

The BEGONIAN

Devoted to the Sheltered Garden

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The BEGONIAN

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Spring Is Here

• Tempus fugit . . . and with the flying of time we leave much to be done that we should have done. One thing we must do, no matter what the rush be about. STOP, LOOK AND LISTEN to the rustling of SPRING on March 20th. The joyous hope that is born in each one of us in Spring should be recognized and having felt its influence, we certainly should see to it that everything about us echoes our buoyant spirit. There is so much to be thankful for in this great United States, no matter in what section we may be. Let us stop and consider what more we may do to keep

it fine and ever first in the world — for our dear ones who are away fighting to preserve it for us. The beauty of your garden will help, aiding a friend achieve more success in his garden, will help. Take some flowers to the hospitals on that day — SPRING. They will help. Don't forget the vegetables for Health and VICTORY — a big help.

The Editor.

• Intriguing reports of multi-colored miniature Rex continue to come in. Undoubtedly, many of these "gems" of the Rex family will be displayed at the various shows this year.

Tuberous Rooted Begonias In Philadelphia

By MARGARET C. GRUENBAUM
Philadelphia, Pa.

(Editor's note: This came in later in the Summer. Holdover until now, February, for inspirational guidance.)

• Our flower bed of Tuberous Rooted Begonias has given much pleasure to us and to our friends. Strangers ask permission to see them.

The colors and types are many: fimbriata in deep pink; decorating the desk from which I am writing a double, deep red, velvety-texture measuring $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches across; a lighter red-single, three as usual on the same stem, the center one a male flower, the other two still in bud and, of course, female; a single, inside of petals pure white, outside tinged with pink; carnation type in light red; peach color a semi-double; one exactly like a rose in the purest white; lemon color in camellia type and single; another semi-double has outside petals tinged with pink and inside petals lemon yellow; another double cerise in color.

There are about 50 plants in the flower bed which measures approximately 15 ft. in length and 5 ft. in width. The plants are spaced about 18 inches apart. But next season my husband plans to space them about 36 inches apart; then it will be possible to fertilize the plants individually, and enable us to give each plant special attention.

The preparation of the bed was begun last January. In October, 1942, sod was removed from a portion of our lawn, because we desired to plant some vegetables this year. These chunks of sod were piled up where they would get the rain, snow and sun, and occasionally were loosened so more rain, snow and air would have access. Then in January, 1943, a liberal quantity of fresh stable manure was spread over the surface of the bed. The bed was already a good grade of top soil with fair drainage. The stable manure was left for the rain, snow, freezing, etc., to work on it for 6 weeks or so. Then the chunks of sod were spread on top and after a few good rains were chopped with a sharp spade until the soil was coarsely fine. About like leaf mold that you would bring direct from the woods.

The tubers had been started sometime in February in peat moss in an inclosed porch with a northern exposure. But

(Continued on page 282)

Abbreviated Minutes of Director's Meeting, ABS, January 10, 1944

• The Meeting was called to order by President Hall at 7:45 p.m. After the reading of the minutes by the Secretary, the regular reports were called for and presented by the Editor, Treasurer, and Membership Fees Chairman. The various visitors were introduced.

Mrs. Crowder, Librarian, added to her report a request for printed lists of all available material in the Library to furnish to interested members. For the same purpose, she desires to have photostat copies of some of the material. Upon her presentation of the costs at the February meeting action will be taken.

Mrs. Poole, Public Relations Director, whose motion carried that the revised Constitution and By-Laws of The Theodosia Burr Shepherd Branch, Ventura, be accepted, also announced that several monthly contributions had been received from Branches for the upkeep of the A. D. Robinson Memorial. The President instructed that contributions be acknowledged and the donors thanked for their support.

Messrs. Crowder, Harker, Hawkins, Hall, Col. Gale and Mr. Baily reported on their Branch activities.

President Hall announced that an index of articles in The Begonian for 1942 and 1943 would soon be available to Begonians.

Mr. Murray Hawkins was appointed as Chairman of the Speakers Bureau, which is to operate on a lend-lease basis, Branches to exchange speakers. Mr. Hawkins promised to report at the February meeting of progress made. Mr. Harker suggested that a new form of Membership Card be issued. Being made in triplicate, it would facilitate the work of Branch Secretaries and the Membership Chairmen. The matter was put to the vote and carried.

Mrs. Wilkes presented a plan to augment finances. Referred to Chairman Ways and Means Committee, Mr. Art Nelson for study and consideration.

The President said he would endeavor to appoint someone to the Questions and Answer Department as soon as possible.

The meeting adjourned to the next regular date scheduled for February 14th, 1944.

Primula Polyantha

By FRANK REINELT
Capitola, Calif.

The blues are the headache of the lot. All large blues that I ever came across so far were only of acaulis type. Although I succeeded in getting a blue polyanthus, their flowers are comparatively small on a thin, weak stem, with very poor seeding quality. Often I have pollinated a dozen plants completely, to harvest hardly enough seed for three or four packages. I could not see any possibility for them unless they were transferred into large flowered, strong stemmed type, which would seed easily, and to gain this goal, I crossed them with all the largest flowers on strong stems of the other colors. The results, so far, were a number of magentas, varying from very dull shades to almost brilliant purple, which in strong sunlight would either burn, fade or sometimes turn bluish. It will take probably ten years to get what I want, but I have, this year, a large lot of seedlings planted from the best magentas inter-crossed with the best blues which will have now three to four blood blue, and some break to further progress may appear in them. The whole difficulty is that there is no such a thing as a blue Primrose in existence. The color is deceptive, it is really a purple, intensified to a point where it looks blue, but when one compares it, for instance, with blue delphinium, they look awfully muddy purple or lavender. The color base seems to be the same as in iris, pansies, etc., where in each case both the blues and reds have the same parentage and are neither blue nor red. What I understand as blue, you find in very few flowers. In delphinium, we have reached, in some cases, clearness and brilliancy that approach the ultimate. One of the visiting seedsmen from the east wore a brilliant blue shirt and commented that "If you could raise as blue delphinium as that shirt, you would have something!" To show how the eye can be deceived, I picked a flower of blue and matched it with his shirt, which in comparison looked washed out lavender in all its brilliancy! We will never reach a blue of that clearness in Primroses since the factor is not there. Of course, maybe I know too much and somebody who doesn't know that it is impossible will do it, as has been done in other cases.

The whole breeding, as I see it, in

Primroses, boils down to the speed with which we can raise the successive generations. The more we pile up a background of better parentage behind each plant, the better result we can expect. The standard of quality changes each year with harvesting of new seedlings and these, superceding anything we had before, change our ideas and lift ideals too.

The best method I found for growing was to sow seed immediately after har-

(Continued on page 282)

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THE ALFRED D. ROBINSON MEMORIAL

By JESSIE A. POOLE, Director
The Alfred D. Robinson Memorial,
Los Angeles, Calif.

THIS is clean-up month at the Alfred D. Robinson Memorial, and if March seems a little late to some of you who are located near the coast, please remember that the temperature in the Conservatory goes below 50 on the coldest nights, and under glass with such a condition, too early trimming will do more harm than good.

We have come to realize our knowledge is necessarily limited to our own small sphere, be it lath-house, heated glass-house or plain dirt gardening. That is the reason why plans were made for the two attendants at the park to help care for the exhibit. When we want sound and practical advice we go to a person who is successful in his line of work, similarly, when we wanted a successful Begonia exhibit we went to those who are best qualified to do the work under the existing conditions. Therefore, it did not surprise me in the least when I visited the Alfred D. Robinson Memorial in February and found everything progressing satisfactorily.

The tall fibrous-rooted Begonias looked not unlike tall, spindly young trees, rather bare and at first glance not too beautiful, but when I looked again I could see the new shoots pushing their way through the old stems and pale leaves of last year's growth. Abel Carriere needs a hair cut; luxurians certainly belies her name; Washington Street, which Mrs. Clark pictured so beautifully in the February Begonian, looks just like she says hers does, rather the worse for wear.

The rhizomes of the Scharstar, rera-cleicotyle, Sunderbruckii and others of that type are thickly covered with the fresh green of new young leaves, tempting me to reach over and snap off the old winter-worn growth hiding them. But no, I remembered just in time that it is a little early in the season for that, so I looked at the tall bloom stalks with their tiny buds forming nicely and thought of how they would look in a month or two. Then with a last fond touch to the fresh green of the baby shoots, I passed on down the aisle, only to stop again to look at a lovely specimen of imperialis smaragdina with its leaves of pure velvet; and to think longingly of

the most beautiful specimen of manicata aureo-crispa I have ever seen, which John Beaver and Luie Seegar have among their own proud possessions, and sinfully hoped that when the exhibit is ready to be opened to the public I can prevail upon them to put it next to ours even though its 3-foot spread does put ours to shame. A plant like that should not be hidden from sight.

Perhaps some of you realize the increasing difficulty being experienced in securing desired plants. In past years all it was necessary to do to obtain the plants was to get in the family car and drive to your favorite nursery. Rationing and other war conditions have changed all that. I am finding it very hard to locate needed specimens for the Memorial, especially those of the more rare types. Here again you can help us. If you have plants which you think we may need, have them ready to go to the Conservatory the last of March or early part of April. Well rooted young plants from good sturdy stock, preferably in three or four inch pots are much easier to handle and will stand the shock of the change of location and growing conditions much better than large plants. If you wish, I shall be very glad to furnish you with a list of those we are particularly desirous of having.

Pledges and contributions to the Memorial Fund have been received to date from the following listed branches: San Gabriel Valley, Hollywood, Parent Chapter, Theodosia Burr Shepherd, Pasadena, North Long Beach, Glendale, Riverside, and San Diego. We are still short of the required amount and hope to hear from the other branches soon.

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Inside of Mr. H. Lambert's Greenhouse in Alberta, Canada

Branch News

The Alfred D. Robinson Branch: Meetings are held on the fourth Friday of the month at 10:30 a.m. at the Hall of the Point Loma Community Church, Udal Street at Poinsettia Drive, San Diego, Calif.

At the last meeting of the **Herbert Dyckman Branch** of the ABS the membership voted to change the name to **The California Heights Branch**, in keeping with the policy of most of the branches to have a name more clearly identifying the location and section served.

This region is now suffering serious losses of costly plants through what is believed to be the effect of Colorado River water undiluted with local well water. Other locations have undergone similar losses and it is hoped something is done to alleviate the conditions very, very quickly. Mr. and Mrs. Harry Harker visited the Branch and spoke instructively on Membership, membership dues and Branch Guidance. Mrs. Anna Haller, President of the Bellflower Branch discussed flowers and ferns generally and then conducted a "Quiz Class" with plants and flowers as the basis of questions.

Since plants are scarce at this time, a gadget sale was held. Several original and ingenious gadgets made by members were received enthusiastically.

Note change of meeting time to 8:00 p.m. March meeting will be held at the

home of Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers Bower. See Calendar.

San Francisco Branch: This group announces the election of Mrs. Irene McMills, 730 Grand Ave., South San Francisco, Calif., to the office of Treasurer.

The January meeting was attended by well over 50 members and friends to hear Dr. Merwyn H. Hirschfeld speak and show his fine colored slides on Tuberous Begonias, illustrating also his method of planting seeds, preparing cuttings and pollenizing.

The subject for the February meeting was Fuchsias, as this group of plants is most necessary in the shade-garden with the Begonias.

North Long Beach Branch: The February meeting was made particularly interesting by a talk on the culture of Begonias by the founder of the ABS, Mr. Herbert P. Dyckman. A Valentine party rounded out the evening's happy time.

The March meeting will be held in the same place. The program will feature a roundtable discussion on the naming and growing of Begonias illustrated with plants, to be conducted by Mrs. Ruby Liedler.

San Diego Branch: Note the change of meeting place; also date. This group will now meet on the **FOURTH MONDAY** of the month, in the Hard of Hearing Hall, 3843 Herbert Ave., near University, San Diego, Calif. It was the only date available and it is hoped most



All Kinds of Tuberous Begonias

of the members will find it convenient.

At the February meeting, Russ Eaker, President, introduced Fred Sabransky, gardener of the Naval Training Station, who told many useful facts about growing seeds and slips. He stressed the point that better results would be gained if fibrous and semperflorens Begonias were cut down below the top of the soil during the end of February in California. This will make them form new roots and produce much healthier plants. Fuchsias, also, should be cut down by that time.

He suggested sprinkling warm, dry sand between seedling plants if they should start to damp off. This will, more times than not, revive them and make them grow. (Editor's note: Students of Anthroposophical gardening and Organic gardening recognize the fact that silica and quartz have very beneficial effects on plants.)

New England Branch: While this group is not able to hold meetings through this time, we hear from the Secretary that they watch for new members' names in *The Begonian*, hoping that when they do find it possible to hold gatherings again, they will make it worth while for everyone.

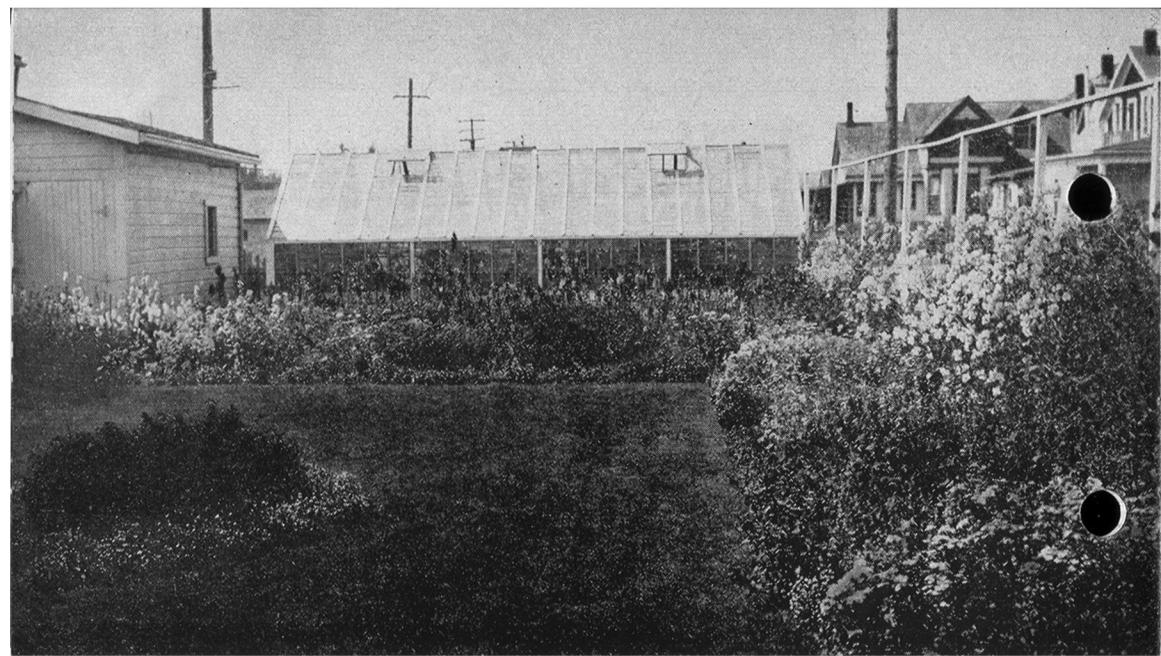
Riverside Branch: The following are new officers for the ensuing season: President: R. H. Terrill, 6848 Leland Ave., Riverside, Calif.; Vice President: Mrs. Harriet E. Meyer, 4219 Sunnyside Dr., Riverside, Calif.; Secy.-Treasurer: Jessie A. Topham, 4620 Arlington Ave., Riverside. There will be a Corresponding

Secretary added to these in due course. In order to stimulate the enrollment of members it was voted at the January meeting to award a \$5.00 plant to the one who brings in most members through 1944. Out of three visitors in January, two became members, which greatly encourages the new officer to create as much interesting activity as possible. The program for February included a sale of plant cuttings followed by a general discussion of methods of propagating from cuttings.

The Branch voted the sum of \$5.00 to be sent to the A. D. Robinson Memorial Fund as the annual contribution from this still small group. The March meeting will be held at the home of Mrs. Meyers, 4219 Sunnyside Dr., Riverside, Calif.

Bellflower Branch: Two new members were enrolled at the meeting held at the home of Mrs. Thalheimer in February. Mrs. Smith of Long Beach exhibited some very fine slides in color of her garden and vacation trip. A lively discussion followed on gardening hints, in which every one took interested part. The March meeting will be held at the home of Mrs. Luella Chase, 1035 So. Virginia Dr., Bellflower, Calif.

Inglewood Branch: Mr. Vose spoke briefly but to the point on the culture of Rex Begonias in hanging baskets. He has his own design which he has evolved from scrap material of the punch press (See page 277)



This is the Garden Framing the Greenhouse

Tuberous Begonias In Canada

By H. LAMBERT
Alberta, Canada

• Rather than writing about my tuberous Begonias, I prefer, infinitely, growing them. My collection is made up of some varieties from England and some I grew from seed.

I start the tubers during the first week in March in four-inch-deep flats filled with damp peat moss. The tubers are covered about half-way and placed one inch apart. Every day I spray them lightly until they have sprouted and are two inches high. By this time they have made a wonderful growth of root and I put them then in five-inch pots carefully, retaining all roots and moss adhering to them. When the pot is full of roots I move them right into eight-inch pots for flowering.

I like a soil made of seven parts leaf-

mould, three parts peat moss, two parts sand, one part old manure and one part bone meal. I spray them every day, preferably in the evening, so that they are moist at night. The Winters are hard on the tubers as the temperature gets down, often to thirty below zero, yet I bring them through and have them start blooming by the end of June and they continue until September when I stop watering them so much. Later I cut them down to three inches of stem on the tuber and pack them away in flats in a cool basement. The stems drop off the tubers in about a month.

I grow about one hundred pots and have no trouble in growing any of them. I do not know of any plant (and I grow many other plants, a fairly large garden

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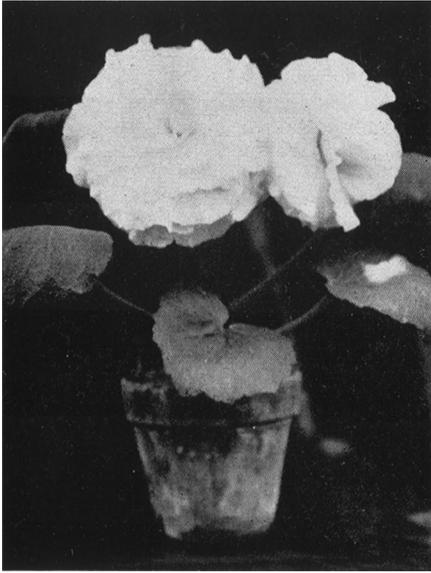
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full of them) to beat tuberous Begonias, it certainly is a show when they are in bloom and I get a real pleasure each year from this fine hobby. Of course, I try to get better ones to add to those I have and I like to grow a lot of them in boxes outside where they make a wonderful display. As soon as the sun gets very hot in the day—about May—I spray the roof of the greenhouse with buttermilk which makes a nice light shade and the one spray lasts all Summer, even the rain does not wash it off. You can see the Begonias in the greenhouse in the picture.

—Photo by H. Lambert

BRANCH NEWS

(Continued from page 275)

which make a distinctive basket, roomy, and easy to hang, simple to transport and handle, and withall, good-looking.

Mr. Berkshire spoke about the Crab or Christmas Cactus (*Zygocactus truncatus*). This is the best time to propagate it from slips, be sure you do this in

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Pasadena Branch: Some 40 members and friends were present to hear Mr. Fred Willard discuss Primulas, the varieties and types grown successfully here and some points on how to succeed every year with them. Miss Charlotte M. Hoak, Secretary, The A. D. Robinson Memorial, led a round-table discussion on Begonias which turned out to be most interesting and informative to all present. The first question, "How to prepare a seed bed or flat to plant seeds of Begonias" brought forth a number of different and very good points for the beginner and professional alike. This led to a discussion on preparing for leaf and stem cuttings. The consensus of opinion was that a box or flat at least 6 inches deep filled with pure, washed, gritty sand is the best for cuttings and leaves, preferably with the aid of a root hormone, will get results for all. The time of the year, of course, will have some bearing on how soon the cuttings will root. The early Spring and Summer seems to be best for most plants for the majority of the people present. Miss Hoak will continue this type of program for this

(Continued on page 284)



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Begonia CHIALA

By ALICE M. CLARKSan Diego, Calif.

• This month the subject of our Begonia portrait is Chiala, another hardy member of the fibrous Begonia family. To have a full flower panicle in February eighteen inches across on a plant only thirty inches high is a real achievement. Of course I must admit that there is no other inflorescence visible as yet. The only other comparable bloom I have seen was on Mrs. Wallow. It was even larger but the same branching type in pink instead of the white of Chiala.

The specimen depicted here came from Palmcroft, where I was delighted to find Begonias living up to the standard of the "good old days." This plant is Mrs. Palmer's favorite and she really has something special as I have not been able to find or heard of any but hers that has the accessory leaf on the flower bract, just like Neely Gaddis. As near as Mrs. Palmer can recall she obtained her stock from Rosecroft and has always grown it from cuttings so it must have been one of Mr. Robinson's Chiala seedlings. Other plants that I have seen, also from Rosecroft, are similar to this but with smaller panicles and no extra leaf. We sent up a very good specimen of white Chiala and also the pink-flowered form to the Robinson Memorial which should be good this spring.

As near as I can discover, Chiala was raised in San Diego by William Grant about ten years ago. It was not mentioned in Mrs. Gray's book of 1931, yet, standardized plant names gives "Grant 1930" for both Chiala-alba and Chiala-rosea.

Recently I visited Mrs. Gray in Encanto and she told me that Mr. Grant "gave around" some cuttings of an unnamed plant of his, both in pink and white which she liked so well that she thought it deserved a name so she called it "Chiala." The name has no meaning but "just sounded sort of Chinese."

Chiala's origin is obscure. Mr. Robinson mentioned that it was like the fruticosa group but I can find nothing authentic about that either. Mrs. Fewkes says that they grew some plants from either Metallica or haageana (scharffi) seeds, in both pink and white that are very similar to Chiala except that they grow taller and stiffer. Miss Bower recalls that the original plant was inclined to droop. It would seem to me that her Druryi, which was delineated in the October Begonian, Chiala, Mrs. Wallow

and Undemille, a Robinson scharffiana seedling, are all closely related. Since we definitely know that Druryi is a cross of sanguinea and Cypraea, we might suppose that there is some sanguinea blood in all of them either directly or through Thurstoni or some similar hybrid but the Robinson and Fewkes seedlings show that like results could come through the hairier types. Some think that a strain of Compta or coccinea could give the leaf shape. All of which, until something definite is proven, leaves us in a state of confusion as to the true origin of Chiala.

Mrs. Palmer says her Chiala will grow to the top of her lath-house. It branches freely and sent up too many shoots for me to include them all in the sketch. The stems are succulent and light green with a red flush at every joint and homely dry stipules that stay too long. They are a lovely light green sheath when they first encase the leaves. There are a few spots on the main stem and the branches are hairy to touch rather than sight. The leaf petioles are two to three inches long, light-hairy on the under red side and showing a light green spot at the junction on the smooth green top surface. The leaf is fairly thick, with ruffled edges that straighten a bit as it grows out but remain quite serrate. Mrs. Wallow is flatter, larger, broader at the top and not as pointed. It also has a pink spot at the center.

As can be seen in the sketch, the flowers vary in size. The largest are over an inch long and lime green in color. One of the medium size, open, showed two wide petals and two narrow and incurved, over a nice yellow center. The tiniest blooms are female, some only an eighth of an inch wide and the first to drop off. The large outside petals are white-hairy. When in bud there are transparent stipules to protect them, long and pointed, giving a feathery effect to the cluster but soon drying up and falling away. The panicles are decidedly drooping.

We admire Mrs. Palmer's ability to keep her Begonias so happy during the cold months and think her enthusiasm for them must give her a special "know-how." She has an intense interest in this Grant seedling and we shall watch to see if other plants with the extra leaf among the flowers show up elsewhere. Otherwise she has an exclusive plant in this Begonia group that is having such a difficult time finding its proper limb on the family tree.



CHIALA

ABOUT THE BEGONIAN WITH REFERENCE TO A BEGONIA

By DR. W. C. DRUMMOND
Los Angeles, Calif.

AT the January meeting in Hollywood, I read a short paper on a *Begonia socotrana* hybrid, Lady Mac. At Christmas time I acquired one from a florist who called it simply "The Christmas Begonia." Since that variety had not been brought before our Branch and it was still in good bloom I took it to the meeting with my paper for a three-minute presentation. Mrs. Wilkes, our Editor, asked me for a copy of the paper and a picture of the plant. It is too bad we cannot have this, especially if it were in color.

Most of the material I referred to came from *The Begonian* and I was loth to let it be published, but that very point decided Mrs. Wilkes in having it, insisting that this would show some of our readers just how useful our Bulletin can be. The main reason for my consenting to her request is that I have something much more important to tell, something that has proved most worthwhile and beneficial to me in my gardening. My Card System has been of great help times without number. I hope it will guide some others to as satisfactory results from the activity of plant growing and plant study as I have. The paper on *B. socotrana* H. Lady Mac will serve as an illustration of my point. Remember, I am a real amateur.

First may I suggest you bind all your *Begonians* year by year separately. I used, until now, scotch tape to hold each magazine to the next one and when all twelve are nicely lined up one over the other, I place the tape over the back also and cover it with a strong piece of gummed paper to hold the backs and the covers on. This done, I secured one hundred or more 4" x 6" ruled cards and an alphabetical index of the same size from the dime store and went to work. I listed each article and *Begonia* on a separate card following this formula:

If the *Begonia* is a hybrid I put a capital X in front of the name, if it is a fibrous type, an F; if rhizomatous, R; for a species, S; and so forth. Immediately after the plant name, botanical and common names, I place an abbreviation of the name of the one who first described it and if known, in what publication. This often will decide the identification of a plant. Of course, the place of origin and what part of that country

are valuable information, and if a cross, the parentage is important. Lastly, still at the top of the card, the picture references are given. In the body of the card I write a short description of the plant, which I secure from various sources, blooming time, dormant period are given, with cultural hints including special needs, suggestions as to watering, fertility of soil necessary according to findings and added to as experience teaches. Amount of light needed or tolerated, what, and how many hybrids are related, if any, methods of propagation, etc. The picture reference, if available, will help in identification. If possible describe leaves in detail, for these characteristics are most important in *Begonias*, even color and type of hair or whether shiny surfaced or felted, etc. There is a wonderful pamphlet published by the Dept. of Documents, of Washington, D. C., "Glossary of Botanical Terms commonly used in Range Research," Misc. Pub. No. 10 for 15c. This we all should have. It describes and pictures several types of leaves and it will familiarize the reader with many terms the while rendering the plants more interesting to the student thereof.

I also have cards for General Information, Rex, Tuberos, semperflorens, Propagation, Watering, Ferns, Fuchsias, Seed propagation, Hanging Baskets, Blooming Periods, Plants for Lathhouse, Pruning *Begonias*, Rare and New varieties, Fertilizers, Hybridization, Soils, etc., and on the back of all these cards I place the references.

When you do yours, be sure to index those wonderful articles by Alice M. Clark, John Vosburg's shade plants, Mrs.

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Krauss' historical notes, Rudolph Ziesenne's advice, etc.

Now for a part of the paper I read. *Begonia socotrana* was discovered in 1880 on the Island of Socotra in the Indian Ocean. I got this information from Mr. Frank Reinelt in his description of *B. Hiemalis*, a group name for all socotrana x tuberous hybrids. On the back of the card I read 9-40/B 138, which, to me, means Sept., 1940, *Begonian*, page 138. This article by Mr. Reinelt is so complete I hesitate to repeat it here but I do ask you to look it up and read it. My next reference is James Esson, 12-40 B 192, also a very fine article. In it he describes *B. Hiemalis* and then in 11-40 B 170 Mrs. Buxton wrote a very good article of various hybrids. It seems that due to the leaves being peltate, they held water causing them to rot easily. This defect was mostly corrected by Mr. Peterson in *Glory of Cincinnati* in 1910 in this country. Other American hybrids were *Lady Mac* by Edgar in 1925, etc. All these men worked for a longer blooming period, larger and double flowers and correction of leaf trouble. The first hybrids were made by Veitch & Co. of London in 1882 using tuberhybrida. The *Gloire de Lorraine* group was brought out by that wonderful hybridizer Victor Lemoine in 1891 using *dregei* x *socotrana*. Our own, now deceased, Mr. C. M. Kelly wrote of these hybrids. All of which goes to show what fun and mountains of information one may gather from *The Begonian*. After indexing my *Begonian* I took up Bailey's *Encyclopedia* and Mrs. Buxton's book jotting down what information applied to the subject under research. I have not yet had an opportunity to use *Die Begonien*.

After indexing *The Begonian* in this manner you will have a greater respect for it. I had mine bound for a long time but not indexed. I started this system for general gardening years ago, recording and cataloging all the plants I grew. I learned a lot that way. I try to remember that education does not alone consist of being able to answer most questions, but in knowing where to find the answers to the questions.

Begonia Chat—

By EVA KENWORTHY DAY
San Diego, California

• The worst of the winter seems to be over and as I look through the plants in the lathhouse there are none that have suffered from the cold. Some nights were pretty cold, too, but it was warmer through the day and we have had no cold winds to shrivel up the leaves. Only a few rex have shed their old leaves, others have held on to theirs and some are still in bloom. Now we may begin work in repotting and starting cuttings. I received some cuttings from Mass. of Woodruff's *Oadi* and *Tea Rose* and they have started roots under a glass jar. They are of the *semperflorens* type and I look forward to see what they will prove to be like. A new plant is always interesting. For the first time since I've grown *Begonia angularis zebrina* it formed and ripened seed pods, so of course I planted some of the seed. They germinated readily and the seedlings seemed to be like the parent, but some of them have brighter color on the underside of leaf, but it may be because the plants are young.

Viauscharff (a cross between *Viaude* and *scharffiana*) makes a good plant and is a fine bloomer. The growth is half way between the two *Begonias* and not as creeping as *scharffiana*. It will grow about three feet tall, with long upright flower stems; the flowers are rather cream tinted with the usual red hairs on the outer side of the petals.

From a cross between *Prunifolia* and *scharffiana* came a very lovely large-leaved plant with soft velvety leaves and white flowers on long stems. I call this *Irene* (*Goddess of Peace*).

Because I try many kinds of seeds, sometimes one develops a bit different from the others, though it may not be really worth naming and growing along, I delight in the interesting experiment and when one really worthwhile shows up I feel amply repaid for the trouble.

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BEGONIAS IN PHILADELPHIA

(Continued from page 271)

next year we plan to have our container of peat moss much deeper, believing that will encourage a greater root system.

They were planted direct from the peat moss into the bed with some 15 tuberous rooted Begonia seedlings which we purchased from Vetterle and Reinelt. We regret to say we do not know which plants are the seedlings and which are the tubers. We should have marked them.

They have bloomed continually since early July, and show no signs as yet (early September) of slowing down. There have been no pests—when there were signs of black fly a camphor ball (one to a plant) on the top of the soil seemed to eradicate them.

My husband brought 25 out of 26 bulbs safely through the resting period by packing them in a large basket between moist chunks of sod (described elsewhere in this article) and kept in a cool place. Some dahlia bulbs which were stored in peat moss did not keep nearly as well as those stored in the chunks of sod. We do not dry off our Begonia tubers in the sun before storing.

The beauty of the blooms of tuberous rooted Begonias is worth all the effort and care necessary to be successful. If your first attempt is not all that you would like it to be, be observant, profit by your experience and try them again the next season.

PRIMULA POLYANTHA

(Continued from page 272)

vest, which, with us is usually the end of July. We sow in flats in light mixture of soil, usually leafmold with sandy loam, covering the flats with sacks and leaving them in a shady lathhouse. This way they can be sprinkled daily without much bother and the seed usually germinates within two weeks. I usually sow fairly thin to save one transplanting, but if there is time, the seedlings will do better if they are transplanted when quite small in other flats. By October, the plants are usually sufficiently advanced to go directly in the field, where they are shaded with lath until the middle or end of November. From then on they are exposed to full sunlight and in the beginning of January, we give them a strong dose of artificial fertilizer. I have used anything with very good results, as they are very gross feeders.

Personally, I prefer fish or cottonseed meal, but if I haven't got the time to bury it between the rows in the ground, I use ammonium phosphate just lightly sprinkled on the ground around each plant. This speeds up the growth so that usually by the middle of February we have fairly large plants in bloom for selection. I have moved these seedlings into separate beds, putting a handful of fishmeal into each hole when I planted them, and they continued growing quite remarkably. This year, some seedlings formed clumps with as much as a dozen spikes per plant. I have seen still larger plants grown on private estates from seedlings, where the cost of fertilizer did not matter and the gardener in the case was extremely generous with it.

Each year I have named some outstanding seedlings with the idea of propagating them, but it seems that each lot is superceded by next year and I determinedly get rid of them, as after all, none of them is what I ultimately want, and so I go forward, seeking.

In conclusion, I would like to say that Spring without Primroses would hardly seem Spring to me. Established in cool

(Continued on next page)

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Plantly Speaking — In the Shade

By JOHN S. VOSBURG
Hollywood, California

• A Violet that fits into the shade picture very well is *Viola odorata rosina*. I haven't been able to uncover much about its ancestry but I do know it is a charming pink form of a violet that is easily grown and provides an abundance of bloom with but little care.

I must admit I was not too well impressed with this violet at first acquaintance. The very fact that I shunned it in the growing plot seemed to induce it to spurt forth in a fine show of many of these medium sized pink violets, that I have since learned, can be a very valuable part of a well planned garden. The flowers are not as long stemmed as some, but bunches nicely and lasts well. Its daintiness and soft coloring are worthy of comment. It multiplies without much hesitancy, making a fine ground cover that surpasses many of the other violets.

This violet is readily available here in Southern California. Growing demands are much the same as the bedding begonia; a rather leafy loam being preferred.

Editor's note: Since Mr. Vosburg is also a student of Herbal lore, I am surprised he did not mention the very special fragrance given out by the leaves of this particular violet. Those of us who work with herbs know that the young leaves of violets used to be mixed with the salads of old, also dipped in batter and fried to be served with orange juice. Violet vinegar is another delightful product made with violets, this time with the flowers proper, as for violet syrups, etc. The leaves are often steeped in tea, if the violet is of the fragrant type as this little pink one happens to be. In fact, brushing the plant in passing or with the hands caressingly or while picking the flowers one enjoys a delicious perfume. Yes, Mr. Vosburg, this is a sweet violet.

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PRIMULA POLYANTHA

soil, either semi-shade under the trees or north side of the house, such as begonias require, they will bloom for years.

A letter received by the Editor at time of going to print in January, from Mr. Reinelt mentions the fact that "The new batch of seedlings is just beginning to bloom and already, the few that are open are showing great promise for large blooms. My interest is still burning full blast in spite of all the handicaps we have today."



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BRANCH NEWS

(Continued from page 277)

month, the subject will be tuberous-rooted Begonias. It will be the best time to start these tubers, therefore if you plan to have some of these beauties, you are invited to attend this meeting or any other. Miss Hoak is Horticultural Editor for "Golden Gardens" and many other celebrities belong to this group.

San Gabriel Branch: This Branch prides itself on a hand-picked group of excellent cooks in various fields as well as not a few near specialists in Orchids, aside from Begonias, Fuchsias, and many other shade-plants. These meetings always have been most worthwhile, and we are sorry we have to miss them these days. Mr. Wm. Ross will speak this month on the propagation of Rex and tuberous Begonias. Like Glendale, they serve refreshments every meeting.

Mrs. Velma Dunn is sending to each member this month, a most enticing invitation to the meeting. It is hand lettered on colored paper on which she has painted an original flower picture, each different from the last. Very inspiring.

Glendale Branch: The last roundtable discussion became involved in composting. Since this writer was not there, it is not known in what phase, but we wonder was it in the NEW (Old-Age Chinese) Indore methods or The Quick Return Compost — or just back-yard hit-or-miss Compost? This is one of the questions that will become more and more engrossing — if you are minded to get more good out of your garden.

Sadie McPherson spoke at the last meeting on Camellias. Since this is her special love and she has done some fine

hybridizing she was much worth-while hearing, we are told.

Hollywood Branch: Again the shortness of speakers who can travel proved to be a blessing in disguise and three of the Branch's own members presented a most interesting program.

George McDowell will speak this month on Fibrous Begonias.

Ventura Branch: The big effort of the season is the gathering of members. Some unbelievable returns are expected, and a fine dinner in any case. With Mr. Mets in the lead, we know that it will be an interesting race.

Long Beach Parent Chapter: A novel manner of presenting her subject was demonstrated by Gladys Bullard, who is in charge of propagation for one of the near-by Nurseries. Each cutting was attached to a card showing the exact method of making the cutting and telling how to proceed in the planting and care of it. The President made and donated eight lovely hanging baskets which were sold to benefit the plant sale treasury. Again this Branch sent a lot of seed to be distributed.

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Growing Begonias In Southwest Minnesota

By MARY DUNCOMB
Luverne, Minn.

• Growing Begonias successfully here without a lathhouse or greenhouse is not easy, but because Begonias are such versatile plants we do our best with them in spite of hot, windy and sometimes very dry Summers often visited by sudden storms and hail, or Winters with exceedingly variable temperature. However, because Begonias can stand a cooler window in Winter than some plants and because they like a sheltered shady spot in Summer, we have a fair degree of success in growing them. True, we must love them and be willing to give them the attention any loved object requires. For instance, I have about 200 pots of plants of all kinds. I have them in every available window of my eight-room house which, fortunately, has lots of windows, all on the ground floor (and a full basement, too). My collection comprises a lot of begonias as well as the orchid cactus (*Epiphyllums*) and scented geraniums.

In Winter, sudden changes of temperature have to be foreseen, so we listen to the weather reports very carefully and no chances are taken on cold nights. All plants are removed from the window ledges, as the windows are the coldest spots of a room, and if frost is on the panes of glass it communicates the cold to the leaves and causes a lot of injury to them. During the day, we see that a paper is laid over the crack in the upper ledge and that makes most house rooms cool enough and comfortable for most Begonias. The flowering plants are kept in the sunny South windows, while the rest are satisfied with less sun and light.

With us the Rex lose their leaves during Winter, but if they are not over-watered they will put out new leaves in Spring. The other Begonias, we find that those which bloomed all Summer lose many of their leaves. This is often a benefit to plants, as it forces them to rest awhile and the new leaves are so lovely in Spring. Watering must be done with great care here. We do not water on dark, cold days. Plants seem to be unusually healthy when given a weekly spraying of clean water.

Cuttings seem to root best in a glass of pure soft water placed in a sunny

window. They are then planted around the sides of a clay pot which is large enough to hold four cuttings. There should be drainage and a good, porous potting soil. These are transplanted to smaller pots as soon as established, and shifted forward as needed.

In Summer we have had best results by sinking the pots of the choicest Begonias in a protected border just North of the house. They are much easier to bring into the house in Fall, after washing the soil off the leaves. Very large plants such as the rubras and *Corallina delucerna* are kept in the house but taken to the cool and moist dirt cellar for the hottest part of July and August, placing them in the lightest spot.

The *Evansiana* is left in its pot the year around only brought inside and kept in the basement for the Winter. This type is not hardy here. Begonias, even *semperflorens*, do not do well here in the full sun, it burns their delicate leaves, nor do Begonias grow to any "California" size. We do, however, grow nice looking plants, symmetrical in shape and healthy as to leaf.

Through the Mid-West, especially on farms where many choice Begonias are grown, often unknown as to name, there should be every incentive to making or widening this interest. Rich soil is available, sand, all sorts of fertilizer, leaf mold, and plenty of soft water. The air is pure, but we do have to realize that sudden changes of climate is the big difficulty we have to contend with.

When starting our Begonia collections, it is a good idea to begin with a few of each separate kind, learn how to describe them and know them by name, then learn the special care each needs and make additions slowly, classifying them properly. Often it is not the size of the collections which make them distinctive, but the discriminating taste displayed by the collector.

Tuberous Begonias do well here if grown in a semi-shady place that is well drained and well protected. There have been some very beautiful specimens brought into our flower shows which have been grown outside in pots in such locations and lifted in the Fall to continue their bloom in the house.

◆
• I have used whey from cottage cheese to water my Begonias occasionally, and it seems to be beneficial. Is there any reason why this should be toxic because of its acidity? Can any reader give us an answer to this question?

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Meeting Dates and Speakers

It would be much appreciated if the Secretaries of the Branches would send meeting data to reach the Editor **NOT LATER THAN THE TENTH OF THE MONTH.**

Note: The March (Second Monday) American Begonia Society Board Meeting will take place in the Director's Room, Retail Merchants Credit Assn., 417 So. Hill, Los Angeles, Calif., March 13th, 1944.

DOMINGUEZ BRANCH

Thursday, March 2nd
Mrs. R. L. Warren, Secy.
21718 So. Alameda, Long Beach, Calif.

ORANGE COUNTY BRANCH

Thursday, March 2nd
Laurance Archibald, Secretary
1216 W. Chapman, Orange, Calif.

BELLFLOWER BRANCH

Tuesday, March 7th, 8:00 p.m.
Home of Mrs. Louella Chase,
1035 So. Virginia Dr., Bellflower, Calif.
Mrs. Esther McElhinney, Secy.-Treas.,
534 Darnell St., Bellflower, Calif.

RIVERSIDE BRANCH

Tuesday, March 7th, 7:30 p.m.
Home of Mrs. Harriet E. Meyer,
4219 Sunnyside Dr., Riverside, Calif.
Mrs. Jessie A. Topham, Secy.-Treas.,
4620 Arlington Ave., Riverside, Calif.

THEODOSIA BURR SHEPHERD BRANCH

Tuesday, March 7th, 7:30 p.m.
American Legion Hall,
North California St., Ventura, Calif.
Mrs. Olive Hamilton, Secy.-Treas.
515 So. Evergreen Dr., Ventura, Calif.

LONG BEACH PARENT CHAPTER

Wednesday, March 8th, 7:30 p.m.
2218 East 4th St., Long Beach, Calif.
Miss Cecille Block, Secy.-Treas.,
1263 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach, Calif.

HOLLYWOOD BRANCH

Thursday, March 9th, 7:30 p.m.
Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd.
Mrs. Kem Weber, Secy.,
6707 Milner Road, Los Angeles, Calif.
Speaker: George McDowell
Subject: Fibrous Begonias

INGLEWOOD BRANCH

Thursday, March 9th, 8:00 p.m.
Women's Club of Inglewood
325 No. Hillcrest, Inglewood, Calif.
Mrs. Harold S. Clark, Secretary
1618½ W. 52nd St., Los Angeles 37, Calif.

CALIFORNIA HEIGHTS BRANCH

Friday, March 10th, 8:00 p.m.
Home of Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers Bower
Chalmers Bower, Secy.-Treas.,
1020 Belmont Ave., Long Beach 4, Calif.

NORTH LONG BEACH BRANCH

Monday, March 13th, 7:30 p.m.
42 East Market St., North Long Beach, Calif.
Mrs. Jean Stocklase, Secy.,
5505 Olive Ave., Long Beach 5, Calif.
Rountable: Mrs. Ruby Liedler

EAST BAY BRANCH

Monday, March 13th
Washington School,
61st and Shattuck Ave., Oakland, Calif.
Dick G. Goodnow, Secy.-Treas.,
2519 Milvia Street, Berkeley, Calif.

PASADENA BRANCH

Tuesday, March 14th, 7:30 p.m.
Pasadena Public Library
Lester F. Harrell, Secy.-Treas.,
668 Bellefontaine St., Pasadena, Calif.
Roundtable: Tuberous Begonias,
By Charlotte M. Hoak

PHILOBEGONIA CLUB BRANCH

Thursday, March 16th
Mrs. Albert H. Gere, Treas.,
362 Brookway, Merion, Pa.

VICTORY BRANCH

Thursday, March 16th
11228 Atlantic Ave.
Mrs. Clara Moore, Secy.-Treas.,
11275 Duncan Ave., Lynwood, Calif.

EVA KENWORTHY GRAY BRANCH

Monday, March 20th
Mrs. Henry O. Colt, Secy.-Treas.,
7221 Olivetas, La Jolla, Calif.

SAN FRANCISCO BRANCH

Wednesday, March 22nd, 7:45 p.m.
Social Hall, Calvary Methodist Church,
% 19th and Judah St., San Francisco, Calif.
Mrs. Theresa Ferrero, Secy.,
2183 31st Ave., San Francisco, Calif.

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY BRANCH

Friday, March 24th
Mrs. Velma C. Dunn, Secretary
244 No. Ivy St., Monrovia, Calif.
Fellowship Hall,
304 E. Valley Blvd., El Monte, Calif.
Speaker: Wm. Ross
Subject: Prop. of Rex and Tuberous Begonias

SAN DIEGO BRANCH

Monday, March 27th
Hard of Hearing Hall,
3843 Herbert Ave., San Diego, Calif.
Mrs. George S. Breidford, Secy.-Treas.,
1146 Oliver Ave., Pacific Beach, Calif.

MARGARET GRUENBAUM BRANCH

Tuesday, March 28th
Mrs. W. E. Jones, Secy., Willow Grove, Pa.

GLENDALE BRANCH

Tuesday, March 28th
329 No. Brand Blvd., Glendale, Calif.
Mrs. Grace A. Dewar, Pres.,
709 Milford St., Glendale 3, Calif.

ALFRED D. ROBINSON BRANCH

Friday, March 24th, 10:30 a.m.
Hall Point Loma Community Church,
Udal Street at Poinsettia Dr., San Diego, Calif.
Mrs. Merrel H. Taylor, Secy.,
2838 Chatsworth Blvd., San Diego, Calif.

SANTA BARBARA BRANCH

Irregular Meetings
Thelma Sommerfield, Secy.,
210 E. Anapamu, Santa Barbara, Calif.

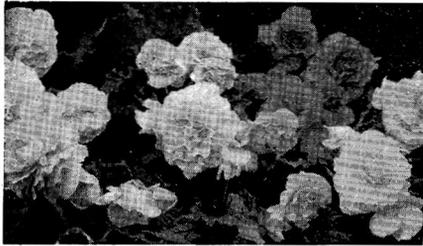
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Miss Annabelle Sylvester, Secy.,
Pleasant St., Middleton, Mass.

SANTA MARIA BRANCH

Mrs. Peter Mehlschau, Secy.,
Box 12, Nipomo, Calif.

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