

QUARTERLY

of the

AMERICAN

PRIMROSE SOCIETY

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PRIMULA ROSEA GRANDIFLORA is like a carmine-pink flame warming the new spring. A native of high alpine meadows of Afghanistan and the western Himalayas as far east as Kashmir, it has been in cultivation since 1879.

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AUTUMN MEETINGS

It was the unanimous decision of those present at the first fall meeting of the American Primrose Society that the organization should cooperate with the garden clubs of the city in urging the importance of including a Horticultural Hall in the plans for post-war city development.

A brief resume of the second Quarterly was given by Mrs. Levy who called on the members for suggestions as to the type of material they would like included in future issues. It was the recommendation of the Board that copies of all issues of the Quarterly be distributed to certain libraries and universities to stimulate interest in Primulas.

Mrs. McHenry spoke on the culture of Primrose seedlings, and made a special appeal for better care of the plants we now possess along with the need to guard against acquiring more than can be cared for properly.

At the October meeting Mr. Ewell brought up the necessity of starting now to plan for the spring Primrose Show and of deciding what type of exhibits each wished to enter. He was strongly in favor of repeating last November's informal show at our next meeting.

It was the decision of the members that dues from new members coming in after the middle of the fiscal year be reduced to one-half the regular membership fee.

On conclusion of the business part of the meet-

ing, Mr. J. G. Bacher gave those present the rare pleasure of seeing some of his fine Primrose slides in color.

Among the blooming Primulas brought in by various members were two of Mrs. McHenry's husky seedlings to illustrate what the well-cared-for young plant should look like at this time of the year.

A discussion of the need for revising the Constitution and By-laws of the Society to fit the requirements of the growing organization was the principal topic of the November meeting, and it was finally decided to turn it over to a committee, Mrs. Lincke being appointed chairman, to make a thorough study of the suggestions offered and present a new Constitution and By-laws at the December meeting.

The annual November informal show included approximately thirty-five exhibits. Prizes for Horticulture were awarded as follows: 1st, Mrs. Helen Jones; 2nd, Mrs. S. R. Smith; 3rd, Mrs. A. W. House. In arrangements Mrs. House received 1st Prize and Mrs. Jones 2nd.

....Ivie Spencer, Roe. Sec'y

Until further notice, please mail membership dues, both renewals and otherwise, to the Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. S. R. Smith, Route 16, Box 102, Portland 2, Oregon.

Leaves are off the trees now. Be sure they are off your Primroses if your winter is the soggy type.

SCARIFYING SEEDS FOR IMMEDIATE GERMINATION

Paul Van Allen

I was raised on a farm in central Oregon and at that time alfalfa was just becoming known as a hay crop. The farmers, however, were having trouble with poor germination of seed so a process known as scarification, which is just plain scratching, was tried and found to solve the problem. This same process has been applied to many other seeds since with more or less success.

So after waiting a year for some choice Primula seeds to germinate, I tried scarification and had the seedlings up in twelve and fourteen days. The way I accomplish this scarification is by taking a pane of glass about fourteen inches square and placing it on a smooth surface. Then on this piece of glass place a sheet of double 0 sandpaper, sand side up. Pour the seeds on this sandpaper placing a similar piece of sandpaper on top of the seed rough side down and on top of this another pane of glass or a hard, smooth board. Taking hold of the top paper and board I move them around with a circular motion for a minute or so thus breaking or scratching the hard coating of the seed.

To start Primula seed I use small seed frames about six inches square and three-quarters of an inch deep with window screen on the bottom. These are filled with a mixture of fine peat or sphagnum moss and a small amount of sand. The seeds are scattered on the surface, barely covering them with the same mixture, and kept at a 60 degree temperature during germination. These frames are watered by placing them in a shallow pan or saucer for a couple of minutes whenever they begin to look dry. They are very easy to handle and as many as seven or eight hundred seedlings can be started in a 6 x 6 frame if they are pricked off as soon as they germinate and before any more than the seed root is formed.

The pricking off is done with an ordinary writing pen, the ends of the pen point being bent back for lifting the seedlings into a hole dibbed with a match. The soil into which the seedlings are transplanted is made up of equal parts of peat, sand and leaf-mould put into standard flats with drainage material in the bottom. The seedlings are spaced about two inches apart each way and left in the flats until the soil is covered with their foliage, at which time they are ready to put out in the open ground.

I have had good success with the following varieties using this method: Auriculas, Florindae, Rosea, Juliae and the Munstead Strain of seed from England. I believe that the bugaboo of old Primula seed can be licked using this method--anyhow it hasn't failed me yet and I use it on all seeds that have hard or shiny exterior coatings.



SEEING IS BELIEVING

Mr. Van Allen illustrated this revolutionary method of germinating Primula seed practically overnight by bringing one of his little 6 x 6 frames filled with sprouting *P. florindae* to the November meeting of the Society. The seeds had been distributed at the October meeting and he scarified and planted them November 1st. They began to germinate November 13th, twelve days after sowing, and on November 23rd the frame was alive with seedlings. They were kept at 60 degrees. Since that time the race has been on to keep them pricked off into flats for wintering over in his greenhouse. *P. florindae* is, of course, one of the hardiest of the Primulas but it is obvious that such tiny seedlings would need such protection during the winter. Those who seed out of doors should wait until spring to scarify their seed.

J. G. Bacher

The florist industry has made use of Primroses for potted plants ever since flowers first played the role of house plants. Nearly a hundred years ago the growing of the so-called Chinese Primula was a dominant factor among commercial growers, for this plant proved itself of outstanding merit as a winter flowering kind, one which responded to the simplest of care and plainest of accommodations. The range of colors, widely varied in singles and doubles, ran from darkest reds to pure white, blues, pink and variegated types some of them in huge clusters, others flowering more sparingly. Individual flowers often reached two inches in diameter while some did not exceed one-half inch.

What made this Primula so very popular among the early day flower lovers was the fact that it could thrive at rather low temperatures and did not require much sunshine to keep flowering during the dark winter months. The heating problem in those early days of simple facilities required plants of great tolerance to put up with the wide temperature range in a twenty-four hour period of wintry days. The Chinese Primrose (*Primula sinensis*) made good under the most adverse conditions and gave a show of flowers to delight the most ardent flower fancier. But modernisation of heating equipment and the dryness of the atmosphere prevalent in homes of today have nearly eliminated the possibility of growing this Primula in a satisfactory manner.

Florists and home gardeners then took to growing another species of Primrose, *Primula obconica*, which is able to stand a higher temperature and resist dryness of the air to a much greater extent. Growers in both England and Germany have lavished their efforts on the breeding of *P. obconica* and have developed sensational strains with marvelous flowers in a wide range of colors, but yet not so diversified as the

Chinese species. The *Obconica* Primrose is to be had in pure white, pinks of many shades going into crimson and bright red tints. Many have a darker coloring, or zone, towards the center, or eye. The flowers are single and begin to appear from late fall to early winter and when properly cared for bloom continually over a period of at least eight months. They may serve as cut flowers with considerable satisfaction for some strains have stems reaching eight inches, even over at times.

The writer has always been an admirer of this continuous flowering plant, so easily grown where a temperature of 50 to 60 degrees can be depended upon. Some ten or twelve years ago the writer observed a disposition in some flowers to come double and by special effort in pollinating these freak flowers has succeeded in obtaining a fully double-flowering strain which reproduces itself from seed to 85%. It is, however, essential to resort to hand-pollination for no seed will form otherwise in this double strain. Beauty of Portland is the name of this creation now being distributed in England as well as America.

Primula obconica is afflicted with a serious handicap, however, which has done much to check its progress and may, in time, even eliminate it from the stock of commercial growers. This drawback is the peculiar disposition to produce a skin irritation on some people, while to others it is entirely harmless. The leaves bearing fine hairs seem to emit a chemical that produces a rash much the same as poison oak or ivy when coming in contact with a sensitive skin. It must be stated, though, that only some persons are subject to this poisoning and consequently cannot bear to come in contact with foliage or flowers without evil effect. It appears that there is a certain immunity enjoyed by some from the poisoning of *P. obconica* while others are subject to harmful effects only at times, being free at other periods. Just what peculiar factor makes that difference is something no one has yet been able to ascertain. It must also be mentioned that remedies cannot be stand-

ardized for every one afflicted, as different individuals will find customary controls of poison oak remedies helpful only part of the time. The *Obconica* Primrose, once the most popular of all due to its long lasting display of flowers and general elegance, is now on the way out in public favor on account of its rash producing proclivities.

In its stead and replacing it everywhere is *Primula malacoides*, the Baby Primrose. Here is a plant of much easier and quicker growth which produces seed very freely either indoors or out in the garden. Originally the flowers were small but very numerous and either pale pink or white. But due to diligent breeding and selection, the color range is now quite extensive and size has been trebled in the flowers so that a well-grown plant is a beautiful sight anywhere.

This primula is more of an annual and may be sown in fall for spring bloom just as readily as pansies and under similar conditions. For normal winter weather in the portland area the Baby Primrose will thrive outdoors in the open without protection. It likes cool damp weather and the amateur will have no trouble growing it in a cold frame protected from excessive and heavy rains, planting it in the open the early part of March.

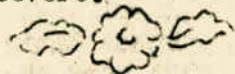
Greenhouse growers often sow this seed as late as January for spring blooming plants, but the amateur of this region will succeed better if the seed is sown outdoors in early fall when the damp season begins. The seedlings come up very quickly and may be transplanted into frames for wintering and then covered with glass when the heavy rains begin. With very little care during the midwinter season they will come along and make handsome strong plants in most any kind of fertile soil. It is by far the most easy-going and best natured Primrose to raise for folks with limited experience. Seed is obtainable in many sorts and colors from the larger seed firms of the country and once you have grown them it is not unusual to find that they re-seed themselves for

years afterwards. In early fall they can be found by the thousands coming up where they were planted in spring. As to names of the better sorts offered by specialists, will mention the following:

- Ericksson's New Giant, large flowers light salmon rose
- " White Imp, pure white
- " Wonder Baby, lavender pink
- " New Baby Improved, glowing deep pink
- " Peach Blossom, deep peach pink
- " Lilac Beauty, soft lilac pink
- " New Red, salmon red
- " Glory of Riverside, strong salmon rose
- " White Giant, large white
- " Brilliancy, opening lavender then turning red
- " Baby Rose, bright orchid rose

These are the choicest sorts known today, nearly all selections by a well-known firm of greenhouse operators in Ohio.

Amateurs of limited experience will do well to try their hand at the growing of this Primrose, either outdoors in milder climates or indoors where the winters are severe.



Note: If anyone has cause to show a sorrowful interest in remedies for irritation of the skin due to contact with *P. obconica*, they may want to experiment with some of these simples.

On page 57 of Cox and Taylor's "Primalas for Garden and Greenhouse" the authors admonish you not to stop growing *P. obconica* because of the irritant contained in the plant, rather to handle it with caution. Then if you find yourself the luckless sort without immunity, the trouble can be remedied by washing the affected parts with turpentine. Another

cure recommended to them is zinc ointment or boracic acid.

The February 25, 1939 issue of Gardening Illustrated, an English publication, carries this simple remedy: a solution of acetate of alum, 2%, dabbed on the skin.

Mr. Bacher himself, on occasion, has had his ungrateful child of beauty turn against him, and reaching for the nearest thing at hand, found that Emerald Oil set up a counter attack that routed the rash in a short, but hot battle.



WISCONSIN LETTER

Baraboo, Wisconsin
June 30, 1943

To the Corresponding Secretary;

Dear Mrs. Smith: The Quarterly of the American Primrose Society, issue of July 1943, has just reached me and I am glad to note that the Society is getting on. This is the first I have heard and I had come to the conclusion that it had not survived until a communication from Mr. Herbert Clarke informed me that the Quarterly was about due.

As far as I know, I am the only individual in this part of Wisconsin who takes the time to grow Primroses from seed, and time right now is an elusive thing. However, I am planting this year a dozen or more kinds hoping that the weeds will not eventually smother the seedlings. My plants did not weather the very severe winter we had in as good shape as in other years, but the display of *Polygonum* was satisfactory, and I showed some fine specimens at the Local Flower Show, which was held in May.

Wishing the Society success, I am

Sincerely,

R. E. Kartack

ADVENTURES WITH THE CANDELABRAS

Mrs. John L. Karnopp

Several years ago it became clear to us that we must either sacrifice our trees or give up the ordinary run of annuals and perennials in our garden. Having been brought up to the tune of "Woodman, Spare That Tree", it seemed most natural for us to decide in favor of the woods, so we accordingly began to look for plants and flowers that would thrive in the shade or in partial shade.

To our surprise, we found that there was a long list of shade lovers and, not only that, we also found that no group of flowers could surpass many of them in delicacy, elegance and lovely coloring. There were many of the lily family, the orchis, of which the cypripediums predominate, the funkias, the astilbes of gorgeous colors and hundreds of others. We soon saw that we need not give up flowers in order to have trees, and that it rather became a problem of what to choose that would best fit our situation and the condition of our soil.

It was about this time that a nurseryman suggested shade-loving Primulas, which were somewhat new to western gardens but which were being used extensively in England, and he gladly advised us where to send for the seed. It is needless to say that never having seen them, we were greatly confused by the number of varieties listed---from the Alps, the Urals, the Himalayas---from Japan, China and Indo-China. However, we managed to make a choice and were started on the road to becoming Primula addicts.

Among the first candelabras we raised from seed were Pulverulenta, Japonica, Cockburniana, Bullgana and Burmanica, which is, I believe, an improved Boesiana. All of them thrived on the leaf-mould and the abundant moisture of our hillside,---all except temperamental Cockburniana which, try as we would, by shifting and pampering this rather delicate orange beauty, would wink out after blooming, leaving only a

few seedlings to make a feeble showing the following year. Thrifty old Burmanica alongside would show up late in the spring from deep down in the wet soil where she had tucked herself, and late in June, after all the others had bloomed and gone, she would do her stuff---sending up good husky candelabras of light lavender to violet purple flowers, always with the bright yellow eye.

One day in desperation over the erratic behavior of our beloved Cockburniana, we broke a late bloom and rubbed her face on the face of the Burmanica almost beside her, carefully marking our clumsy efforts at hybridizing with a string. The resulting seed brought us quite a goodly bunch of seedlings the following spring. When these began to bloom a year later the fun began. Some, of course, favored Burmanica, and were in shades of purple, some were in delicate shades of pink over-shot with yellow, and some surprised us by having neither purple nor yellow shades, but by being a brilliant rose pink of a rather deep shade. All had the distinctive bright yellow eye and the hardy appearance of Burmanica and all were late bloomers.

From this beginning, we selected our clearest, best colors and we are now working toward something that we hope may some day be an improved strain of hardy, late-blooming candelabra Primulas.

We had another interesting case of hybridization in our garden. A chance seedling appeared which was quite outstanding, and which was clearly a cross between Cockburniana and Pulverulenta. It is cinnamon or henna color, and has the marks of Cockburniana in its somewhat ridged leaves, while its powdery stems and hardness show its Pulverulenta parentage. We have increased this by division until we have quite a showing. However, the color is trying and it must show off by itself as it clashes with all its more brilliant neighbors. We have not yet planted the seed of this, but have it now in prospect.

If you are a Primula fan, don't miss the fun of

hybridizing, no matter what variety you are addicted to. Like gambling, it gets you, but it's harmless.



A GREAT PRIMROSE BARGAIN

The American Primrose Society, in view of its being one of the newest horticultural Societies in the United States, asks a very modest annual membership fee so that all who love Primroses may join no matter how many older organizations they already pay allegiance to. In return the Society offers the opportunity to work with it in research and experiment for the national enjoyment and good of Primroses; a voice in the government; four publications a year; the benefit of requesting information and articles; seeds; mutual interest friendships; directories of reputable growers and firms; it is the key that unlocks the gates of private Primrose gardens, and many more advantages.

At any season of the year it is an exhilarating gift to yourself or some other Primrose enthusiast. The only requirement for membership is a genuine interest in Primroses.

The Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. S. R. Smith, Route 16, Box 102, Portland 2, Oregon, will gladly furnish information.

If you have been lucky in your choice of a garden spot, Primrosely speaking, you might try this busy veteran's method of raising seedlings. "These seedlings were neither self-sown nor broadcast. Early in the spring I sowed them in rows and hood once."

SWEDEN'S COWSLIPS

Mrs. Marguerite Norrbo

The very first time I met with the Primrose Society, memories were brought back to me of happy childhood days when the wild Primroses, the yellow Cowslip—Guldvivan, or Catsboots, as they are called in Sweden—were blooming. How eager I was to run and pick large bouquets! I was in fact so fond of them that at the age of eleven, when we moved from the east coast of middle Sweden to the northern mountains where I could not find any, I sent for some cut flowers. It never occurred to me to plant them up there.

As I recall, those I found grew in sandy soil close to the sea in rather open ground with barberry bushes here and there. My husband who grew up in the southernmost part of coastal Sweden remembers gathering the Guldvivan at the edge of and in the beech woods that stand near the sea in that district. The climate of Sweden's southern and middle east coast is very similar to ours here in Portland—perhaps colder winters with a bit more snow, and definitely wetter summers. We never had to hose our gardens there, the rain being sufficient even for Primroses.

The large-flowering varieties (Polyanthus in many colors) grow beautifully in most of the gardens in southern and coastal sections. And to my amazement, on a tour to Sweden in 1928, I discovered in a large, old garden close to "Kramfors" which lies north but close to the east coast where the temperature goes 25 below zero in the winter, a very fine border with large clumps of Polyanthus Primroses. This was in August, seed pods were still on and some went into my pocket. On returning to Minneapolis where I was living at the time, I planted those seeds but had no success due to ignorance of their cultural needs.

THE FALL SHOW

Robert W. Ewell

The Fall Primrose Show this year was more than twice the size of last year's. This, together with the greater excellence in both color range and quality and texture of the plants, makes the Fall Show an event to be looked forward to...and planned for... with as much expectation as the Annual Spring Show.

The Show was quite representative of the varieties that give a second blooming in the Fall in this region...Primulas japonica, polyanthus, acaulis, capitata Mooreana and Juliae.

A flat of nearly two dozen plants was shown by one of our leading commercials. In it were specimen Polyanthus ranging in color from the most delicate blue to a double in a beautiful shade of salmon. The texture of the plants and stiffness of stems were noticeable.

The fragrant P. capitata Mooreana smelling of heliotrope was shown by Mrs. S. R. Smith, and rock gardeners, especially, were interested in Mrs. Marguerite Clarke's blue Juliae hybrid, Banty. A number of Auriculas were shown and a few doubles in shades of red and yellow called insistently for attention. In the background were some fine specimens of Japonica. That always happy combination of yellow and blue Polyanthus and Acaulis was there several times over.

There were some memorable arrangements; one that comes to mind repeatedly was a cream container holding blues and yellows, and in the prize winning exhibit was a beautiful plant of the yellow Primrose. This offspring of the English Primrose--the one that grows wild in the countryside--was Disraeli's favorite flower. Primrose Day, April 19th in England, is the anniversary of the statesman's death, and no lapel is without one of these blythe blossoms.

Winners in the horticultural section were Mrs. Helen Jones, Mrs. S. R. Smith and Mrs. A. W. House;

in arrangements, Mrs. A. W. House and Mrs. Helen Jones.

Judging from both the Primroses and the appreciation of the crowd, the Show was a real success.



WEEVILS ALWAYS MAKE NEWS

From two careful gardeners comes more ammunition to lay away against the coming of the weevil. The first is a repellent, and if you don't like this one, you may have to use the second which should approximate a heavy artillery barrage.

Mr. Allen Davis of Portland puts one teaspoonful of tobacco dust in the bottom of each hole before planting his Primroses. It has been his observation that the beetle consistently passes up these plants in favor of the untreated. She evidently doesn't have the tobacco habit.

A P.S. from one of Mrs. Charles Ward Burton's letters, Detroit, Michigan, sounds extremely valuable. "If arsenate of lead--5 lbs. to 100 square feet--was dusted or sprayed on the soil of the Primula bed, wouldn't that get the weevils? I have had no acquaintance with weevils, but the arsenate of lead is used to get wire worms, eel worms, grubs, etc. that feed on roots of grass and plants. Put on the ground and allowed to wash in, it will last for five years according to Miss E. J. McDaniels of Michigan State College. Arsenate of lead sounds more reasonable to use than corrosive sublimate and is easier to obtain than rotenone during wartime".

(continued on page 93)

A STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE FOR POLYANTHUS

Florence Levy

With fine disregard for the cross-fire from the sophisticates' section of the gardening fraternity, I say that it is always springtime in the hearts of those who truly love Primroses. During the active part of the year every service given is a reward in itself but each attention is also a building toward the time when Primrose season is at high tide. In the months that active gardening is shut off by the weather, seed that is still unsown is always a fascinating thing to poke and ponder over. Each time it is brought out the eye caresses it like the tongue does a sweet, and each time we find the Primrose that is destined to eclipse all Primroses. Let the winds howl. Externals fall into oblivion as potting soils are planned, strategies of new situations and different plant foods are worked out, show material selected and one or two of our more modest efforts receive the blessing of the judges.

Since Primrose time is just around the roughest corners of the next three--possibly four months--it isn't too soon to start thinking about entries not only for the Primrose Shows in the west but for Spring Flower Shows all over the country. How many times after a show have we heard "For goodness sake, I know I have a better one than that" and they hurry home to compare their favorite Polyanthus with the winner. There is usually but one reason for their not having dug the plant and shared its beauty with an appreciative public--apprehension that someone might have larger blooms than they, which, in their minds, automatically and irrevocably demerits theirs.

Often they find that their plant has flowers very much larger than any of those winning awards and would have had an excellent chance in competition. What then is the ideal type of Polyanthus?

After a poll of discerning Primrose growers, both professional and amateur, in the Northwest and

Canada and a study made of European catalogs and book excerpts, it was found by the committee appointed to outline a standard of excellence for Polyanthus that size alone, unsupported by the basic refinements, did not make an outstanding Polyanthus. Somewhere along the way blind worship before the altar of Gargantua had gone out of fashion and people had begun to cast their eyes in the direction of a more trim and patrician figure. This is not meant to minimize the importance of size, either in the individual bloom or in the large, full truss of magnificent proportions. Size will always be one of the prime considerations of hybridizers and gardeners, but size without refinement degenerates into coarseness.

These refinements consist of quality and clearness of color; texture of bloom; strong, sturdy stalks; a compact truss, or head of blossoms; clear eyes, or centers; flowers that are fully open when mature and several other considerations which will be mentioned later on. It is interesting that Primrose fanciers have come to consider clarity of color and texture of bloom more important than size. Here, they feel, is the thing that first arrests the attention and wears better on long association than just straight bulk. The color itself doesn't matter--there are usually separate classifications for pastels and all the brilliant shades--but make sure it is clear and without a trace of muddiness. Texture is a thing of substance or "feel"; the quality that determines a fine piece of goods. Flimsiness, no matter where it is found, is a sign of fundamental lack.

Likewise a weak stalk shows a deficiency in stamina and gives a half-hearted, spineless appearance that is altogether unpleasant whether it remains in the garden or is put on the show table. Fortunately, these are not met with very often any more and the sturdy stalks that hold the truss of bloom boldly aloft are a gallant sight.

The symmetrical and compact truss is like a modish figure, restrained but with plenty of shape.

Whenever a head of bloom has a sloppy, pendulous appearance, it will be found that the pedicels, or stems supporting the individual flowers, are too long allowing the truss to abandon itself to whatever shape the wind wills.

Eyes, the center designs, are clear when the ground color does not wash back into them but remains 'fast' either a steady yellow or a brilliant gold.

There seems to be no end to the shape of the individual blossoms---flat or ruffled with cleft or rounded segments; picoteed, fringed or plane-edged; with the usual five petals or a few extras---the style remains a thing of personal preference, but whatever the pattern, mature blossoms should be fully open as opposed to cup-shape which is unattractive generally even when not viewed critically.

Crisp, healthy foliage that shows signs of being well fed but not stimulated and which is disease and pest free indicates intelligent care over the growing season. It is also well to allow your plants to bear the marks of honest contact with the elements rather than the pampered, cold-frame look which might give the impression of their having been coddled for exhibition purposes only instead of enjoying a normal life in the garden.

In this area all hardy Primroses are looked upon primarily as garden, rather than show table, subjects, and gardeners are encouraged to grow them as such. With this in mind, the question of a pin-eyed or a thrum-eyed Polyanthus becomes a secondary one and not a problem over which hairs are split as in some localities. (For illustration of pin and thrum types of bloom see page 57 of October, 1943 Quarterly.) Everyone is in agreement that a blossom is more pleasing when the throat is filled with anthers, as in the thrum type, than when the pin-headed stigma extends above the surface of the bloom thereby interrupting the eye as it passes over the face of the flower. When the stigma does not protrude beyond the throat of the bloom it is not nearly so objectionable, and since a good proportion of very beautiful

polyanthus is pin-eyed, it was thought short-sighted to summarily cast out these plants without an honest appraisal of their good points.

The last word in Polyanthus elegance is the raised fluting that sometimes encircles the throat of the bloom like gold embossing. When this rose crown or rose-eye as it is called, is present on a thrum-eyed blossom in addition to the other desirable characteristics, the very ultimate in good breeding has been reached and the plant is a thorough-going aristocrat.

All of this might seem confusing at first, but the reading time is much longer than the actual observation. It is really surprising how many gardeners have prized Polyanthus for these very qualities without realizing the reason for their choice.

To get a standard of excellence down in concrete form, the committee arrived at the following method of scoring Polyanthus. So far it has been necessary to use it only when plants offer close competition, but as an aid to those who would see their Polyanthus in the same light as they are analyzed on the show table, the present standard of excellence is given below. Let it be said that it is not a closed proposition, rather suggestions and criticisms are invited and will readily be entertained.

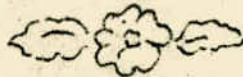
Scoring for Polyanthus

	Points
Form of Flower	50
Color	15
Texture	15
Size (must be over 1 inch)	10
Clear eye	5
Flowers fully open	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Thrum eye	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Form of Umbel	10
(Individual floret borne on short enough pedicels to insure a compact and symmetrical truss)	

	Points
Stem	20
(Sturdy, round and tall)	
Foliage	20
(Free from disease and pests showing signs of being well grown)	100



One of the thrills of spring is to watch Primrose seedlings come on with the weather's first moderation. There is no trick to growing Primroses from seed if the tough jacket is worked on either by scarifying or freezing. So in the slack winter months, sow your seed and place the containers outside to the action of frost and snow, protecting from heavy rains. They'll be up before the first robin returns.



PORTRAIT OF A GREAT PLANT HUNTER WHO LOVED THE HEIGHTS

"I have a vivid memory of Reginald Farrer in the hills, his stocky figure clad in khaki shorts and shirt, tieless and collarless, a faded topee on his head, old boots, and stockings that gradually slipped down and clung about his ankles as the day wore on. The bustle of the early start; the constant use of the field-glasses which always hung around his neck..."
....from E.H.H. Cox's introduction to Reginald Farrer in "The Plant Introductions of Reginald Farrer" edited by E.H.H. Cox

SPRINGTIME AND A WHITE BIRCH TREE

A mind a-wearying, a heart
Heavier than it should be,
Eyes a-searching rested on
Canaries in a white birch tree.

The sight made unsung music,
The leaves in tones scored with
Soft gray white of dainty twigs--
It was a symphony in green!

Somewhere amid love's symbols
Came vibrations sweet and fair,
Quite modestly beneath the tree
A yellow primrose nestled there.

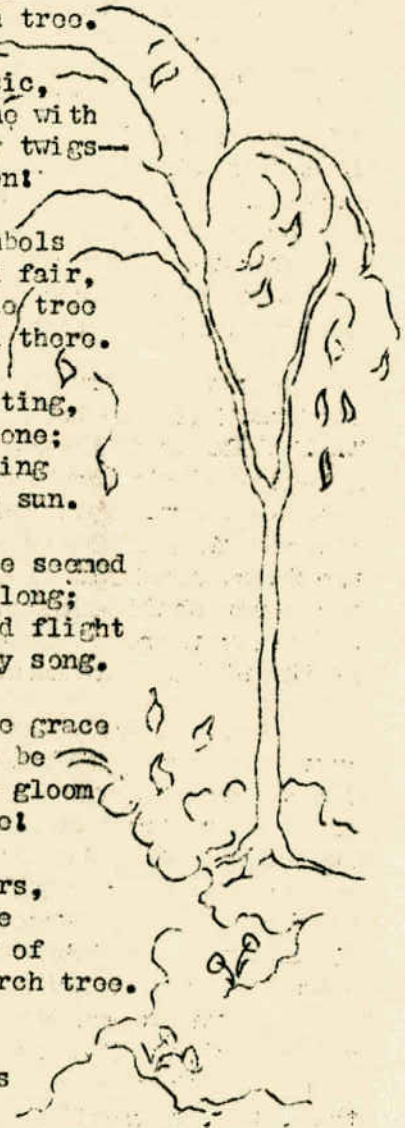
Then two guests came flitting,
Their preening soon was done;
Yellow satin bodies gleaming
In a ray of early morning sun.

The more aggressive birdie seemed
To think he'd stayed too long;
So just before his hurried flight
Surprised me with a lovely song.

The beauty of such fragile grace
In that setting seemed to be
Sent to banish an earthly gloom
Like the one depressing me!

This memory sweetly lingers,
And I hope you too may see
A little blessed symphony of
Springtime and a white birch tree.

....Sophie Ann Hayes



"HOW DEAR TO MY HEART---"

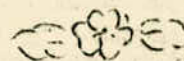
What fond recollections are recalled from the scenes of our childhood by old-fashioned flowers and fragrances. Primroses have this special charm to bridge time and distance, to bring back those enchanted moments when days were carefree. In many of the old gardens of this country, Primroses were as much a part of family life as violets and pinks, and for those who spent the earlier part of their lives abroad, fields, meadows and woods, as well as gardens, hold memories that are brought to light by Primroses and those who have shared like experiences.

For the pleasure of all, and especially for those who might be reminded of happy times, excerpts from letters will occasionally be published.

Correspondence on Primroses between the Ewells and Mrs. Mullenix brings this picture of England. "...I felt as if I had known you for years. I especially enjoyed being reminded of those dear childish sentiments by Mrs. Ewell and remembered every one of them after having my memory refreshed. Yes, I remember the Cotswold sheep. I was born on these famous hills and never shall I forget the lush mushrooms we used to gather there on misty autumn mornings or the song of the nightingale in summertime..."

A box of Primroses brought this story from Mrs. Bertha Eckert in Illinois. "...My father was born in Alsace, France, and as a young child played in the woods where Primroses grew wild. He called them Auriculas and told how his father took him to the woods each Sunday morning while they lasted to gather great bunches of them. Many times when I was a young child (I am eighty now) he told me stories of the beauty of these woods when the Primroses were in bloom. He was a lover of all flowers, but the Primrose remained his favorite. The memories of his stories and the beauty of these modest early-blooming flowers make them, too, a great favorite of mine."

primroses and springtime took Mrs. Finnegan out of the hills of Washington back to old Erin. "...the yellow Primrose grows all over Ireland, every road is full of them. Of course it's pretty back there now with the fields covered with white and pink daisies and buttercups, and the roads lined with maybush, or hawthorn, lilac and honeysuckle. They have many kinds of primroses in the gardens, double kinds--a lovely blue, white, some reds and pink. Oh dear, you reminded me of something...the Cowslips..the fields are full of them and how sweet they smell. Yes, indeed, many times we made Cowslip balls or tisty tosties, but I'd rather see them growing than make balls of them. All the hills are covered with furze and there the rabbits make their nests. How many a rabbit 's nest I have seen with its cute little balls of fur, but the furze is so thorny. Yes, Ireland is a pretty place...."



PRIMULA FLORINDAE SEED FOR THE ASKING

Primula florindae is a noble acquisition for the garden at any time, but these seeds have the special distinction of coming from the internationally famous gardens of Mrs. A. C. U. Berry in Portland, Oregon. If you have not received your packet, please notify the Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. S. R. Smith, Route 16, Box 102, Portland 2, Oregon, and she will forward them at once.

In exchange, the Society would appreciate a post-card report on how the plants thrive in your locality. A fairly complete outline of *Primula florindae* is given in the Sketchbook on the next page.

If anyone with plantings of *Primula* species has an over abundance of seed, the Society would appreciate receiving it for distribution amongst the members. In this way seeds that might otherwise be wasted give pleasure to the members and valuable information to the Society.

SKETCHBOOK

The Sketchbook, as originally planned, was to be a picture gallery hung with portraits of some of the lesser known Primulas. This plan will still be carried out except when gifts of seed of the better known Primulas are made to the Society for distribution amongst the members. Thus a picture of *Primula florindae*, the giant Cowslip of Tibet--well known by some, but little more than a name to others--is now about to be placed, tagged with its background, history in cultivation, preferred situations, cultural requirements and seeding information for the purpose of recommending itself to you and suggesting suitable situations in your garden.

Undoubtedly it is one of the best introductions made by Capt. F. Kingdon Ward who is responsible for bringing so many fine Primulas and other plants out of Asia. In view of its popularity and wide distribution it is difficult to believe that *P. florindae* has been in cultivation less than twenty years, Ward having discovered it in 1924. Indeed, Capt. Ward was so impressed with it that he named it for his wife.

Those who are familiar with the broad floral sweeps of alpine meadows can see it growing in Tibet as Ward first saw it margining the valley streams, in the stream bed itself--a yard or more of stalk with hundreds of bell-shaped blossoms swinging in the wind perfuming everything within wafting distance. The bright, sulphur-yellow bells, coated with moul as the dust of summer coats the roadside, jostle for position with barberry bushes, species of rose and honeysuckle making thickets to shelter the orange flowered *Primula chungensis*, the blue Tibetan poppy and great drifts of violet iris.

This is in southern Tibet at about 12,000 feet in the middle of the Tsaangpo valley between Lhasa, the holy city of Asia, and Tzola Dzong in the provinces of Kongbo and Takpo. *P. florindae* rambles over a district about a hundred miles in length, east to west, and sixty miles from north to south, sometimes in great

numbers, other times more sparsely. These meadows occur chiefly in wide, wet, comparatively level valleys--formerly housing projects for glaciers---which are below forest line (conifers) and dotted with birch copses.

As usual, seeds were sent back to England and in 1926 *P. florindae* was awarded the Royal Horticultural Society's First Class Certificate by unanimous vote, a certificate given plants of only the greatest excellence. After twelve years of proving itself, the Award of Garden Merit was bestowed upon it in recognition of the reputation it had established for amenability to the conditions that prevail in the British Isles. It is said there that *P. florindae* will support atmospheric and soil conditions in which most Primulas would refuse to grow.

At first it was thought that *P. florindae* could not compare favorably in cultivation with its perfection of beauty in the natural state. But it wasn't many years before it was found to grow even more beautifully when given understanding care. In fact, it was suggested that one English gardener be photographed standing in the shade of his *Primula florindae*.... a feat that could easily be accomplished by Mrs. Walter Schibig in her Seattle garden on the edge of Puget Sound. Almost all visitors to her garden must look up to see the glory of these sulphur bells, for at least one plant is almost six feet tall. It grows in a woodland situation, partial shade, plenty of rich humus and good drainage, and while it delights in the cool mists and fogs that drift over, its objection to open, wet winters amounts to little because of the perfect drainage provided. Mr. Beattie, in his article on primulas in Ontario, Canada (page 45, October, 1943 Quarterly) says it is an exceedingly easy plant to grow if it is given plenty of moisture, and that it is as hardy as a rock. Mr. Weston on page 39 of the same issue says he finds it almost impossible where there is no natural water stream.

Being a streamside Tibetan, moisture during the

summer is a necessity and its winter preference is for frozen ground with a thick blanket of snow. In the West, special attention must be given to drainage as insurance against crown rot during the more or less open winters. In both the East and West, it must be planted in dappled light and shade or given morning sun in a cool, humic soil that is kept moist from June until fall. In regions of great heat and low humidity it will do better with somewhat less sun and much more water, but it doesn't thrive in complete shade.....the same old rule for the successful culture of most of the Asiatic Primulas.

The seeds, unless scarified, should be frozen, either artificially, as outlined in the Question Box in this issue, or naturally by planting at once and placing the seeded containers out of doors. If planted now, a pane of glass or some other invention should be provided in milder climates to keep off beating rains, then removed when snow flies. If frozen artificially, the seeds can remain in the freezing compartment of the refrigerator, under the conditions specified, until the weather moderates enough for seeding in the early spring. If scarification is planned, store the seed in an air tight container, preferably in the refrigerator but not in the freezing compartment, until early spring. If a greenhouse is handy to accommodate the seedlings during the winter, scarify them and sow at once. Unless Mr. Van Allen's method of seeding is used, sow the seeds thinly and transplant to the garden when large enough to handle easily.

The following spring you will probably haunt the Florindae bed looking for signs, and finding none, will conclude they left you for a fairer clime. But they are one of the latest sleepers of the family and pay no attention to spring's alarm until late April here on the West Coast when they start leafing out and grow while you watch. They are in full bloom in the Northwest by the first of July, continuing throughout the month if kept moist and cool. The curse of a great thirst is this giant's only weakness.

BIOGRAPHICAL GLIMPSES

Paul Van Allen is an amateur who has approached the growing of Primroses from a scientific angle, his experiments often making valuable contributions to a more successful culture. When gardening weather is in again, and he has finished his year's work as President of the Mens' Garden Club in Portland and Vice-president of the American Primrose Society, it will mean extra nights to garden by the light of his big goose-neck lamp. Address: 5447 N. E. Mason St., Portland

J. G. Bacher is one of the best known and best beloved horticulturists in the West whose earnestness in his work and helpfulness in the endeavors of others stamp him as a true flower fancier. His interest in Primulas goes back to his native Switzerland from whose mountain meadows and lodges he has studied the alpine sorts. Under his professional name of Swiss Floral Co. he was one of the first to grow the rare types of Primulas and improve the more common ones. Address: 1920 N.E. 7th Ave., Portland.

Mrs. John L. Karnopp does many things beside beautify her garden with Primulas. She writes, is a member of the Oregon State Senate, has dug deeply into the history and behavior of Primroses and now is well on the way to creating an entirely new race of late blooming candlebrás. Address: 2738 S.W. Rutland Terrace, Portland.

Mrs. Marguerite Norrbo's fondness for Primroses has led her to grow so many that she now flies the professionals' banner beside her garden in Portland's west hills which, she says, is so reminiscent of her native Sweden. Fine Polyanthus are her particular hobby. Address: 4005 S.W. Crestdale Drive, Portland 1, Ore.

Robert W. Ewell's enthusiasm gains momentum with each month that primroses bloom. It is he who keeps the

fires going under members to bring flowers and plants to the meetings instead of allowing them to bloom in privacy. In addition to his post as Librarian, he was recently appointed to fill a vacancy on the Board. Address: 3275 S.E. Ankeny St., Portland 15, Ore.

Sophe Ann Hayes, like many another has a childhood fondness for Primroses. School days were made happier by the bouquets from her mother's garden. Now she loves them as a flower and their ability to invoke memories. Her lovely garden at 5408 Lincoln Ave., Vancouver, Wash. is made gay with them in the springtime.



ALL THE WAY FROM RENO

Excerpt from a requested report.

847 Ralston St.,
Reno, Nevada
Nov. 26, 1943.

Dear Madam: The plants are on the east side of the house so only get morning sun, but it is 90 to 100 degrees there by noon during July and August. I watered them well every night and had an occasional flower during the summer.

In June the cutworms did their best to ruin them and after trying a commercial bug killing product with no result, I soaked a strong plug tobacco in water and poured it around the roots twice a week which killed them in a few treatments.

The Auriculas are all looking fine.

I hope they will all live through our winter which is dry and cold and will, of course, cover them very soon.

Yours truly
Mrs. Fred Beck

GROWING PRIMROSES WYOMING STYLE

When a man deliberately encases his garden in ice by watering it during the first hard freeze, the novelty of the thing calls for an investigation. Last year, Mr. Keeler who grows Polyanthus as successfully in Rawlins, Wyoming as they are grown on the West Coast, put his garden under lock and key by the ice method in December. He then covered his plants with corn stalks and leaves. Although the temperature often drops to 25 below zero, alternate thawing-and-freezing sometimes occurs as early as January, continuing until May. The point of the story is that Mr. Keeler's Primroses do not heave out of the ground but remain firmly anchored throughout the ordeal due, in all probability, to their being frozen to a great depth under winter protection. The coating of ice also provided enough moisture so that when the plants were uncovered in May they were green and fresh.

Subsequent snow storms left no mark on either leaves or blossoms which were as beautiful as those shown at the Primrose Show in Portland, Mr. Keeler having attended while his own plants were still under cover. His plants bloomed from the third week in May until the end of June in a situation where they received morning sun and afternoon shade. With the coming of the hot days and high, drying winds, the plants were watered thoroughly every other day. There was no sign of red spider which attacks Primroses when kept too dry during the summer.

When Mr. Keeler was in Portland the last of November, his garden had been frozen-in since October....early even for Wyoming. The Auriculas and Julias planted in early summer settled down under the conditions provided them and seemed very much at home. A report this coming spring will tell how they wintered and bloomed. If anyone over the country grows Primroses under worse climatic conditions, I am sure Mr. Keeler would either be greatly solaced or treat him as a brother in arms.

Seed occupies attention at this time of year and two questions that come up repeatedly may well be answered now. One concerns the proper storage of seed and the other the why and wherefore of artificial freezing.

Seed has a dual nature. It both attracts moisture and is subject to drying. As it dries, the outer husk hardens, imprisoning, at the same time it protects the life germ. The long time necessary to soften up this outer jacket on Primrose seeds is the great stumbling block in the path of germination. Proper storage coupled with methods of freezing or scarifying eliminates the trouble.

The best method found to date for storing seed is in air tight containers placed in the refrigerator outside of the freezing compartment. Tobacco tins with a piece of adhesive tape placed over the hinge in back to exclude air, jars with air tight covers, or any such contrivance that approximates a vacuum will counteract the drying effects of the refrigerator which is so valuable in keeping the seeds cool. This is for storage purposes only.

In addition to their faculty for drying, it is the nature of Primrose seed to be exposed to severe freeze—those that do not germinate very soon after ripening and scattering—since the majority of them are alpine. Freezing under natural conditions occurs when the seed is planted in late fall or early winter and allowed to remain exposed to frost and snow but sheltered from heavy rains. Artificial freezing is accomplished by placing just enough water on the seeds in their air tight container to make them stick together, then placing them in the freezing compartment of the refrigerator. The time they are left in is a matter of convenience to the one who plants them. They should be taken out occasionally to thaw, but only for about an eight hour period. To allow them in a moist condition at room temperature

would cause them to begin germination or mould. The shortest period of freezing should be at least ten days or two weeks in which time they have probably been taken out two or three times to thaw. No harm comes to them when left to freeze for five or six months, if moisture is sufficient to coat them in ice. A thawing about once a month, or whenever thought of, is helpful. Old Auricula seeds left to freeze for six months germinated in ten days when planted in the spring.

The principle involved is to duplicate, as nearly as possible, the action of frost in nature. In the natural state seeds are moist but not wet; when they first thaw it is still too cold to germinate or mould; and when they do finally thaw for the last time, the weather is warm and moist and the germ is encouraged to awaken, sprout and make a new plant.



WEEVILS ALWAYS MAKE NEWS
(Continued from Page 77)

A recent communique from Mr. Ewell reports a victory for the weevils when he used $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful of corrosive sublimate in a gallon of water. He captured the pests first and then poured on a cupful of the solution, leaving them, as he said, to their meditations. The following day, however, they seemed none the worse and he is wondering if he has an exceptionally tough commando type, if results are not always immediate or if the dose should be stronger. Those with information on corrosive sublimate treatment would assist greatly in the experiment by sending it on to the Editor for publication.

There are four possible ways of losing hardy Primroses to the winter : by mice, weevils, rot or drying. Mice are very much attracted to Primrose roots and crowns and will follow along mole runs to feed, or will burrow under snow and leaves on the surface. Entire nests can be wiped out by placing balls of rodent poison in runs or under Primrose leaves. There are poisons on the market that are non-injurious to other animal life.

Weevil exterminators were discussed in the last issue of Quarterly and in this issue on page 77.

Rot is caused by poor drainage or by moving plants too late in the season. English Primrose types and evergreen Asiatics are especially susceptible to late moving since the retention of leaves indicates a non-dormant condition--a desire to grow whenever the weather allows. When a protracted freeze sets in shortly after transplanting, roots are unable to re-establish and sustain life. In sections where winters are fairly open to encourage late planting, a great toll of Primrose life is taken in this way and the trouble is usually diagnosed as loss by freezing instead of loss through rot.

The dormant Asiatic Primulas, those that lose their leaves in the Fall, will stand replanting should some accident occur to necessitate such action.

Regions of scant snowfall and high, freezing winds are probably the hardest on evergreen vegetation. Roots are unable to supply moisture to replace that which is sapped from the leaves, and plants simply dry up and blow away. A protection of evergreen boughs, hay, cornstalks or any such material that admits air and yet breaks the force of the wind will prevent damage. If placed after the ground has frozen, the plants will not heave after every thaw.

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Address all Society communications, other than editorial, to the Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. S. R. Smith, Route 16, Box 102, Portland 2, Oregon. All material for the Quarterly should be sent direct to the Editor's office, Box 218, Gresham, Oregon

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If this list is incomplete, as it must be, kindly advise the Editor