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meat and beer. In the evening, of all those thousands collected, not one is to be seen “drunk and disorderly,” and not a voice distinguishably raised in anger or dispute! How far different would be the scene in London, Edinburgh, or Dublin!

**BRITANNIA’S SMELLING BOTTLE.**

DID the reader ever ask himself, as he passed a perfumer’s shop,—How are these delicate odours that strike so sweetly upon the sense taken prisoners? What chains can we forge fine enough to enslave the delicious breath of the rose? what trap can we set sufficiently subtle to seize the odour of the violet? By what process do we manage to “bottle” the hawthorn-scented gale?

If the perfumer (guessing his thoughts) were to say “The most successful trap we set is a lump of fat,” possibly our reader would open his eyes very wide, and exclaim incredulously, What possible affinity can there be between so gross an animal product, and so volatile an essence? Verily, good reader, there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy; and this is one of them. Possibly, if we were to tell you that the perfumer salts down his rose-leaves in order to preserve their odour, just as the meat-curer salts down his pork, you would be still incredulous; yet, verily, we speak the words of truth and soberness, as we shall presently show you.

The cultivation of flowers for the manufacture of perfumes is chiefly carried on in the south of France, in the plains watered by the river Var; and now that Louis Napoleon has acquired both banks of that river, he may be said to have taken possession of the scent-bottle of Europe. Those who have visited Cannes and its neighbourhood, must have seen the flower-farms bright with a thousand brilliant dyes; and at Grasse, again, the plantations of orange trees, which perfume the air. To secure the odours of those flowers is the care of the proprietors, so that thousands in far-off capitals shall be able to enjoy the perfume that otherwise would waste its sweetness upon the desert air. There are various modes of accomplishing this; but the principal one, for the more delicate flowers, such as the jasmine, the violet, rose, and orange, is by what we will call the fat-trap.

Those who know anything of chemistry are well aware that carbon, in the shape of charcoal, possesses an astonishing affinity for all kinds of odours—a property which the physician avails himself of to absorb the foul smells of the hospital. The hydrocarbons, such as beef and mutton fat, highly purified, possess a similar absorptive power, which is taken advantage of by the flower farmer, to take and secure the fleeting breath of his flowers. Let us suppose, for instance, that it is the season for violets. The proprietor has already prepared thousands of square wooden frames, the rims of which are, say, three inches in depth; in the middle of this frame is inserted a sheet of glass, and the whole series of frames are constructed so as to fit one upon the other. Upon both sides of the glass a film of finely purified fat is spread, to the depth of a quarter of an inch, and upon this fat the violet flowers just picked are lightly spread. Thus it will be seen the
flowers are sandwiched between layers of fat, resting upon the lower layer, but not touching the upper layer. In a short period the fat will have absorbed the whole perfume of the flower, when a fresh supply is added, and this process of feeding with flowers in often repeated thirty times, until the fat is thoroughly saturated with its perfume. Thus imprisoned, the odour is safely transferred from one part of the globe to another.

The extent to which this process is carried in the south of France may be imagined when we say that 1,600,000 lbs. of orange flowers, 500,000 lbs. of rose blooms, 100,000 lbs. of jasmine blooms, 60,000 lbs. of violets, 65,000 lbs. of acacia buds, 30,000 lbs. of tuberose flowers, and 5,000 lbs. of jonquil flowers are consumed annually, the value of which cannot be less than 240,000. But, says the reader, what can all this scented fat be used for? The fat, good reader, is only the vehicle in which these odours travel. The next process, when it reaches the manufacturing perfumer, is to liberate the delicate Ariel from its bondage. In order to accomplish this, the fat is cut into small cubes and macerated in pure spirits of wine. The scent, like an inclement mate, immediately deserts its more material partner, and combines with the spirit, just as wives now and then will desert their solid city husbands for some mercenary singing master. The scent is now in the form of an extract, but is by no means fitted for the pocket handkerchief. Here the artist steps in and combines in definite proportions different odours so as to produce bouquets, or he manufactures primary odours; for your fashionable perfumer will no more allow the public to enjoy the pure perfume of the flower than a chef de cuisine will permit you to taste the natural quality of the meat. And, first, with respect to primary odours, it is astonishing how few art has yet managed to extract direct from the flower. Violets, geraniums, orange blossoms, and roses, are translated, it is true, by the absorptive process immediately into the perfumer's stores. But of the scores of scents which the European nose smells at, full two-thirds are but a delusion and a snare. Mr. Septimus Piese, of the firm of Piese and Labin, has written a very interesting book on the art of perfumery, in which this secret is most frankly confessed. We must admit, however, that the manufacturing perfumer is in no wise to blame in this matter. It is not his business to provide the primary odours; his department is the legerdemain of combining them; give him a fuller scale of notes and he will not fail to please the public more varied tastes. Mr. Piese indeed laments, that whilst cultivators of gardens spend thousands for the gratification of the eye, they altogether neglect the nose. Why should we not grow flowers for their odours as well as for their colours? There are scores of flowers in our gardens that would yield admirable extracts with a little pains. For instance, there is heliotrope, the lily of the valley, honeysuckle, myrtle, clove pink, and wallflower. We have extracts of all these flowers in the perfumers' shops, but they are nothing but skillful combinations of other scents. They play tricks with our noses as they do with our palates. We know full well that certain flavourings, such as pine apple drops, jargonelle pears, &c., are manufactured out of the refuse of gas tar and from rotten cheese. In the same way some of our sweetest and, as we believe, natural flower-scentes have their base in toad animal secretions, such as musk, civet, &c. Who will come to the rescue? There is a great cry for woman's work—here it is. Many a lady would willingly employ her time which hangs heavy in country-houses, if she only knew how. We will tell her. "I want heliotrope pomade," says Mr. Piese. "I would buy any amount that I could get;" and this is the way to get it. If there is such a thing as a glue-pot in the house, you have the only piece of machinery needed—it is, in fact, a water-bath.

As the details of the process are all important, we will proceed in Mr. Piese's own words.

"At the season when the flowers are in bloom, obtain a pound of fine lard, melt the lard, and strain it through a close hair sieve, allow the liquid fat as it falls from the sieve to drop into the cold spring water; this operation granulates and washes the blood and membrane from it. In order to start with a perfectly inodorous grease, the melting and granulation process may be repeated three or four times, using a pinch of salt and a pinch of alum in each water; it is then to be washed five or six times in plain water; finally, re-melt the fat, and cast it into a pan, to free it from adhering water. Now put the clarified fat into the glue-pot, and place it in such a position near the fire of the green-house, or elsewhere, that will keep it warm enough to be liquid; into the fat throw as many flowers as you can, and there let them remain for twenty-four hours. At this time strain the fat from the spent flowers, and add fresh ones; repeat this operation for a week: we expect, at the last straining, the fat will have become very highly perfumed, and when cold, may be justly termed pomade à la heliotrope."

To turn this pomade into an extract fit for the handkerchief, all that has to be done is to cut the perfumed fat into small pieces, drop it into a wide-mouthed bottle, and cover it with highly rectified spirit, in which it must remain for a week. When strained off the process will be completed.

In this manner every flower of the garden may be turned into a genuine extract, and the lady who takes the trouble to perform the operation may be sure that she possesses a perfume which money cannot buy from the best perfumer in the metropolis. Moreover, she would then possess some individuality in her perfume. Why should we not know our fair friends by the delicate odours with which they are surrounded, as we know them afar off by the charm of voice? There is an appropriate odour, to our minds, to each particular character. The spirituelle should affect jasmine; the brilliant and witty, heliotrope; the robust, the more musky odours; and young girls just blooming into womanhood, the rose. The citron-like perfumes are more fitted for the melancholy temperament, and there is a sad minor note in vanilla that the young widow should affect. When we study the esthetics of odours, we shall match nice shades of character with delicate shades of odour. Why should human feeling be expressed better by colours than by perfumes?
Meanwhile we must trust to the perfumer to set the fashion, and to impose upon us his bouquets at his own good will. We are, in fact, the slaves of his nose. All the fashionable world, like the Three Kings of Brentford, but a little while ago were smelling at one nosegay in the celebrated "Ess Perfume;" later still, we have had imposed upon us "Kiss-me-Quick;" and now the latest novelty of the season is "Stolen Kisses," with its sequel, "Box his Ears." Why are theMessrs. Pisse and Lubin so amatory in their nomenclature?

Besides the processes of maceration and absorption, or enceurage as the French term it, there are several other methods of obtaining the colours of flowers, the principal of which is distillation; by this means the essential principle, or the otto of the flower only, is extracted. It is an old saying that we can have too much of a good thing, and it will be verified by an inspection of a perfumer's laboratory. One might be led to think that a common seur's wine-bins contain the dearest liquids in the world—old port at two guineas a bottle looks extravagant enough; but let us enter the dark little room where the perfumer keeps his otto and extracts. He draws you a drop of oil of jasmine, holds it to your nose, and tells you with a complacent smile, that it is only worth nine guineas a wine-glass full—he shows you a little bottle of otto of roses from the far East. The principal rose farms of Europe are situated in the Balkan in Bulgaria, and the expense of the perfume may be estimated, when we state that it requires at least 2000 blooms to yield a single drachm of the otto. Different districts have their own peculiar shades of difference, just as different vineyards produce different qualities of wine. The Provence roses of the south of France have a fragrance peculiarly their own, which is attributed to the fact that the bees carry the pollen of the orange blossoms into the rose buds, and it is to the delicate flavoring of the orange that this otto owes its value. The suggestion of the bridal flower is indeed very slight, but herein the charm is constituted, as the easy house comfort-seur shall well know when he ordered a slice of beef cut with a hammy knife. Some of these precious otto and extracts amelt at in the bulk are positively disgusting; take civet, for instance—a pot suddenly opened is enough to knock you down. It is the infinite subdivision of the scent which gives it its true value as a perfume. Some astounding tales have been told of the persistence of scents, but we know that some of them have outlived the memory of great empires, and probably will yet exist when the New Zealander takes his seat on the broken arch of London Bridge: there is to be seen at Alnwick Castle a jar of perfume, at least three thousand years old, which still gives out a perfume. We know no better illustration of the infinite divisibility of matter than is afforded by the history of some of the more persistent perfumes. But it is not the animal perfumes alone that are disagreeable in a concentrated form—all flower odours are more or less changed; otto of roses is anything but nice, and otto of violets is for all the world like prussic acid. When they are diluted with an approximate quantity of spirit, they regain all their delicacy, just as they do when subjected to the diluting influence of the gentle breeze in the summer evening.

The concoction of bouquets is the triumph of the perfumer's art. His nose must have the most delicate appreciation of the harmonies, so that no one odour shall outrage another. A writer in "Chambers's Journal" has very subtly remarked that scents, like sounds, affect the olfactory nerve in certain definite proportions. Thus there are octaves of odours, the different notes of which agree with each other. Let us take heliotrope, vanille, almond and orange blossoms, for instance, and we find that they possess a cognate smell. There is another series of perfumes which constitute a higher octave, such as citron, lemon, orange peel, and verbena. Again, we have half-notes, such as rose, and rose-geranium; and minor keys, such as patchouly, vilivart; and, lowest in the scale, musk and other animal odours strike a deep base note.

The skilful perfumer with this full gamut before him can make a thousand different harmonies; indeed, the combinations are endless, but they must be made with a full knowledge of the art. He can no more jumble half-a-dozen perfumes together, and expect to be able to please the nose, than he could strike half-a-dozen notes at random, and expect to charm the ear with the harmonious effects of a chord. But an harmonious perfume is not all that is required; the British public are very exigant, they want a delicate yet strongly marked odour, and a persistent one at the same time,—two totally incompatible qualities, for an odour that strikes powerfully upon the nose must be a very volatile one; and, if it is volatile, how can it be expected to remain in the handkerchief for any length of time?—it is like eating a cake and expecting to have it afterwards. The perfumer gets over the difficulty by making some persistent odour, such as musk or vanille, the base of his perfume. The effect of this, however, is to give the scent two different odours; the volatile perfume on its departure leaving behind it the base, which is often objected to as smelling "sickly." The moral of our story is, that we should not expect a delicate perfume to be two things at the same time—volatile and lasting.

England is famous for only two products used in perfumery—lavender and peppermint. We grow roses also in large quantities, but only for the purpose of making rose-water. Our flower-farms are situated at Mitcham and Hitchin. English lavender is worth four times as much in the market as any other, and it is a scent which partakes somewhat of the national character; it has, indeed, a sad and grave smell, and possesses a certain poetic grace, but is withal healthy and invigorating. We are informed that this and peppermint form the base of many kinds of cheap perfumery; but musk is the pièce de résistance of the manufacturers. People very commonly say, "I detest musk—I never have a perfume containing musk." The perfumer smiles, and gravely assures them the articles he sells do not contain it. All the while he is well aware that it forms a very
essential part of all favourite perfumes; it is a principal ingredient in the renowned old Windsor soap, all sachets, or dry perfumery-bags contain it, few essences or bouquets are without it, and yet this is a perfume that no one likes!

The scents of the ancients were, as far as we know, entirely dry perfumes, such as myrrh, spikenard, frankincense, all gum resins which are still in use by perfumers, and they were used rather to perfume the air than the person, although it was a very old custom to scent the beard. It is a question purely of taste as to whether scent is allowable to the male sex, but among Englishmen, at least, the feeling is against it; the fashion is certainly feminine, and long may it be confined to the ladies, for although it would be a superfluity to paint the lily, we may yet be permitted to perfume the living violet.

A. W.

"HIS HAND UPON THE LATCH."

A YOUNG WIFE'S SONG.

My cottage home is fill'd with light
The long, long summer day,
But, ah! I dearer love the night,
And hail the sinking ray.
For eve restores me one whose smile
Both more than morning's match,—
And life afresh seems dawning while
His hand is on the latch!

When autumn fields are thick with sheaves,
And shadows earlier fall,
And grapes grow purple neath the eaves
Along our trellis'd wall,—
I dreaming sit,—the sleepy bird
Paint twittering in the thatch,—
To wake to joy when soft is heard
His hand upon the latch!

In the short winter afternoon
I throw my work aside,
And through the lattice, whilst the moon
Shines mistily and wide,
On the dim upland paths I peer
In vain his form to catch,—
I startle with delight, and hear
His hand upon the latch!

Yes; I am his in storm and shine;
For me he toils all day;
And his true heart I know is mine,
Both near me and away.
And when he leaves our garden gate
At morn, his steps I watch,—
Then patiently till eve await
His hand upon the latch!