

Labour seem light when attending to its wants, and so enables the worker to benefit both in mind and body. Bacon tells us that "gardening is the pursuit of all human pleasures, and a great solace to the heart of man." That being so, in a general sense, there can be no doubt; but it is only the true enthusiast who can fully appreciate the meaning of these noble words. It may now be profitable to say a few words about some of the enthusiasts I have known intimately, omitting names in case some of my friends might object to publicity, as the truly modest very often do.

The first on my list was a show dahlia enthusiast. It was while I was at school (alas! a long time ago now) that I knew "Jeems." He was headle of the Parish Church, and a pawky, humorous body. His dahlias were his pride, and certainly finer blooms of the show and fancy sections I have never seen. His garden was no great size, but he managed to find room for some three dozen of his favourites. I remember one year poor "Jeems" met with a sad "mischance." His plants were growing well, but a neighbouring farmer was using some kind of artificial manure for his turnips, and "Jeems," thinking to improve matters, took a pail and helped himself to a generous quantity of this material wherewith to treat his favourites. Making a little trench round each plant, he scattered in a good handful to each, and then well watered it in. In a day or two the fine, promising dahlias were all withered and ruined for the season, and "Jeems" was in despair. However, it weaned him from experimenting with stuff out of a "poke," and the same trouble never befell him again.

This inclination to be very good to plants has often disastrous effects, just such as poor "Jeems" had. Another old fellow who grew very fine black currants nearly killed his bushes outright by being too generous with fowl manure. Before leaving dahlias, I should mention the pompoms of an old friend in the South of Scotland. For years he had a perfect craze for this section; and such plants as he could produce! I have seen them eight feet high, and covered with beautifully perfect blossoms. Eventually he transferred his favours to the cactus section, and did them equally well. I know several auricula enthusiasts, and the amount of labour these men expend on these modest flowers is simply wonderful. The bulk of these men grow simply for the love of the flower, but the panny men are nearly all exhibitors. It is astonishing how the hold the panny cult can have on its devotees, and the amount of time and labour they will expend endeavouring to beat a neighbour.

SWEET PEAS IN ROWS.

No. 1 shows how each plant must be placed in rows—in zigzag lines as denoted by the small circles in Fig. 2. The manner of applying manure is important. If the manure be simply dug in in a narrow trench as shown at 2 in Fig. 3, the plants will only thrive during the early part of the summer; but if it be well mixed with the soil generally over a space several feet wide, as shown at No. 3, the plants will continue to make roots, strong shoots, and produce flowers throughout the summer months—if well fed and all flowers are regularly gathered until the end of September.—Severn.

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Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

SWEET PEA CULTURE ILLUSTRATED.