

Bagnell Hall Looking West, Showing Ribbon Border and Cut Flower Beds—Fig. 3

equal parts of loam and leaf soil. Never use all rank manure.

The roots of cyclamen proceed from the fleshy rootstock or corm, and this should be about half-covered in potting, leaving the top roots, whence the leaves develop, clear. The after-culture consists of keeping the plants at all times in a light, airy place, and as near the glass as possible to prevent drawing and consequently weakening. Shade in bright weather only and syringe on fine

days to keep the plants clean and encourage growth.

Cyclamen may be grown on a second year by drying moderately and resting for a time, afterwards reducing the soil about the roots and repotting. They should receive similar treatment as that suggested for young plants, but the flowers are generally earlier and smaller the second year. It is not advisable to save plants after this age, as young stock is far more satisfactory.

My Favorite Flower--The Sweet Pea*

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EACH year I plant my sweet peas in the same place along by a wire fence on the west side of my garden. The ground is clay loam and well drained. In the fall, after the old vines have been pulled up, I throw out the earth about ten to twelve inches wide and one foot deep. I then put in fresh earth, giving it a good coating of well-rotted manure and mix it thoroughly. Later on, before it freezes for the winter, I throw this earth outside of my trench into a ridge, keeping it as lumpy as possible so as to let it get full the advantage of the frost.

My experience has taught me that the earlier you get the seed planted the better bloom you have, and the flowers bloom for a longer period. As soon, therefore, as the ground is ready to work, I clean out the trench and put in about two inches of good manure. This is dug into the subsoil. On top of this I put about five inches of the prepared earth and then plant my seed, planting them in double rows. The seed is sown four to six inches apart and covered with about two inches of earth. This is pressed down with the hoe. As the vines grow up I gradually draw more earth around them till it forms a slight ridge about two inches higher than the surrounding earth, leaving a shallow

trench along the row for watering purposes.

My sweet peas are planted where they get lots of sunshine and plenty of fresh air, and I try to keep the soil cool and moist, but not wet and heavy, as this would cause a weak, yellow vine, and they would not get a good growth. As mine are well drained I always have a strong, healthy, tall vine.

For supporting the vines I prefer for a trellis a six foot wire netting. The

netting is put in place when the vines are two or three inches high so that the vines can get early support. The netting is left about two inches from the ground.

To help retain the moisture, keep the soil around the vines fine, and especially after heavy rains. Cultivate about two inches deep. This lets in the air and helps keep down the weeds. You cannot have the best flowers and weeds.

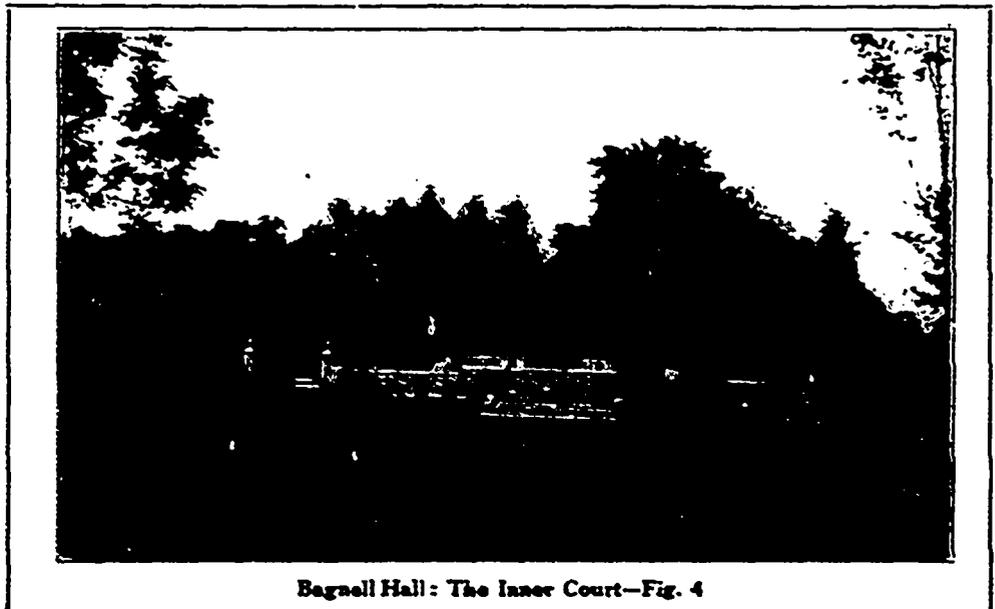
If the plants need watering give them a good soaking at least once or twice a week, as that is better than a sprinkling every night. I always water at night as I am away early in the morning. Water with a rather weak liquid manure, putting the liquid in the trench along the vines.

If the weather keeps dry and hot, spray the under part of the foliage with cold water or soap suds to keep down red spider and aphids.

When cutting the flowers pick them every day. Pick every flower that has all the flowers on the stem in bloom. Do not allow seed-pods to form if you want long continuance of bloom. Select certain plants for seed purposes.

To prolong the season of bloom, pick off the tops of the plants. They will then branch out again. If after a long period of blooming the flowers become small and the stems short, prune the vines. This brings longer stems and larger flowers.

If you decide to save your own seed, pick out the sturdiest vine, cut the poorest flowers, and save the seed from vines having a long, strong stem with three or four flowers to a stem. When they are ripe pick the pods and save the largest seeds. The smaller seeds are at the end of the pods. Discard these. By this method I have had stems sixteen to eighteen inches long and flowers two inches across.



Bagnell Hall: The Inner Court—Fig. 4

*This article won the third prize in the essay competition on "My Favorite Flower and How I Grow It."