VIOLETS, SWEET VIOLETS!

By Fanny L. Green.

Violets are one of the earliest of our annual flowers, and are the first of the spring to clothe the meadows with their purple garb, soon to be followed by bluebells. They are often called "bloomers" because they blossom before the other flowers, and are sometimes called "wanderers" because they are found in the wilder parts of the country. Their flowers are small, purple, and fragrant, and the leaves are heart-shaped.

The violets have a sweet and pungent smell, and are often used in making perfumes and other fragrant articles. They are also used in the preparation of many dishes, such as vinaigrettes and salads. The leaves are also used as a tea, and are said to have a soothing effect on the nerves.

The violets are a symbol of love and friendship, and are often given as tokens of affection. They are also associated with the month of May, and are often used in Maypole decorations.

The violets are easy to grow, and can be propagated by division or by seed. They thrive in a variety of soils, but prefer a well-drained, loamy soil with a pH of 6.0 to 7.0. They require full sun to partial shade, and need regular watering, especially in dry conditions.

The violets are a hardy plant, and can withstand a considerable amount of cold. They are also relatively trouble-free, and are not affected by many pests and diseases. The main problem with violets is that they can become invasive if not controlled.

The violets are a beautiful and fragrant flower, and are a welcome sight in the spring. They are also a reminder of the beauty of nature, and the importance of preserving it.
CHAPTER IV.

Friday, June 23rd.—Half my term of imprisonment is at an end. I have just received an anxious letter from home asking me for news of my illness, and an impertinent query from my sister as to whether mumps hurt much.

Well, here I am seated at my davenport, or scrittoire, or secretaire as they call it here. What a delightful bit of furniture it is to be sure—full of little drawers and snug compartments, and tiny recesses, and miniature cupboards! Love for inanimate things is not generally permissible; if it were I should, without doubt, proclaim the fact that I love my davenport. I find an infinite pleasure in opening the little drawers one after another, peeping inside at their contents, and letting them shut again with a bang. My davenport has seen its most obsessional secret, but still a secret—and I am proud of the fact! I should never have found out the existence of this secret had I not occasionally and very mysteriously lost a number of my copy-books, papers, and pens. This made me institute a search, when I discovered a little brass button, which on being heavily pressed opened a small door, which instantly sprung back again and shut on my fingers. This process has always to be undergone when I visit my secret, and I have never once been able to open it without being punished for my curiosity.

My davenport is of carved black oak like the rest of my furniture, and the shelf upon which I write is covered with red rep, so old, and tattered, and worm-eaten, that it has become

MUMPS.

By BUZZIE, Author of "Refining Fires," etc.

sally employed by the shawl merchants of Cashmere to protect their fabrics from the attacks of moths and insects. It is also smoked as a narcotic and stimulant. The golden blossoms of the cassie tree from the most effective substitute for the more expensive blossoms of the violet, and it is cultivated in the neighbourhood of Grasse and Cannes entirely on this account. As in the case of most flowers the seeds must be steeped in water before they are sown, a process that must take place in heat. In their third year the young trees are grafted, but they do not flower for another three years. The harvest of cassie blossoms is from October to January or February, and the crop is a successive one; each full-grown tree will produce about two pounds weight of flowers, which are worth about threepence or fourpence a pound.

Bulle de cassie is produced by enflorescing olive oil as in the case of violets. Cassie pomade may be prepared by the cold process of enfleurage, but it is usually the result of the less delicate hot process known as maceration. Pure fat is put into clean linens, metal, or porcelain pans, and melted by means of steam. The cassie flowers are then immersed in the liquid fat during a period of from twelve to forty-eight hours, when they are carefully skimmed out, and fresh flowers added till the grease has absorbed the required strength of perfume. Pure olive oil often takes the place of fat in the maceration process. Extract of cassie is derived from cassie pomade or oil, in the same way that extract of violet is obtained from violet pomade or oil. Like violet extract it is of a fine green colour.

The following beautiful thought of an old herbalist may fitly bring this paper to an end—

"The black or purple violets, or March violets of the garden, have a great prerogative above others, not only because the mind conceived a certain pleasure and recreation by smelling and handling of these most odorous flowers, but also for that very many by these violets receive ornament and comely grace; for there be made of them garlands for the head, nosegays and posies (posies), which are delightful to look on and pleasant to smell at, speaking nothing of their appropriate virtues; yet gardeners themselves receive by these the greatest ornament of all chieftest beauty and most gallant grace, and the recreation of the mind, which is taken thereby cannot but be very good and honest, for they adorn and stir up a man to that which is comely and honest, for flowers through their beauty, variety of colour, and exquisite form, do bring to a liberal mind the remembrance of his own esthetic, comeliness, and all kinds of virtues."

hadn't a mirror to reflect back upon me a pair of honest but uncomparably green eyes. I might be led to suppose that, like the heroine of one of Grimm's Fairy Tales, I was afflicted with four eyes, black, blue, brown, and yellow (for I suppose yellow matched closest to the colour of the sun's rays). If all the flowery butterlies which follow up these initial lines are as truthful as themselves I shall begin to think that old cynic Voltaire was right when he apostrophised compliments as being a "bouquet of lies."

My prose love letters are exactly like every other girl's—effusions which seem to me more or less idiotic seen through the medium of a attack of mumps, but which at other times may have impressed me, and have received the same number of tears and smiles as are usually lavished on such precious documents. In fact, I am not quite sure whether I have not on the receipt of one or two of them brightened up and blushed, and like "Little Emmy" tripped off to my room with a beating heart to read them all unseen.

My school letters, alas, have little more sincerity and candour about them than my billets-doux. They are all very gushy, and generally begin with "My own dear old darling," or something similar, and finish up with "Yours for ever and ever till death do us part," and yet the writers have one and all married or otherwise been lost to me, and I no doubt have completely passed out of their life and thoughts.

I here give a fair specimen of one of these school-girl effusions written to me by Hilda—aged twelve.