

scriptions convey a very good idea of the shade seen in this brilliant variety." The photographs illustrating these three new varieties are from blooms grown at Takapuna, Auckland.

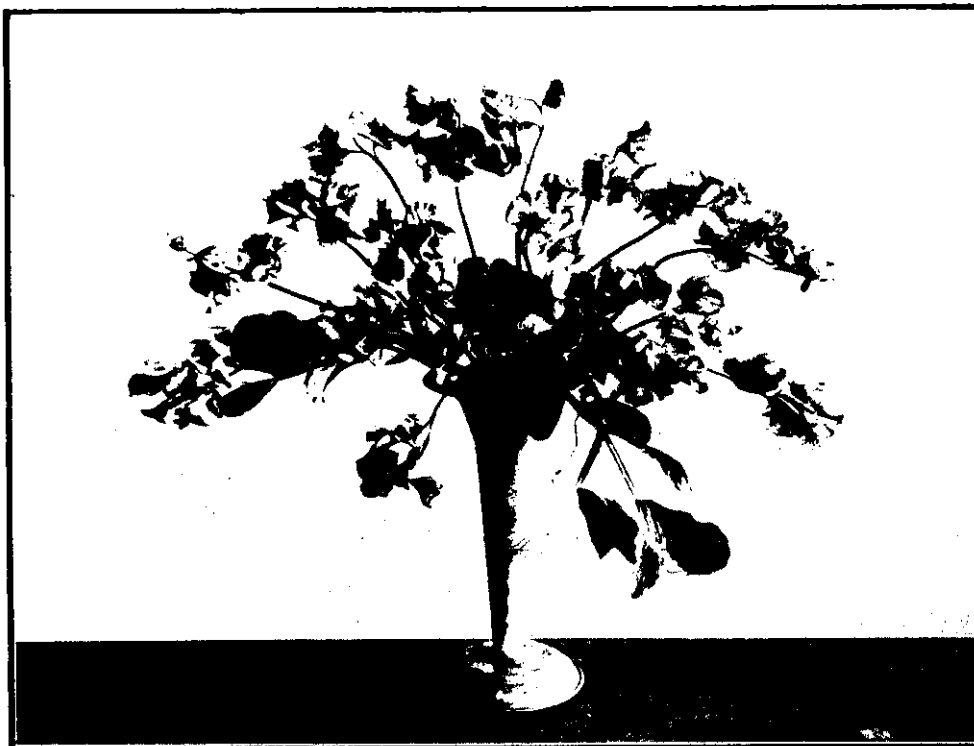
**EVOLUTION OF THE SWEET PEA.**

Mr. Alvin C. Beal, of the Cornell University, Ithica, New York, who had the care of the sweet pea trials conducted by the National Sweet Pea Society of America, recently read an interesting paper in Philadelphia on the evolution of the sweet pea, from which we make extracts.

During the first 100 years of the history of the sweet pea only three varieties or colours were known, namely, purple with blue wings, pale red with white wings (Painted Lady), and white. The black and scarlet appeared in the last years of the eighteenth century. It is quite probable that the scarlet was far from what we conceive a scarlet sweet pea should be to day. In Martyn's edition of "Miller's Gardeners' Dictionary," 1807, we find the white, the Old Painted Lady, the New Painted Lady, the latter with a rose-coloured standard and pale rose wings, Old Purple, and a variety having a violet keel and wings and purple standard. Sayers describes the scarlet sweet pea as *Lathyrus flore rosea*, while the Painted Lady is described as "fleshed" colour. From this we may conclude that the New Painted Lady, a rose-coloured variety, was sometimes called scarlet.

The first of the striped varieties was offered in 1837, and since that date this group has been augmented until the classification now includes striped and flaked (red and rose, purple and blue). This classification, however, does not express the real range of colour in this group, for we have crimson stripes, red and rose stripes on white, red and rose stripes on primrose, mauve stripes, blue stripes, and maroon-flaked.

The variety Blue Edged, the probable forerunner of the pictée forms, appeared in 1860. This was a white variety with a well-defined blue edge, a probable hybrid between *L. magellanicus* and a white variety of *L. odoratus*. The variety, at all events, was the first to exhibit a distinct blue colour among sweet peas. Later it was known as Blue Hybrid, under which name it won an



SWEET PEA, AFTERGLOW.

A beautiful mauve-purple variety of fine size and form, raised by Mr Robert Bolton, Warton, Carnforth, England.

Their exhibits year by year are really a treat, and an education in themselves as to how far Nature can be assisted in producing its very best.

The special class for exhibitors within a radius of five miles of the Wellington G.P.O. was well contested with some very fine blooms—Mr. G. Jeffrey scoring first, with Mr. H. A. Fox second, and Mr. S. G. Pearce third, both being very close on his heels. Twenty-four ladies' decorated tables formed quite an outstanding feature of the show, the first and third prizes going to tables decorated with sweet peas.

A magnificent exhibit of pot plants consisting of calladiums, gloxinias, ferns of all kinds, and many beautiful flowering and foliage plants secured a Royal Horticultural Society medal for Mr. G. A. Chapman, of the Lower Hut, Miss Joseph scoring second with a smaller but very tasteful exhibit. The show was too early for carnations and sweet peas, those staged being of poor quality. The attendance both during the afternoon and evening was excellent.

**Three Good New Sweet Peas.**

"There are several sweet peas that have done well in the terrible season just over in England," says a writer in the "Gardener's Magazine," "and many new varieties that have attracted considerable attention by reason of their fine form and colour. The following three are not here referred to as standing head and shoulders above all other new sorts, but attention is drawn to them because they possess high merit and distinctness, and are thoroughly well worthy of cultivation.

"Afterglow, one of the novelties from Mr. Robert Bolton, Warton, Carnforth, met with general approval on the occasion of the National Sweet Pea Show in July last. The variety has good form, size, and excellent stems, and it presents a novel and pleasing shade of colour that is best described as deep mauve-purple. There is such a softness of shade and such a beautiful sheen over the blooms that almost everyone admires the variety; certainly it did not lack admirers at the great London show.

"Bertha Massey is a charming sweet pea, and its exquisite shade of bright mauve-blue has already made it a first favourite in the estimation of ladies. As an exhibition flower, however, it

stands out well, and it is especially valuable in, say, a class of twelve varieties, because of its attractive colouring, and the way in which it lights up deeper-tinted sorts. Messrs. S. Bide and Sons, Farnham, are the raisers of this fine waved novelty.

"Thomas Stevenson, raised by Mr. Robert Holmes, of Norwich, bears the name of Mr. Thomas Stevenson, head gardener to Mr. E. G. Mocatta, Woburn

Place, Addlestone. Mr. Stevenson's knowledge of sweet peas is particularly wide, and his success as an exhibitor is so well known that when we say he wished this variety to bear his name, it may be taken for granted that in colour and size and form it stands in the first rank. The colour of Thomas Stevenson is variously described as orange-scarlet and orange-salmon, and these de-



SWEET PEA, BERTHA MASSEY.

A charming variety with large mauve-blue flowers of great beauty; raised by Messrs S. Bide and Sons, Farnham, England.