

IN THE LAVENDER FIELDS.

The Work of Harvesting England's Great Crop of Scent-Laden Flowers.

There are few more delightful scenes than a field of lavender, with the morning sun lighting up the ever changing colors of the swaying stems. As fleecy clouds move across the sky the blue mauve of the field takes a darker tinge, and then, as the sun's brilliant light plays again without hindrance on the great patch of scent-laden flowers, the hue becomes almost a Cambridge blue.

But for a moment, the variations are ceaseless. The color of a lavender field has baffled the brush of many an artist, and none that we can recall has even been able to catch these wondrous shifting tints with anything like truth.

Spring frosts often do considerable damage to the lavender plants, but although this year the frosts were keen enough to cut down the potato haulm, they seem to have spared the lavender.

The net result is that, while the bunches of so-called "Mitcham lavender" which find their way to Covent Garden are full and well flavored this year, the yield of essential oils is also excellent.

For the long spell of sunshine has enriched the little cups which constitute the sprigs of bloom. It may surprise a good many people to learn that the name of "the toon laddle" among his

years, such a thing as Mitcham lavender.

There was a time when Fig's Marsh boasted as many as five stills, and when Mitcham was certainly the center of the lavender industry, but the scene of operations has shifted, and now Beddington, Wallington and Croydon constitute with a radius of about six miles Surrey's lavender growing area.

There are something like 150 acres under cultivation in Surrey (notably at Croydon), and if the retailers maintain the Mitcham legend it is because the Surrey lavender is noted for its quality and Mitcham is a good name to stick to. The flower is also grown at Hitchin (Herts), Grove Ferry, near Canterbury, and in Bedfordshire.

Lavender growing is certainly one of the things better done in England than in France, for a pound of English oil ranges in price from 25 shillings to as much as 100 shillings in exceptional times, whereas seven shillings or eight shillings is the price obtained for an equal quantity of the French variety.

A good deal of the French lavender is grown wild, and the natives of the Alpes Maritimes gather it and distill the oils in primitive fashion. There is nothing primitive in the way the industry is carried on in this country, and a visit to the fields of one of the largest growers of Croydon, William Wood, affords abundant evidence of the careful manner in which operations are conducted from the time when the young plants are put in the ground until they have reached the zenith of their oil-yielding powers in the third and last year of their existence. In the first year they are planted some 20 inches apart, and in the following season alternate rows are transplanted elsewhere, leaving the spreading plants more than three feet of space in which to thrive and develop. The planting is done on the square, and the symmetry of design presented to a visitor standing in the center of a field of yearlings, the rows radiating in perfect formation from a middle point, is eminently attractive. There is no mistaking the two and three-year-old crops, for while the former may be, as they are this season, full-bodied and strong, the sprigs of the older plants are weighed down with the weight of their oil-laden cups. Then, too, there is a distinct difference in color between a field of lavender two years old and one which is nearing the end of its term, the young blossoms partaking of a more delicate hue. One advantage the lavender grower possesses over other cultivators is that he has no need to fear the depredations of the birds. Partridges and larks may build their nests in his lavender, but the scent of the flower tempts them not at all, and but for the fact that the rabbits may bite off the straggling sprigs which interfere with their runs the lavender has no enemy save the spring frost.

The harvesting has to be conducted with great care. The fields rapidly ripen under the summer sun, and all the reaping which is done for the sellers of "sweet lavender, 16 branches a penny," has to be done while the dew is still upon the land, for to "bunch" the sprigs when the sun has dried the ripe blooms would mean to lose millions of the scent-giving cups that would fall under the pressure of the reaper. The lavender, which is destined for the distillery, and which is cut throughout the day, is laid on what are known as St. Peter's burg mats, which are bound around about 60 pounds of lavender stalks, and in this way the bloom is carried to the stills. Here coppers holding as much as a ton of lavender boil the flowers, the steam which is given off being condensed, and the oil separated from the water. Stripped to the waist, the men work night and day in the heat of the barn-like buildings of two stories, with the furnaces below and the distillery in the floor above. Carefully the boiling process is watched until the time comes for securing the precious oil of lavender, which makes sent for the million. But that after all is the business and the least attractive side of the calling of the grower over whose fields one is roaming. It is the growing lavender which possesses so many charms for the visitor. The air is charged with faint scent of the flower, the bees (black bumble bees) buzz in thousands above the sprigs of blossom, and butterflies—the chalkhill blue, the handsome sulphur-tinted yellow and many others—add to this scene of varied colors over which the reaper is passing with the wish of his sickle. Who would not envy the lavender grower, who purifies his calling amid such delightful surroundings?—London Mail.

MEETING ROYALTY UNAWARES.

Amusing Adventures of People with Kings and Queens They Didn't Know.

Many amusing stories are told of the adventures of royal personages when they have divested themselves of what may be called their official dress and assumed the guise of ordinary mortals. And no one loves more to tell these tales of misadventure than the royalties themselves.

The czar still recounts the story of an experience he had some years ago in Scotland. It was in the early days of his cycling enthusiasm, and he was riding in company with Princess Maud.

When the royal cyclists were walking with their machines up one of the steep hills near Balmoral they overtook an old Scotsman who wished them "good day" and seemed disposed for gossip.

The young pair entered into the spirit of the adventure, and chatted merrily about their cycling until they reached the top of the hill. Before they remounted the gallant old man looked wonderingly at the machines and said: "Weel, weel, they're grand things for you toon lasses and laddies."

When they had got out of hearing the royal pair literally laughed until they cried, and the czar even yet answers to the name of "the toon laddle" among his

years, such a thing as Mitcham lavender.

There was a time when Fig's Marsh boasted as many as five stills, and when Mitcham was certainly the center of the lavender industry, but the scene of operations has shifted, and now Beddington, Wallington and Croydon constitute with a radius of about six miles Surrey's lavender growing area.

There are something like 150 acres under cultivation in Surrey (notably at Croydon), and if the retailers maintain the Mitcham legend it is because the Surrey lavender is noted for its quality and Mitcham is a good name to stick to. The flower is also grown at Hitchin (Herts), Grove Ferry, near Canterbury, and in Bedfordshire.

Lavender growing is certainly one of the things better done in England than in France, for a pound of English oil ranges in price from 25 shillings to as much as 100 shillings in exceptional times, whereas seven shillings or eight shillings is the price obtained for an equal quantity of the French variety.

A good deal of the French lavender is grown wild, and the natives of the Alpes Maritimes gather it and distill the oils in primitive fashion. There is nothing primitive in the way the industry is carried on in this country, and a visit to the fields of one of the largest growers of Croydon, William Wood, affords abundant evidence of the careful manner in which operations are conducted from the time when the young plants are put in the ground until they have reached the zenith of their oil-yielding powers in the third and last year of their existence. In the first year they are planted some 20 inches apart, and in the following season alternate rows are transplanted elsewhere, leaving the spreading plants more than three feet of space in which to thrive and develop. The planting is done on the square, and the symmetry of design presented to a visitor standing in the center of a field of yearlings, the rows radiating in perfect formation from a middle point, is eminently attractive. There is no mistaking the two and three-year-old crops, for while the former may be, as they are this season, full-bodied and strong, the sprigs of the older plants are weighed down with the weight of their oil-laden cups. Then, too, there is a distinct difference in color between a field of lavender two years old and one which is nearing the end of its term, the young blossoms partaking of a more delicate hue. One advantage the lavender grower possesses over other cultivators is that he has no need to fear the depredations of the birds. Partridges and larks may build their nests in his lavender, but the scent of the flower tempts them not at all, and but for the fact that the rabbits may bite off the straggling sprigs which interfere with their runs the lavender has no enemy save the spring frost.

The harvesting has to be conducted with great care. The fields rapidly ripen under the summer sun, and all the reaping which is done for the sellers of "sweet lavender, 16 branches a penny," has to be done while the dew is still upon the land, for to "bunch" the sprigs when the sun has dried the ripe blooms would mean to lose millions of the scent-giving cups that would fall under the pressure of the reaper. The lavender, which is destined for the distillery, and which is cut throughout the day, is laid on what are known as St. Peter's burg mats, which are bound around about 60 pounds of lavender stalks, and in this way the bloom is carried to the stills. Here coppers holding as much as a ton of lavender boil the flowers, the steam which is given off being condensed, and the oil separated from the water. Stripped to the waist, the men work night and day in the heat of the barn-like buildings of two stories, with the furnaces below and the distillery in the floor above. Carefully the boiling process is watched until the time comes for securing the precious oil of lavender, which makes sent for the million. But that after all is the business and the least attractive side of the calling of the grower over whose fields one is roaming. It is the growing lavender which possesses so many charms for the visitor. The air is charged with faint scent of the flower, the bees (black bumble bees) buzz in thousands above the sprigs of blossom, and butterflies—the chalkhill blue, the handsome sulphur-tinted yellow and many others—add to this scene of varied colors over which the reaper is passing with the wish of his sickle. Who would not envy the lavender grower, who purifies his calling amid such delightful surroundings?—London Mail.

Relieved Him.

Magistrate—Do you acknowledge that you were with the gang when this man was robbed?

Prisoner—I refuse to commit myself, judge.

All right; I'll do it for you. Three months.—Philadelphia Record.

The Infantile War.

Young Mother—Oh, dear! I wonder what the baby is crying for now? We have to give him everything he seems to want.

Young Father (grinly)—I guess he's crying for something to eat for—Judge.

SHOPPING IN JAPAN.

Great Deliberation Marks All Business Transactions—Some Queer English.

Japanese are very fond of strolling through their bazaars. You enter one door and leave by another. Goods for sale are displayed on each side of aisles that wind through the length of the shop. Passing up and down these aisles they lead you to the second, and often third, story of the building, then back again through different aisles, causing you to travel the length of the establishment many times. Finally you see the doorway a few feet distant, but even then you must travel this maze several times its length to escape.

Usually shopping is very restful in Japan. You sit around on the floor, and in some shops they bring you cups of tea to sip and a "hibachi" from which to light your pipe.

Time is of no consequence to the orientals, nor are they eager to sell. Their ideas of trade are very peculiar.

You are compelled to ask them whether you can see articles after their stating that they have them in the store.

Ten pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Twenty pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Twenty-five pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Twenty-eight pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Thirty pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Thirty-two pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Thirty-five pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Thirty-eight pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Forty pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Forty-two pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Forty-four pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Forty-six pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Forty-eight pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Forty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-one pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-two pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-three pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-four pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-five pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-six pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-seven pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-eight pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article sometimes cost 12 pieces.

Fifty-nine pieces of an article