

Aster Seeds for the Saving

Max Moineau, Toronto

HAVING noticed the difference of opinion existing between Mr. W. Norman, of Elmira, Ont., and Mr. Charles J. Fox, of South London, regarding the saving of aster seeds, I should like to give my own experience, from the amateur point of view. I invariably save my own seeds, but only from flowers that particularly please me. I select a few of my very best blooms, strip the plants of all but three or four buds, and these I cover with cheese cloth to prevent cross fertilization by insects. The flower attains full development before the pollen is ripe, and I can easily pass judgment upon it before there is danger of accidental cross fertilization.

If I wish to cross a variety, I cover the two varieties which I have selected for the purpose, and when the anthers burst and shed their pollen, I use a camel's hair brush, filling it with the pollen of one flower and dusting it over the stigma of the other; the one I have crossed I keep covered with cheese cloth. My flowers always come true, and I have originated several new varieties, which I consider as fine as any that I have seen.

This year I have in my hotbed some beautiful plants, the greater number of which were started from my own seeds. I have others, however, which I bought. I always buy the newest varieties with which to experiment, but at present the best looking plants I have are from my own seed. I quite agree with Mr. Fox that, if flowers are not protected, the bees will cross them; but, by covering them as I do, I get them true to type. Besides, after gathering the seeds, I

make a careful selection, keeping those only that are the best developed. Among the many that I have bought, I have never seen as uniform a collection as I get from my own gathering and selection.

I maintain that if one is careful enough, he can have finer seeds, and better flowers from his own collection

cent. of good plants and well developed flowers.

What the aster really needs, for the proper development of seeds, is the best of attention with the cultivator and plenty of fertilizer. Hardwood ashes, administered about the end of July, makes a wonderful improvement.

I have practiced saving my own seed for several years and, whenever I cover the flower in time, I have not been disappointed. This covering must be done before the pollen ripens, or it will be of



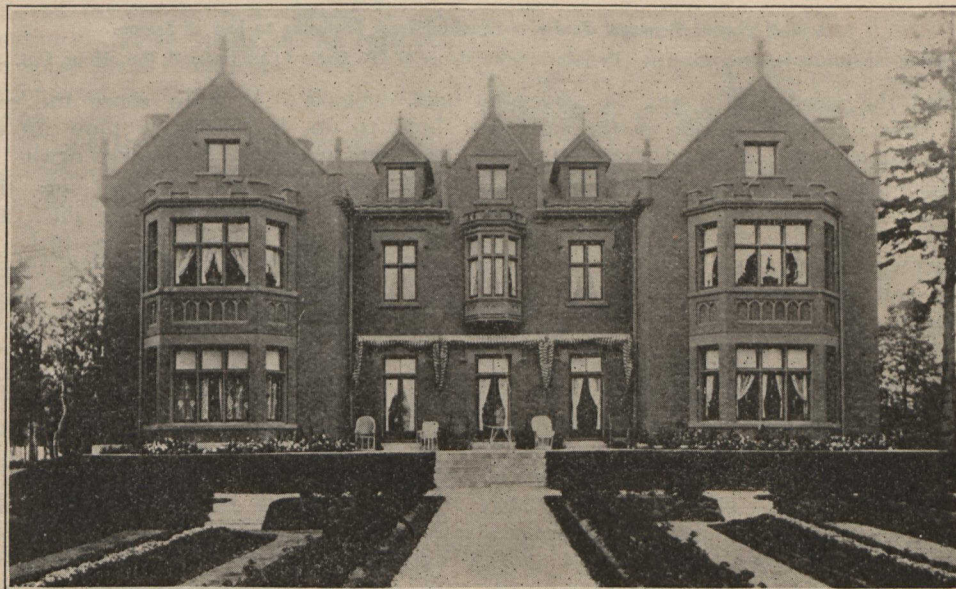
A Pond of Natural Origin That Has Been Beautified by Artificial Means

On grounds of Mrs. Donnelly, Cobourg, Ontario

than can be secured from many of those that he buys. I have bought seeds which, from a whole package, have produced only six or seven plants, and perhaps only one of them true to type. My own seeds have produced ninety-five per

cent. of good plants and well developed flowers. I do not know what method the commercial grower adopts, but I should think that where large fields of asters, of many varieties, are grown in the open, the danger of cross fertilization would be greater than where an amateur protects his seed by covering. Mr. Fox states that "Each color is grown separately. Every plant showing the slightest signs of a wrong color is destroyed." This method may be necessary among commercial growers, but if the amateur, after making his selection of a seed flower, uses the covering method, he can have true seeds, and better seeds, at a smaller cost, with less discouragement, and without the ruthless destruction of other varieties.

For amateurs, I am an advocate of saving seed from the best of their favorites, but I would not confine them to this method alone. Look the catalogues over for the latest novelties, secure only the best from the most reliable growers, and study the improvement, by cross-fertilization, of old favorites. Herein lies the greatest fascination.



Old English Landscape Art Applied to the Adornment of a Home in Canada

"Hamilton House," Cobourg, Ont., the summer residence of Mrs. C. B. Tracy, New York City, and formerly of Hon. Sidney Smith, a postmaster general of Canada in pre-confederation days. Here, King Edward VII (then the Prince of Wales) lived during his three days stay in Cobourg in 1867. The gardens are laid out in formal style with terraces, sunken flower beds, hedges, arbors, closely trimmed evergreens, and so forth.

As a general rule, it is best for amateur gardeners to steer clear of fancy flower beds. Unless given great care and attention, they will not be satisfactory.