

to promote the culture and interest in iris.

In the next issue of the Bulletin we will discuss the hopes we have for new projects sponsored by the Society, providing our membership is increased enough to justify the necessary expenditures.

MARION R. WALKER, *President*

The Judges' Choice

W. F. SCOTT, JR., *Chairman*, Awards Committee

Fifteen years ago, Mr. Kenneth Smith asked about fifty friends of his, all Iris Judges, to list their choice of the new varieties of that time. This was the beginning of the SYMPOSIUM, in which all of the members of our Society now participate, and the results of which form an important guide to iris lovers everywhere.

As the SYMPOSIUM moved away from its highly selective original character, the nature of the results changed. Now the SYMPOSIUM is a list of tried and true varieties, the arrangement of which changes slowly. This is natural, for the SYMPOSIUM varieties are good friends, well known and trusted. We give them up reluctantly, a few new friends joining the circle each year.

This is all very fine, and very valuable. But something more was needed. Each year some 500 new irises are introduced. Each year nearly fifty new varieties receive Honorable Mention. Even to the wide-awake fancier of the new things, this is perplexing. These people, and they are numerous, want their gardens to have in them the very best of the new things. But they have had no guide to the probable worth of these many new varieties. Obviously, some must be better than others, and novelty buyers were clamoring for some sort of poll of favorites of the new things. The JUDGES' CHOICE is an attempt to give all of our members just that.

It works in a very simple fashion.

Each year approximately fifty new varieties receive Honorable Mention. Thereafter, these are not eligible for any higher Award for two years; when they become eligible for the Award of Merit. So the problem boiled down to measuring the popularity of the new things marking time in that two-year testing period. Obviously, no new balloting should encroach upon the field of judgement of the higher Awards of the Society.

So each year a list is made up which is composed of the Honorable Mention irises of the current year and the previous year. These varieties are marking time. They are not eligible

for any other honors at the moment. This list, consisting of about 100 varieties, is sent to all Accredited Garden Judges. They are asked to indicate their favorites. Not less than ten of them, and not more than fifteen of them. From the compilation, the top twenty-five are selected, and the results published in the earliest possible issue of the BULLETIN.

Why are the Judges asked to select not less than ten? To eliminate from the balloting those Judges who have not found it possible to get around and see the newer things during the just-past season or two. Perhaps at the same time this stimulates their desire to get out and see more gardens the next year. Inability to choose ten from a list of nearly one hundred must be something of a shock.

Why are the Judges asked to select not more than fifteen? For several reasons. First, it is an unusual Judge who has seen as many as fifty of the list. Possibly the average good Judge has seen no more than thirty. So to select fifteen favorites is sufficient of a task. Also, if more were selected, the tabulation would become greatly magnified without accomplishing anything useful. All that would be accomplished would be to arrange the runners-up into a lengthy sequence of descending popularity.

The ballot for the 1955 JUDGES' CHOICE listed 95 varieties. It was sent to all Accredited Garden Judges. Of these, 276 returned their ballots within the time limit. Some 23 were not counted for the reason that they did not list the minimum number of ten selections. A number of Judges returned their ballots with no vote, but with comments indicating their inability to vote for a variety of reasons; mostly the severe freeze in the late spring of 1955.

To all the Judges who returned their ballots on time, whether they voted or not, the Awards Committee says, "Thank you very much!". To the approximately two hundred and ninety (yes, 290!) Accredited Garden Judges who did not return a ballot, the Awards Committee earnestly says, "What's the matter? Don't you have fifteen minutes and three cents?"

Here are the tabulations. The Awards Committee will be very glad to supply any Regional Vice-President with a breakdown of the voting in any particular Region. The Regional breakdown would be published in the BULLETIN, were it not so lengthy.

The favorite new irises, as selected by the JUDGES' CHOICE BALLOT of 1955:

<i>Place</i>	<i>Variety</i>	<i>Votes</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Variety</i>	<i>Votes</i>
1	Blue Sapphire	132	16	Rosedale	53
2	Sierra Skies	129	17	Crispette	48
3	Queen's Lace	108	18	Bluebird Blue	46
4	Rehobeth	105	19	The Citadel	45
5	Pink Fulfillment	89		Orange Frills	45
6	Swan Ballet	85		Cape Cod	45
7	Dark Boatman	81		Storm Warning	45
	June Meredith	81	20	Native Dancer	44
8	May Hall	77		South Pacific	44
9	Deep Black	70	21	Ruffled Apache	43
10	Altar Light	65		Pink Enchantment	43
11	Lavanesque	62	22	Black Taffeta	42
	Cascadian	62		Ice Carnival	42
12	Gay Head	61	23	Caramel	41
	Golden Sunshine	61		Regina Maria	41
	Lady Rogers	61		Gene Wild	41
13	Top Hat	59	24	Toast 'n Honey	40
14	Majorette	55	25	Tabu	39
15	Mohr Glorious	54			

FROM THE ORIGINATOR . . .

**ARGUS PHEASANT FIRST VIOLET CAROLINE JANE
 REHOBETH CLOUDCAP FRANCES KENT
 BRIGHT GEM NIGHT 'N DAY ELYSIAN GOLD
 and others**

Introductions for 1956 will include

**IRMA MELROSE GRAND TETON TALLCHIEF
 ALL HONEY SNOW DREAM MOON FANTASY
 CASCADE DAWN LULA MARGUERITE
 VIOLET HILLS SNOW FIRE**

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