

SWEET LAVENDER.

THE DELICATE PERFUME SO POPULAR A CENTURY AGO.

An Old-Fashioned Fragrant Water That Found Favor With Grand Dames in the Olden Time.

The lavender fields of Surrey were once of great value, remarks the London Standard, but the importations of the fragrant oil from Japan and America (cheaper in price though inferior in quality) seriously injured the prosperity of the home dealers, and some twenty-five years ago the business of lavender cultivation near Carshalton was rapidly declining. An energetic woman, owner of an oil distillery which had been in her family for over a century, then attempted to revive the industry, and now the air around Wallington is fragrant with the scent of the sweet plant which Miss Sprules ("Purveyor of Lavender Water to the Queen," as she is permitted to style herself) distills into oil and lavender water.

Lavender was the favorite product of the herb gardens of our great grandmothers. Laid among raiment and linen its dried flowers were valued as preservatives against moth as well as conveyors of perfume. To ransack old chests in country houses is usually to fill the air with the faint fragrance of lavender. The expression to "lay up in lavender," was a cant phrase two centuries ago for a visit to a pawbroker's. Ben Johnson thus alludes to a "black satin suit which now lies in lavender," the article in question being pledged.

Lavender was an emblem of affection, possibly so selected because of its lasting fragrance. Drayton, in his eclogues, speaks of a pair of lovers exchanging posies of lavender and rosemary as tokens of affection and remembrance. Some persons have as strong an antipathy to scents as had Louis XIV., and his mother, Anne of Austria, fainted at inhaling the scent of roses: the King disliked perfumes, and prohibited their use about him in later days. The most candid of autobiographers, the second wife of the Duke of Orleans, Charlotte of Bavaria, mentions this fancy of the King's, adding, "however, the old One (as she styles her hated rival, Madame de Maintenon) always used perfume, and persuaded the King it was carried by other people."

Persons with this dislike to strong scents cannot echo the praises of "sweet lavender," which certainly exhales powerful fragrance. The perfume is pleasant when mellowed by time, and faintly imparted to household linen. "Lavender-scented sheets" are always described among the attractions at the ideal rustic inn or country abode. No country garden is complete without a lavender bush; and, though street cries are nearly extinct in London, "sweet lavender" is still retailed by hawkers with the old call. Old-fashioned housewives had a knack of weaving dainty ribbon-bound faggots out of sprigs of lavender, which were laid away with linen or raiment as perfumes and preservatives against the ravages of moths. Country lasses often carry lavender sprigs, instead of scent bottles, to church.

At the Wallington distillery even the refuse of the lavender is turned to account, the stalks being used as a litter for stables as well as manure. It is satisfactory to hear of some native industry that appears in anyway flourishing, and lavender seems such a peculiarly English plant that it is according to the "fitness of things" that a native distillery should supply this perfume to our royal palaces. Lavender is always associated with the typical English cottage home, the life of "rustic innocence," so be-rhymed by eighteenth century poets.

Distilleries like those of Wallington are of ancient date, though the name of "distillery" usually conjures up other visions than those of flowers. Benvenuto Cellini, writing in 1543, speaks of a distiller of perfumed waters which were excellent for the complexion as having lately set up a factory in Paris. According to the Italian writer, this was the first introduction of "perfumed waters" into France, and he mentions that this distiller won favor with Francis I. pleasing with gifts of his novel perfumes, and interesting by exhibiting the process of manufacture. Perfumes are said to have existed in France as early as the twelfth century, but probably the distiller alluded to by Cellini had introduced novel machinery, and produced superior scents. Perfumes of all kinds were lavishly introduced into France by Catherine de Medici, in whose time the perfume too often combined the trade of scent maker and poisoner. There is something eminently respectable about "sweet lavender;" it is homely, unsophisticated perfume. It is credited with no miraculous effects on the complexion; it is associated with no fragrant tales of poisons lurking under its scented breath. It is not imitated by skillful chemists, who call products of all—many of nasty—substances by the alluring names of fruit flowers and fruit perfumes. Visitors to the Surrey lavender fields may trace the process of the manufacture of the fragrant "water," from the growth of the plant through its passage through vats and stills to its

final emergence as "pure English lavender water." The favorite English scented plant is yet distilled in the country of its growth, and though large quantities of perfumes are imported from England Wallington can boast that it yet exports some of its fragrant manufactures, India being a customer for some of the Surrey wares.

Fisherman in History.

Caius Marius, when he fled from the court of Hiempsal of Numidia, effected his escape by the assistance of fishermen, sending as a message to his enemies the following: "Go say to the Roman Governor that thou hast seen the exile Marius sitting on the ruins of Carthage." When the great Pompey was overthrown on the plains of Pharsalia, he found shelter and rest in the hut of a fisherman. The unfortunate Mary of Scotland suffered a decisive defeat from her rebel nobles. She crossed the Frith of Solway in a fishing bark, and was safe from her own subjects. Charles the Second, after the fatal termination of the battle of Worcester, fled for his life, and was glad to accept the humble hospitality of the fisherman, Tattersal, who betrayed not his great trust. At the battle of Culloden, which was the death blow to the hopes of Prince Charles Edward, he fled, trusting neither noble nor knight, but sought and found concealment and succor among the humble but devoted fishermen, who had ever been loyal to the Stuarts. Massaniello, the young fisherman of Naples, led his countrymen in revolt against Spanish rule, and rose to supreme power amid the greatest of the land.

In the colonization of Massachusetts, when both men and money were required for the public defence, fishermen were exempted from the performance of military duties and the payment of taxes. Scorning to screen themselves behind special privileges, the fishermen of Marblehead, Salem, Beverly, Newburyport and numerous other fishing places of note, rallied to the defence of the flag, and in all the wars known to the country have borne their full share. Marblehead sent nearly every able bodied man to the camp or continental vessels of war. No other town in the United States suffered in population and property, in proportion to size, as she did. The close of the contest showed within the borders of the town 458 widows and 966 fatherless children.

Duel Between Horse and Snake.

Hiram Blake, a wealthy farmer residing in the southwest part of Blount County, Ga., has related a thrilling story of a battle to the death between a spirited horse of his and a huge rattlesnake. The horse, a very fine animal, valued at \$2500, was loose in a pasture, through which ran a small stream of water. Along the banks of this stream there was a dense undergrowth of small bushes, interspersed with patches of rank grass. The horse was feeding on this grass, and getting near a thick clump of bushes was struck about the nose by an immense rattlesnake. The horse threw his head up and wheeled suddenly around. The fangs of the snake were so firmly imbedded in the animal's flesh that several vigorous shakes were required to throw it off. The snake fell in an open space, and the horse, instead of running away, plunged at the writhing reptile with his fore feet. Failing to strike the snake the first time the brave horse was again bitten on the leg. Rearing high in the air with a piercing neigh that sounded almost human, the noble animal plunged again and again at the striking monster until his iron-shod hoof crushed his head.

An examination of the horse disclosed the fact that it had been bitten no less than five times, and, though drenched time and again with quart bottles of whisky, died in a few hours from the effects of the deadly bites. The rattler was of the diamond back species and the largest ever seen in that section. It measured nine feet in length and had nineteen rattles. Mr. Blake is going to send its skin to the Smithsonian Institute.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Madest Vegetable Giants.

Giants in the vegetable kingdom seem to have developed a singular propensity to keep themselves hidden from public view, until, in these later days, science is gradually finding them out. A number have been brought to view during recent years. One of the most recent is a plant of the *Campanulaceae*, or order of Bell-flowers. It produces a stem reaching five feet in height, and the flowers, arranged along this stem, are over six inches in diameter. These huge bells are of a pale, lavender color, as showy as they are monstrous. Regel, the botanist of St. Petersburg, seems to have been the first to have taken notice of it, and that it is wholly new to science; so it has been named by him for a Russian patron of science, Mr. Ostrowsky. *Ostroskia magnifica*, as it is now to be, was discovered in Bokhara in 1834; but it has already found its way into cultivation in European gardens.—Independent.

The recent naval manoeuvres of England's fleet show that "the chief naval need of the country is a largely increased number of cruisers, and that the prime factor in modern naval warfare is speed."

Tassels on Umbrellas Are Useful. "Let me see a good silk umbrella," said a matter-of-fact looking man in a Chestnut street store. "Here's a nice one," said the salesman, holding up a fine specimen. "I don't like these tassels," remarked the would-be purchaser. "I don't see what they're put on for. They're not ornamental, and I'll swear they're of no use."

"Oh, but they are useful," said the salesman. "Many a man has saved his umbrella by having tassels on it."

"How so?" "Why, instead of laying it down or standing it against a counter when he stops in any place, he simply thrusts one of the tassels through a buttonhole of his vest. When he starts to go out of the store or wherever he may be a tug soon reminds him that he is escorting an umbrella. I lost a good customer by explaining the utility of these tassels—or rather his custom is not so consecutive as it formerly was. He bought a high-priced silk article one day, and took out his knife to cut off the tassels, when I stopped him. 'Don't do that,' I said.

"Why not?" asked he. "I always do when I get home. I might just as well do it. They're no use."

I explained to him that they were of use. "By Jove!" said he, "that's so. What a fool I've been! I have invariably cut off the tassels as soon as I got home and put them away in my bureau. As a consequence I have a score or more of tassels and no umbrellas."

"That man hasn't bought an umbrella for over a year, whereas he used to come in every two or three weeks for a new umbrella."—Philadelphia News.

Is Deafness Hereditary?

The State Convention of deaf mutes assembled in the City Hall at Rochester, N. Y. The President in the course of his address said, concerning the longevity of deaf mutes, that the average, according to present computation, is sixty-seven years. The oldest deaf mute in the State is Miss Mary Tabor, of Scipio, Cayuga county, aged ninety-three. The statistical information of the association is against the theories of Dr. Alexander Graham Bell concerning the hereditary tendency of deafness. In all but one of these institutions in the State there were in twenty years 2293 admissions to the deaf mute schools, and of these eighteen were children of deaf mutes—almost three-quarters of one per cent. The President said not one of the schools of the State was supported as it should be. The State paid a yearly amount per capita of \$250, which was not sufficient.—New York Star.

Chewing-Gum Fortune-Teller.

A foreigner visiting America for the first time would naturally inquire, says the Detroit Free Press, why the jaws of the people were constantly moving, and the answer would be: "That is not owing; they are chewing gum!"

"Everybody chews gum," said Mr. Hull. "We can hardly supply the demand for it. I have just returned from the seashore. All the fashionables were chewing. There is a mania for it since the doctors recommended it as a cure for dyspepsia."

"And will it cure dyspepsia?" Mr. Hull shrugged his shoulders. "It sweetens the breath and cleans the teeth," he said.

"Isn't spruce gum popular now?" "Yes, with Canadians and those who have lived in a pine country. City people do not like the wild taste it has."

There are about fifty different kinds of chewing gum. One kind is a fortune telling gum. It is put up enticingly in fringed yellow paper and has this girl's fortune printed on each label: "Yours is a sad lot indeed. At the age of seventeen you will run away from home to marry a man thirty-five, and the third week after he is killed in a railroad accident, but his life is insured for \$10,000, which you get. Five years after you marry again, this time to a man three years younger than yourself. You die together ten years, when he dies, after spending all your money, and you, to support yourself and children, accept a situation as a matron of an orphan school, living to be old enough to see your grandchildren."

As the fortunes are different, the "chewer" is tempted to try again. The gum itself is a thin red rubber concoction, sweet and flavored with checker-berry.

Aluminum in Plant Ashes.

Possibly one of the most interesting discoveries in chemico-phytology made for some time, though introduced to the public in a very quiet way, is the one that aluminum once supposed to be confined to lycopodiums, is to be found in the ashes of a great number of plants. It is found in all lycopodiums so far examined, except those which grow wholly on trees; in these it is not found. In many ferns it is in considerable quantity. It some tree-ferns full twenty per cent. of the ash was aluminum, and it is remarkable that it has been so long overlooked. Strange to say, though comparatively abundant in Australian ferns, little or none is found in the ferns of Britain.—Independent.

A monument to the memory of Dr. Eliza Mitchell has recently been erected on the summit of Mitchell's Peak, in North Carolina. The monument is of bronze, and is probably the highest memorial shaft in the world, this mountain having a greater altitude than any east of the Rockies.

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