

The BEGONIAN

Devoted to the Sheltered Garden

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The BEGONIAN

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How Do You Like Them?

By YOUR EDITOR

● Several new features are being presented to you—our Begonians—this month. We hope to keep them flourishing as we go forward. The names and addresses of new members of the previous month will be listed facing the Calendar page. This will help everyone to become better acquainted with everyone else, but more in particular it will help the Secretaries and the Membership chairman of each Branch to bring closer together the members in the vicinity, as well as to keep a record of "Who's Who" in the Branch.

Mr. Ferd Neels, past President, is not only in charge of the Question and Answer department, but beginning with this

month he is telling us what is uppermost to be done in our shade gardens for the month. The old timers need little help but the newcomers and the youngsters in the pursuit of shade gardening success will certainly welcome this courtesy—as we do.

Then, HAVE YOU NOTICED THAT WE ARE GIVING YOU FOUR MORE PAGES in this issue? Now there will be more room in which to endeavour to give everyone something of what he wants, more information about all phases of Begonia culture and making a really fine—possibly even an entrancing shade garden.

This is YOUR magazine, but we are on the one side of the fence YOU are on the other. Let us get really together for a still better Begonian. Take a part in it and you'll enjoy it.



The Oakland Begonia Exhibit

and photo: by A. E. NELSON
Arcadia, Calif.

• Some time last summer we heard and read about the wonderful exhibit of Begonias maintained by the Oakland Branch of the American Begonia Society in a greenhouse on the shores of Lake Merritt in Lakeside Park, Oakland, California. Of course, Southern California generally doesn't want to be outdone by any other section of the country, so when Dr. C. H. Lauder heard about it he immediately got the bright idea that the South should also have a similar exhibit. He got going strong on it and finally made arrangements for the American Begonia Society to take over one of the greenhouses in Lincoln Park in Los Angeles.

In order to develop enthusiasm for the Los Angeles exhibit, Dr. Lauder played on everybody's competitive spirit to have as good an exhibit as the one up North and raved about the wonderful set-up there (although I know he hadn't seen it). In view of this build-up, I determined if I ever got near Oakland I would drop over to Lakeside Park to see the exhibit. It was my good fortune to be up in Oakland for a couple of days before Christmas, last winter, and al-

though it was raining the day I went past the park I decided to stop, as that would be the only time I would have to see it.

Stepping into one of the lathhouses, I asked about the Begonia Society exhibit, and Mr. C. H. Congdon immediately dropped his work to show me and tell me all about the exhibit. Mr. Congdon has charge of the greenhouse so was in a position to give me complete information. I was so impressed with the set-up and exhibit that I decided to try to take some pictures even though it was rainy and cloudy. The photograph reproduced here gives a better idea of the exhibit than I could hope to with words. (There is a good description of the exhibit in the November, 1942, issue of *The Begonian* by W. W. Hoffman.)

In the first place, the setting for the greenhouse is very fine. As you enter the greenhouse you are impressed with the array of begonia plants of all descriptions and the neatness of the display. There is a moss wall at one end of the greenhouse in which potted plants are nestled. Near the entrance the Society has a table on which is a guestbook where visitors are requested to register. In looking over the signatures I find there have been visitors from near and far.

After looking over the exhibit, Mr. (Continued on page 57)

FANCY-LEAVED CALADIUMS

By HAROLD W. HART
Glendale, Calif.

YOU have very little to worry about in the way of pests in growing Fancy-Leaved Caladiums. The only thing I have ever noticed on the Caladiums I have grown has been a few plant lice or aphids. If these appear, it will usually be on the new tender growth, and they can be very easily controlled. Any good spray will do the trick, or better yet, when you first detect the aphids, spray cold water on the affected parts using enough force to wash the aphids off.

I have never had anything eat the leaves or cause any imperfection in them. It is quite a relief to grow nice specimen plants with beautiful leaves with many and various colors without having holes in them or blemished edges due to pests which seem to enjoy a feast on many of our finest shade plants. Occasionally I have noticed some plant lice in the roots. This seems to occur after feeding with blood meal. I don't know whether this plant lice does anything to the plant, but I do make an effort to get rid of them, and I have been successful in using Nicotene-Sulphate; one tablespoonfull to a gallon of water and giving a heavy watering, filling the pots to the brim, and letting it soak thoroughly into the root system. I have noticed no harmful results to the plant.

In the March issue of the Begonian, I mentioned that I feed my Caladiums every fifteen days with a good commercial fertilizer and if this is not obtainable, a good cow manure will give good results. I have also had good results with blood meal, using approximately a teaspoonfull to the plant at a feeding around the edge of the pot. I would like to add that I only feed my plants when they are growing. In other words, judgement should be used how often one should feed them; for if the caladiums are in the garden, and the night temperature is cold and the plants are not showing a good growth, it would be over-doing to feed them too often. If the plants are in the hot house and making fair growth, they will take the feeding and they certainly will respond by making very large plants with large leaves. I have had many leaves that will measure twenty to twenty-two inches from the upper ear of the leaf down to the point. It has been my theory that if

a plant is growing, and you over feed, it is very easy to make a sick plant out of it, and harmful effects would be the result.

The Caladium bulbs seem to be subject to rot. That is if they have not been properly cared for when they are dormant. I have noticed often-times that if they are not thoroughly dried in the pots after the plant becomes dormant, they will have spots where rot or decay will start. If you take a sharp knife and cut this decay away and then dust either with sulphur or fine charcoal, you can save the bulb and no harm will be done. It is well to examine the bulbs occasionally, pressing firmly with your fingers for any faults or decayed spots, then cutting as above mentioned.

I mentioned in my previous article that I have grown some sixty or more different named varieties of Fancy-Leaved Caladiums, and the following are a few of my favorites with a short description of each variety. If you can obtain any of the following bulbs, I think you will be pleased with their beauty.

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Fibrous Begonias

● It may be wise to clarify a point which might misguide beginners at growing Begonias. Not all Fibrous Begonias are dormant in Winter, as given to understand in "Pruning Begonias," February issue *Begonian*, unless they are left out to freeze, in which event they are probably permanently dormant.

Many varieties of Fibrous rooted Begonias are by nature Winter bloomers and are at their best in the Winter and early Spring months.

As for pruning, yes, most Begonias need pruning at times, but in most cases this is best done just before new growth starts. I have found it very dangerous to prune a dormant Begonia especially when just going into its dormant period.

The article also stated—never to feed Fibrous Begonias. With me, the contrary has proved most successful, for I have found that plants of Fibrous Begonias left un-fed just "stay put" and never mature. I suppose this is what the Editor of this magazine needs, diversified opinions according to our personal experience so as to help each other to find which method is best in our locality.

BEGONIA Mrs. Scripps: In the same issue of *The Begonian*, Mrs. Alice Clark depicted this Begonia and stated in the

By **TRISTRAM COFFIN WHITAKER**
Philadelphia, Pa.

article accompanying it that B. Mrs. Scripps was related to B. luxurians on one side and B. scharffi now properly (B. haageana) on the other. I think most Begonia growers will agree with me that B. Mrs. Scripps is probably a seedling of B. luxurians and B. scharffiana.

Editor's note: The above article will probably draw some interesting remarks, and since the American Begonia Society exists mainly to clarify the existing knowledge and nomenclature of Begonias, we shall be happy to hear further on the subject from those who have pertinent information to impart. Our Nomenclature Chairman will help us with her comments, we hope.

Note: As referred to before, we have adopted the use of "Standardized Plant Names" Second Edition, 1942, published by J. Horace McFarland Co., though in the February issue B. Scharffi was misspelled and should have been replaced with B. haageana which is preferred. While making corrections: Mrs. Clark would like us to change the date of discovery of B. Mrs. Scripps from 1937 to 1934. The former year was the one Mr. Alfred D. Robinson first listed it in his catalogue

or scarlet center and many crimson spots toward edge.

MME. TRUALL. Shining red leaf with bronzy hues; broad center ribs of darker shade.

MRS. W. B. HALDEMAN. Medium leaf of bright pink with narrow green edge.

RISING SUN. Brilliant deep red center and ribs on dark, goldtinted background; spotted transparent pink.

SPANGLED BANNER. Glowing red leaf with darker ribs and a profusion of pink spots.

TRIOMPHE DE L'EXPOSITION. Old favorite with roundish leaf of bright red; dark green edge.

One of the things I get the most kick out of in growing Fancy-Leaved Caladiums is that I may cut leaves which can be used for bouquets and in flower arrangements. I will give you my experience with cut leaves in the next issue of the *Begonian*, plus more descriptions of named varieties.

● What have been your experiences with the new ground conditioner and mulch—Sani-Soil?

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● Please do send in material to reach the Editor not later than the tenth of the month.

● When trimming your Rex and Fibrous, don't throw away the leaves or cuttings. Take them to your branch meeting. Others will be happy to get them.

Heard at the March Board Meeting

By C. H. LAUDER, M. D.
Arcadia, Calif.

• The national board meeting was held at the usual time and place in Los Angeles.

Five representative directors from branches were present and made their reports of activities of each branch. Two distinguished guests were present, Mrs. Lee Krauss, Honorary vice president of the society from Pennsylvania, and Mrs. L. H. Fewkes, a prominent Begonia grower of San Diego.

Membership secretary reported that renewals were coming in slowly and urged that local branch officers co-operate as much as possible to bring all old members as well as new into the society.

Librarian, Mrs. Crowder reports valuable additions to Begonia books having acquired some photostatic copies of authentic and original articles. She is very enthusiastic and makes an excellent librarian. She is also having some "Begonians" bound.

Seed fund chairman, Mrs. Harris reported very little activity due to inability to obtain seed, especially from foreign countries. She would appreciate any information as to where any begonia seed could be secured.

Report by the Robinson Memorial chairman stated that there had been little activity in this department but excellent prospects for accelerated activity is in the offing. The Riverside branch donated \$5.00, the proceeds from their recent plant sale. There is space available for ten times as many plants as we now have in the exhibit. So even though there are duplicates these can be exchanged for different types at some future time. As Spring starts new growth

of many Begonias the branches are intending to donate liberally.

President Baily read a letter from Mrs. Clark of San Diego inviting the national board members to attend the meeting of the three San Diego branches at Roscroft Begonia Gardens, March 28, 1943. It will be very interesting and we should all try to attend. Those who have cars should volunteer to share a ride with others.

On April 1, 1943 board members are planning to visit the Orange County branch. This should also be well attended by the national directors. It would be beneficial to everyone if some of us could visit several branches each month.

Mrs. Krauss gave a report about condition in the Eastern branches stating that they wanted to hear more of the interesting things being done in California with Begonias. She was particularly enthusiastic about the new Dwarf Rexes which she described as "little gems." She also briefly described the research which she had done with Begonias. Her talk was all to brief but of great interest and enthusiastic. I am sure she intends becoming more active in the affairs of the National Begonia Society.

The next meeting of the board will be April 12, 1943 and we invite all members of the Begonia Society to attend these meetings if possible as they are open to all lovers of Begonias.

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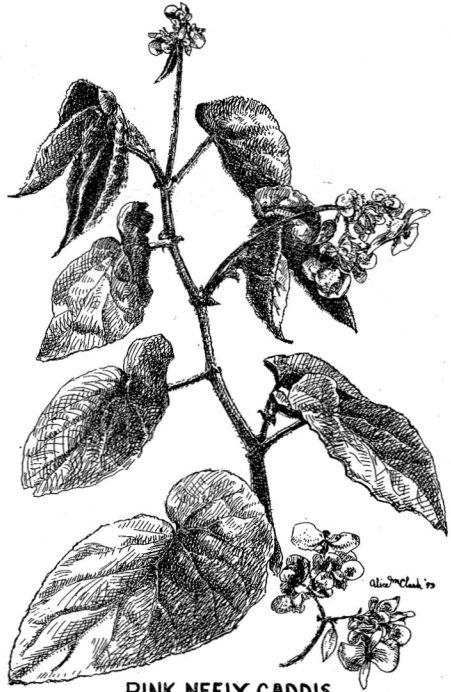
By ALICE M. CLARK
San Diego, Calif.

• Among those who have developed seedlings of merit from *Viaude* is Constance Bower with *Pink Neely Gaddis*, which she brought out in 1927. Around that same time Mr. Alfred D. Robinson got *Prunifolia*, also from *Viaude* and Mrs. Gray introduced *Neely Gaddis* with the pure white bloom. All three are excellent plants for the garden, making a nice bushy development, good as a background planting tho' the flowers are so attractive that one wants to see them close up also.

Pink Neely Gaddis grows to a height of four feet easily, in fact the one that was donated to the A. D. R. Memorial was taller than that. It is a very free bloomer even in the winter months, and if in shade its pink flowers are so pale as to seem white. Its rich leaves, a deep plum-red on the back, downy with white hairs, and a fine dark olive-green on top, with a luster shining thru its hairy surface, are large and decorative. When young they are almost as plushy as *Scharfii*, an effect difficult to convey in a drawing.

The flowers of *Pink Neely Gaddis* are not in as large clusters as *Viaude*. The petals are about the same size with two large and two small opposite each other, but those of *Viaude* overlap at their conjunction point with the two small ones not extending beyond the width of the large ones. Miss Bower's plant differs in that the petals are open and graceful and the narrow ones extend half their length beyond the wider ones. In contrast to the very red hairs on the large petals of *Viaude*, which give a coarse effect, those of *Pink Neely Gaddis* give a dainty tone to the whole flower, being a soft tint of pink. The pure white blooms of Mrs. Gray's plant are the most striking of the group as there is not even a touch of pink in the thick white hairs of the large bloom.

The flowers of *Prunifolia* and those of our sketch are very similar, so much so that there is only one sure way to distinguish them and that is by the tiny leaf that is a part of the flower panicle. In *Prunifolia* the back of the leaf does not seem to be quite as deep in color as *Pink Neely Gaddis*, altho it, too, is on the purplish side.



PINK NEELY GADDIS

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SUMMER HOMES OF BEGONIAS IN MIDDLE ATLANTIC STATES

By MARGARET C. GRUENBAUM — Philadelphia, Pa.

AFTER observing results from growing Begonias in a greenhouse during the late Fall, Winter and early Spring, and a lath house the remainder of the year, it has been rather trying the last few years to accumulate and grow a collection of Begonias without either. (By a collection I mean from 50 to 100 varieties.)

Having disposed of our greenhouse and lathhouse, I no longer have these facilities to work with.

So I had to learn to grow my Begonias during the summer, by finding shade, shelter and protection from wind and draft, somewhere in the garden. This was not so easy to do as we are City-suburban dwellers, living in a house exposed on all sides except the west, and with no shade trees in the garden. There is a large bed of flowering shrubs approximately 10 ft. wide by 50 ft. long, but because of buildings on either side, the sun reaches this bed only in the middle of the day.

During June of 1940 I increased my collection to about 60 varieties, but soon discovered that underneath the flowering shrubs was not to the liking of the Begonias. The sun at noon time was much too hot, other parts of the bed where the sun did not reach them, seemed much too humid,—the ventilation did not seem sufficient.

The south end of our garden has for its boundary the side of a large two story brick house. You will realize that this would make for a plot or bed of soil that faces the North and is protected from the hot summer sun. Running at right angles with the 2 story brick house is a one story garage and bake shop, so there is additional protection from the Western sun, which in the vicinity of Philadelphia is a very hot parching sun. So a flower bed along the 2 story brick house gives a location where the morning sun will reach it until about 10 A. M. sun time.

A space of about 12 ft. along the 2 story brick wall and 3 ft. wide of the ground was decided upon in which to place the Begonias. One-half inch used iron pipe was utilized to make a frame work over this bed. The uprights were about 3½ ft. high. A lath frame was placed on the top (the width of a lath

being the distance between each lath). The Begonias were left in the pots and the pots sunk in the soil, up to the collars of the pots. As long as the sun was shining on the location the top and sides were covered with cheese cloth.

The Begonias grew, but not particularly well, but they were healthy plants to bring into the house for the Fall and Winter of 1940-41. But my casualties were many, and when it was time in the Spring to move them outdoors I had only about 25 percent of what I took inside in the Fall.

Nothing daunted I increased my collection again during the summer of 1941, also increased the size of the northern exposure bed against the 2 story brick wall. But I placed boards over the frame, making a solid roof over the top of the Begonias, and put the cheese cloth around only during the last hour of the sun in the morning. This gave the Begonias a lot more ventilation, and I had somewhere between 60 and 75 varieties of good healthy plants to take into the house in the Fall of 1941.

I kept them on an inclosed porch with a northern exposure, temperature of about 60 degrees, during the Fall and Winter of 1941-42. Had very few casualties during this season.

Observing the improvement in the growing of the Begonias when they had a solid cover over them, my husband had a roof built along 20 ft. of the 2 story brick wall, at about 7 to 7½ ft. from the ground. Then a landscaper arranged a garden of rocks under this roof, distributing generous quantities of porous garden soil, peat moss and leaf mold throughout. (Not too many rocks.) The purpose of the rocks was to retain moisture and keep the soil cool around the roots. In this the treasured Begonias were planted, some the pots were sunk into the ground, others—the plants were removed from the pots, and they grew and grew, with no cheese cloth protection from the morning sun. They were indeed a joy to behold.

From the experience of the 3 summers, the following definite conclusions were arrived at:

1. Select a location with definitely a Northern exposure.

(Continued on page 57)

Plantly Speaking — On the Shady Side

by JOHN S. VOSBURG
Hollywood, Calif.

• Here is a bulbous plant that has definitely impressed many who have grown it. It is an *Allium* (meaning—a garlic). I question if the name under which it is generally sold is proper, however, *Allium tricoccum* is the name under which it has entered the trade in California and it is the bulb so called that I can recommend as a very generous flowering bulb at this time of year.

The flowers are nodding, white and borne abundantly. It is not too particular as to choice of soil and doesn't draw a hard and fast line between sun and shade preference but will do very well in either situation. It has a fault: It smells strongly of leek, and as a cut flower it must not be approached too familiarly or placed where one will sit close to it, but outdoors the odor will not be noticed, unless the leaves or stems are crushed.

The bulb multiplies with reasonable rapidity and so enters into that list of plants that are suitable for colonization.

Many of these *Alliums* need Winter protection in some of the colder sections but they survive if given a minimum of shelter. The bulbs of this plant are small, so small that it hardly seems possible for so many attractive flowers to come out of so tiny a bulb—but seeing is believing, and to prove it, you will have to grow them.

SUMMER HOME OF BEGONIAS IN MIDDLE ATLANTIC STATES

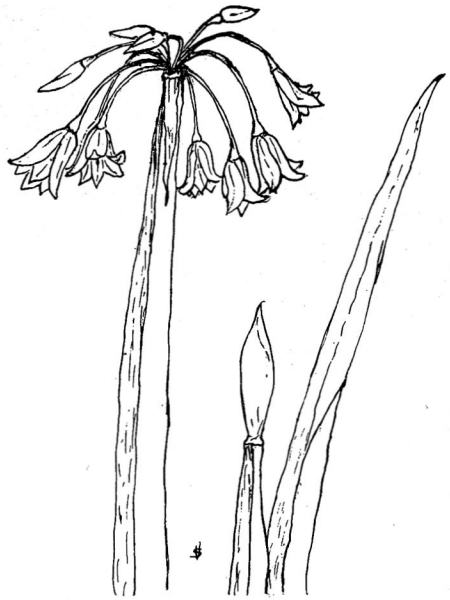
(Continued from page 56)

2. Erect a solid slanting roof (one that water will not leak through) 7½ ft. from ground at back and 7 ft. from ground at front. This height seems to be about what is required to hold moisture, keep out the wind and give the Begonias the needed protection.

3. If possible have morning sun reach every part of the Begonia bed, but not after 10 A. M. sun time.

4. Have soil light and porous, and keep soil and plants moist but not wet.

5. As soon as sun is off the bed, spray foliage with as fine a mist of clear water as is possible.



• How many new members have joined your branch this year?

THE OAKLAND BEGONIA EXHIBIT

(Continued from page 51)

Congdon took me to some buildings next to the greenhouse where the Oakland Branch held their monthly Sunday afternoon meetings. This certainly makes an ideal set-up, for the meetings of the Begonia Society are held practically in the midst of a veritable array of Begonias.

As yet I haven't taken any plants over to the Alfred D. Robinson Memorial Exhibit in Lincoln Park, but I told Dr. Lauder that I would get some over there soon, as he needs all the help he can get if we are to come up to the Oakland exhibit. You Southern California begonia enthusiasts had better get busy nursing along some good Begonia plants and see that they get over to the Alfred D. Robinson Memorial Exhibit, so we can have something worthwhile to show the Northern California Begonia hobbyists when they come down South.

(Editor's note: Mr. Nelson is President of the San Gabriel Branch. He and Mrs. Nelson have an outstanding Begonia Home. See *The Begonian* — soon.)

SPEECH OF FRANK REINELT

1942 ANNUAL MEETING — Glendale, Calif., 1942

Reported by MRS. C. C. COOK

I never like to prepare a speech; most of the friends with whom I spoke today made it up for me; by this I mean I watched to find out what they wanted to know, and I would rather speak on those subjects than any others.

The majority of questions I had asked today were about the Sani-Soil. Some was given to me for experimentation last year by the Santa Cruz Redwood Company. I was not enthusiastic at first; as a rule somebody brings out some new invention which usually does not turn out as expected. They usually sound very revolutionary but most of them prove to be more work than anything. This, though, had the elements of success, and we did some experimenting with it. However, I want to point out that it is too soon to tell whether it will be fully successful. We have worked with it for a year—it takes three to five years to tell exactly. I believe in it mainly as a mulch and shall use it for that.

There are two types of Sani-Soil, the coarse and the fine. The coarser type mixed with the soil does not decay and keeps the soil fluffy. It would be a fair substitute for either peat or leafmold. Those two decay very rapidly and redwood does not. I presume it will stay in the soil two or three years before there is any sign of decay. It is not toxic as most people think. It is the wood that is toxic. Sani-Soil does not absorb moisture; it is not a fertilizer; and does not prevent disease. However, insects do not like it and most insects are carriers of disease; so if you eliminate them you eliminate most of the diseases. It is nasty to handle.

We tried it on Begonias. I planted some tubers, simply starting them in Sani-Soil mixed with peat or leafmold, and they did very well. Since it does not hold any moisture other soil must be used with it. Mixed fifty-fifty with ordinary soil or fine leafmold the plants did fairly well, but better with only 30% Sani-Soil. In other respects it had no importance as it contains no important elements.

The difficulty we had was with dampening off and moss forming on the surface of the flats when the plants were

quite young. We mixed a combination of 50% leafmold and redwood. The result was that the soil did not receive a sufficient amount of water and the plants looked yellow and grew very slowly. Finally, I saw why they did not grow—the upper surface managed to keep moist but one-fourth inch below it was as dry as a bone. The next group sown in pure leafmold with a little bit of redwood, germinated very well, and as soon as the seeds germinated, we added a little bit more Sani-Soil and kept adding more as the plants grew. Those plants did not show any sign of moss. In fact they were the best plants we had ever had.

This year we used 20% Sani-Soil mixed with finely sifted leafmold for surfacing of our flats. The bottom part was rather coarse leafmold. After sowing the seed, we sifted over the surface again a fine film of Sani-Soil put through a flyscreen and moistened down. The germination was very good. No dampening off appeared in the first lots, sown December 15. As soon as the seedlings came through and developed their first leaves, we again screened a little more of the Sani-Soil over the surface, which acted as a mulch and also as a shade for the seeds that had not germinated as yet. In this way, some lots which showed poor germination in the beginning came through eventually.

Three to four weeks after the first plants came up, the second lot came through. No moss formation appeared and today, the first of February, the plants are ready for transplanting. The second lot, sown December 22, was heavily affected by dampening off, although similarly treated. This, of course, exploded my theory that Sani-Soil may prevent dampening off. Again a third lot, sown December 26, germinated excellently without any dampening off; a fourth lot sown January 1 was hit again heavily with dampening off. I have come to the conclusion that the lots that had heavy dampening off were not well drained. By that I mean the bottom soil was a little too fine and the drainage was not what it should be. They stayed too wet and consequently dampening off appeared.

It may be interesting to know at this moment how much young seedlings will

stand. We heat our greenhouses with open flame burners, using butane gas, under the benches. The sides of the benches are covered with paper, holding the heat inside, so that the overhead temperature drops pretty low at night, although the flats are kept very warm with the high bottom temperature. During January we had a spell of cold, graduating from 32 degrees at night, finally down to 18 degrees before the cold weather passed. Some mornings the temperature in the greenhouse was as low as 34 degrees. Finally, during the last and coldest night, we ran out of gas, and when I came in the greenhouse in the morning, the thermometer showed 30 degrees. Out doors it was still 22, and before we could get gas and light the burners, the temperature dropped down to 29 for almost two hours! I thought all the begonias in the various stages of germination were gone, but as a precaution I sprayed them immediately with lukewarm water and they came through and grew merrily.

Personally, I prefer fluctuating overhead temperature with cool at night and warm during the day, as it keeps the plants healthier. However, the bottom temperature should always be high.

Coming back to Sani-Soil: I saw immediately that the Sani-Soil was effective primarily as a mulch. We have an outdoor bed of primroses which usually had to be watered once a week all summer and even at that the plants were drying up and shriveling. Last spring, we covered them with an inch of Sani-Soil with rather surprising results. The watering was cut down to once in a month, as the soil stayed moist underneath. The plants held green foliage all summer, and started flowering this year much earlier than usual. Some were in flower during the January cold spell and the temperature of 18 didn't seem to hurt them a bit. They are much healthier than any primroses we have had any other year. The weeding was cut down about 80%. A few perennial weeds came through, which, after once being cleaned out, did not show up any more. We tried it on Begonias in the lath houses in some beds, and the young plants grew more rapidly than normal because the surface stayed continually moist. Where you have difficulty securing leafmold, you could mix the redwood with your soil as a conditioner and get practically the same re-

(Continued on page 65)

Spring Cleaning Begonias

by ELLA M. FEWKES
San Diego, Calif.

• Here we are entering into Spring and as usual a million things to do.

We, here at the garden, are making little ones out of big ones, so to speak; that is we are cutting all "old wood" BELOW the surface of the soil. This invigorates the new growth, throwing all the vitality toward this end. If it has to support several years accumulation as well as new stalks, then something has to suffer and from past experience find smaller leaves, less bloom and unsightly brown canes and stems are the result.

After all this is done, we broadcast Crude Naphthelene, over this Nitroganic then spade this in being careful not to uproot the plant. We use an ax or spade about 8" from the plant completely severing the root system at this point. Find this makes the plant pretty angry and proceeds to grow more roots just to show this ax welder a thing or two.

After this we put a good thick coating of oak mould, not less than 6 to 8 inches.

By this time we have completely wrecked our beautiful garden, but it does not stay that way long. In two months new growth has developed into adult growth and is in full bloom, thanking us for allowing the new growth to be able to assimilate our rejuvenation of last year's soil without having to share it with a cane or stem which has served its purpose.

Potted plants? They go through the same procedure; that is cutting back old growth, but dump 'em out of the container and cut off the bottom half way up. Yep its hard to do. Put a liberal portion of peat, green Oregon moss or stones, whatever you use for bottoms of pots, dump in a liberal amount of fresh soil, (4 buckets leaf mould, 1 bucket peat, pound can Nitroganic, 3-inch pot crude naphthelene well broken up), repot your plant, or a larger container which is better, more fresh soil on top, press firmly around edges, water well, and say, "I dare you to die." It won't. In a couple of months you have a surprise coming, I betchya.

• Are you using a novel idea to boost your branch finances? Tell us about it?

Tuberous-Rooted Begonias

By **RAY E. BIRCH**
 Editor **The Stamen**
 Pittsburgh Pa.

• This item was scheduled for next month's **STAMEN**, but since now is the time to get tuberous rooted begonias started, we decided we'd better not hold off. In our garden club are a number of members who can't understand why this isn't the national flower. For sheer beauty of magnificent blooms, nothing can excel them. While they, no doubt, do far better in some other sections of the country, particularly in California, where they are commonly used as pot plants, they nevertheless have proved that they have a place in Pittsburgh. The best known form of flower is the camellia type of bloom. The range of color includes salmon, pink, yellow, orange, red and white. The size of flower is truly amazing. The catalogs state that exhibition blooms 8 inches in diameter are common. However, Pittsburgh experience shows that half of this is about what to expect, with six inch blooms such as Hugh Cobb's 1942 blue ribbon winner being rather exceptional.

The chief value of the begonias in Pittsburgh is for planting in almost complete shade in easy access to the sprinkling can, since they like it moist. Anyone who has a north exposure problem should try them out. They'll even do well between closely placed houses.

Tuberous rooted begonias can be started now from tubers, or later plants grown from seeds can be purchased from one or more specialty plantmen. Many will prefer tubers because they cost about the same and give more assurance of having a tuber to carry over for the next year. For an early start the tubers should be started in the house in March or April. Prepare a shallow box with a moistened mixture of peatmoss alone or with peatmoss and sand up to 55%. Then

place the tubers in a depression in this soil, with the cupped side up. The top is identified by its cupping and because most of the tubers will now show tiny sprouts. Keep the box at about 50 to 60 degrees in a dark place until the sprouts show signs of growth. The planting may then be moved to a light window where full sunlight does not strike the plants. The soil is to be kept uniformly moist, and care must be used to keep water out of the cup on top of the tuber. It now becomes a matter of letting the plans develop (still at 50 to 60 degrees unless higher temperatures cannot be avoided) until danger of outdoor frost is past. Some may transplant them to pots before this time, but success is had by leaving them in the box until the final move can be made.

When transplanted to the open ground the tuber may be placed as much as an inch under ground. They do not root widely so a large hole is not necessary. However, it needs to be well prepared. A recommended mixture contains equal parts of old cow manure, leaf-mold, loam and peatmoss, with a smaller proportion of sand. The plants need to be staked at once since the typical thick fleshy stalks break easily. All season they need to be kept moist but not wet, and some feeding is helpful.

The plants are taken up before a heavy frost in the fall, and after the stems are dried they are removed from the tubers.

These flowers bloom all summer and give no end of delight. Three flowers develop in each cluster and since only the center one is double, the two side blooms are usually pinched out.

If you have never seen these beautiful flowers and want to proceed gingerly we suggest that you start with two or three tubers. Yellow, crimson, or salmon colors for this first trial will make you a confirmed TRB addict.

Courtesy "The Stamen"

• Send your propagating problems to the Question and Answer Dept.

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Just a Few More Don'ts

By A. A. LONGMIRE
Carpinteria, Calif.

- Don't prune trees or shrubs until after flowering.
- Don't prune berried shrubs until after fruiting.
- Don't overlook pruning at this time: Hydrangea; Sambucus; Calycanthus; Viburnum; Snowball and Poinsettia.
- Don't wait too long to prune Roses, and do not be afraid to prune severely.
- Don't prune Chionanthus; Osmanthus or Ligustrum until after flowering.
- Don't wait. Prune now: Heliotrope; Datura; Hibiscus; Fuchsia; Lantana and Salvia.
- Don't prune—except for shaping: Magnolia; Michelia; Liriodendron and Illium.
- Don't fail to prune to the ground: Romneya; Bocconia; Linum flavum; Reinwardtia indica or Melianthus.
- Don't prune before or after flowering, before or after fruiting, but GRUB IT OUT . . . (Rhus toxicodendron—POISON IVY, or POISON OAK).
- Don't prune—except to shape—the Variegated purple or golden-leaved shrubs or trees.
- Don't forget to prune your budget—to buy war stamps and bonds.
- Don't fail to start some of your best Tuberous Begonias: they will make you some fine cuttings true to form.

Don't let Tuberous Begonia bulbs become dry and soft: It will only cause them to produce poor flowers, and be more readily open to attack by rot, etc.

Don't forget to take bottom cuttings from Begonia semperflorens. Only basal cuttings will make good plants.

Don't be discouraged if your Begonia crosses do not show nice results the first generation: You must follow a cross into the second generation at least, to get a true hybrid.

Don't think that Begonias are the only plants that will be looked at with admiration: Just try some Billbergias of which there are so many lovely varieties.

Don't fail to mulch places planted to bulbs with a heavy blanket of manure about the time they should be starting their growth. After they have made root growth, this will help to give them strength to make fine top growth.

Don't be jealous of your neighbor's plants: Seek to learn what he knows more than you do, then you may be able to reciprocate at some other time.

Don't trim or prune Begonias or any plant that has been frozen: Wait until new growth has been made to show you how far to cut.

Don't forget the VICTORY garden: We do have to eat, you know.

Don't think the slugs and snails can't take care of themselves: You had better take care of them first.

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Branch News

Inglewood Branch: Returns to the Woman's Club in Inglewood, the day, however is changed to Thursday, since it was impossible to book the usual Friday. The time 7:30 p. m. Mrs. Neels has secured Mr. George McDowell as speaker on the subject of the all important "Victory Garden" and there will be a short talk on Begonias by Mr. Murray Minehardt. Inglewood is well known among other things for fine plant sales, and this is to be an especially fine one because it is earmarked as a "Donation" sale toward the upkeep of the Alfred D. Robinson Memorial Greenhouse.

Riverside Branch: Will meet at the home of Mrs. H. L. McPherrin, 6317 Brockton Ave., Riverside, Calif., with Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Meyer as co-hostesses.

HOW IT'S DONE AT THE RIVERSIDE BRANCH . . . Extracts from a letter received from the Riverside Branch dated March 3rd. "It's now cutting back time. Each member brings cuttings to the meetings, and these are sold for 1c each."—thus enriching the treasury.

"Now hat our Victory Gardens are beginning to pay for our labors, members are donating specimens which are auctioned at the meetings, creating entertainment and boosting our finances."

"Our branch has gone over 100% in renewal memberships."

See elsewhere they sent a donation to the Alfred D. Robinson Memorial in lieu of plants.

Glendale Branch: The March program deviated somewhat from the usual Shade-garden subjects but the occasion was a special one arranged to hear Prof. Tema Shults Clare on "Cucurbitaceae of the World." Prof. Clare is an authority on several subjects but her special interest is in the field of morphology and anatomy of plants, through her extensive research on algae, seed germination, polyembryony of Pine trees and anatomy of orchids.

In April Mr. Louis Carbery's subject, again aside from Shade gardening, but since this is perfect time for his specialty, he will tell about "Border Carnations" and bring an exhibit of these beautiful flowers.

The Bellflower Branch: Promises an interesting meeting on April 6th, at the home of Mrs. Anna Haller, 949 E] Artesia Blvd., Bellflower, at 8 p. m.

Philobegonia Branch: Members would have envied Mrs. Krauss, who was visiting in the West while they were going through a raging snowstorm. The silver lining to this cloud, however, will be the report Mrs. Krauss will take back to them.

Hollywood Branch: The March meeting was unusually well attended which was gratifying since the program was of especially great interest. It is seldom that a speaker can present such a scientific subject so clearly and interestingly as to fascinate men and women alike whether horticulturists or not, but Mr. Alfred W. Roberts did just that in speaking of his pet pursuit, that of growing Ferns from spores. We are much wiser now and have some notion as to why really beautiful ferns are hard to find and we know that it takes a mountain of patience with a life time of perseverance to attain great success in this branch of plant culture.

The April meeting will be dedicated to two subjects presented by one man. Mr. Wm. Ross is coming from Glendale to tell how to divide and transplant Rex Begonias and then he will speak on Victory Gardening. So from meeting to meeting one has plenty of opportunity to appreciate the development of ideas as carried out by speakers who inspire others to try to do likewise. Both these men really do what they preach.

Ventura Branch: Enjoyed another "top notch" meeting on March 2nd a milestone in what the Venturan's are sure will be another banner year for this aggressive group.

The meeting started with a "pot luck" supper, followed by excellent musical entertainment secured through the efforts of their able Program Chairman, Mr. Newton Nance.

Mr. Art Longmire of Carpenteria was the speaker of the evening. Art devoted his entire time to answering questions pertaining to the garden and the lath house, and Art really can answer them and the audience really "gave it too heem".

107 were present. Three guests signed up as new members and eight renewals were obtained,—which makes a 100% paid membership.

Your Questions With Answers

By **FERD P. NEELS**
426 E. Maple Ave.
El Segundo, Calif.

Q. Please tell me what issue of the Begonian explains how to grow semperflorens. Will there be an article soon in the Begonian on that subject?

Ans. July 1940, page 110; January 1942, page 13; July 1942, page 101 and 104.

Q. When planting the Victory Garden should the ground first be spaded?

Ans. Yes, at least 10 inches deep. That is what is meant by soil preparation. The soil should be enriched at same time.

Q. I formerly could purchase a very fine grade of tuberous begonia from a lady who advertised in the Begonian. I believe her place of business was at Redwood City. Does she still advertise? Is she still in business? What is her address and name?

An. Write Redwood Begonia Gardens, 1105 Madison Avenue, Redwood City, Calif.

Q. Are schizanthus adaptable to a

lath house? When should seeds be planted?

Ans. Yes, in lightest part of lath house. Now.

Q. Seedling tuberous just showing the third leaf were transplanted from the seed pan to a flat on March 6. Will they bloom this year?

Ans. Yes.

Q. Can you tell me where to buy Hollyhock Begonia seeds?

Ans. Woodriff's Fairyland Begonia Garden, Harbor, Oregon.

Q. I have a Jessie that is a very fine plant and blooms profusely. I also have the other type with mottled leaves, which does not do well, does not grow tall and hardly blooms. Is his a characteristic of that plant?

Ans. No, try moving plant to different location.

Q. I noticed in transplanting seedling tuberous that many of them became crushed by the tweezers I used. Is there a special tool for such fine work?

Ans. Tweezers made of bamboo are very satisfactory. If seed flat is moistened, the tuberous will come out easily.

Q. Will Sani Soil enrich Leaf Mold?

Ans. Would advise you write advertiser in Begonian.

The usual plant sale ended a wonderful meeting, and the treasury was thus enriched by \$32.40.

A cordial invitation is extended to any and all Begonia fans to visit the Ventura Branch. Their meetings are held at 52 N. California Street, on the 1st Tuesday of each month.

East Bay Branch: Mr. S. S. Fletcher, the President-elect for last year, was the speaker at a recent meeting. Mr. Fletcher had just returned from a trip where he had been called to the South Sea Islands. He would like to have talked about the fauna and flora of that region, but since time was his restricting factor he was not able to study those subjects sufficiently—instead, he collected many of the objects used by the natives in their daily life and festival as well as tribal feasts. This gave the members a different outlook for awhile and a very interesting evening it was. Mr. Bushnell grew some very fine Cinerarias for the plant sale which proved that he can do fine things with plants as well as help organize a Begonia Branch.

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LATHHOUSE CONSTRUCTION

by ALFRED D. ROBINSON, Dec.
Lately of Point Loma, Calif.

CHAPTER VI

Begonias

THOUGH it is my firm conviction that the use of lathed structures is destined to become a general, rather than a localized custom, and so will house plants of much more diversified habits, at the present time those thus sheltered are confined to a few families, foremost of which is the Begonia, and in attempting to deal with this family I have a feeling that I am the fool who rushes in where angels fear to tread, because though very old plants as cultivated ornamentals go, it, as a group, has been very noticeably left alone by horticultural authors, and the information about its past must be largely dug out of files of magazines and monographs. I have found Curtis' Botanical Magazine and Garden Illustrated my chief sources of knowledge.

There is little excuse for giving much space to ancient history, except as a source of sentimental interest, for the Begonias, grown to day, are for the very large majority, horticultural hybrids and varieties produced comparatively recently and they have so changed that their origins seem quite obscure or very far away.

I have three loose leaf books of copies of illustrations and accompanying letter press taken from Curtis' Botanical Magazine describing some 200 varieties of Begonias, of which only a very small minority are now in cultivation and I have never found elsewhere any reference to half of them. The description of many of these missing species is very intriguing, and efforts to recapture them are being made by the American Begonia Society, which has already secured some seeds from India, and is negotiating with other countries for their natives.

Mrs. Bessie W. Buxton has done much for Begonia lovers in her "Begonias and How to Grow Them" put out by The Massachusetts Horticultural Society and a copy should be owned and studied by all lovers of this plant, especially residents of the Eastern States.

The name Begonia was given to this plant family in honor of a Mr. Begon, French botanist, but just why he or the plant was thus distinguished, I do not

know, and as I have already inferred, I am not too much concerned with the rattling of dry bones. They, the Begonias, are natives of warm countries, but with few exceptions grow in the cooler regions of these lands, having been collected at an elevation of about eleven thousand feet. I was told by an eminent scientist that he saw Begonias in bloom in the high passes of the Andes but perhaps I should add that his specialty was **Fish**. Much the larger number of species come from Central and South America. Brazil gives the most, and it (and adjoining countries) are the home of the tall fibrous, and tuberous. Mexico comes next with the rhizomatus or root-stock type. South Africa has the semi-tuberous. Indian regions, the Rex. For those who love statistics I give the number of species from the following countries as given in Curtis' Magazine; Brazil, 11, Mexico 7, Peru 7, South Africa 4, China 6, Bolivia 5, India 3, Bhotan 3, Venezuela 3, Assain 2, Jamaica 2, and one each in Borneo, Guatemala, Ceylon, Socotra, St. Thomas, Bengal, and Trinidad, with 16 of unknown origin.

The names in the foregoing list of countries might suggest that the Begonias require tropical cultural conditions, which would be all wrong as they are temperate in their loves, though my experience is that certain ones are not so moderate in their hates. It is of interest to note that neither Europe nor North America has a native Begonia.

(To Be Continued)

WILLIAM ROSS

BEGONIA GARDENS

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Cultural Hints For April

By FERD P. NEELS

• Now that spring is here our Begonias will start their new growth; the warmer days and nights aiding this action considerably. **TUBEROUS BEGONIAS:** Do not delay starting the tubers. Place in a flat of leaf mold or peat about three inches apart (with the depressed side up) covering slightly with material. Keep uniformly moist. When growth is about three inches transplant into pots or permanent position.

Directions for tip cuttings as a means of propagation will be given next month.

FIBROUS BEGONIAS: In order to have strong, healthy "Fibrous" it is necessary to mulch the plants growing in the ground with compost, fertilizer or leaf mold. Potted plants should be transplanted into larger pots using good rich soil.

If you have a large potted plant that is too big to handle simply remove about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the top soil and replenish with a rich fibrous soil.

For those interested in starting Fib-

rous Begonia cuttings see Fibrous Begonia Bulletin.

SEMPERFLORENS OR BEDDING TYPE: Handle the same as Fibrous Begonias. If they have grown tall and spindly pinch back anywhere between the first few nodes.

Seed can be started now for July bloom. If you can possibly find a place for a border of these lovely begonias, your efforts will be rewarded.

REX BEGONIAS: These should be repotted this month in order to secure large plants as early as possible. Remove all ripe or broken leaves as they merely take extra food and are of little use to the plant. If the plants have grown too large, they can be broken apart, using the stems with roots for potting. The stems without roots, but having numerous nodes can be cut into small pieces containing two or more nodes each and placed in the cutting bed.

The best soil to use when repotting the Rex is fairly coarse oak leaf mold; however, compost, well rotted cow manure, sand, peat or commercial fertilizers are sometimes added to the leaf mold. It is advisable to remove most of the old soil from the roots before repotting.

SPEECH OF FRANK REINELT

(Continued from page 59)

sults. The leafmold has food value and by breaking down, gives certain elements, where the redwood does not. You will have to feed the soil mixed with redwood far more. Soils which dry out very rapidly will benefit by the Sani-Soil mulch, although the soil stays wet underneath without forming moss and sufficient depth, an inch or two, will prevent more of the annual weeds from coming through. In small gardens, where watering and weeding are often a problem, this no doubt will be a god-send. For large scale commercial purposes, it is too costly and will have to be used only for specific things, especially beds that stay put over a period of years. For spring bulbs, or any kind of bulbs for that matter, it should prove valuable.

We covered large beds of daffodils in very shallow soil with two inches of Sani-Soil. There has been practically no weeding and no watering done in the lots; the soil stayed continually moist and the temperature of the beds varies hardly at all. At this time the daffodils look better than I have ever had them

before. This is about all we have done so far.

Do not expect miracles. Commercial advertisers claim a great many things which are not always true. You have to use your own judgement and when you know the facts and what the products can do, apply accordingly. Again I say, it will not hold moisture itself and has no food value, but it will lighten the soil—even adobe, and that is important, for the lighter your soil the more aeration it has, the more moisture it holds, and the better the root system.

Q. Does Sani Soil carry 21 elements as claimed?

Ans. I am not fairly sure; you have to take their word for it, but they are of such minute quantities as to be of no importance as food value.

Q. What is your opinion of using the coarse fiber in a basket. Would it also hold the moisture?

Ans. I think it would be better than moss. It won't hold any moisture itself but will keep it inside.

Note: Two other questions and answers are held over for next issue for lack of space.

NEW MEMBERS

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DEALERS WANTED

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 April (2nd Monday) American Begonia Society Board Meeting will take place in Board of Directors Room, Retail Merchants Credit Assn., 417 So. Hill, Los Angeles, Calif., April 12th, 7:30 p.m.

DOMINGUEZ BRANCH

Thursday, April 1st
Dominguez Casualty Station,
2171 So. Alameda St., Long Beach, Calif.
Mrs. R. L. Warren, Secy.
21718 So. Alameda, Long Beach, Calif.

ORANGE COUNTY BRANCH

Thursday, April 1st
College Hall, Santa Ana J. C.
917 N. Maine St., Santa Ana, Calif.
Geo. A. Barrows, Secretary
1111 Louise St., Santa Ana, Calif.

INGLEWOOD BRANCH

Thursday, April 1st, 7:30 p. m.
Woman's Club of Inglewood
325 No. Hillcrest
Inglewood, Calif.
Mrs. Harold S. Clark, Secretary
1618 1/2 W. 52nd St., Los Angeles, Calif.
Speakers: George McDowell and Murray
Minehardt

PHILOBEGONIA CLUB BRANCH

Tuesday, April 6th, 10:00 a.m.
Mrs. Albert H. Gere, Secy.-Treas.,
362 Brookway, Merion, Pa.

RIVERSIDE BRANCH

Tuesday, April 6th
Home of Mrs. H. L. McPherrin,
6317 Brockton Ave., Riverside, Calif.
Mrs. Harriet E. Meyer, Secy.-Treas.,
4219 Sunnyside Dr., Riverside, Calif.

BELLFLOWER BRANCH

Tuesday, April 6th, 8:00 p.m.
Home of Mrs. Anna Haller,
949 E. Artesia Blvd.
Mrs. L. D. Thalheimer, Secy.-Treas.,
222 S. Woodruff St., Bellflower, Calif.

THEODOSIA BURR SHEPHERD BRANCH

Tuesday, April 6th, 7:30 p.m.
American Legion Hall,
North California St., Ventura, Calif.
Mr. George Fitch, Secy.-Treas.
70 So. Hurst Ave., Ventura, Calif.

SAN FRANCISCO BRANCH

Wednesday, April 7th
1060 Francisco St.,
Harry F. O'Donnell, Secy.-Treas.,
1575 31st Ave., San Francisco, Calif.

HOLLYWOOD BRANCH

Thursday, April 8th, 7:30 p. m.
Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd.
Mrs. Grant Waldref, Sec.,
1615 No. Genesee, Los Angeles, Calif.
Speaker: Mr. Wm. Ross
"Rexes and Victory Gardening"

LONG BEACH PARENT CHAPTER

Thursday, April 8th, 7:30 p.m.
Odd Fellows Temple
728 Elm, Long Beach, Calif.
Mrs. M. S. Algeo, Secy.-Treas.
1712 Gardena, Long Beach, Calif.

HERBERT DYCKMAN BRANCH

Friday, April 9th
Home of Mrs. Jessie Jenkins,
3615 Cerritos Ave., Long Beach, Calif.
Mrs. Rush T. Lewis, Secy.-Treas.
3733-A California, Long Beach, Calif.

SAN DIEGO BRANCH

Monday, April 12th
4037 39th Ave., San Diego, Calif.
Mrs. Edwin F. Barker, Secy.-Treas.,
4561 El Cerrito Dr., San Diego, Calif.

NORTH LONG BEACH BRANCH

Monday, April 12th, 7:30 p.m.
5708 Atlantic Ave., Long Beach, Calif.
Mrs. M. E. Van Hook, Secy.-Treas.,
6774 Olive Ave., Long Beach, Calif.

EAST BAY BRANCH

Monday, April 12th, 7:45 p.m.
Washington School,
60th and Shattuck Ave., Oakland, Calif.
Dick G. Goodnow, Secy.-Treas.,
2116 Derby Street, Berkeley, Calif.

SANTA BARBARA BRANCH

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

VICTORY BRANCH

Thursday, April 15th
11228 Atlantic Ave.
Mrs. Clara Moore, Secy.-Treas.,
11275 Duncan Ave., Lynwood, Calif.

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY BRANCH

Friday Evening, April 16th, 7:30 p.m.
123 E. Lime St., Monrovia, Calif.
Mrs. N. H. Powell, Secretary
419 South Ynez Ave.
Monterey Park, Calif.

EVA KENWORTHY GRAY BRANCH

Monday, April 19th
Mrs. Henry O. Colt, Secy.-Treas.,
7221 Olivetas, La Jolla, Calif.

ALFRED D. ROBINSON BRANCH

Friday, April 23rd, 7:30 p. m.
Home of Mrs. John G. Clark,
3026 Freeman St., San Diego, Calif.
Mrs. George S. Graves, Secy.-Treas.
2922 Evergreen St., San Diego, Calif.

GLENDALE BRANCH

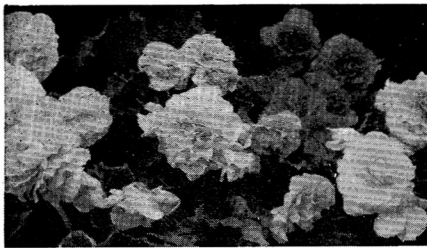
Tuesday, April 27th
329 No. Brand Blvd.,
News Press Bldg., Glendale, Calif.
Home of Mrs. C. C. Cook,
1345 Virginia Ave.,
Glendale, Citrus 2-6603
Speaker: Mr. Louis Carbery,
Subject: "Border Carnations"

MARGARET GRUENBAUM BRANCH

Tuesday, April 27th
Mrs. M. S. Prince, Secy., Hatboro, Pa.

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