

There are a large number of plants possessing such irritant juices. Some are well-known, like the Nettles, Poison Ivy, and the much favoured little Primula (*P. obconica*), which is so grateful a flowering plant during the winter months in our conservatories. Experiments have been made with a number of closely related primulas, all members of the *P. Sinensis* section. The Chinese Primula itself has caused considerable irritation to persons handling the plants. The leaves of this group of plants are covered with fine glandular hairs, which contain the irritant juice. It has been found that *Primula Sieboldii* Morr., *P. Arendsii* Pax., *P. Mollis* Hook., may also cause similar irritations. Strangely, however, people unsusceptible to the irritation of *P. obconica* have often suffered considerable annoyance from these latter species.

In examining the glandular hairs of these and similar plants I once had the misfortune to sting myself very severely with a Laportea from Australia (*L. gigas*). For weeks my arm was stiff and swollen, and for months—even years—as soon as the hand affected by the sting was put into cold water a severe pain shooting right through the limb was felt. There grows on Parliament Hill, right in the centre of Ottawa, another member of the same genus, (*L. canadensis*), which has a decidedly unpleasant action upon some people. One of the men at the Experimental Farm still bears large scars due to the effects of this plant.

Certain cruciferous plants with large brittle hairs cause a smarting effect like Stinging Nettles, but much less severe. The fine hairs covering the inside walls of some rosaceous fruits also may cause a very troublesome irritation to the unprotected skin. The glandulous hairs covering leaves and stems of some of our wild orchids, especially *Cypripedium pubescens*, *C. spectabile*, and *C. parviflorum* contain a secretion which acts much like *Primula obconica*.

Some records exist of an eczema-like inflammation of the skin caused by handling Common Ivy (*Hedera Helix*).

*Humea elegans* is another plant which causes frequent skin irritations. It is a compositous biennial from Australia and is one of the most beautiful herbaceous perennials, though little known in Canada.

No doubt there exist a number of other plants having similar properties, but those mentioned have been repeatedly recorded as having a decidedly disagreeable action on some persons. A saturated solution of lead acetate in alcohol added to an equal quantity of glycerine has been proven to be of the greatest value in relieving the often unbearable irritations.

H. T. Gussow.