so many flowering plants. There were some very attractive entries (but more would be desirable) in Classes 45 and 46, both of which were won by Dr. James Davidson, who also came first in Class 57. Entries in Class 60 should also have been more, but Mrs. E. Clark's *Euryops evansii* was a worthy winner and her *Aethionema* 'Warley Rose' in Class 64 was another excellent plant.

The A. O. Curle Trophy (Class 73) was won very worthily by Mr. H. Esslemont, and Class 74 produced seven entries, most of which were of a high standard—the winner being that of Mrs. Tucker.

The Bronze Medal in Section II was won by Mrs. L. G. Whitby, who also won the Henry Archibald Rose Bowl for Class 77. There many good and interesting plants throughout Section II, including two excellent *Saxifraga* 'Southside Seedling' in Class 82, very good primulas in Classes 84 and 85, an excellent *Oxalis adenophylla* 'Rosea' in Class 90 and *Sedum spathulifolium* 'Aureum' in Class 101.

Section IV had many very interesting and attractive Cacti and Succulents on view. Miss Izatt of Grovemount Nursery, Auchterarder, was awarded a Large Gold Medal for a most delightful layout of an interesting collection of plants, and to J. R. Ponton of Kirknewton went a Gold Medal for a stand of some very interesting plants as he so often provides.

Book Review

"MOUNTAIN FLOWERS," in colour, by Anthony Huxley, illustrated by Daphne Barry and Mary Grierson. P. 428, with 884 plants illustrated in colour, 390 in black and white, and further drawings throughout text. Published by Blandford Press, Ltd., London. Price 30s.

This book covers in great detail but in very condensed form the plants of our European mountains, from the Pyrenees to Yugoslavia, and from Norway to Sicily. After a short preface there follows an introduction dealing with the book's scope, complete with maps, how to use it, botanical nomenclature, and what are covered in it as 'mountain flowers'. Then follow in their families the illustrations and later their descriptions in text. The illustrations are numerous and very accurate, and where difficulty in identification of individual species is liable to occur, further explanation and sketches are given in the text.

This all makes for the type of book which botanists, rock gardeners, and all interested in mountain plants have been looking for for a long time, and the fact that it is of a size which can be easily carried in a pocket or rucksack makes it all the more valuable. At the end, immediately before the indices of latin then common names, are glossaries of botanical and geological terms and a useful bibliography.

Speaking personally as one whose nomenclature is probably a bit dated, I am sorry to see that *Anemone* or *Pulsatilla sulphurea* has now become *Pulsatilla alpina apiifolia*. Some of the Sempervivums, too, have become *Jovibarba* (or *Diopogon*)—but this need not cause any heart burnings to prospective show exhibitors; they will still be eligible in the sempervivum classes. Fortunately for our peace of mind, Mr. Huxley gives us synonyms liberally, so that we can satisfy ourselves that our memory is not at fault. It shook me to see that *Primula scotica* was not listed in the index, but I was relieved to find it still under this name in the text among its relatives.

The gentian family is very fully dealt with. The fact that an old acquaintance of rock gardeners, *Gentiana acaulis*, has passed into oblivion should come as a relief to the many who have long found it difficult to reconcile the lumping together of so many differing forms under this name. Now when it is realised these forms have been given the status of true species and their various habitats are listed, we may get new ideas concerning their possible needs in cultivation. One misses the mention of *Gentiana dinarica*, and *G. favrati* in the *verna* complex has become *G. orbicularis*.

Armeria plantaginea becomes *A. arenaria*, and great detail is given to the identifications of *Pedicularis* species with 37 illustrations. Campanulas with 24 illustrations and Saxifragas with 64 are also dealt with excellently. Congratulations are due to all who have shared in the production of this very fine book—the author, the illustrators, and finally the printers and publishers for such an excellent production.

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