

BULLETIN
OF THE
ALPINE GARDEN SOCIETY

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[Do not distribute]

F. 19a. "Purdonia aurea" — an unnamed small Daphnoid shrub of very great charm, exactly like a golden *D. cneorum*. Abundant in all open sub-alpine & alpine places & soils, in S. Kansu & up the Border. Be very careful to avoid root-disturbance.

F. 139. Cypripedium sp. — a very charming sp. of 6-8 inches, with one un-showy flower, suggesting a *C. pubescens*, with butterfly soda-water-bottle lips, & a delicious scent of lilies of the valley. Only & rarely, seen, in deep combs, under the shadow of huge limestone cliffs, in loose woodland soil of leaf-mould & limestone grit.

SELECTED FIELD NOTES
OF THE
FARRER-PURDOM EXPEDITION
TO KANSU, 1914-1915.

The Field Notes given in this Bulletin have been transcribed from Farrer's original manuscripts, and chosen on account of their interest and importance as relating either to plants first introduced into cultivation as the result of the Expedition, or to new species many of which are at present unknown in our gardens.

These field notes differ from those originally issued to subscribers to the Expedition, in that they are reproduced exactly as worded by their writer, thus preserving in all cases the typical Farrerian touch which endeared his work to all those who have acquaintance with his books. They have been supplemented by additional notes from Farrer's manuscript "Record of Specimens and Seeds," which bears the date, January 10th, 1916, and was probably compiled during his journey home from China at the end of 1915. Extracts from this record are given in *italics*.

The writer has also felt justified in adding a further pen picture from the descriptions in Farrer's books in the case of his outstanding discoveries, and takes this opportunity of paying tribute to Mr. E. H. M. Cox, whose work "The Plant Introductions of Reginald Farrer" gives very many more and detailed particulars of plants than can be attempted here. Mr. Cox's appraisal of the relative values of Farrer's discoveries has been of the greatest assistance, and his book is recommended to all those who seek still further information.

The Expedition itself, the object of which was the exploration in search of new plants of the ranges between Western China and Thibet, is fully described in "On the Eaves of the World" and "Rainbow Bridge," and was undertaken with the valuable advice and companionship of Mr. W. Purdom, who had traversed a portion of Kansu four years previously.

The Society is indebted to Mr. and Mrs. Purdom, of Brathay Lodge, Westmoreland, for permission to include numerous hitherto unpublished photographs taken by their son during the

expedition. Many of the plants were photographed *in situ*, others after removal to the base at Siku. William Purdom never returned to England after the completion of the Expedition in 1915, but accepting a responsible position of Forestry expert in the Ministry of Agricultural of the Chinese Government at Peking, died after a few days illness in 1921.

It was unfortunate that the seven hundred packets of seed sent home should have arrived during the War, and thus could not receive the individual attention in many cases required for their successful raising. There are, however, nearly fifty of these introductions in our gardens to-day, and seventeen have received the Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Merit. Thus Farrer was probably no more and no less successful than other pioneer collectors in China, but his skill in describing the plants he came across, places his field notes among the classics in this branch of literature.

ALLIUM CYANEUM. F. 222. (Sent home as *A. Kansuense*.)

“General and variable in all places and all elevations on the Thibetan border. Sow *shallow*.”

ALLIUM KANSUENSE VAR. FARRERI. F. 305.

“An even lovelier plant. Forming tight tufts in the highest bare earth-pans and shingle slides of one mountain at 12,500. It stands near *A. kansuense* but seems to have larger flowers of a soft china blue.”

Both plants are well known in cultivation.

ANDROSACE MUCRONIFOLIA. F. 319.

“(Do not distribute). Grows *only* in the very fine turf of the top-most Thibetan aretes at 13,000—14,000. Cool rich soil, well drained in open aspects.”

Note made in 1917, “Plants despatched to England arrived alive and are now prospering vigorously.”

“Quickly in the gathering gloom the camera was called on to immortalise this virginal beauty, growing in such dense snow-drifts that the crowds of wee fluffy-grey rosettes are hidden from view beneath the heads of snow-white blossom that are borne all over the cushion on tiny stems of half an inch or less, till the whole becomes a solid sheet of purity, sweetly fragrant of hawthorn—though without its model's after-tang of salt shrimps.”

On the Eaves of the World.

ASTER FARRERI. F. 174 and F. 582.

“ Big Bear, glorious but local in the lower Alpine meadows of Thibet.”

“ The most glorious Aster of the year, a towering, touzle-headed person of a thousand narrow rays of richest violet flopping from a flat central disc of vermilion orange. I called it Big Bear to differentiate it from Middle Bear (*Aster limitaneus*) which is the dwarfed and magnified beauty of the highest shingles.”

On the Eaves of the World.

In cultivation, this plant has hardly fulfilled the promise of Farrer's description.

BERBERIS WILSONÆ VAR. SUBSCAULIALATA. F. 355.

“ A low graceful shrub of 1—3 feet. General over the *open* Alpine downs at mid-elevations. When well fruited each long spray becomes a solid spout of blood, and the whole effect is overwhelming. For *open sunny* glades at the edge of a covert.”

In cultivation, as are also other species from this expedition, but as yet un-named.

CALLIANTHEMUM FARRERI. F. 70.

“ A very beautiful ground-hugging high Alpine from scree-slopes, earthpans and ledges of vegetable mould 8—13,000 with glaucous foliage and big china-blue flowers like *Anemone blanda*. *Very carefully* split the nut before sowing (it falls green and matures in the shingle) and extract the kernel which should be sown about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch deep and kept cool.”

“ Seed is very hard to get ; the carpels fall while yet green, and you have to quest around each clump to detect the green nutlings lurking here and there in the chinks of the shingle.”

The English Rock Garden.

Not in cultivation.

CARPINUS TURCZANINOVII. F. 331.

“ A good tree of light elm-like foliage 15—20 feet.”

Mr. Cox, in *The New Flora and Silva* (Vol. III., p. 277), states that it “ forms either a rounded shrub or a small shrubby tree with slender and rather weeping branchlets. The leaves are ovate and sharply toothed, of a lovely deep bronze shade when young, turning to a rich brown in Autumn before they fall.

The plants in Mrs. Farrer's garden at Ingleborough, are rounded bushes with the lower branches sweeping the ground.

They are only about 4 feet in height and 5 feet in diameter. As it is absolutely hardy and slow growing this Hornbeam seems to be an admirable plant for the Rock garden where small hardwoods of good colour are comparatively scarce."

CLEMATIS MACROPETALA. F. 559.

"Glorious Atragenoid blue climber from Ghyll of Tien Tang (Da Tung Alps). This seed, however, is mixed with a kindred yellow species."

"8,500 feet. June. A singularly beautiful plant of slender habit."

Described as one of the most charming though not the most striking or showy of the plants Farrer introduced from Kansu. It deserves a home on a wall or old tree in every garden.

(Photograph).

CLEMATIS TANGUTICA OBATUSUISCULA. F. 306.

"A handsome ramping twiner very abundant in limestone shingles of Thibetan rivers with profusion of flowers like large nodding golden Fritillaries."

Received an Award of Merit in 1913 when sent home earlier by Purdom.

CORYDALIS PURDOMII. F. 254.

"Seeds very doubtful. Do not distribute. Plants you already have and I am sending more. It is a first-class thing. Deliciously fragrant."

"Lives only in the top-most scree of the great mountains, huddling close with fat and lovely leafage of glaucous-blue, emerging from which unfold large heads of very large flowers of pure white, but lipped and helmed with sky-blue. It smells most deliciously of Lily-of-the-Valley."

The English Rock Garden.

Not in cultivation.

COTONEASTER DAMMERI VAR. RADICANS. F. 148.

"A valuable plant perfectly prostrate, forming carpets many yards wide of rather large glossy and willow-like foliage, amid which nestle gleaming red holly-berries. It looks evergreen, and I have only seen it in one limestone gorge covering the ground, in silt and scree and rooting as it goes."

"It should prove a prize of most special preciousness whether for its own beauty, sheeting a slope, or as a covert for delicate daffodil and crocus."

The English Rock Garden.

In cultivation, but rare.

CYPREPEDIUM FARRERI. F. 155.

“ Probably *C. luteum*. A most noble and precious copy of *C. hirsutum* (*spectabile*), but with solitary sulphur flowers, and a staminode that either does or does not turn of a solid chocolate brown. Abundant in *open* slopes of Alpine woodland, in loam, leaf-mould or turfy peat at about 8—9,000, beginning about the top-most limits of the big red species, with which it is first found.”

Not in cultivation.

DAPHNE TANGUTICA. F. 271.

“ A low, dense and very attractive tight bush, about 12 inches high and twice as much across. Flower unknown. Leaf very dark and glossy. Dotted in *open turf* on the slopes 9—10,000 feet. in deep calcareous loam or vegetable soil.”

“ *Very sweet, flowers typically or frequently ivory-white. Scarlet fruit in late August.*”

Akin to *D. retusa*. Plants are in cultivation, both at Ingleborough and at White Craggs, Ambleside, where the bushes have attained a height of 2 feet. Flowering in April the plants do not set fruit in this country.

(Photograph).

DELPHINIUM PYLZOWI. F. 570 and F. 710.

“ Most lovely and important. Cloudy dense masses 8 inches high of huge violet flowers. High Alpine, universal. Particularly abundant in earthy screes, and at the loose stoney edges of the path with *Meconopsis Pratii*.”

Note made in 1917. “ Well up and doing well.”

“ *General at Alpine and high Alpine elevations on the Da-Tung, August 10—15,000. It extends Southward to the Alps of Kweite, always preferring open earth-pans. A perfectly glorious sight on the E. and W. faces of Wolvesden Pass, where its dense violet clouds especially at the path edges are interspersed with clear azure spires of Meconopsis Pratii, and are clearly visible from far away.*”

(Photograph).

Was in cultivation only for a short time.

FARRERIA PRETIOSA (Novum genus). F. 19a.

Sent home as “ *Purdomia aurea*.”

“ An un-named small Daphnoid shrub of very great charm, exactly like a golden *D. cneorum*. Abundant in all open sub-alpine and Alpine places and soils in S. Kansu and up the Border. Be very careful to avoid root disturbance.”

Never in cultivation.

GENTIANA FARRERI. F. 217 and F. 332.

“ *Closely akin to F. 217, but utterly different in capsule. Same situations.*”

“ So did I transport the living clumps ; with what awe and attendance you may judge. And the Trans-Siberian journey killed them all. My disappointment cut so deep that I put it behind me, and resolutely banished the memory of that Gentian from my heart. Months passed, and the War submerged me in work, and London engulfed me, and the garden ceased to exist, except as a remote memory. But in August of that year (1916) a little package reached me from the Botanic Garden in Edinburgh. Would I give the history of the enclosed Gentian ? I tore open the box, and there, large and lovely and luminous as ever, was the lost Da-Tung Gentian, which I had dismissed all hope of ever seeing again.

Do you ask how the miracle was wrought ? I hope you do, for I intend to tell you. Can you remember how in 1914, over the high lawns of Thundercrown and the Ardjeri Alps, I collected the elusive seed of *Gentiana hexaphylla*—on Thundercrown, with my own hands, and vicariously, by the servants, on the fells of Ardjeri ? And do you also remember that some of the packets brought down by the servants seemed to show a different form, to be larger and thicker and darker in the pod than any of *G. hexaphylla*'s ? So different, indeed, did they seem to me that I ultimately sent them, as a precautionary measure, under different numbers, as F. 315a, and F. 473. And these germs it was that in due course revealed the despaired of *G. Farreri* to the amazed eyes of Edinburgh. On so frail a thread, and across so complete an intervening gulf of gloom, was accomplished the introduction to our gardens of so preeminent a plant. In any Comtist calendar, that reckons only the really important things for human happiness (rather than the mere deaths of Sovereigns, and passing of Bills that make no difference, and conclusions of peaces made of pie crust), large and red will be the letters that mark the August day which first revealed my *Gentiana* to cultivation.”

Rainbow Bridge.

Now offered in every Alpine nurseryman's catalogue, and has established itself as a living memorial to its discoverer. *G. Farreri* is capricious, however, and for this reason the less showy, but easy going *G. sino-ornata* has somewhat usurped the popularity of Farrer's plant. *Gentiana Macaulayi*, Well's variety, a cross between the two plants, with the ease of *G. sino-ornata* and the beauty of *G. Farreri*, will do much to compensate those who find difficulty in growing Farrer's Gentian.

(Photograph).

GENTIANA HEXAPHYLLA. F. 217.

“ One of the most beautiful I know. Spreading cushions of innumerable fine-leaved stems of 4 inches, ending each in a long trumpet flower of clear pale blue. Abundant in the highest turf of the Thibetan Alps 12-13,000. Late Summer.”

In cultivation, but has never become plentiful except in a few Northern gardens.

GENTIANA KURROO VAR. BREVIDENS. F. 303.

“ A magnificent half-prostrate species close to *G. Kurroo*, but rather smaller in all parts, with much more numerous flowers of dark sapphire blue. Abundant in ordinary dry loose soil (situations of *G. cruciata*) in banks and highway sides, and road-edging lawns of fine turf at one point of the Thibetan border. 8,000 feet.”

Not in cultivation from Farrer's seed.

GERANIUM NEPULIGERUM. F. 201. *Sp. nova.*

(Until recently invariably known under the name of *G. Farreri*.)

“ A lovely plant akin to *G. argenteum* in style and beauty, ramifying in the topmost red-shale or limestone scree of the Thibetan Alps at 13,000 feet. Only two good seeds could be procured, but it is hoped that rhizomes may follow.”

2nd Sending.—“ *Very important.* (Two seeds sent last year). Highest earthy shingles, 12—14,000. First introduction into cultivation and a rare little beauty.”

3rd Sending.—“ A very beautiful little plant, exactly in the way of a small large flowered, un-silvered *G. argenteum* of palest pink running about in only the highest Thibetan shingle-slopes of limestone or red-shale at 13—14,000.”

“ No other in the race gives the same picture of this Thibetan treasure, turning the gaunt shingles at twelve thousand feet to a crowded dance of its faintly flushing blossoms, silvery in the cold pale air that day I saw it, and dense upon the concise and comely clumps.”

Eaves of the World.

Has received the R.H.S. Award of Merit. Excellent for a special corner of the rock garden or scree.

ISOPYRUM GRANDIFLORUM. F. 96.

(Now known as *PARAQUILEGIA GRANDIFLORA*).

“ Sow shallow six to a pot round the edge so as to avoid root disturbance in removal. Also sow some in the cooler moist and mossy crannies of the Cliff. It is *always* a saxatile plant, and as I hope to get more this lot need not be distributed.”

“ *Universal in the sheer cliffs of the limestone Alps 8,500—12,000. June. White rather than blue as reported.*”

Three lots of seed were sent in 1914, but in the following year under the same name was sent other seed of a plant subsequently referred to under number F. 504 as :—

ISOPYRUM FARRERI.

“ One of the loveliest things I have ever seen in my life. Cool shaded crevices of hard limestone cliffs only. Raise with the utmost care, sowing seeds individually round the edges of 3-inch pots, slightly covered with rich fine soil ; and then put straight out into shaded cool rock crevices as soon as possible, sedulously avoiding breaking up the roots. (Note—Get a number, when up, inserted in the cool mossy or damp crannies on the further extension of the Cliff, which is *the* absolute home for it. But I hope to be home to do it myself.)”

“ *Rock crevices of the Batung region. Lime or granite, usually cool and shady except at great altitudes 9—14,000. Perhaps the loveliest of all rock plants. June—July.*”

“ An *Isopyrum*—but what an *Isopyrum*. All the previous season I had been moving under limestone cliffs, hung with wide grey maidenhair cushions of *I. grandiflorum*, besprent with big golden-hearted wood anemonies of white or palest skim-milk blue. And all that season, beautiful as *I. grandiflorum* certainly was, I kept wondering over the shouts of ecstasy that it had aroused in previous collectors. It seemed a lovely thing enough, but not really anything to lie awake at night about. And now there turned up unbeknownst in Mafu's anthropoid fist, an *Isopyrum* that simply sent *grandiflorum* supperless to bed, with foliage larger and more voluminous, like a much handsomer sea-blue maidenhair, from out of which came dancing great silken blossoms of sheeny lavender purple, like some glorified *Anemone nemerosa Allenii*, with a fluff of golden stamens at their heart, and five orange-coloured nectaries set round. If that other pretty thing, anæmic and pale, was indeed *I. grandiflorum*, what then was this full-blooded noble beauty of twice the size ? And how could any other *Isopyrum* be called “ *grandiflorum* ” with this one in existence ?

Throughout the season I doubted if I might not have misplaced the names, especially as I remembered how Mr. Elwes had told me of a lovely purple *Isopyrum* farther North in the Altai : indeed it was not till the first *Eaves of the World* was passing its final proofs for publication that at last in 1917, I learned that the Da-Tung *Isopyrum* was not, as I had modestly called it *Isopyrum grandiflorum*, but a brand new species, in whose beauty my own mortal name was to be immortalized. For indeed, *I. Farreri* leaves *I. grandiflorum* away out of sight—an introduction so important, so vigorous, hearty and superb, that in itself it would have been worth the whole year's expedition.”

Rainbow Bridge.

I. grandiflorum is in cultivation, and produces nodding white flowers. Farrer's plant is growing in Mr. Bulley's garden at Neston ; its lavender blue flowers are held almost erect in contrast to the pendant cups of the type form.

(Photograph).

LEONTOPODIUM HAPLOPHYILLOIDES. F. 740.

(Sent home as *L. aloysiodorum*.)

“ Very valuable. A suffrutescent simple-stemmed wiry grey

bush of 6—8 inches, bearing silver stars and deliciously lemon-scented all over. Abundant in the Da-Tung on open banks and river shingles. 9—10,000 feet.”

In cultivation, quaint and interesting. Last year we came across plants from Farrer’s original stock growing in beds of river sand in Mrs. Saunder’s charming garden at Wennington, near Ingleborough.

LILIUM CENTIFOLIUM. F. 316.

“ Two cultivated bulbs seen near Siku in different places and in gardens of rich loess loam, sent up enormous spikes of white trumpets. I sent seed on the chance of this turning out, perhaps, a stronger variety of *L. longiflorum*, which the species probably is though never examined at close quarters.”

Growing nine feet high, with flowers twice the size of *Lilium regale* this is one of the finest species in cultivation. At Ingleborough, in the kitchen garden, there is a fine border of this lily labelled *L. Kansuense*. It received a First Class Certificate as *L. Brownii Kansuense*.

LILIUM DUCHARTREI VAR. FARRERI. F. 183.

“ A very pretty white Martagon from steep copsy banks, especially above rivers in Thibet in shingly soil. A few bulbs in soil in a box.”

In cultivation. Has received an Award of Merit.

MECONOPSIS LEPIDA. (Sent home as *M. eucharis*), sp. nova.
F. 123.

“ A most lovely little biennial akin to *M. Delavayi*. Rock ledges and edges of banks on limestone cliffs at 12,000. All the seed that Summer and hail has left. Distribute but with intense economy. It confines itself to the cooler aspects.”

“ *Dainty texture of delicate silken lavender purple.*”

“ Has only been seen on the cooler slopes and rock ledges of the high limestones on Thundercrown from 12—13,000. It was in splendour on June 20th, practically all the seed was gone from the elongate narrow glabrous or very sparsely haired capsules by August 27th.”

This species has the buff anthers and deep blue petals of the otherwise very different *M. psilonomma*. Like that fine plant it is unfortunately biennial and monocarpic. (Photograph).

Not in cultivation.

MECONOPSIS PRATTII. F. 136. The Celestial Poppy.

(First sent home as *M. rudis*, and later corrected).

“ The superb azure blue pyramid poppy belongs only to the highest moraines, shingles and cliffs, 10—14,000. Sow in pans of very light stony stuff kept cool and moist. Sow some also broadcast in the moraines and some in the chinks of the Cliffs. Biennial.”

2nd Sending.—“ The Da-Tung form is much more addicted to open grass slopes than that of the Min S'an. Watch for other differences. First year leaves are often amazingly round.”

“ *Very abundant in the Da-Tung ranges, 10—15,000. July, August. Albino W. side of Wolvesden pass. Three lovely rose-coloured forms on the cliffs of Primula Farreri along the ridge; a very aberrant-podded form in a gully below the Lac Clair.*”

“ It is born and made for the moraine and there should be sown again and again.” (*The English Rock Garden.*)

Mr. Cox states in his book *The Plant Introductions of Reginald Farrer* “ F. 136 is in cultivation of a slightly larger form than usual, and of a peculiar and attractive slaty-blue, very soft and charming when seen in the mass. Oddly enough this colour breeds true from seeds. It is well worth growing for the uncommon shade of the flowers.”

MECONOPSIS PSILONOMMA. sp. nova. F. 255.

“ A magnificent one-flowered biennial in the group of *M. Delavayi* from the high Alpine turf on one Thibetan mountain only at 11—12,000 feet.”

“ *Only on one hillside above Ardjeri, in the grass beginning at the upper limit of M. punicea at 12,000 feet and sharing the topmost crest at 13—14,000 with M. quintuplinervia.*

Primulina group akin to M. Delavayi but larger. The best specimens were stolen and these are not good enough.”

Note made in 1917. “ Thriving in cultivation.”

The anthers in this species are a very pale buff, unlike those of any other member of the *Primulinae* group except *M. lepida*.

No longer in cultivation.

MECONOPSIS PUNICEA. F. 175.

“ *Valleys opposite Choni, beginning in scant coppice at 10,000 and ascending to 11,500 in the open grass. A glorious sight in August. The capsule usually hairy is occasionally glabrous.*”

"At all times and in all places the Blood Poppy calculates successfully on taking your breath away, but never does it do so more triumphantly than when you see its huge flopping flags of vermillion hovering in the sunlit patches of a copse; of all its race it is perhaps the most overwhelming. . . . Never once among all its millions could I detect the least inconstancy of colour, though needless to say I quested long and far in search of the pure albino, which must assuredly be one of the loveliest flowers on earth."

On the Eaves of the World.

Note made in 1917.—"Thriving freely but blooms uncertainly with a tiresome habit of trying to do so in mid-winter."

The plant, which is monocarpic, and seldom sets seed here, is no longer in cultivation as the result of this expedition. The species is interesting as illustrating one of the few families where flowers of all the three primary colours are represented. Farrer states that in England "those dim flags of scarlet flop, and in the Thibetan Alps they blaze and flap." To see it, however, is to realise what a good flower is our own red poppy of the cornfields

MECONOPSIS QUINTUPLINERVIA. F. 118. ("The Harebell Poppy.")

"This has its very centre and zenith on the Da Tung Alps from 10,000 to 14,000 in alp or open scrub. An unparalleled glory over the high downs on July 8th, when its flowers covered the face of the fell. Albinæ (2) and turquoise varieties occur, but the species is remarkably stable."

2nd Sending, 1915. "The special glory of the Da Tung Alps, and the most delicately lovely of all its race. Keep cool in moist rich spongy soil."

"To cherish or even to purchase a plant called *Meconopsis quintuplinervia* is as impossible as to love a woman called Georgiana; mitigating substitutes have inevitably to be invented. So, as the Harebell Poppy, may my treasure long enrich our gardens, luxuriant and enduring in moist rich ground, and inimitably lovely in the well-bred grace of its habit, as well as in the serene and tranquil loveliness of its lavender bells. . . .

Not for her the crude splendour of the crimped Lampshade Poppy, not the flaunting scarlets of the Blood Poppy. From a clump of soft and narrow pointed leaves of greyish tone, with their hairy coat, springs up the delicate and swanlike grace of the stems, each one of which swings out a solitary hanging bell of dainty loveliest lavender blue, that only on the sunniest of days swells open to a shallow pendent pattern."

On the Eaves of the World.

"From a crest which I call Crest Royal, we dropped over on the other side into a wide grassy hollow about three or four miles across. This dip is all moorland turf, and in early August, as far as you can see in every direction, it is one shimmering radiance with the pale blue bells of the Harebell Poppy, soft lavender blue. And they make a picture which, though I have seen many beautiful pictures in Alpine regions, cannot, I think, be beaten by anything I have ever seen anywhere in the world. When I saw them in early August in that region there was nothing that one could say before such beauty, so

incomprehensive and inexpressible. I had Purdom with me, and we were both perfectly quiet in the face of such a spectacle. I wondered to myself what he was feeling, or how at last he would try to put into words the pain of a pleasure so intense. Then after the silence had grown too heavy, he turned to me and said in a half-whisper, "Doesn't it make your guts ache?" It was exactly right; no other words could have nailed the truth so absolutely."

The Geographical Journal.

Appropriately in no garden does the Harebell Poppy grow more luxuriantly in large clumps than in Farrer's Old Rock Garden, and in the beds that surround his memorial under the shadow of Ingleborough.

(Photograph).

MECONOPSIS RACEMOSA. F. 691.

"*Serchim Alps and Kweite.* Often passing back into *Meconopsis horridula*. Anthers golden-orange, flowers of darker blue than *M. Prattii*. I never saw any sign of this in the region round Chebson whence the original specimen is said to have been collected. In the Da-Tung, *M. Prattii* holds the whole field, and I believe *M. racemosa* occurs only in the ranges S. and W."

The original specimen was collected by Przewalski and figured by Maximowicz, in 1876. *Meconopsis racemosa* is still botanically buried in a mass of uncertainties with *M. horridula*, and those who wish to attempt to distinguish the two from *M. Prattii* and *M. rudis* are referred to the Kew Bulletin, No. 4, of 1915.

(Photograph).

OMPHALOGRAMMA ENGLERI. F. 74.

Sent home as *Primula* "Viola-grandis."

First Sending.—"Another theft of the hail (and anyhow it forms very few capsules). So I should advise you, unless you find seed enough, not to distribute it yet, except to the R.H.S., especially as it is a thing so special and difficult-seeming. It is glorious (see photo in Chronicle), but always rare and never seen except on a few N. and N.W. exposures, or on the darker side of deep and sunless limestone gorges, where it waxes fat on the underside of soil-ledges, or in crevices in rich clammy red loam or black vegetable mould, seeming to have no need of water at the root (though damp pervades it) or any particular fancy about soil. At its upper limit (12,000) it even grows in the springy moorland turf of the ledges amid tiny dwarf Rhodos not 4 inches high. I need not advise you to treasure it *most precious*."

Second Sending.—"A glorious species of the *Omphalogramma* group with huge solitary Pinguicula-flowers on scapes of 4—5 inches, followed by the full expansion of great violet-shaped

flannelly dark-green leaves. Local on shady and Westerly and Northerly slopes, canons or banks, on the underside of the ledges, at 9—10,000 feet, in very rich woodland mould, red loam, peat or heavy greasy soil, always moist and cool, and never facing daylight. Only once have I seen it really abundant, on one high breast facing N.—N.W., amongst 3-inch Rhodos: in springy peat. It is a new species in its group, and the most Northerly by far, standing nearest to *P. Delavayi*, but looking as if it might have a better constitution under *very* special treatment along the lines indicated (Places on our Cliff should suit it). Not a free seeder, but free in flower.”

(Photograph).

In cultivation—but a “mimp.”

POTENTILLA FRUTICOSA VAR. FARRERI. F. 188.

(Sent as *Potentilla Veitchii*—sp.).

“This seed was got from a bank where the flowers were of every shade from snow to gold. The shrub is very abundant all up the Border in grassy glades from 8—10,000 or higher. This seed should give a rich mixture of colours. (Do not distribute).”

2nd *Sending*.—“The *golden* Thibetan fruticosa to be glorious in great wide-spread bushy jungles in open glades and along the sunny fringes of woodland.”

“Usually white about Siku, usually yellow at 9,000 feet in Thibet, and white higher up with every intermediate colour.”

The yellow form is one of the best known of Farrer’s introductions, and has received the R.H.S. Award of Merit.

PRIMULA ÆRINANTHA. Purdom. F. 273. Sp. nova.

“A dainty little plant about 12 inches in spike, with pale blue flowers and delicious scent, from light spongy soil on moss-banks of limestone gully sides, with Pines on either hand a little higher up. Rare and very limited in distribution (12,000 feet).”

“Flowers blue and deliciously sweet.”

Not in cultivation.

PRIMULA ALSOPHILA. F. 178. Sp. nova.

“Our little Lady of the Grove.”

“A particularly attractive small *running* woodland species allied to *P. geraniifolia* (probably) but quite distinct, and very graceful with light scapes of 3—4 inches. Each with a few large pink flowers. Deep mossy depths of highest Thibetan forests. 10—11,000.”....

Note made in 1917. “Symbiotic, but one or two sad little seedlings have appeared.”

Not in cultivation.

PRIMULA CITRINA. F. 133. (Sent home as *P. flava*).

“ This lovely plant is *never* seen in sunlight, or open to rain, but dwells in overchanging crevices and shallow grottoes of great limestone cliffs, where it grows fat in light powdery calcareous silt that accumulates in such places. It appears to have a fine constitution and to germinate well. 9—13,000 feet, growing small and tight at these latter elevations in cool peaty crevices.”

Note made in 1917. “ Very prosperous in cultivation so far. Bloomed at Edinburgh where they say its flower hardly comes up to the promise of its foliage.”

PRIMULA CONSPERSA. Purdom. F. 187.

“ Like a very tall, many-tiered *P. farinosa* ; for exactly the same treatment. It is biennial or very nearly.”

Note made in 1917. “ Grows so very large in cultivation, as no longer to be distinguished from *P. gemmifera* unless by its tiers of flowers.”

Not in cultivation.

PRIMULA FARRERIANA. Sp. nova. F. 560.

“ A very superb great Nivalis, confined to deep *shady* crevices of limestone precipices at great elevations, 14—15,000. The seed of these high Nivalids is very capricious, and requires the utmost care to raise. Sow on the surface and barely cover to keep the seeds in place.”

“ *Singularly lovely and fragrant, overweighted by its leaves. Stock thick as a leek's.*”

Not in cultivation.

(Photograph.)

“ The collector's dream is to have some illustrious plant to bear his name immortal through the gardens of future generations, long after he himself shall have become dust of their paths. Mere beauty will not do it ; for the plant may fail and fade in cultivation, and his name be no more known, except to the learned, as attached to a dead dry sliver on the sheets of a herbarium. To become vividly immortal in the Valhalla of gardeners, one must own a species as vigorous as it is glorious, a thing capable of becoming, and remaining, a household word among English enthusiasts, such a constant friend, for example, as *Gentiana gentianella* or *Primula auricula*. And how few of our Chinese importations will probably do this. Already Professor Balfour refused me several of my Primulas, as being, despite their loveliness, of a temper so tricky as evidently not to be long for this world in English gardens, and therefore not fitted permanently to bear aloft my name in them. Only reluctantly, in fact, had he consented to give me *P. Farreriana* on my urgent plea that a Primula of my own I must certainly have, and that a lovelier one there could not be, and that no more were likely to be got in my season anyhow, so this one I must certainly have, permanency or no permanency.”

Rainbow Bridge.

PRIMULA GEMMIFERA. F. 168.

"A lovely plant of the high earth slopes and shingle banks. 12—13,000; occasionally seeding down into the river shingles. It is akin to *P. siberica*, but smaller, prettier and neater; farinose and dentate-leaved. Do not distribute yet. The seed is premature and poor. I hope more and better may follow."

2nd Sending.—(as *P. acclamata*. F. 562).

"Last year's F. 168 in another local form but of the same needs and habit."

3rd Sending.—(as *Primula acclamata simia*. F. 563).

"A very curious descended form of the type from the lower river shingles."

"Akin to *P. siberica* but farinose in stems and pedicels. Tube yellow. Sweetly scented."

In cultivation.

This plant, shown by Messrs. W. E. Th. Ingwersen, received the Society's Certificate of Merit, in June, 1931.

PRIMULA HYLOPHILA. F. 38. Sp. nova.

"The Wood Nymph."

"The beautiful woodland species already sent in seed in the very first sample of all. Cool rich soil in shade—exactly as for a choice primrose."

"Habit and habits of *P. acaulis*; lavender rose flowers on short stout scape. Loves rich woodland soil and rotten tree trunks."

PRIMULA KIALENSIS. F. 39. (Sent home as *P. scopulorum*).

"The Rock Nymph."

Field Note by Purdom :—"From moss wads on rocks (7,000 ft.). In gullies leading to Alps, rather shady where it grew best. On dry rocks it seemed to grow smaller."

Note made in 1917.—"Very abundant and thriving and lovely. One of our greatest introductions."

In cultivation for a short time.

PRIMULA MAXIMOWICZII. F. 191.

"Soil, sites, needs and treatment exactly as for *P. Purdomii* with which it grows."

Neither of the above species is recorded in Farrer's Record of Specimens, as neither was seen in flower during the expedition. Seed of *Primula Purdomii*, was sent with the note "From another locality, watch for varieties, and send a pinch to Prof. Balfour." In the Appendix to *The English Rock Garden*, it is referred to as

“ The unsurpassable and worthily named *P. Purdomii*, the Queen of the Nivalis group.” It was first discovered by Purdom in 1911 and shown at the Primula Conference in 1913.

Neither plant is in cultivation from seed sent home by Farrer.

PRIMULA OPTATA. F. 122. Sp. nova. Sent home as *P. præclara*.

“ The Oread.”

“ It is a very high Alpine, only seen quite by itself in quite bare shingle slopes, screes and earth-pans of the limestone from 12—13,000 feet. Not apparently with any need for water, and, though a Nivalis in general habit, yet with a far healthier mass of roots straight from the crown, without any neck. Its pod, too, is that of *P. Maximowiczii*, and it is a most lovely treasure.”

“ *Lovely lavender-blue, scented of mice and cupboards.*”

Note made in 1917. “ Hitherto a trifle slow and reluctant and miffy at home.”

PRIMULA REGINELLA. F. 561. Sp. nova.

“ Very fine turf at great elevations 14—15,000. A real jewel, tiny and exquisite. Prick out the young seedlings into finest turf and keep cool.”

“ *In the finest turf only, and at the edge of peat pans. July.*”

Farrer at first thought this to be *Primula pumilio* discovered by Przewalsky in the Da-Tung. “ until I looked closer. It was very odd, there was no cushion, there were no heads of blossom, the blossoms themselves not numerous and wee ; on the contrary they were big for the tiny plant ; they were carried on footstalks of an inch or two from the scape so close to the ground that it looked as if each gay little, round-faced gold-eyed brightness was springing solitary on a thread-fine stem of its own, and, finally, the plant did not grow in cushions, but in quite small tufts of two or three crowns at the most.”

Rainbow Bridge.

The plant was sent home under the name of *P. reginella* “ not only in tribute to its own royal but tiny charm, but also to give an *arrière pensée* of its inventor’s Christian name.”

(Photograph.)

PRIMULA RIPARIA. F. 33. “ The Bankside Primula.”

“ *A form or microform of Primula obconica. Slender, dwarf and pretty. Three clumps on a grassy bank above Chago, May 6th, 1914, 6—6,500. A coppice bank fairly thick with it below Chago. May 8th.*”

PRIMULA RUPESTRIS. F. 734. Close to *P. sinensis*.

"This form *may* be hardy, occurring so much further North than the type, in very hard limestone crevices of dry cliffs in the Da-Ba-San. Yet it is but a soft creature, and overhead or ground moisture will have to be rigidly avoided."

"Fruit only. Rock crevices, limestone; in the Da-Ba-San, N. Szechwan, between Chow-Tien, Ming Jang Jo and Kwang Yuen. A most notable record."

PRIMULA SATANIENSIS. F. 61 and F. 197. Sp. nova.

(Sent home as *P. Silvia*).

First Sending.—"An especially fine form of an especially beautiful woodland sp., akin to *P. lichiangensis*, but with more nodding, more saucer-shaped flowers suggesting a glorified *P. viscosa*. Border Alps in one small district only."

Second sending. "A large woodland species closely allied to *P. lichiangensis* from mossy rocks, glades and limestone grottoes in the Alpine forest zone of Thibet. I send it under the No. 8 description, but as this particular batch hails from another locality—Row Ba Temple, it is just conceivable that the flower may reveal it as a variety."

Field Note by Purdom.—"Alpine gulley 7,000 feet. They are to be found in and about exposed rocks, but best grown in rather shady spots on verge of woods in gullies leading to high Alps. It probably will be a free grower."

Not in cultivation.

PRIMULA SERTULUM. F. 40.

(Wrongly sent home as *P. Loczii*.)

Field Note in Purdom's handwriting:—"Abundant in Alpine moorland (6,500 feet), among scant scrub under hedge banks on open fell, and even spasmodically in wood. Should say an easy grower."

"Wood edges, grassy downs and mossy sides of little willowed hillocks all over the ridge between Satanee to Ga-hoba. A little habited farinose *P. farinosa*."

PRIMULA SIKUENSIS. F. 87. Sp. nova.

(Sent home as *P. lichiangensis*).

"I send a little of this as it is now so common in cultivation, while here though frequent it is very sporadic at the edges of cliffs flopping down under the shelter of bushes. Its chief interest is that here it is so very far North of its name place, yet, I think, the same species."

Not in cultivation.

PRIMULA STENOCALYX. F. 503.

(Also sent as *P. cognata* F. 193). "Primula Clusterbeauty."

"Very lovely and abundant all over the Da-Tung region even in the hot dry scrub and open banks of stone on loam. The high Alpine form (F. 502) is heavily powdered. It should germinate and thrive as readily as the type in any reasonable conditions. Both forms are of singular beauty."

"Hitherto in England, I am sorry to say Clusterbeauty cannot stand corn. She has, in fact, a tendency, like Jeshurun to wax fat and kick the bucket. Rich soil in summer disposes her to grow so lax and luxuriant as not to be able to stand our Winter wet. Out of very many plants in the open but very few have survived with me, and I already see that starvation and fullest sunshine alone will probable acclimatize Clusterbeauty, in the paler conditions of our cooler, moister country."

Rainbow Bridge.

PRIMULA TANGUTICA. F. 194.

"Raise and then distribute it all. It is perfectly frightful, like a black and diminished *P. Maximowiczii*."

"*Primula tangutica* from its cabbagey crowns was unfolding on its lanky stems, its tiers of miserable squinny chocolate-coloured stars, that make it, as a rule, so really hideous as to bring shame on the august name it bears."

Rainbow Bridge.

PRIMULA URTICIFOLIA. F. 531. "The Pretty Primula."

"Sow in fine rich soil and keep seduously moist, cool and shaded. Another charmer only seen in deep crevices of dampish limestone rocks."

"A little beauty suggesting *minima* × *bella*. In the coombes above *Wolvesden pass*. It grows freely in earthy slopes under the cliffs at 13—14,000 feet. Seed early September."

(Photograph).

PRIMULA WOODWARDII. F. 116.

(Sent home as *P. imperator*).

"A superb plant of the *Nivalis* group with typical long woody neck and scant fat white roots showing the *Nivalis* impatience of bad drainage and wet Winter. It grows only as isolated specimens in the coarsest Alpine turf, (which lies dead over it like a thatch in Winter as with *P. Purdomii* and *P. Maximowiczii*) on slopes and steep hillsides from 9—12,000 feet. Always rather rare, but found as often amid light scrub as in the Alpine lawn above. Shown by Veitch at the Primula Conference under the false name *Primula purpurea*. Collected W. Purdom, 1911."

Sent also in 1915. "From a new district; the form is different, redder in tone and often powdered."

PYRUS BACCATA VAR. F. 82.

A small neat tree, white-flowered in the way of P. spectabilis, with hard red fruits like little cherries.

This tree grows in Mr. Hough's garden at Clappersgate, and flowering in early June, makes a striking background.

(Photograph).

SEMI-AQUILEGIA ECALCARATA. F. 280.

"An ugly little quaint maroonish flower. Abundant in Alpine woods and beck sides."

A small chocolate-coloured columbine. In cultivation.

STELLERA CHAMÆJASME. F. 93.

"It springs in a mass of glaucous-leaved shoots to a height of 8—12 inches, forming a compact dome of growth and blossom, each undivided stem ending in June and July in a compact dome of fragrant pearl-white Daphnes with a centre of varnished ruby-red buds."

"Pink and very fragrant. Hot grassy lower flanks of Thundercrown 7—8,000 feet extending abundantly to the lower Alpine lawns of the Min S'an."

Isolated plants were in cultivation for some ten years, but no seed was set, and it was found impossible to increase vegetatively.

Award of Merit, R.H.S.

(Photograph).

TROLLIUS FARRERI. F. 519, F. 117, F. 137.

(Sent home as *Trollius pumilus perfectissimus*).

"A bright gay little thing, probably akin to, or a form of *T. pumilus*. About 6 inches high with wide flowers. Very general all over the high Alpine lawns. Be sure to keep the seed pans constantly moist, and, as the race is uncertain in germination, it would be well to sow a certain quantity straight out, in some persistently cool moist place grassy or open."

"Very abundant and beautiful in the lawns of the Da Tung Alps, especially about 10—11,000. June. A pair of lovely albinæ were found on a cliff in Wolvesden beside the Buddha's fresco by the Holy Well."

(Photograph).

VIBURNUM FRAGRANS. F. 13.

"A most glorious shrub attaining 8 feet in height in any light loam, with, in spring, profuse thyrses of pearl-pink flowers, like lilac, deliciously smelling of heliotrope, followed by bunches of

scarlet berries in autumn. A most especial treasure, rare as a wild plant (only in one small strip of country, amid light coppice, and in small bays beside Alpine streams ; 4,000—6,000 feet), but generally cultivated in Kansu for its loveliness and fragrance. *Slow and uncertain of germination* unless treated as follows :—Sow $\frac{1}{2}$ inch deep in loam, leaf-mould and sand (equal parts) then when cold weather comes put out the pans and get them heaped with snow for as long as possible, then bring into gentle heat and germination will be prompt and general.”

“ *In low coppice and grassy bays beside the hill-becks between Shi-hor and Shi-ja-chuang (first stage out of Shi-hora) on a low pass about 6,000. Generally cultivated for its loveliness and scent in all temple and palace yards of Kansu, and even in Peking where it was restricted to the Imperial grounds.*”

“ April 16th (1914), is an important date in botanical history as marking the first discovery of *Viburnum fragrans* growing as a wild plant. Its place of origin had long been in doubt, though all over China it is probably the best beloved and most universal of garden plants ; so there was real satisfaction in having traced it to its home in the wild hills immediately to the South of Shi-hor.”

On the Eaves of the World.

In cultivation and considered one of Farrer’s best introductions, but the plant does not generally set fruit in England. Both the type and albino *Viburnum fragrans candidissimum* (F. 13a) were sent home. There are two forms of the plant. Farrer’s flowers freely and produces many suckers from the roots.

* * * * *

“ Wolvesdon House, I feel, though abandoned again for evermore to mules and muleteers, remains perpetually my property Dear little house, how dull you sometime were ; how desirable you always are. Sitting up there, far away, lost and lone in your deep grove of the great Thibetan Alps. Those who may wish, (in days I hope still distant) to commune with my ghost must take a long journey, to where it will be found cheeping and chittering wanly round the mud-plastered walls of Wolvesden, rather than on the Schneeberg or the Tombia or even Moncenisio.”

Reginald Farrer

SOME OTHER FARRER PLANTS

At the age of 14 Farrer made his debut by publishing in the *Journal of Botany*, of 1894, a note on the occurrence of *Arenaria gothica* on Ingleborough. During the following 26 years he was to introduce valuable plants, some of which appear in every Alpine catalogue to-day. The chapter on English Alpine plants in his book, *My Rock Garden*, has, in all probability, done more to create interest in rock gardening and plants of the hills than any other dozen pages ever written, and his love of the wild plants which inhabit his corner of Yorkshire led him to introduce many into cultivation through his Craven Nursery.

In one of his old Catalogues we find included *Actæa spicata*, "the rare Baneberry of Ingleborough," *Arenaria gothica*, "from Ingleborough, one of our rarest plants," *Arenaria verna*, "a charming little rare native," *Cochlearia alpina*, "the scurvy-grass of Ingleborough," *Dryas octopetala minor*, "a small form from the Craven Highlands, one of the very best of rock shrubs," *Geranium Lancastriense*, "a most lovely flat-growing plant from Walney," *Geranium phæum*, "the English dusky Cranesbill," *Potentilla rupestris*, "tallish, snowey sprays: a very rare native," *Potentilla verna*, "our own golden Alpine," *Saxifraga Farreri*, "a natural hybrid from Ingleborough," *Viola lutea*, "our native yellow mountain pansy," and *Primula farinosa alba*.

Farrer's note in one of his books on this last plant is of peculiar interest, as at the Primula Conference held at Chelsea in 1927, not a single specimen of this plant entirely free from any tinge of colour was displayed, and we doubt whether any true albino form is in cultivation to-day. In 1907, Farrer wrote: "Parkinson quotes also the albino form, and catalogues have occasionally offered it to me at high prices. But the so-called Albinæ always turned out to have the very faintest possible tinge of lilac, so that after many years of disillusionment, I was inclined to give up *Primula farinosa alba* as a partial and inconstant variation. My views, however, were finally dissipated two years ago, when Mistress Mary Saunders, 'a worthy gentlewoman and a great lover of these delights, who dwelleth at Wennington, nigh unto Hornby Castle, in these parts' discovered untold quantities of *Primula farinosa alba* in one field,