

American Rock Garden Society Bulletin



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DIRECTORATE

BULLETIN

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Published quarterly by the AMERICAN ROCK GARDEN SOCIETY, incorporated under the laws of the State of New Jersey. You are invited to join—annual dues are: Ordinary Membership, \$5.00; Family Membership, \$7.00; Patron Membership, \$25.00; Life Membership, \$150.00; Overseas Membership, \$3.50. The subscription price per year is \$4.00. The office of publication is located at P. O. Box 26 (175 High Street), Closter, New Jersey 07624. Address communications regarding membership, dues, and other matters relating to the Society to Richard W. Redfield, Box 26, Closter, N. J. 07624. Address manuscripts and other matters relating to the *Bulletin* to Albert M. Sutton, 9608 26th Ave., N.W., Seattle, Washington 98107. Second-class postage paid at Closter, New Jersey.

AMERICAN ROCK GARDEN SOCIETY BULLETIN

Albert M. Sutton, Editor

VOL. 29

JANUARY, 1971

No. 1

FARRERIANA

AMERICAN ROCK GARDEN SOCIETY ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

February 1, 1970

Introduction by Mr. Harold Epstein:

This morning's program is devoted to the inimitable, the sacred,—REGINALD FARRER—the father, the mother and the son and everything else of Rock Gardening. I don't know whether there was anyone in the past who has left such a mark on the whole subject of rock gardening as Reginald Farrer and for those of you who haven't referred to or read any of his classic material of all kinds—and I refer only to those on horticulture because his other works have been horrible as you will hear from Elizabeth Hall—you should. They are collectors' books as I told you yesterday—they are not easy to get and if you do they are expensive.

Elizabeth Hall has been blessed with this assignment (and I think that she will agree with me that the word is *blessed*) which she has appreciated very much, and most people do not appreciate assignments the way Elizabeth Hall did this one, because she has been living "Farrer" day and night for the past few months and I think that when this is over she will be the world's living authority on Farrer.

Elizabeth Hall started her career in the Library of The Horticultural Society of New York. Incidentally, she is a graduate of a horticultural school, so do not think of her only as a librarian. Later she was brought up to The New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx where she spent over thirty years and recently, in her retirement, she has returned to The Horticultural Society of New York where she is now in charge of a wonderful collection of rare horticultural books. I do not know of anyone who enjoys his or her work as much as does Elizabeth Hall,—even in retirement. I give you Elizabeth Hall.

Address by Elizabeth Hall:

Thank you, Mr. Epstein. Good morning, members of The American Rock Garden Society. About four months ago Mr. Epstein telephoned and asked me whether I would like to give a talk entitled "Farreriana." He said,

"I'll give you a bibliography"—and so he did. He produced a marvelous list of all the references on Farrer which had come out in the *Quarterly Bulletin of the Alpine Garden Society* and I have read and enjoyed every one of them.

Reginald Farrer wasn't exactly a stranger to me. I was familiar with some of his books and I have met a few persons who remembered him. I have been in this horticultural library business for over forty years and I have had the great privilege of knowing many botanists and horticulturists who have shaken the hands *which* have shaken the hands of numerous famous plantsmen. You know some of these people whom I shall mention. There was Arthur Herrington, for many years the manager of our International Flower Show. Before coming to the United States he served as secretary to William Robinson. Farrer knew and greatly admired Robinson. For about thirty years I worked with T. H. Everett, Director of Horticulture at The New York Botanical Garden. This was quite an exciting period in my life. Mr. Everett and Mr. Farrer had several things in common—they were both dynamic individuals, having definite likes and dislikes, and reveling in heated arguments. It was through Mr. Everett that I had the good fortune to spend an afternoon visiting gardens on Long Island with Mr. Everett's guest, Frank Kingdon Ward, who is well known for his plant hunting expeditions and for his books.

Really, I can't begin to tell you how much these things have meant to me. I like plants and people and books and my work and play have been a combination of all three of these.

Reginald Farrer's plant hunting books have been among my favorites. In the Library, at Christmas time, I am frequently asked for suggestions (mostly from wives) of what they can give their gardening friends for Christmas. Some of you may remember Mr. James G. Esson who was the Superintendent of the Roswell Eldridge estate in Great Neck, Long Island and an active member of the American Rock Garden Society. Mrs. Esson had a standing order with me to locate one Farrer book for each Christmas. These Farrer books are all out-of-print, as you know, but under the Christmas tree for several years Mr. Esson would find another Farrer title. On one occasion a lady member of the Horticultural Society brought her "non-plantsman" husband to the library and asked me to give him an entertaining book to read while she went shopping. I brought forth Farrer's *On the Eaves of the World* and when the husband was about to leave he said, "What a gifted writer this man Farrer is—I'd like to buy a copy."—which proves that Farrer's books cover such a fascinating range of subjects—plants, places, and people—that they have an appeal to many kinds of readers.

Now, let us consider Reginald Farrer—the man. He was a dynamic, controversial, and curious individual—and I like that word *curious*. The latin *cura* means care and a curious gardener (often referred to in old gardening books) is a careful, painstaking person. I know, there are other meanings of this word *curious* which are a bit derogative, such as inquisitive or odd. Nevertheless, to my way of thinking, a curious person is a delightfully odd individual—and so I think Reginald Farrer was all that. He was an intrepid plant hunter, and a superb writer who loved wild plants and wild places. He was a great scholar of the classics as well as of the literature of his time and his books are filled with numerous allusions to the works of authors whom

he admired. In one instance he likened the plants which he was describing to some of the characters in *Pride and Prejudice*. He was a self-taught artist of quite some ability and he painted many of the flowers which he saw in his travels.

His novels were mediocre and his plays were pretty terrible. And to complete this summation, he was a Buddhist and a bachelor. Today, he is known as the patron saint of all alpine gardeners.

He was born in 1880 in a little village of Clapham in western Yorkshire near the Lancashire border. The countryside of Yorkshire is still delightful. I had the privilege, a few years ago, of traveling on a garden tour in England and Scotland (which was under the guidance of our Mr. Epstein) and we went through a part of Yorkshire. This country is particularly rich in native flora. I found in our library a book entitled *The Flora of Yorkshire* by F. Arnold Lee which lists over eight hundred different kinds of plants.

Farrer was the eldest son of wealthy parents but he was handicapped as a child with a harelip which entailed numerous operations and compelled him to be educated at home until he went to Oxford. He was called a "difficult child"—he must have been because it was said that in a temper he was apt to hit his music teacher over the head with his violin or throw a bottle of ink at an uninvited visitor to his study. Much of his time was spent in roaming over the Yorkshire downs in search of plants. At eight years of age he knew by heart his school text-book of botany and he could dissect a flower with full knowledge of its component parts.

Early in his teens he was rebuilding the rock garden at his parents' Yorkshire Ingleborough House. In his roamings around his home he discovered *Saxifraga x farreri*, a natural hybrid, and in 1894 this young lad made his botanical debut in print by publishing in *The Journal of Botany* (a very scholarly British publication) a note on the occurrence of *Arenaria gothica* at Ingleborough which was a new station for this plant.

From 1898 to 1902 he was a student at Balliol College at Oxford where he took classical honors. While at Oxford he and one of the Dons, Mr. Bidder, designed and rebuilt a rock garden which was admired for many years. Before leaving Oxford he published in 1901 a forty-four page skit entitled *Herod Through the Opera Glass—a Tragedy in Three Acts*. This was a parody on one of the works of Stephen Phillips, a Victorian playwright whose plays were produced by Beerbohm Tree.

After Oxford he traveled in Japan, Korea and China and briefly in Canada. He records his trip to the Orient in *The Garden of Asia: Impressions from Japan* which was published in 1904. In this book he mentioned only a few plants—he was greatly impressed with *Cryptomeria*, the *Fritillaria* and the *Kerria* but he was particularly delighted with the artistry and scale of the Japanese gardens. Most of the book is devoted to the Japanese people—their way of life—particularly of the Japanese wife, the mother-in-law, and of course, the Geishas.

When he was back in England he worked in his gardens and attended the meetings of the Floral Committee of the Royal Horticultural Society and the flower shows about England. He gave a lecture at the Royal Horticultural Society on Japanese plants and gardens. Mr. F. H. Fisher paints a vivid word picture in his article "The Farrer Story" in the *Quarterly Bulletin of the Al-*

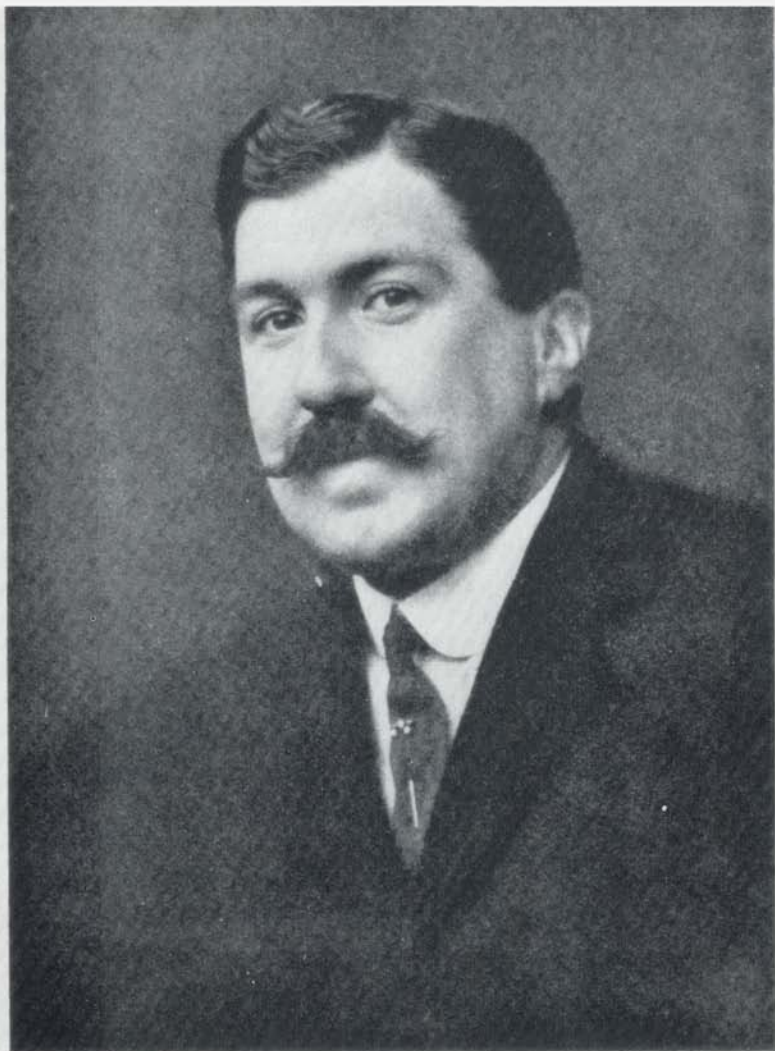
pine Garden Society (March 1961): "He possessed no hesitation in speech, at its worst it sounded like one of those early phonographs fitted with a tin trumpet, though it was a piercing voice which could be overheard by many as he held argument in some crowded hall such as the Old Temple Show of the Royal Horticultural Society. His appearance was not altogether unprepossessing, though it remained still grotesque . . . His complexion, formerly sallow, assumed a more florid tinge in his thirties, and he had grown rather fat, which caused him to resemble the Chinese God of Good Fellowship . . . From his birth he carried a slightly Mongol look." One of his friends thought that his head resembled that of an Italian barber. So much for Farrer's personality and looks.

Hardly a year passed that he did not make a plant pilgrimage to his much loved Alps with one or another of his gardening pals, such as Clarence Elliot or George Maw, the crocus king. He admired the elderly William Robinson and Gertrude Jekyll—the great exponents of naturalistic plantings in contrast to the terribly trite Victorian designs abounding in carpet bedding and the like. He was constantly swapping plants with E. A. Bowles who wrote the delightful books: *My Garden in Spring*; *My Garden in Summer*; *My Garden in Autumn and Winter*.

In 1907 Farrer completed *My Rock Garden*, perhaps the most popular of all his many books. In this he deals with the making and maintaining of a rock garden and decries most vehemently the then-existing garden types—1. The Almond Pudding Creation. 2. The Dog's Grave of Flat Stones. 3. The Devil's Lapful (throwing stones around at random). Farrer states: "Nothing comes upon my page that has not lived in my garden." He describes his old rock garden which was far from satisfactory and also his new garden—an old disused kitchen garden where the soil was rich and fat and full of hoarded nourishment. He writes: "These alpinists are such frauds; there is nothing that they appreciate, I have found, like manure, as long, of course, as it is not rank or recent. After all, why shouldn't they, although they starve on rubble in the Alps? Because a pauper-child exists and looks pale pretty on kippers and gin, that is no reason why it shouldn't, if the chance be given, grow fat and rosy on buns." Throughout this book Farrer preaches the importance of drainage, drainage, drainage. In proper rock gardens he would exclude all double flowers except possibly the double orange Welsh Poppy and positively—no annuals allowed. He remarks: "It is no more right or appropriate than to put the prettiest of French picture-hats on the Venus of Milo." The bulk of his text is devoted to an evaluation of a long line of acceptable rock garden plants which are arranged under plant families, beginning with the Ranunculaceae and continuing down through the numerous plant groups.

In 1907 Farrer visited Ceylon, donned the yellow robe and served for a time as a Buddhist monk. In 1908 his *In Old Ceylon* appeared which was permeated with Buddhist philosophy and in which he gave glowing accounts of his trips to abbeys where he viewed the relics of his beloved Buddha.

This same year he finished his *Alpine and Bog Plants*—a companion to *My Rock Garden* in which he gave directions for building bog and water gardens and also an account of another excursion to the Alps. In the *Quarterly Bulletin of the Alpine Garden Society* for March 1969 is a splendid paper by June M. Horwood entitled "In Farrer's Footsteps." Mrs. Horwood



REGINALD FARRER

and her husband returned from their trip thoroughly satisfied that the rare plants described by Farrer, over sixty years ago, were still to be found—even his favorite “King of the Alps,” *Eritrichium nanum*.

In between books on rock plants he wrote several historical novels and plays. Some of these may be found in The New York Public Library. These works are fantastic, revealing the vast background that Farrer possessed of classical literature and history as well as of contemporary publications. Considered the best of his novels is *The Anne-Queen's Chronicle; Being a History of the Last Five Months, Faithfully Recounted in the Life of Lady Anne, Marquise of Pembroke, Queen-Consort of England*. In Farrer's own words: “an unbeautiful vixen.”

In 1909 appeared my favorite Farrer book—*In a Yorkshire Garden*. Through the pages of this book we are taken on a walk in the gardens of Ingleborough House and the Craven Nursery (which was Farrer's commercial venture). He speaks of some of his garden-minded relatives—in particular, an energetic aunt whom he kept busy cleaning seeds. He describes this aunt as hating cold and who shivered and withered, come winter, like his bamboos. With tremendous pride he shows us his Great Moraine and the Cliff Garden. He points to some unhappy looking plants which he had seen at the Trury Show—"a place most perilous and seductive" which had tempted him to try some plants that would not thrive under rugged Yorkshire conditions. He keeps back no secrets on how he succeeds with plants nor does he hide his failures. Throughout this book, his favorites, the Primulas, are constantly in evidence. As in all Farrer's works, *In a Yorkshire Garden* is well indexed as to the plants mentioned in the text—a great boon to the reader and especially to a reference librarian.

In 1910 Farrer made an extensive excursion through the Maritime Alps in search of new plants. In the following winter, back in Yorkshire, he wrote *Among the Hills: a Book of Joy in High Places*. This was dedicated to his great friend, E. A. Bowles. He finished the manuscript just before Christmas and on the closing pages he wrote: "Therefore, will I conclude by sending my heartiest good hopes, for Christmas and for every other season, to all gardeners (and all their gardens) who diligently purchase my successive works, and put them on their shelves and refuse to let them out on loan or hire." Practically every book of Farrer's contains a facetious line to buy his books and thus enable him to have the wherewithal for another plant hunting expedition. In this book he mentions a particular *Viola* that caught his fancy—"Viola cenisia is a true Pansy . . . They not only have a dear little eye of bright yellow, but on the lateral and lower petals there are usually a beard and whiskers—which give the flower an expression of waggish intelligence. So many of the Pansies have silly faces; the garden ones one often longs to slap, they look so stupid, like kitchen clocks." And then we run across an illuminating bit of information concerning his state of bachelorhood—"this is to reassure the many people who write and tell me that they are certain that I am unmarried from the tone of my writings—Dear, dear Sophia of my heart, would you then so clearly transpire through my works, supposing you had heard me with a kindlier ear?" In this account of his plant hunting in the Alps he sees fit to ruthlessly make fun of the inability of one of his companions to negotiate awkward places in climbing the mountains.

Farrer continued to write novels and plays when he was not writing for the *Gardeners' Chronicle* (London) or visiting his horticultural cronies. He mingled politically with the Liberal Asquith Set and in 1911 he stood for the Ashford Division. He was then thirty-one years of age. He spent much of the thousand pounds which his father had given him for this political venture in buying Cypripediums. Needless to say—he lost the election.

About this time he was very active in the Buddhist Society of Great Britain and Ireland. He lectured frequently at their meetings, served on their Council and was a member of the publication committee of *The Buddhist Review*. A file of this publication is to be found in the Annex of The New York Public Library which is located on West 43rd Street next to the Hud-

son River. In this Annex are shelved ancient newspapers and magazines that are seldom consulted. I spent a whole morning pouring over Farrer's contributions and I ran across one of his plays entitled *Vasanta the Beautiful: a Drama in Four Acts—Time about 595 B.C. During the Manifestation of the Buddha Gautama*. One unkind critic said that this "masterpiece" reminded him of *Chu Chin Chow*—an oriental musical comedy which some of you may remember. To me it is a fascinating piece of writing, permeated with Buddhist philosophy but one detects that Farrer often has his tongue in his cheek. The following is a brief sample—a dialogue in free verse between a very, very obese gentleman called Tarukshya, the Fat and Ananda, the Well Beloved, the Living Buddha.—(It reminds me of a session of today's "weight watchers").

"Oh Lord, stretch forth your healing hand on me;
 In truth, it is not lack of deep respect that keeps me
 Sitting fast upon my place . . .
 But I am excessively weighted down
 With gouty pains and fat and want of breath
 I cannot rise . . .
 Do good to me this hour and heal me."

Ananda, the Living Buddha replies:

"Yes, without a miracle or laying on of hands;
 Rise up and walk five miles a day, my friend,
 And eat two meals instead of four . . .
 And then your pains will fade
 As fades your flesh . . .
 What did you think that I
 Should charm your fatness from you with a word?
 The very utmost any God can do
 Is to prescribe the way . . .
 Salvation is not bought with giving alms
 But won by eager effort in yourself."

In 1912 Farrer succumbed to the wanderlust and traveled to Athens and Constantinople. In this same year appeared a little book of a hundred pages, with eight plates in color—*The Rock Garden*. This is a practical, useful guide for the beginning gardener in making and maintaining a rock garden including the construction of a moraine garden. Always in a masterly and intriguing style he gives his evaluations and recommendations of specific plants. He writes that rock gardening is "by far the cheapest and most repaying form of gardening . . . It has come accordingly the pet passion of the man of small means, and only a small plot of ground to play with." He adds, in closing, "But as for books upon the subject, I should be an idiot if I didn't urge you specially to read my own—and there are others."

In 1913 he wrote a sequel to *Among the Hills* entitled *The Dolomites: King Laurin's Garden*. At the beginning are these words: "Those who dislike mountains and are bored with plants need to have no dealings with this volume." How he loved the high places and hated to descend to the "comfortable fat lands." He writes: "Nowhere does one feel more free from the

pettinesses of man than amid the lonely and annihilating splendours of this place."

Back in England again he was asked to write a preface to E. A. Bowles' *My Garden in Spring*. He was an ardent admirer of Mr. Bowles and he wrote a sincere tribute to this great plantsman. However, he could not refrain from using this opportunity to write a diatribe on formal show places of the nouveau riche and of others who, according to Farrer, had abominable taste. Sir Frank Crisp's splendiferous formal estate (without actually being named) got the "works." Farrer speaks: "Come into Mr. Bowles' garden and learn what true gardening is, what is the real beauty of plants and what the nature of their display." This preface enraged Sir Frank Crisp and also Miss Ellen Willmott (of *The Genus Rosa* fame) who was a close friend of Sir Frank and who had been on unfriendly terms with Farrer for some time. Miss Willmott and Sir Frank wrote a little pamphlet in defense of the modern landscape artistry of Crisp's estate and cursed Farrer for his rudeness and lack of appreciation. Miss Willmott distributed this pamphlet at one of the Royal Horticultural Society's flower shows. Unfortunately, on this occasion, Farrer was far away on his Kansu-Tibet expedition—otherwise there would have been a dramatic rebuttal from his vitriolic pen.

The Kansu-Tibet expedition was planned during the last months of 1913. This time Farrer was going to have a companion, Bill Purdom, who was of the same age—thirty-three. He was willing to go for no remuneration except his expenses. Previously, in 1911, Purdom had collected plants for the Veitch nursery in England and for the Arnold Arboretum in the United States. He was as shy and retiring as Farrer was dynamic but he knew the Chinese well and was liked by them which was a tremendous help because at that time the Kansu-Tibet border was in a state of nervous tension between the Chinese and the Mohammedans. Purdom had been at Kew from 1902-1908. Farrer and Purdom left England February 7, 1914 and were in Kansu April 16. Farrer's two-volume work *On the Eaves of the World* contains the thrilling account of this expedition which lasted two years. The dedication of this book reads as follows: "To my dear Bill (W. Purdom, Esq.) through whom alone it was that these odysseys were made possible and pleasant, this tale of them is thankfully offered by his affectionate friend, the Author." One of their first exciting discoveries was to find *Viburnum fragrans* (known today as *Viburnum farreri*). For centuries this shrub had only been seen in cultivation in gardens throughout China but never before had it been found growing in the wild. Later in the year the fruit was gathered for the purpose of extracting the seed which was to be sent back to England. But a tragic experience took place. A native prince who happened to take a dislike to Farrer because he had gone too far up a sacred mountain and supposedly had enraged the gods, ate up all the Viburnum fruits and threw away the seeds. Luckily, more fruit was collected. On another occasion, the natives, believing Purdom to be a doctor, compelled him to perform an operation. Farrer administered the chloroform, and the patient recovered. The fact that Farrer was a Buddhist was a helpful liaison with the Chinese priests. Once, when their lives were really in grave danger Purdom disguised himself as a coolie—he shaved off his blond mustache, he wore a tight scarf over his hair, and he lowered his blue eyes whenever

he met a stranger. Farrer, fortunately, had gold fillings in his front teeth, so he went forth as an important potentate under the name of "Governor General of Northern England." Purdom was a skillful photographer and Farrer was a clever artist with water colors. Much of their work can be seen today in the library of the Alpine Garden Society in London. As regards some of Farrer's photographic attempts—the story goes that on one occasion he took several score of pictures only to find that he got a hundred per cent failure. It was discovered that he had neglected to remove the cover of the lens of his camera.

The native coolies, Ma Fu and "goggle-eyed" Go Go, would not allow Farrer to dry his plants for herbarium specimens. He was told that he would lose caste among the natives if he were seen performing such a menial task. After these coolies had mastered the technique of properly handling plants, their work, with characteristic Chinese precision, could not be surpassed.

On August 4, 1914 there was a terrible storm which particularly frightened the natives who believed that the Gods were enraged. Farrer writes: "We saw no significance at the time—but that was the day World War I began."

The end of the second volume of *On the Eaves of the World* brings us to November of 1914. *The Rainbow Bridge*, which was not published until 1921, continues and concludes the story of the 1914-15 expedition to Kansu. Farrer writes at the beginning of this volume: "Do not grumble at me if I make you linger . . . along the preliminaries of my travel. For, if you are to share its flowers and fun, it is only fair that you should share its delays and dullnesses, too, so as to gather a complete notion of what that country and that northern winter and spring are like, and how our life went by there, in long, slow slabs . . . I hope I do not detain you unduly with feasts and foods. But the fact is that the countless cross-examinations I have undergone since my return at the hands of the more intelligent have left me with a conviction that people's prime interest in one's travel-experience lies in learning what one has to eat and drink . . . No real book is ever written for anybody but its writer; first and foremost; and only afterwards, by chance of Fate, for the greater or lesser multitude of other people; who reflect his various facets and react to his personality. Be patient, then, you who don't like plants and do like prattle; and you others, bear up against the prattle for the sake of the plants; I am not writing exclusively for any set of you among the lot, and in my rainbow bridge there are many colours, of which you must accept those you don't like at the price of enjoying those you do. And if you like none of them, you are very welcome to stay at home and not set foot on my bridge at all; Oh, you dyspeptic people . . . stay at home in the suburbs, good people, and cultivate *Calceolarias*; I and my little band of the elect will fare forth unashamed across the Plains of Heaven, swishing through that soft blue surf of fragrance, with every nerve tense in the intoxication of delight." And further on we read: "By this time we were well embogged in gentle muggy gloom where the sun proverbially shines so rarely that the dogs bark at it when it does."

This trip was full of adventures including the fording of rivers with often a humorous comment from Farrer: "I cannot feel that I looked my best, with my bulk obliterating the small frail veteran, who yet continued intrepidly

staggering on . . . gripping the mud with his toes at each step. It must have looked like some blowsy blossom hovering heavily above the water on a quite inadequate stem."

And now I must mention the account of the appearance, disappearance, and miraculous reappearance of a plant which was to be named eventually *Gentiana Farreri*. Farrer tells it this way: "To become vividly immortal in the Valhalla of gardeners, one must own a species as vigorous as it is glorious, a thing capable of becoming, and remaining, a household word among English enthusiasts, such a constant friend, for example, as *Gentiana Gentianella* or *Primula auricula* . . . Already Professor Balfour had refused me several of my Primulas, as being, despite their loveliness, of a temper so tricky as evidently not to be long for this world in English gardens, and therefore not fitted permanently to bear aloft my name in them. Only reluctantly, in fact, had he consented to give me *Primula Farreriana* on my urgent plea that a Primula of my own I must certainly have." However, there came a day in this rugged Kansu expedition when Farrer saw the plant of his dreams—"a fresh crashing explosion of colour . . . In no other plant except perhaps *Ipomoea learii*, or *Nemophila* . . . such a shattering of colour; it was like a clear sky soon after sunrise, shrill and translucent, as if it had a light inside. It literally burns in the alpine turf like an electric jewel, an incandescent turquoise." Now comes a tragic note—Farrer could not stay longer in this region for seed harvesting—he had to turn homeward and he packed his darling plants in biscuit tins. But the trans-Siberian journey killed them all. Months passed. World War I submerged Farrer in his work in London in the Foreign Office. His garden ceased to exist except as a remote memory. Then, in August of 1916, a little package from the Edinburgh Botanic Garden reached him with a note inquiring if he knew anything about the history of the enclosed unknown gentian. He tore away the wrappings and there was his lost gentian. How was this miracle wrought? Back in 1914 Farrer had sent to Edinburgh some plants of *Gentiana hexaphylla* and apparently with these had come some of the seeds of his "lost discovery" which had germinated and come into flower. In due time conservative Professor Balfour deemed this gentian worthy to be named *Gentiana Farreri*.

Let us go back to *The Rainbow Bridge* which Farrer was editing for publication. Here is a sample of one of the last pages: "Such a delightful book, said one party, if it hadn't been for all those beastly plants; . . . Such a delightful book, said the other, if it hadn't been for all those boring people and landscapes and things . . . In sum, criticism here, criticism there, it is all helpful and guiding, but I must remind myself . . . that I am writing this book for the relief and release of one person only in the world . . . My experiences, my pleasures, observations, ardours and achievements, with I, I, I." And as a final admonition Farrer adds: "Foreign travel, O reader, has its very real advantages, and all the pleasant scenes you have collected are so many medicine-bottles stored on your shelves against the maladies of life."

I must return to 1913, the year that Farrer completed copy of his two volume masterpiece of over a thousand pages—*The English Rock Garden*. He had taken this manuscript with him to Kansu in 1914 and had edited it for the press but we know that the war delayed its publication until 1919. He stated in the beginning of this encyclopedic work that he had written it

primarily for his own need. The initial chapters deal with the subjects of construction and maintenance of rock gardens, bog gardens and wild gardens. Then follow in alphabetical order under genus, species and variety, descriptions and evaluations of thousands of plants which he considered qualified to belong to his category of good rock garden subjects. In his text there is almost a complete absence of complex botanical terms. He calls idle affectations common names which have been artificially coined. This work teems with Farrer's exaggerated descriptions of his plants. Here is his portrayal of *Eritrichium nanum*—"The blue . . . lacking the tinny violence of *Gentiana verna*'s sapphire satin, and the almost vicious intensity of *Scilla bifolia*."

Some of Farrer's definitions have become classics, such as: "A *miff* is a plant, which, in the midst of seeming life, is in death and expires abruptly . . . A *mimp* is one that forever hangs on the edge of death, trailing a sickly existence towards inevitable extermination. Thus, *Gentiana verna* in too many gardens is a *mimp*; *Myosotis rupicola* is a *miff*." This book brought forth much praise but also some adverse criticism. Here are a few choice comments: "He was too much inclined to clothe plants with merits they hardly possessed."—"His likes and dislikes are fierce."—"His praise is often exaggerated and his blame is not always warranted." From *Nature*, an authoritative periodical published in England came: "His exuberance is very irritating . . . extravagant excesses with the English language." Another British serial, *The Journal of Botany*, offers: "Where one word would suffice Farrer uses twelve." Yet, in contrast, there were numerous touching evaluations, such as: "He has revived horticulture by his picturesque and dashing enthusiasms." "Few know alpinists as he does."—and the following tribute from one of our American plantsmen, Peter J. van Melle, of Poughkeepsie: "It is because of the rare gifts of beauty which he bore (more precious, perhaps, than any fruits of taxonomy) that the world has forgiven Farrer his shortcomings. Heaven send us more such Sinners."

So much for Farrer's books. We are now in the year 1919. World War I is over. Farrer is in a nursing home recovering from an appendectomy. He is raring to get back to his beloved mountains. In a five minute conversation with E. H. M. Cox it is settled that they set off for Upper Burma in six months. And they went as per schedule. Cox was with Farrer until the end of 1919 at which time he returned to England and left Farrer alone with his native coolies. Much of this Farrer-Cox expedition was described by Farrer in the pages of the *Gardeners' Chronicle* (London). To Cox we are indebted for his own splendid book entitled *Farrer's Last Journey: Upper Burma, 1919-1920*, which was published in 1926. The last letter which was received from Farrer was dated September 11th, 1920 and was sent from the frontier range between Burma and China. He wrote that the weather was bitter but that he was kept busy with his seed collecting. Shortly after, word came that Farrer had fallen ill with a cold on October 1st and had died October 17th. His devoted Gurka coolie stood by him to the last and buried him among the hills that he loved. On Farrer's grave is a memorial plaque which was erected by the wish of his mother.

To E. H. M. Cox we are also indebted for another outstanding book entitled *The Plant Introductions of Reginald Farrer*, published in 1930 as a memorial volume to coincide with the tenth anniversary of Farrer's death.

It contains twelve reproductions in color of Farrer's paintings, which were requested by his mother, and a definitive bibliography of Farrer's writings, in addition to references to biographical data.

Mr. M. R. Farrer, who was a cousin of Reginald, generously made a gift of a collection of the first editions of Farrer's plant and travel books to the Alpine Garden Society of England and with these were albums of photographs, lantern slides, letters and papers.

In conclusion, I would like to share with you just two more quotations which pertain to the unforgettable Reginald Farrer. Mr. Cox writes: "Even after the lapse of eleven years I have a vivid memory of Farrer in the hills, his stocky figure clad in khaki shorts and shirt, tieless, collarless, a faded topee on his head, old boots and stockings that gradually slipped down and clung about his ankles. His legs usually looked like a ploughed field but he cared little. He plastered them with grease and otherwise left them to take care of themselves."—And finally, W. E. Th. Ingwersen's masterly summation: "There never has been, and I do not think there ever will be, another who will leave so vivid a mark of his passing on any single horticultural subject. Whilst the cult of Rock Gardening is being followed in our land, Farrer will need no other monument than the volumes he has left behind him or the insidious virus with which he has influenced not only his contemporaries but the present and following generations of garden lovers. Surely a monument to be proud of. Few of us will ever see his grave in the far away Kawnglang Po, but almost every catalogue on Alpine Plants contains conscious or unconscious quotations from Farrer's books, and our Alpine Garden Society, owing to the generosity of one of its members, yearly awards handsome plaques to his memory. Every modern Rock Garden in itself with its moraine or scree is a memory to him who put the Dog's Grave, the Almond Pudding and the Devil's Lapful style of Rock Gardening to derision. If neither the moraine nor scree or the underground watered beds are Farrer's own invention, but the results of his wide reading on all matters appertaining to the subject so near to our hearts, there can be no doubt that Farrer has had the widest and the most impressive influence on Rock Gardening, and his works bid fair to become classics on this entrancing subject."

CLIFFSIDE OF FLOWERS

FRED LAPE, *Esperance, N. Y.*

Reginald Farrer, east of Llasha,
high in the Da Tung Alps, fell on his knees
worshipping a cliff where isopyrum
fell in cascades of leaf and flower.

It never yielded to cultivation.
One must go to the Da Tung Alps
for Farrer's white goddess, elusive
as all dreams from humanity kneeling.

And now men walk there in hatred,
no time to stop by a cliff of flowers.

And Farrer is dead.

Will another come
when the hatred has spent itself,
will another kneel at another cliff,
East or West, yellow or white what matter,
earth's flower and leaf the same to both,
or better yellow and white together,
earth's flower and leaf uniting both?

This is my own elusive dream.

PRIMULA DEORUM

HEINZ WEBER, *East Germany*

No rock garden would be complete without the genus *Primula*, one of the most colorful and diverse genera among alpinists. There is hardly a mountain visitor who could forget the sight of Primulas in flower. Unfortunately, not all of the species grow abundantly in the garden as they do in their mountain home, but there are those that attract the rock gardener and he will try again and again to grow them successfully. Sometimes he does; more often he fails. One of these difficult and rare beauties is *Primula deorum*, the Primrose of the Gods.

A long desired wish was fulfilled in July, 1969 when I went to Bulgaria to the Rile Mountains, the home of this beautiful Primula. The highest peak of these mountains is the Masala, 2925 m (9595 feet). Our hotel was situated at 1350 m.

Four of us climbed upwards early in the morning. In the high fir woods and among *Pinus montana* grew always *Soldanella hungarica* SIML., another member of the big family Primulaceae. We passed many flowering cushions of *Dianthus microlepis* BOISS., also *Campanula alpina* JACQ., and other alpine plants, and reached a large depression with many small streams and pools which were continuously supplied by the higher situated snow fields as the snow melted. Here I found that for which I had been searching. In the shallow water grew hundreds of the rare *Primula deorum*. The sight was overwhelming. I felt a pleasure that I had hitherto never experienced.

Primula deorum VELEN is related to the Section Auricula, Subsection Cyanopis. To this subsection belongs the lovely *Primula glutinosa* WULFEN.

From a rosette of leathery, elongated lance-shaped, gray-green leaves rises a scape up to 20 cm high carrying about ten one-sided, pendent flowers. They are about 1.5 cm wide and of an indescribably beautiful purple-violet color. The upper surfaces of the leaves have a gray bloom (no farina).

A closer look at the flowers shows that they are dimorphic. To get seed of *P. deorum* we must take care to have planted both pin-eyed and thumb-eyed plants together.

Primula deorum seems to be shy-flowering for I found places with over a thousand plants without a flower. The plants likely must reach a certain

age to flower. They inhabit always wet, marshy places, often in running water. They stand in full sun and are lime free. The soil is a brown fibrous substratum which can be squashed as a sponge (no sphagnum).

Primula deorum grows in company with *Primula farinosa* L. var. *exigua* VELEN. Nearby I always found *Gentiana pyrenaica* var. *vagneri* VELEN., the Balkan form of *G. pyrenaica*.

In 1967, I received the first plants of *P. deorum* from their native habitat. Since the literature in respect to this species gives only little advice on their culture, I placed them in half shade as I did all the other alpine Primulas. To the soil I added old peat soil. The plants did not do well and by the next spring all were gone. I might add that my rock garden lies at an elevation of 400 m.

In 1968, I was visited by my friend from Bulgaria who again brought me young plants. These I planted at the brim of a pool in full sun. The medium I used this time was composed of clay loam, fine-rubbed sphagnum moss, sharp sand, and pine needle humus in equal parts. All this I rubbed with a small board until the mixture was very fine. In hot weather I sprayed the plants often with water and they looked wonderful. There seemed little difference between them and those in the wild. In July, 1969 one of the eight plants flowered. All of the young plants I brought home from my own trip to Bulgaria I potted, using the same soil mixture. They grew up to be nice plants before the arrival of winter.

Almost all of my alpine plants get an addition of pine needle humus to the soil and this acts prodigiously.

Primula deorum, the gem of the Bulgarian mountains, is worthy of receiving an honored place in the garden of every friend of the Primulas.

* * * * *

IT IS REWARDING TO PARTICIPATE—So often we hear or read words like these, "Hesitatingly, I wrote an article for the Bulletin, and was almost afraid to send it to the editor. But I did! Who could have foreseen the results? Because of the publication of this article, I now have many new friends, a rewarding correspondence; I am a much better gardener, and, at last, I have a feeling of truly belonging to the ARGS." And many are the occasions when words of appreciation filter through to Sallie Allen and the editor concerning the generous response to "Requests by Members" which appears from time to time in the Bulletin.

* * * * *

ARE THEY NEW SPECIES?—Our readers would like to be kept up to date on the developments concerning the botanical classification and the cultural aspects of certain native plants discovered recently and mentioned in the Bulletin. For examples there are *Trillium hibbersonii* of Vancouver Island fame (a smaller trillium with opening pink flowers) and *Lewisia stebbinsii* found in California. Have these names been approved? Are they new species or only varieties? Are they in cultivation? When will they become available to the rock gardeners? All these questions, and others, could well be answered by short contributions to the Bulletin by those who know!

THE AQUILEGIAS

T. J. COLE, *Ottawa, Canada*

Every year, the seed exchange lists of the various Rock Garden Societies have a bewildering array of names, many of which are unfamiliar. From this proliferation of names it is difficult for the keen amateur alpine enthusiast to pick out those plants best suited to his needs.

One can peruse an assortment of text books and carefully look up every unknown plant. This is very time consuming, especially when one wishes to return the seed list as soon as possible in order to obtain the best possible choice.

In order to try and simplify the selection of Aquilegias, I obtained seed of the majority offered, both in the seed exchange listings and the commercial trade. These were germinated in the spring of 1969 in the greenhouse, transplanted to nursery rows and then were observed and evaluated during the growing seasons of 1969 and 1970.

As there are many other named species described in the literature whose seed was not available, this presentation is not meant to be a complete appraisal of all Aquilegias. Two species, *A. laramiense* and *A. jonesii*, noted for their dwarf habit, were unobtainable. A total of 55 different seed lots were obtained of which nearly all germinated (some with only one seedling) and four failed to survive the winter. As is common with Aquilegias, the plants were not always true to name when they came into flower. The monograph *Aquilegia—The Cultivated and Wild Columbines* by Philip A. Munz, published by the Bailey Hortorium, Ithaca, New York in 1946 was used as reference guide for approximate plant height, flower colour, etc.

Only a few of the many species and cultivars grown were suitable for rock garden use, because of their being short. However, several had a delicate habit of growth and would be acceptable for rock garden culture despite their overall height.

All colour numbers included below refer to the Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart. Capitalized colour names also refer to this chart; names not capitalized are included for clarification.

A brief summary of comments regarding the Aquilegia cultivars and/or species evaluated at Ottawa follows in alphabetical order:

- A. akitensis*—a synonym of *A. flabellata nana* but our plants were taller.
- A. akitensis* var. *alba*—a synonym of *A. flabellata nana* 'Alba' but as our plants reached 23" in height they could not have been true to name.
- A. akitensis* var. *kurilensis*—these plants were identical with *A. flabellata* in height and colour.
- A. alpina*—not a good rock garden plant except in large rockeries. Plants were from 17—26" tall with nodding flowers of bright blue (93B).
- A. alpina* 'Alba'—these are not true to colour; being pinkish.

- A. alpina* 'Hensol Harebell'—this was not listed in Munz work. The plants were 23—34" tall with nodding flowers of the same blue so prevalent among *Aquilegias* (93B).
- A. atrata*—Received as *A. vulgaris atrata*, the plants grew between 23—35". Flowers were nodding, Plum Purple (79A). It is of little use for alpine work being rather coarse and with the flowers not very showy.
- A. bertolonii*—did not survive the winter.
- A. biedermier*—another species not listed. The plants were regular in height being 22—25" tall and with nodding flowers, but there were two different types present. One had regular flowers of blue (94A) while the other had flowers almost lacking in spurs and more mauve in colour (90B).
- A. brevistyla*—only one survived and this was weak and did not flower.
- A. buergeriana*—as the flowers were blue instead of purple this is not true to name.
- A. caerulea*—a fairly tall columbine 18—32" high, with a flower colour variation from plant to plant. The deepest coloured plant had sepals of Bluebird Blue (94D) flushed with Violet (86A), spurs of Bluebird Blue (94A to B) and petals of Neyron Rose (55A). While the palest plant had sepals of Wisteria Blue (92B) with a cream midrib, spurs of the same colour and petals again of Neyron Rose.
- A. caerulea* 'Alba'—the flowers were nodding, not erect, and the spurs hooked, not recurved, so these plants were not true to name.
- A. caerulea* 'Blue King'—very similar to *A. 'Mrs. Nichols'* but with longer spurs. Petals white, sepals varied from Violet Purple (77A) to blue (88B) and spurs in shades of blue (90A to 93C).
- A. caerulea* 'Candidissima'—plants fairly even in height 27—34". ('Snow Queen')—Flowers white. Useful border plant.
- A. caerulea*
- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 'Crimson Star' | —all well-known border plants, but |
| 'Dragonfly' | too tall (21-29") for the rock garden. |
| 'McKana Hybrids' | Most of the <i>caerulea</i> hybrids |
| 'Mrs. Nicholls' | are well known in horticulture. These |
| 'Mrs. Scott Elliott' | are no exception. |
- A. chrysantha*—tall plants 31-38" high with yellow flowers. Sepals are Mimosa Yellow (8B) tipped with red (103A). Petals are Sulphur Yellow (6B) with Canary Yellow (9C) spurs.
- A. 'Clematiflora'*—said to have originated as a sport of (Mrs. Scott Elliott.) The flowers are spurless in shades of pink and mauve. Wide variation in height from 2 to 4 ft.
- A. discolor*—of the twelve plants which were planted out, only two survived and grew to a height of 3". However, these were weak and did not flower freely this year. The few flowers which appeared were whitish rather than blue.
- A. einseleana*—two different batches of seed were sown, neither of which germinated freely. The plants did not flower this spring but it should prove a good alpine species if it is true to name.
- A. flabellata*—quite a wide variation in height from 12—30". Sepals and spurs were blue (93B), petals white, tipped cream.



Aquilegia chrysantha

T. J. Cole

- A. flabellata nana*—like a miniature *A. flabellata* with the same colour range but only 7–10" high. A desirable species.
- A. flabellata nana* 'Alba'—two different lots of this were sown, one was the true species, the other was *A. f. nana*. As can be expected from its name 'Alba' this is a white version of the preceding species. These are perhaps the two most useful *Aquilegias* for general rock garden use, as both are dwarf, and easy to obtain and cultivate. They are very



Aquilegia caerulea 'McKana Hybrids'

A. R. Buckley

hardy (to -25 degrees F at least), grow equally well in full sun or in shade, and in sandy or loamy soil.

- A. flava*—said to be a synonym for *A. chrysantha* but our plants did not flower this spring.
- A. formosa*—a tallish plant (17-35") but one that is suitable for the large rock garden because of its open habit. The sepals and spurs are red (34C and 34A respectively) while the petals are Buttercup Yellow (15A).
- A. formosa* var. *truncata*—did not survive the winter.
- A. formosa wawawensis*—seed obtained under this name produced plants and flowers identical with the species.
- A. fragrans*—a very tall species 3-4ft. high with varying flower colour from white to purplish. Our plants were not fragrant, however, so they may not have been true.

- A. glandulosa*—the seed was received as *A. glandulosa* var. *jucunda* which is the same as the species. This is another columbine suitable for rock garden use; growing from 7-15" tall with delicate foliage. The outward-facing flowers are lilac blue, sepals (88B) and spurs (93C) with Sulphur Yellow petals (6C/D). Seed received as *A. glandulosa* was not true and did not key out to anything so probably a hybrid.
- A. x 'Helenae'*—a cross between *A. flabellata* and *A. caerulea*. The plants we grew under this name were 22 to 33" high but were not true as the petals lacked the white tips and the spurs were too short.
- A. latiuscula*—plants grown under this name keyed out to *A. canadensis* var. *coccinea*, being 25-35" tall with Mimosa Yellow petals (8B) and Cardinal Red sepals and spurs (53B).
- A. oxysepala* var. *yabeana*—another delicate, lacy columbine suitable for the large rock garden, 8-18" tall. Petals are a lilac-blue (90B) and with violet sepals and spurs (86A). Received as *A. yabeana*, under which name it was originally introduced.
- A. pubescens*—a fairly dwarf type 7-15" high with variable flowers in creamy-yellow or pink. Our flowers were whitish (155A) with the spurs flushed with Jasper Red (39C). Quite good for alpine work.
- A. pyrenaica*—not true to name as the flowers were pink, not lilac blue.
- A. saximontana*—this promises to be a useful rock garden subject, with 4-6" plants and pale blue flowers. Our plants were slow to establish and have only just started to bloom. The flowers are white basically, but the sepals are flushed with blue (97A) and the backs have a pinkish mauve stripe (73C) down the center.
- A. scopulorum*—if true to name this should be a useful rock garden plant. It should be 2-8" tall with erect blue to white or red flowers. Only two of our plants were in this height range and they didn't flower. The others were in the 3 ft. range and have been discarded.
- A. sepina*—very slow germinating with the result that the plants were still small and so did not survive the winter.
- A. shockleyi*—our plants were taller than the description, being 40-45" but otherwise seemed true to name. Sepals and spurs are Brick Red (35A) with Sulphur Yellow (6B) petals. A good border plant.
- A. viridiflora*—a most unusual columbine with greenish flowers. The sepals are near Lettuce Green (144C) while the petals are an olive colour (148A), flushed black at the tips. Spurs are Yellow Brown (153A). Not a showy plant but could be grown for its novelty value although at 18-24" tall it is too large for most rock gardens.
- A. vulgaris*—our plants of this were too mixed to be able to evaluate properly.
- A. vulgaris* 'Alba'—a tall variety, 2-3 ft. high with upright flowers.
- A. vulgaris* var. *erecta* 'Edelweiss'—a very even cultivar 19-25" tall with upright-facing flowers and very free flowering. A good plant for the back of a large rockery or front of the border. The best of all the *A. vulgaris* varieties tried here.
- A. vulgaris* 'Floro-pleno'—a double-flowered form though some singles appeared in the batch planted out. Wide range of height, 23-38", and the colours are in pinks, blues and off whites.

- A. vulgaris* var. *stellata*—should be a spurless variety. Ours were not. *Semiaquilegia*—claimed by Munz to be an old name for the spurless forms of *Aquilegia*.
- S. adoxoides*—I could find no reference to this species. Our plants were identical with *S. ecalcarata*.
- S. ecalcarata* (*A. ecalcarata*)—not a very showy plant with spurless flowers. Even in height 22–24" tall. The flowers are small with Beetroot Purple (71B) petals and Lilac Purple (70A) sepals.
- S. ecalcarata* 'Lilac Form'—we found this no different from the species, in either height or colour match.

AEQUAM SERVARE MENTEM

(To Preserve an Unruffled Mind)

PAUL H. BOSWELL, *Massillon, Ohio*

After viewing the results of a particularly devastating orgy of youthful vandalism, where long-treasured plants had been pulled out of the ground and some beaten into pulp with a stick, I remarked to myself something about a "generation of vipers," then sat down to meditate on whether or not there is any remuneration in gardening worth the blood, sweat, and tears.

Mine is not a botanical garden and the idea of trying to maintain indefinitely a large collection of plants has long since been abandoned. I have tried to do the best possible job with the things I attempted, reading all available literature on their requirements before setting them out, taking pains to fulfill their needs for humic or mineral soils, shade or sun, moisture or sharp drainage. I have kept germination records, entered the seasons passing before flowering occurred and kept a calendar on the time and duration of bloom. I came to regard the garden as a laboratory and each new species became an experiment. If one grew and flourished I was gratified, but if it did not germinate or failed after transplanting it was either relegated to oblivion or I acquired new seeds and tried again. Nevertheless, I loved some plants with particular passion and when something went wrong it often required insensate stoicism to endure their departure.

Being a self-trained botanist, I frequently am in trouble over nomenclature, but I have worked hard to become as accurate as possible and I have kept pestering friends and acquaintances about order, genera and species. Lately I have taken to corresponding with a score of fellow ARGS members and have received welcome advice and encouragement from all points of the compass. I am grateful for these acts of friendship and try to be as accommodating as possible when it is my turn to do a good deed.

Dr. Wherry has been very kind, helping frequently with wild flower analysis and suggesting experiments in soil chemistry. The idea that corolla color and the general well-being of many plants is influenced by the presence of chelated iron or aluminum in the soil was a revelation which, when tried, paid off last spring when *Hepaticas*, which had developed albinism,

returned to their pristine shades of blue or pink after having been treated the autumn previous with the recommended dilution of chelated iron and trace elements.

It seemed that wild woodlanders in the area were not adversely affected and the colors of *Claytonia virginica*, *Anemone thalictroides* and *Trillium erectum* seemed to sparkle with new radiance. The need of ericaceous plants for iron in the soil has, of course, been well known for decades and, needless to say, a colony of *Gaultheria procumbens* in the treated area came in strong with good leaf tone and normal flowering. Two plants of *Rhododendron obtusum* flowered abundantly in May and now, in August, are giving a respectable second crop of bloom. These are in the foundation planting beside a *Pieris japonica*, which had died back once and had not flowered in six years. In early April of this year I reset it in a deep mix of peat and rich loam and watered it in with the chelated iron solution. The bed, including the azaleas, was topped off with a two inch mulch of small glacial pebbles. The *Pieris* has thrived and is now setting on abundant buds for next spring's flowering. Our old *Rhododendron maximum*, which had been lackadaisical for several years, burst forth with an unprecedented array of bloom after treatment with the chelate and the addition of aluminum sulphate late last summer.

Since the inception of our Great Lakes Regional grouping, I have tried to attend all May and September meetings, failing only once. The atmosphere of these gatherings has been one of friendly camaraderie and I am sure that most members of our clan are wondering why we didn't organize long ago. Many fine plants are submitted in the sales and after each get-together we have all come away richer either in garden material and/or in a state of grace for old friendships renewed and new ones established.

Yes—it is sad to have one's garden trampled and violated, but one feels most sorry for the insensitive trespasser who has not learned, and may never appreciate, one of life's finest pleasures. To me, a few plants despoiled is not the end of the world. Even if they are irreparably damaged, they are in the records and have been the subject of many joyous conversations in times past. More important, in knowing them, I found a key to the assembly of naturalists and rock gardeners—which is a fine thing, indeed.

* * * * *

SEPTEMBER ADVICE TO ROCK GARDENERS—Don Havens, Chairman of the Wisconsin-Illinois Region of the ARGS told his area members, "If you haven't been throwing rock mulch in your garden, now is the time to do it. Mulch with stone chips or coarse river run gravel. Work it in around the crown of the plant and spread out over any barren space to a depth of at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch. Then this winter when you recall the pert little Alpine poppy, a clump of *Luetkea pectinata* or *Penstemon rupicola* you encountered on a trail trip this summer, have on hand a seed packet of each to throw on those barren spots. If there is snow on the ground when you fling the seeds, so much the better. It works. You will have seedlings next spring right where you want them."

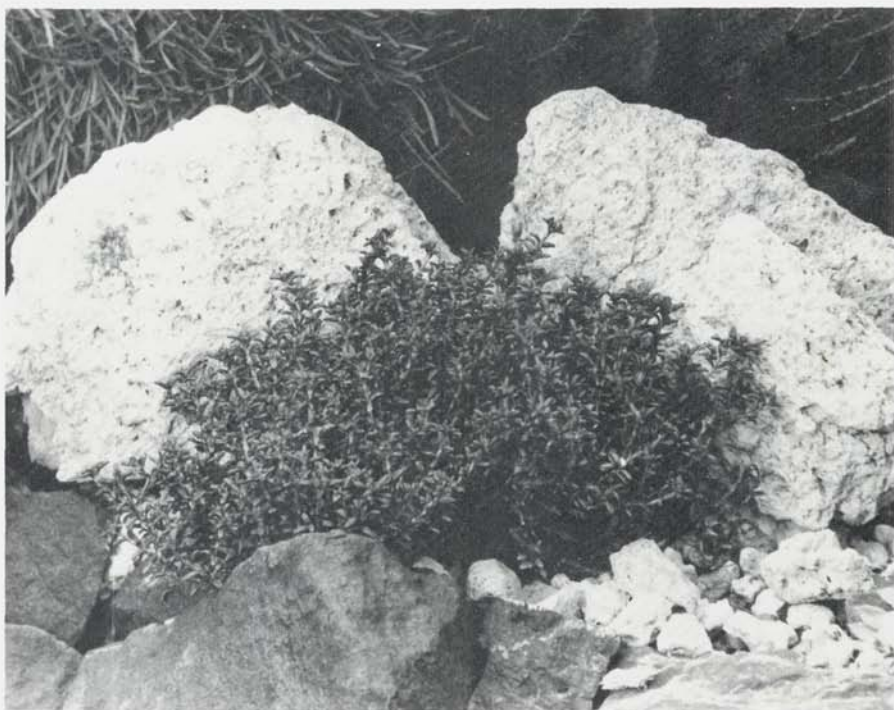
THE UPRIGHT FORM OF *LOISELEURIA PROCUMBENS*

James Baggett, *Corvallis, Oregon*

The alpine azalea, *Loiseleuria procumbens*, is usually described as a dwarf procumbent shrub, as the botanical name suggests. Less commonly known, but no less desirable for the rock garden is a form with upright shoots which result in a stiff, twiggy little shrub. The plant shown in the photograph is 6 years old, about 8 inches wide and 4 inches tall, with roughly the form of a typical evergreen azalea. It is growing on a steep southeast slope receiving full sun until mid-afternoon. It is never permitted to become very dry. Flowering of this plant is moderate to heavy each year. It is possible, based on this performance and the experience of a friend who has both types, that the upright form may flower better than the prostrate type. Sparse flowering in captivity is sometimes mentioned as a fault of the species.

The original stock from which my plant came was collected by a friend near Ketchikan, Alaska. It was growing on mounds in a deep sphagnum bog at 500 to 600 feet elevation. No different types were noted in the area.

I. L. Wiggins (*A Flora of the Alaskan Arctic Slope*) describes the species in Alaska as a low, dense shrub, usually under 1 dm tall, but E. Hulten (*Flora of Alaska and Neighboring Territories*) describes it as a low, depressed shrub, forming mats. Though *Loiseleuria procumbens* occurs in many



Loiseleuria procumbens—Upright form

parts of Northern Europe, Asia, and America, about a dozen additional botanical and rock garden books and garden encyclopedias which were consulted all clearly described the growth of the species as trailing, creeping, procumbent, etc. Farrer (*The English Rock Garden*) said it grew in close carpets on the alpine turf, like a small leathery thyme.

There is no major disagreement among authors about the conditions required for garden culture: perfect drainage in a peaty, gritty soil which is never stagnant; freedom from drought; full sun, unless the climate is very hot, in which case some shade may be required. Care must be taken with young plants, since too much heat can easily be fatal before they are established.

White-flowered varieties of *L. procumbens* also occur, but are apparently quite rare, both in nature and in cultivation. I do not know whether there are white flowered forms of the upright type.

SOME OF ISRAEL'S NATIVE PLANTS

RUTH BENJAMIN, *Post Rupin, Israel*

(Editor's Note)—The article below, written by a new member, introduces to us plants from faraway Israel. In the current article, Mrs. Benjamin tells us of Israel's native plants, sand lovers mostly, that have garden value, or are otherwise interesting. In a subsequent article, she will write of the plants from other parts of the world that are grown in the gardens and rock gardens of Israel where climatic conditions are so different from those under which most of us do our gardening. Mrs. Benjamin is the Curator at the Havath Noy Garden, Post Rupin Institute of Agriculture in Israel.

The indigenous flora of Israel is very rich even when compared to other, larger countries. The reason must be that we have here a meeting place of different climatic and geobotanical conditions, and so, many borderline plants can find their niche here.

Their ornamental value is another matter. Every visitor is impressed by the wonderful floral brilliance everywhere in spring, on every inch of uncultivated ground and in gardens, whereas most wild plants are not impressive at all during summer, giving an overall impression of wilted brownness.

The reason for this is, of course, that the plants are adapted to our climate of long, dry summers and short, rainy winters. In order to survive, they live through the summer with a minimum of transpiration, achieved by leaves turned into thorns, gray coloring, or other similar well-known devices. Only at the beginning of the winter rains does their real growth start rapidly, culminating in flowering in spring when the rains let off. They then scatter their seeds during the dryness of summer, having them ready for germination at the onset of the winter rains.

Considering this basic life cycle of our plants, it is easy to see the reason for failure with so many "wild" plants under ordinary gardening conditions, as all gardens and most agricultural crops must be irrigated throughout the summer. This of necessity results in the gradual degeneration of the wild flora in gardens, with the exception of those planted in dry corners.

So with all due sentiments for our indigenous flora, we really cannot rely

on it for making satisfactory gardens, and therefore have to use a great deal of introduced plant material.

With this in mind, we can now proceed to look for those indigenous plants which will take to gardening conditions, or even thrive on them, and are at the same time decorative or otherwise interesting.

As a plant lover, one feels attracted to many specific characteristics, and little-noticed traits often make a certain plant most endearing and offer an irresistible challenge to make it grow under our own hands.

It is in learning more about their natural habitat that helps us to succeed in this ambition.

The following article describes my own observations on some of these plants. I am indebted to Professor Abraham Halevi who wrote *Native Bulbs of Israel for American Gardens* in 1962 for his kind advice, and to Mr. Harry Elkins of the ARGs for encouraging me to attempt to write for you and for prodding me on to finish in time!

CLIMATOLOGICAL NORMALS

Courtesy of the Israel Meteorological Service

Zone	Elevation M	Temperature C°		Relative Humidity	Yearly Rainfall MM	Rainy Days in a Year
		Max.-Min.	Daily Av.			
Coastal Area (Tel-Aviv)	3	33.3-3.0	19.1	69	519	46.4
Hill Region (Jerusalem)	785	34.3-1.0	17.1	62	509	43.5
Beer-Sheva	270	39.0-1.8	19.5	58	200	27.8
Galilee (Mt. Kena'an)	935	34.5-0.7	16.1	58	728	60.6
Jordan Rift (Jericho)	— 260	43.4-5.4	23.7	49	143	28.0
Eilat	5	44.1-4.9	25.0	39	30	4.6

Note. In most parts of the country pH values are between 7 and 8.

ARTEMISIA MONOSPERMA Del. (Compositae)

Hebrew: L'ANA

This creeping plant covers the sand dunes where almost no other plant can get established—right on the shifting sands. Its foliage is a glossy dark green throughout the year. Where there are strong winds or other unfavorable conditions, the plant grows almost horizontally, rooting as it goes along. In other places it can grow into a low shrub of dense habit.

The flowers are inconspicuous and bloom during summer. There is a distinct, not unpleasant odor to its foliage. The plant can stand any amount of irrigation. It is found all along the coast, and further inland wherever there is very sandy soil. Propagation is very easy from soft cuttings at any time.

ARTEMISIA HERBA-ALBA Asso.

This is quite different from the above, forming a small, compact shrub about 30-40 cm. high, with a roundish appearance. Its leaves are finely cut, very small, of a gray color, and have a very pleasant highly aromatic scent.

This plant is limited to the hot Judean desert, and thrives there in the

poorest, gravel-covered soil. When transplanted into richer soil, the plant becomes straggly and gradually degenerates, this process being helped by summer irrigation. Like the above, the flowers, in summer, are inconspicuous, and propagation is easy, from soft cuttings.

SUAEDA VERA Forsk. (Chenopodiaceae)

Hebrew: OOKAM

This is a typical rock plant of creeping succulent growth. The leaves are small, cylindrical, of a greenish gray color. When in shade or irrigated, they turn into a livelier green. The branches form a dense but irregular mat, not much rooting. The flowers which bloom in summer are inconspicuous. The plant generally grows near the seashore, between rocks near the sea, as well, and in salt marshes. It grows equally well in dry and in moist places, and tolerates irrigation in cultivated surroundings.

Propagation is easy, by any part of the plant, throughout the year.

ERAGROSTIS BIPINNATA (L.) Muschl. (Graminae)

Hebrew: KHILAPH

This stiff grass used to cover a great part of the now fruitful coastal plain which had a steppe-like appearance before irrigation came to change its face. It can still be seen in neglected parts there, as its deep, hard rootstocks are slow to die. Where there is not much irrigation they survive for a long time, sending up their hard, strong shoots again and again, withstanding the onslaught of cultivation.

The blades are about 60 cm. high, pointed sharply at their tips, and their sides are almost razor-sharp, injuring the hand which tries to pick them. Inflorescence occurs in autumn or earlier (June-October) with tall, handsome spikes which stand out conspicuously, about 60-80 cm. tall. They are used, artificially colored, as the "poor man's decoration." Another "poor man's" use is the foliage which is cut for cheap mattress filling. In shade the leaves get longer, softer, and of a "weeping" habit.

The plant wanders with the help of its rootstocks, and will tolerate any difficult condition except excessive irrigation which causes the rootstocks to rot away. Its most active growth is from winter to summer, and it is less active during its flowering period in autumn.

I have never investigated its propagation. On the contrary—I am trying to destroy it whenever I find remnants of it in my garden. But I cannot help having a certain sympathy for such a sturdy plant fighting for survival. It is a remaining evidence of the original landscape which had been untouched for perhaps thousands of years.

I should think propagation would best be from seeds sown in autumn (beginning of the rainy season) if young plants cannot be obtained.

WITHANIA SOMNIFERA Dun. (Solanaceae) (L.)

This is a bush about 1 meter high, with soft, dull green foliage, its small, red, numerous (poisonous) berries being its special feature. The berries are each enclosed in straw-colored husks all along the branches throughout most of the year. Its flowers are inconspicuous. This plant grows mostly in dry places near abandoned human habitation, such as ruins, old wells, and refuse heaps.

It retains more or less the same appearance throughout the year, but looks better with irrigation or after rains, although it does just as well without. Propagation is by seed.

IPOMOEA STOLONIFERA (Cyr.) J. F. Gmel. (Convolvulaceae)
Hebrew: LEPHUPHIT

This is a completely decumbent creeping plant seen mainly in the sands near seashores. The spreading, leathery stems are usually hidden under the sand, with only the leaves showing above. In young plants the leaves are spaced far apart, and as the plant grows older the leaves become closer and closer together until they finally form a dense mat. The leaves are glossy dark green throughout the year, and the off-white flowers are quite decorative, especially when they show against the background of the foliage (in an older plant) rather than just against the dull-colored sand.

The plant tolerates irrigation, but under cultivated conditions becomes more compact in growth and lacks the interesting spreading branches which sometimes, especially on shifting sands, can be traced as far as 2-3 meters from the center of the plant. Propagation is best by seed, although the branches also root.

THYMELAEA HIRSUTA (L.) (Thymelaeaceae)
Hebrew: MITNAN

I hesitated to list this most interesting plant because it is difficult to cultivate and to propagate. Then too, propagation material is scarce. But I feel I should not deprive members of information about this unusual plant.

This bush is indigenous to the sandy soils in the warm regions of the country, but can be seen less and less because of the advancing cultivation of the land. It tolerates any difficult conditions, but takes many years to grow from seed, which are not too numerous. In the village where we live, I found one specimen when we made our garden on soil untouched for many decades—and we arranged to have no irrigation there. (Everything in Israel, including gardens, is irrigated throughout the 9-month rainless period). The plant looks happy and healthy, and I find a few more seedlings every year, although I hardly dare to transplant them. They are moved with difficulty because of their enormously long and thin taproots. If necessary, transplantation should take place at the very earliest phase of the seedling's development.

The foliage consists of glossy green scales, giving it an over-all shiny appearance. The tiny yellow flowers, which look like lighter-colored parts of the foliage, appear on and off throughout the year. The almost woody branches have a very elastic, strong epidermis which makes it impossible to break off a branch. The "skin" simply peels off in long lengths. Before the War of Independence, the commandos were taught to use this "skin" in long strips in place of string. Propagation is by seed, but as mentioned before, with difficulty.

SALVIA HIEROSOLYMITANA Boiss. (Labiatae)
Hebrew: MARVA

This beautiful sage stands out in spring in the shade of trees and shrubs all over the Carmel range, in Galilee, and in the Jerusalem hills. Its color var-



Asphodelus fistulosus in foreground and *Pennisetum asperifolium* in background

ies from dark purple to light lilac, in many-branched racemes up to 60 cm. high, or higher when in the shade. During summer the plant dries up completely, with its strong woody roots surviving and sending up new shoots with the onset of the rainy season. Propagation is by seed in autumn and by cuttings of the tips of the new growth.

SALVIA JUDAICA Boiss.

This sage, in comparison, is seen much less, mainly because it grows in more exposed locations where it can more easily be discovered—and destroyed. Its color is a very beautiful deep purple, and its habit is more compact and erect. Altogether, it is less tall and its flowers are smaller. Then too, its roots are weaker, which probably adds to the gradual disappearance of the plant. Propagation is by seed.

ASPHODELUS MICROCARPUS Viv. (Liliaceae)

Hebrew: IRITH

This beautiful herb can be seen all over Israel in early spring, having whitish pink tall flower spikes, regardless of difference in soil or climatic conditions. It bursts forth from between rocks in the cool Galilee in the north, and is just as happy in the extreme heat of the south.

Surviving the hot, dry summer with its fleshy tuber-like roots dormant, its long, thin leaves come out at the onset of the winter rains, culminating in the many-branched flower spikes (80-100 cm high) at the end of the rainy season.

It ripens its numerous seeds during the hot summer. The leaves dry off at that time, usually being attacked by pests and diseases at this time of their deterioration.

When picked and kept indoors the flowers exude a sharp scent which is unpleasant to some people. Propagation is by seed or by division of clumps in autumn.

ASPHODELUS FISTULOSUS L.

Contrary to the above, this plant is almost evergreen and tolerates summer irrigation. It has fleshy roots also, but thin, and the flowers resemble the former except that they are more compact and not so tall, being 40-60 cm. The leaves resemble the kitchen herb "chives" so much that once by mistake I used them from my garden instead, discovering the difference only by their lack of the typically onion smell!

This plant is found in many areas also, but is not so widely dispersed as the *A. microcarpus*. There are many of them around the Jerusalem hills. In their natural location they flower in spring like most geophytes, but in gardens they flower almost continuously, degenerating after 2-3 years.

This is a very pretty plant, its only disadvantage being its too numerous seeds which result in a carpet of new seedlings all around it. Because of their strong fleshy roots they are difficult to pull out with ordinary weeding.

Despite my initial enthusiasm for this plant as being strong, good-looking, and reliable in the garden, I now discourage gardeners to plant it because with the smallest neglect it turns into a weed, albeit a pretty one! The solution, of course, would be to cut the flowering branches before they set their seed. Propagation, needless to remind you, is by seed.

PENNISETUM ASPERIFOLIUM (Desf.) Kth. (Graminae)

Hebrew: ZIPHOTZA

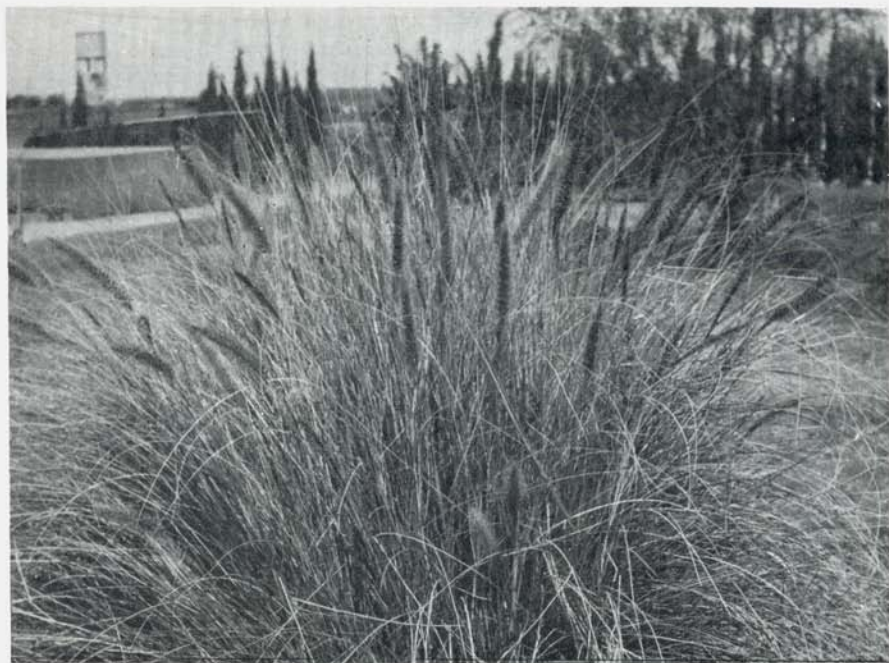
This ornamental grass can be seen between rocks and on hills in most areas, its thin blades forming graceful clumps. It flowers in spring and summer in soft bluish gray spikes which are very attractive. The plant retains its greenness throughout the year, naturally being more lush during the rainy season. In gardens it tolerates summer irrigation but then tends to lose its tidy appearance because the leaves grow longer and lie on the ground. The flower spikes are also apt to lie down instead of standing erect. In gardens therefore, it should be kept as dry as possible and in sunny positions in order to ensure its compactness. Propagation is by seed or division in autumn.

MANDRAGORA OFFICINARUM L. (Solanaceae)

Hebrew: DOODA

This is the very famous Mandrake which is linked with so many stories, Biblical and folklore. It is, therefore quite a shock to see an ordinary-looking small leafy plant!

Of course, the seat of all its assumed powers is in its root, which is indeed rather crooked-looking, and with some imagination can be found to resemble anything! But no botanist has ever found it to "shriek when pulled out," nor does it "require a dog to be tied to it." In fact, I can assure you that I have pulled out many specimens over the years without any evil effects (so



Pennisetum asperifolium

far!). The only “danger” in this plant is its current classification as one of the “protected” plants, so one may end up paying a fine for laying hands on it.

The other important feature is its tomato-shaped, orange-colored fruit which is reputed to have aphrodisiac properties. The most famous example of this is told in the story of Rachel and Leah each vying for Jacob’s love and favor and believing that the Mandrakes, brought to Leah by her son Reuben, would help whoever had them—both in love and in conceiving by him. I am no expert on this aspect, but it certainly has medicinal properties.

The fruit is edible and has a pleasant taste, if one gets a chance at it before the birds, for they find it delicious, too. Its size is like a small egg, it has a round shape, and grows in clusters of about five, in the midst of large luscious leaves with a spinach-like texture. After the rains cease, the leaves wilt, and come up again from the strong root the next autumn.

The bell-shaped flowers appear in clusters in early spring in the center of the leaves, almost hidden by them. They are a pleasing dark violet color.

The plants grow singly in any spot with good soil where cultivation has not yet reached, and because there are fewer and fewer such places their population is certainly decreasing. Propagation is by seed.

MAJORANA SYRIACA (L.) Feinbr. (Labiatae)

Hebrew: EYZOV

This is a silvery-woolly subshrub of the woodlands which should not be irrigated during summer. Shade or excessive watering will give it a scraggly appearance, but when left alone it has a nice compact shape. The leaves have the typical Marjoram aroma. It flowers in early summer, the off-white

color merging into the over-all light color of its foliage. Propagation is easy by soft cuttings throughout the year.

PLANTAGO ALBICANS (L. (Plantaginaceae)

Hebrew: LEKHEKH

On the seashore in the hot sand is found this small silvery plantain, spreading by rootstocks and forming loose mats. Its narrow leaves are only about 20 cm. high, the flowers appearing in spring. Propagation is by seed or "runners."

ACANTHUS SYRIACUS Boiss. (Acanthaceae)

Hebrew: KOTZITZ

The beautiful shape of these flowers was chiseled in many motifs by craftsmen of another age in columns which are being excavated in our time.

This very decorative plant grows on Mount Carmel and in many other places, coming into flower in late spring. The flowers are dark maroon-purple in an inflorescence about 60 cm. high, and the large leaves are beautifully cut. The plant is a strong perennial, but dries back every summer. Artificial irrigation will result in its flowering less and less richly. Propagation by seed.

AERVA TOMENTOSA Forsk. (*A. javanica* Juss.) (Amaranthaceae)

Hebrew: LOVED

This is a small, woolly, silvery-white plant of the desert areas, flowering in spring in woolly-white spikes about 30 cm. high. It must on no account be irrigated during summer, and it also needs a lot of heat and a sunny location. Propagation is by seed.

RHAMNUS PALAESTINA Boiss. (Rhamnaceae)

Hebrew: ESH-HAR

Here is a shrub with strong, spreading branches and tiny, glossy leaves, remaining evergreen and tolerating summer irrigation, even benefitting from it. The inconspicuous flowers appear in spring.

The shortest side branches turn thorn-like in summer, but stay almost soft under conditions of irrigation. Propagation is by seed, but vegetative propagation is possible with mist-spray.

TWO INTERESTING ANNUALS

CITRULLUS COLOCYNTHIS (L.) Schrod. (Cucurbitaceae)

Hebrew: P'KUAH

This is a ball-shaped gourd, completely round and hard when ripe, the size of a large apple. The plant creeps to a very great length, 3-4 meters, with finely-cut leaves hugging the ground. The yellow flowers appear in summer, and the fruit is ready just before the winter starts. The plant grows in sandy soils in the warm and hot areas. When young, the fruit has dark green markings on the lighter green skin, turning a beige-brown when ripe. The pulp dries up completely in ripening, and the seeds can then be heard rattling inside the thin, hard shell. Propagation is by seed.

LUPINUS PALAESTINUS Boiss. (Papilionaceae)

Hebrew: TURMUS

This is one of the most common flowers to be seen in spring on the coastal plain in sandy soils. The flowers vary from purple to lilac, or part cream with these colors, about 40 cm. high. The seeds are beautifully colored, mottled dark and light brown, popping out of their pods with the onset of the hot weather. A strange sound may be heard from any field where these seeds ripen, like minor explosions. Propagation is by seed.

BOOK REVIEW

A GARDENER'S GUIDE TO SEDUMS by R. L. Evans. Published by The Alpine Garden Society, Publication Manager, 30 Sheering Lower Road, Sawbridgeworth, Herts, England. 5/(25p.) plus postage 6d.

For some years it has been my intention to buy the reprint of Praeger's *Account of the Genus Sedum*. Right now, with Mr. Evans' *Guide* at hand, Praeger is pushed farther away to a future period of historical study. For present gardening activities, the Evans' *Guide* is the important work to have.

When I was manager of a Wisconsin nursery in 1942, our catalog offered nine species of *Sedum*, all of which would look more or less familiar to me now. Later, in Rochester, by chance, I grew *Sedum anacampseros* to represent the genus in the garden. Now in my present garden I have *Sedum spathulifolium* 'Capa Blanca' from The Rock Garden, the nursery of the Walshes in Litchfield, Maine; a start of *S. sieboldii* from the August seedling sale of the Connecticut District of the ARGS; and from Ithaca, N. Y., an interesting species, *S. glaucophyllum*, which is treated by Mr. Evans under the name of *S. nevii*. American authorities have accepted the separation of the North Appalachian (West Virginia and Virginia) plants of damp, calcareous rock-cliffs from the plants given the name of *S. nevii* by Asa Gray which occur farther south.

Mr. Evans admits to growing 160 kinds of sedums; 80 of the hardiest are selected for description in the *Guide*. Nearly 60 are mentioned in an article in the ARGS Bulletin for July, 1961, by Donald Allen of Vermont. It is evident that here is a genus of interest at many levels. For the beginning gardener with a yen for collecting plants, growing sedums would afford fewer disappointments from cultural failures and this interest would lead by easy stages into more difficult problems such as the accuracy of names.

Finally, just over the border in Mexico is a large number of non-hardy species which invite attention. As evidenced by Dr. R. T. Clausen's recent book, *Sedum of the Trans-Mexican Volcanic Belt*, the genus can become an intellectual adventure. "After 24 years of study," Dr. Clausen testifies, "gradually the realization has come that *Sedum* is an excellent group of plants for studying fundamental biological problems."

Bernard Harkness

REQUESTS BY MEMBERS

Will the members who are able to fulfill any of the requests below, please contact directly the person making the request!

"I would like to correspond with anyone who has had experience with growing alpines (or alpine-like miniatures) under artificial lights. I live in harsh, windy Nebraska, but I do have a big basement with fluorescent lights installed. Some of my questions have to do with how cold it must be at night for various species during the growing season; which species must be hibernated in a cold frame in winter; which species are day-neutral and which flower only after lengthening days or shortening days? I hope to provide 55 degrees at night and 14 hours a day of light most of the time. Write Del Hollenberg, Crete, Neb. 68333." Help Mr. Hollenberg if you can!

Mr. Ben Haines, 1902 Lane Street, Topeka, Kansas 66604 would like plants of *Talinum parviflorum*.

Seeds of any *Abies*, *Picea* and *Tsuga*, particularly *Tsuga canadensis* 'Sargentii'. Please send seed via airmail. Will pay. These are wanted by Mr. Robert C. Watch, 24 Eighth Avenue, Loftus 2232, N. S. W., Australia.

Please send your requests for seed, plants, books, slides, and information to Mrs. Sallie D. Allen, 18540 26th Avenue N. E., Seattle, Wash. 98155. For inclusion in a specific issue of the Bulletin, requests must be received by the first of the month, two months prior to publication date. It is not possible to acknowledge receipt of requests. We would like to hear the results, if any, from those who have utilized the "Requests by Members" column in the past.

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BLUE AND WHITE CAMASS—Mr. I. C. Shank, P.O. Box 327, Ganges, B. C. writes, "Early this year I collected seeds of *Camassia leichtlinii* for distribution by the seed exchange. Lately, I was somewhat disconcerted to see the flowers described as white in two rock gardening books. The variety I had collected had definitely violet-blue flowers. I have a friend with a set of reference books, *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest*, which is regarded as the authoritative work for this area. This reference indicates that the creamy white-flowered type is indigenous to Douglas County in Oregon, while the violet-blue variety has a range from British Columbia to California. It boils down to this: the violet-blue variety is designated as *Camassia leichtlinii* var. *suksdorfii* (Greenm.) C. L. Hitchc. The white variety is designated as *Camassia leichtlinii* var. *leichtlinii*. An identification characteristic of both varieties is that after flowering the sepals twist together above the ovary, covering it, until forced apart by growth of the capsule."

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL ROCK GARDEN PLANT CONFERENCE & SHOW HARROGATE, ENGLAND, APRIL 21st-25th, 1971

DR. HENRY TOD, *Roslin, Scotland*

The First Rock Garden Plant Conference was held in London by the Royal Horticultural Society and the Alpine Garden Society jointly in early May, 1936. Then came the war and the Second Conference was only mooted in the late 'forties. The Second Conference was held in 1951 in London and Edinburgh, as this time the Scottish Rock Garden Club was a third partner in the organization. Unfortunately, I was only able to attend a few of the meetings in Edinburgh—but ten years later, I was charged with organizing the Edinburgh “half” and, fortunately, was able to attend both the London meetings and those in Edinburgh.

When, a few years ago, we discussed the forthcoming Fourth Conference to be held in 1971, for a variety of reasons it was decided to hold it “half-way” between the two capitals. Harrogate, with its wonderful facilities for Conferences, its wealth of Hotels and its world-famous Spring Show, was the obvious choice. They have, most generously, placed full facilities for us to hold an International Rock Plant Show as a part of their Show during the period of the Conference and all our top exhibitors will be competing, as well as more “average” members.

The program has been given as international a flavor as possible as will be seen from the following:

- Lecture No. 1—SCOTTISH MOUNTAIN PLANTS—J. R. Aitken.
- Lecture No. 2—AMERICAN ROCK GARDENS—Mr. & Mrs. H. Lincoln Foster.
- Demonstration—ROCK GARDEN CONSTRUCTION—W. Ingwersen V. M. H.
- Lecture No. 3—ROCK GARDENING IN SWITZERLAND—A. Correvon.
- Symposium 1 —EXHIBITING AND JUDGING AT SHOWS—
Exhibiting—J. D. Crosland & H. Esselemont.
Judging—Dr. H. Tod & Joe Elliott
- Symposium 2—IRIS SPECIES FOR THE ROCK GARDEN—
In cultivation—E. B. Anderson.
In the wild—Admiral J. P. W. Furse.
- Lecture No. 4—JAPANESE ALPINES—E. Hodgkin.
- Symposium 3—A DECADE OF NEW PLANTS—Dr. J. Elliott,
R. C. Elliott, Admiral J. P. W. Furse.
- Symposium 4—SPANISH ROCK GARDEN PLANTS—A. J. Huxley & A. P. Hamilton.
- Symposium 5—GROUND ORCHIDS—Prof. E. H. Morel, A. J. Huxley & I. B. Barton.
- Lecture No. 5—NOMENCLATURE—Dr. W. T. Stearn.
- Lecture No. 6—HIMALAYAN ALPINES—O. Polunin.

- Symposium 6—CROCUS AND COLCHICUM—B. Mathew & C. D. Brickell.
 Lecture No. 7—PLANTS AND THEIR HABITATS IN THE ANDES OF NORTHERN PERU—Prof. G. Pontecorvo.
 Symposium 7—NEW ZEALAND ALPINES—Prof. W. R. Philipson, Mrs. W. R. Philipson & Mrs. J. Warren.
 Symposium 8—BULB FRAMES AND BULB HOUSES—E. B. Anderson, K. Aslet & B. Mathew.
 Symposium 9—ROCK GARDEN PLANTS OF WESTERN AMERICA—Margaret Williams & Wayne Rodrick.

It is of particular interest to note that M. Aymon Correvon, the grandson of the famous Henry Correvon, is down to speak on Rock Gardening in Switzerland as he was a speaker at both the First and Second Conferences as a young man, thirty-five and twenty years ago.

This time the organization of the speakers has been in the hands of Christopher Brickell, B.Sc., the brilliant young Director of the Royal Horticultural Society's Garden at Wisley and I have been landed with Publicity and "Press Relations." We, on the Joint Conference Committee, are most anxious that representation should be as world-wide as possible from North America for we know how keen the interest is there. At these Conferences the discussions are as important—if not more so—and as valuable as the lectures and symposium for in them we hear the views and opinions of rock gardeners who are working under totally different conditions and often by very different methods; we all learn from each other to our mutual gain and enjoyment.

We are most anxious to have a really "strong contingent" from North America, the United States and Canada alike. Anyone who has not had particulars of the Conference will still (only just) have time to get them if they apply by Air Mail to me—I give my address below.

We have members coming from Australia, Japan and New Zealand; to attend you need not be a member of either the Scottish Rock Garden Club or the Alpine Garden Society. All that is needed is an interest in Rock Gardening and Rock Garden Plants---DO COME !

ADDRESS—Dr. Henry Tod, Carnethy, Seafield, Roslin, Midlothian, Scotland.

* * * * *

A BIT OF ANCIENT HISTORY—There appeared in the publication *Horticulture*, dated May 15, 1936, the following item: The annual meeting of the American Rock Garden Society was held in Horticultural Hall, Boston, May 1, with President Montague Free of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden in the chair. In his annual address, Mr. Free said that the immediate need of the society was a larger membership and suggested that regional officers promote meetings, lectures and shows, in order to arouse interest in the society's work. He said that the society's financial condition would not permit the publication of bulletins and year books at present and advised continuing the society's present affiliation with the *Gardeners' Chronicle of*

America, in which 100,000 words on rock gardens and about 100 photographs were published in the last year.

He spoke of the question frequently asked, "What is a rock garden plant?" In his opinion, the question will never be answered satisfactorily but he felt that certain material might well be considered as taboo, specifying petunias, bedding lobelias, geraniums and Drummond's phlox.

Officers were elected as follows: President, Mrs. Clement S. Houghton, Chestnut Hill, Mass.; secretary, Mrs. Dorothy E. Hansell, Summit, N. J.; treasurer, Robert Lemmon, New Canaan, Conn.; directors, Dr. Hugh Findlay, New York; Mrs. Willis M. Hall, Waterbury, Conn.; Montague Free, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Mrs. C. I. DeBevoise, Green Farms, Conn.

At the afternoon session, Robert Senior of Cincinnati, Ohio, gave an illustrated lecture on "Botanizing in the Rockies," substituting for Mrs. Charles H. Stout of Short Hills, N. J., who was unable to be present.

OMNIUM-GATHERUM

As you undoubtedly know, our Society's emblem comes in two styles; one we term the pin type, or lady's pin and the other the screw-on or men's. The editor has been supplied with emblems of both types and in his endeavor to sell them to members he has found that it is almost impossible to keep the lady's type on hand and that it is almost as impossible to sell to the men. Have other purveyors of these pins had this same trouble and, if so, why is it that our men seem disinterested in wearing the emblem? The lapel, or screw-on type emblem should be worn by every male member at Society functions. Especially should they be worn by those members attending the 4th International Rock Garden Plant Conference and Show at Harrogate in the coming April. Our British cousins are placing great stress on the international aspect of the conference and will welcome easy identification of overseas visitors. By wearing our beautiful Dodecatheon emblem the identification of ARGS members will be happily facilitated. We know that our ladies will wear them, but will enough of our men? Should you not know where to obtain an emblem, contact your regional chairman or write to Mr. Edward B. Leimseider, 45 Burr Farms Road, Westport, Conn. 06880. Price, either type, \$3.00.

More about Camassias—The editor remembers a pleasant drive from Medford, Oregon, to Seattle many years ago along Highway 99 (no four-lane highway then and the speed of driving was more apt to be 45 to 50 miles per hour instead of 70 and over, and one could see and enjoy the countryside to better advantage). This was in the spring when the Camassias were at their best. Field after roadside field were shimmering sheets of prime *Camassia* blossoms. Sometimes there would be fields of violet-blue flowers, no other color. A few miles farther along the blooms would all be white, or perhaps a creamy white. Then would come blue ones again, dark blue or nearly purple this time. Still farther north (all this in Oregon) the Camassias were light blue, as though the cloudless sky had reached down and lightly dyed a field of white flowers with its own heavenly color.

Undoubtedly, all of these Camassias were *C. leichtlinii* for in those days we had no thought of varieties. Two stops were enough to determine

that the spent sepals were twisted together over the ovaries in a way characteristic of this species. *Camassia quamash*, with a somewhat similar range does not have this characteristic. The only other twisting species is *C. howellii* which seems not to grow as far north as to be present in the fields we were passing. It is somewhat smaller than *C. leichtlinii*. Another non-twister (in this the spent sepals twist individually, not together) is *C. cusickii* which we found, also many years ago, in the Ochoco Mts. of central Oregon. Perhaps someone would like to write an article on this charming liliaceous plant for the Bulletin, even though in some parts of the Pacific Coast it is considered a weed (aren't nearly all lowland plants considered weeds in those areas where they are naturally most abundant)? *Camassias*, like *Brodiaeas*, can be most effective and pleasing in certain types of larger rock gardens.

The picture of Reginald Farrer in this issue was used as the front-piece of the book *The Plant Introductions of Reginald Farrer*, by Mr. E. H. M. Cox, published in 1930.

* * * * *

HOW FORTUNATE—Our Society is richly endowed with members, many venerable, who have a wealth of gardening knowledge stored in their minds and in their hearts. How very fortunate it is that these masters of floriculture are so able and willing to share this knowledge! Especially benefitted are those of our new members who are just starting on the flower-strewn path that, with this help and with persistence, will lead them to some future eminence in the gardening world.

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1. Date of Filing: October 26, 1970.
2. Title of Publication: American Rock Garden Society Bulletin.
3. Frequency of issue: Quarterly.
4. Location of Known Office of Publication: 175 High Street, P.O. Box 26, Closter, N.J. 07624.
5. Location of the Headquarters or General Business Offices of the Publishers: Same as above.
6. Names and addresses of Publisher and Editor: American Rock Garden Society, 175 High Street, P.O. Box 26, Closter, N.J. 07624. Editor: Albert M. Sutton, 9608 26th Ave., N.W., Seattle, Wash. 98107.
7. Owner: American Rock Garden Society, 175 High Street, P.O. Box 26, Closter, N.J. 07624. There are no stockholders.
8. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 per cent or more of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities: None.
9. Not Applicable.
10. A: Total number copies printed averaged 1782 each issue during preceding 12 months and was 1690 for issue nearest to filing date.
- B: Paid circulation by mail subscriptions averaged 1617 each issue preceding 12 months and was 1654 for issue nearest to filing date.
- C: Total Paid Circulation: Same as above.
- D: Free Distribution: None.
- E: Total Distribution: Same as B.
- F: Office use, Left Over Unaccounted, etc.: Averaged 165 each preceding 12 months and was 36 for issue nearest to filing date.
- G: Total (Sum of E and F): Averaged 1782 for each issue preceding 12 months and was 1690 for issue nearest to filing date.

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