

in these interesting works. Thus, on one occasion a lucifer-match was found to have passed between the rollers of the granulating machine; and on another occasion a key was discovered in the same condition. It seems little less than a miracle that such a thing could have happened without causing an explosion.

The works here can turn out about 30,000 barrels of powder in a year, or about 700 barrels weekly. It may be of interest to add that, in-

allowed to dig in them, these grounds are virgin soil, and accordingly they nourish a profusion of wild flowers which are scarcely known outside. Hence they are a favourite haunt of botanists who can procure admission to them; but the favour is sparingly accorded.

The introduction of gunpowder into England is connected with the honoured name of Evelyn, as that family are said to have brought from Holland the secret of its manufacture. Mr. George Evelyn,



ON THE LEA.

cluding the sidings and canals, there are about ten miles of water on the estate, of which three and three-quarter miles are navigable. In addition to the screens of trees, the more dangerous portions of the works are isolated by solid traverses of earth or brick, to minimise the effects of explosion.

The "works" which I have described can boast of almost a venerable antiquity. In the "Anglorum Speculum, or the Worthies of England" (1684), it is stated that there were gunpowder mills "on the River Ley, between Waltham and London." In 1735 Farmer speaks of them, in his "History of Waltham," as being the property of a Mr. John Walter; and in the same book there is a delightful description of gunpowder. As nobody is

grandfather of the author of "Sylva," received, about 1590, a licence to set up powder mills at Long Ditton and at Godstone, Surrey.

"The works at Faversham, afterwards for so many years the Government gunpowder factory, date from Elizabeth's reign; but they were then secondary in importance to those at Godstone. There seems reason, however, to suppose that powder-mills existed at Waltham Abbey as far back as 1561, for in that year we find John Thomworth, of Waltham, in treaty, on behalf of Elizabeth, for the purchase of saltpetre, sulphur, and staves for barrels. Fuller also refers, in his "Worthies," to the powder mills of Waltham Abbey, of which he was appointed vicar in 1641. In 1787 these mills