

Permit me to direct your attention to two or three groups, which, if you investigate them, will, I am sure, awaken in your minds a more general interest in this subject, and when we take into account that in many of the seed catalogues more than a hundred of such groups are enumerated, it will be seen that the field is not likely to be soon exhausted.

The group of Primulas, which include the Primrose and Polyanthus, is a very inviting one. The flowers are of many hues, embracing very many rich tints and beautiful combinations of colour. They are easily raised from seed sown in a hot-bed in spring, and if sown early and transplanted into rich ground as soon as the plants are large enough, will make fine flowering plants the following spring. The varieties of *Primula auricula* are very rich in colour, they are scarcely so hardy as some of the other members of the group, but with a slight protection will endure our coldest winters. *Primula capitata*, known also as *Cashmeriana*, is a charming spring flower. Late in the autumn the plant dies down to a small compact head, from which, as soon as spring opens, a crown of vigorous leaves is pushed, from the centre of which rises one or more flower spikes which soon develop stout stems bearing globular heads of reddish pink flowers with a pale yellow centre. *Primula Cortusoides* and its several varieties are pretty, free flowering plants, varying in tint from pale lilac to magenta red, which continue to send up fresh flower clusters for nearly a month. *Primula veris*, the English Primrose, is a very hardy and free-blooming plant in its various shades of yellow, rose and white, and some of the offshoots of this family are still more charming, especially the groups *Acaulis* and *Elatior*, where we find a great variety of rich tints of purple and red, margined and centred with yellow or gold. As curious departures from the normal type, we find in *Elatior Macrocalyx* the flower set on a large green calyx, which has a singular effect; also the variety *Duplex*, known as hose-in-hose, where one flower appears as if set into another one in a very odd manner. The many varieties of *Primula Suaveolens*, commonly known as the Cowslip, are well worthy of attention. They have a pleasant odour, and include, besides the common yellow form, many with larger flowers of brilliant shades of yellow and red. Besides those I have named, there are included in the larger seed catalogues, fifteen other forms belonging to this interesting group. This sketch would be incomplete were I to omit to mention a pretty little native species, from two to six inches high, known to botanists as *Primula Mistassinica*, which is found growing along the shores of the Upper Lakes. The flowers are pale lilac with a yellow eye, and the plant does well when transplanted to the garden.

The Aquilegias or Columbines are equally interesting and varied, and most graceful in their forms and habits. Our common wild Columbine, *Aquilegia Canadensis*, is a charming flower, which improves under cultivation, and deserves a place in every garden.

"Sweet plants there are which bloom in sultry places,
By rude feet trampled in their early hour,
Which, when transplanted are so full of graces,
They lend a charm to Flora's fairest bower."

From our wild species several varieties have originated, one of them a dwarf with beautiful scarlet and yellow flowers. In addition to the older forms, of which there are more than fifty varieties, we have two elegant species from the Rocky Mountains, distinguished by the beauty of their form and the length of their spurs. One of these, *Cerulea*, is a violet blue with a yellow centre, the other, *Chrysantha*, of a rich golden yellow. I would suggest that one or both of these be included in the packet of seeds to be sent in the coming spring to those of our members who may select flower seeds; the plants are very hardy, and will be a much prized acquisition to every garden. *Aquilegia glandulosa* is also a very beautiful form; the flowers are large, of a rich, deep blue, with a pure white corolla. Where several of these varieties are grown together, and another generation of plants raised from the seed produced, many interesting crosses will be obtained, which will lend a charm to the flower border.

Among the Gentians, also, of which there are about twenty varieties in cultivation, there are some gems. None is more beautiful than *Gentiana acaulis*, which finds its home in the mountainous regions of Europe. In early spring, its tufts of gorgeous blue, bell shaped flowers, arise from charming cushions of glossy foliage. *Gentiana verna* is