Democratic Watchman.

Bellefonte, Pa., August 23, 1907.

FOR A MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY.

Lord Jesus, Thou hast known
A mother's love and tender care;
And Thou wilt hear, while for my own
Mother most dear I make this birthday prayer.

Protect her life, I pray,
Who gave the gift of life to me;
And may she know from day to day
The deepening glow of Life that comes from Thee!

As once upon her breast
Fearless and well content I lay,
So let her heart, on Thee at rest,
Feel fears depart and troubles fade away.

Her every wish fulfill;
And even if Thou must refuse
In anything let Thy wise will
A comfort bring such as kind mothers use.

I cannot pay my debt
For all the love that she has given;
But Thou, love's Lord, will not forget
Her due reward—bless her in earth and heaven.

—Henry Van Dyke, in the *Outlook*

THE FATAL GUM.

Zeke Scraggs had been working out on the dry patch, where it was a long ways between drinks, and lukewarm water from a canteen no particular comfort. He complained, and I produced a discovery in the shape of a tinfoil-wrapped package of chewing-gum marked "Lily Sweet."

"If you chew a piece of that when you're dry, Scraggsy," I said, "it will stave off thirst for some time."

Mr. Scraggs received the offering in his large palm, and poked it with the forefinger of his other hand.

"Yaas," he said; "Y-a-a-s. But it's dangerous."

"Dangerous?"

"Horrible. You don't ketch me minglin' myself with no 'Lily Sweets.' I consider the lily of the field how she grows. You wouldn't believe that anything that sounds so innercent could be the tee-total ruin of a large, dark-complected tin-horn, with a pair of muss-taches like Injun-polished buffler horns, would you?"

Like anybody else, I said I wouldn't.

"Well, it was," said Zeke. "If you could see that gam, and compair him to this here package of choon'-gum, you wouldn't ever guess that either one could do much of anything to t'other; yet I can a tale relate of that combination that would make each particler hair stand up-ended like the squills of the frightful porky-pine."

"Rats!" said I, being but a youth.

"You got any hairs that's particler by nature? No? Well, then, I'll spread this terrific osculation of the conmingulated forces of Nature befo' you, as Charley says. My kind of narrative is the plain, unvarnished tale. Folks that tell a varnished tale is apt to sit on the varnish before it's dry, any they'll stick to it, come cold fact or red-hot argyment; whilest I'm always willin' to prune, cross-harrer, revise or alter accordin' to my victim's feelin's. That is, of course, if they go to corner me, which, between gentlemen, is a low-cut outrage. But this business about the gam is dead straight. I had relinquished all amusements and was livin' quiet in order to save money, before I got acquainted with the facts.

"First place, comes a female missionary out to the ranch, and she was a corkin' fine-lookin' nice young woman, too, who tackled me on the subject of chewin' terbackker. She had me all taugled up in my own rope and double lift-sided front and back before the clock struck one.

"I tried to arger that nobody wouldn't care whether I chewed terbackker or grass, so long's I was happy and doin' no harm. But that turned out not to be true. She said so.

"Then I tried to reach her womanly compassion by tearfully expoundin' how I'd miss my cut of plug a day; I never touched her. Hers was a new religion. It had a different figger on the back from any I'd had dealt to me before. Seems it weren't a sin to chew, but it was the control I'd lost over myself that put me in the hole. I had just to git command of my mind and everything would come at me, like a North Ca'lina town's nigger's dogs chasin' a three-legged cat up an alley.

"'But, ma'am,' says I, 'I've knocked off before; an',as for control over my mind, durin' the bull spell me an' Star Plug was separated, friends had to hold me to prevent me goin' in an' robbin' my own grip. Control of my mind,' says I, fightin' noble, 'why, you could 'a' sicked a burglar on me, an' he couldn't have found no such thing on my person. I didn't have no mind. I walked up an' down, day and night, in that man's town, like a ravin' maniac stupefied by his halloocinashuns. All that passed beneath my shinin' dome was: "Oh for a chew! Oh for a chew! Oh for a choo-choo-choo-choo! Whoeep! Breaks!" And when the cars went over the switch or a cayuse cantered up, they said: "Terbackker, terbackker, terback ker," to my famished ears. All I wished was that the houses was built of plug, and all I thought of was that I could get earnest with an axe. That's *all* I *could* think—all!"

"'But you must use the control!' says she, eager.

"'You mean, ma'am,' I says, 'that I must seek out a quiet place, clinch my fists, grind my teeth to a feather-edge and strain my suspenders to the bustin' point in one calamitous effort to think I'm not thinking?'

"'Precisely!" says she, victorious. 'You Western men have such a ready grip on essentials that it is a delight to be your guide.'

"'Well, Uncle Tom and the dogs a-bitin' him! says I to myself. 'Lead on!' I took off my hat aloud and bowed to within two of my noses to the ground. 'To be able to foller so gentle and able a guide straight to perdition is a joy,' says I. 'I quit the class of roominants for two weeks. I will not use terbackker. No!' says little Zekey Scraggs. 'There's my hand on it, ma'am.'

"And she turned pink with joy. She was an awful nice little gal. Only she was so jam-full of knowledge that it was hard for her to understand things.

"Having put up this job on myself, I went to our storekeep' and called for my time. I knew I'd need bright lights and excitement for a while. I begun to feel already that a chew wouldn't go bad.

"There was the storekeep' gazin' fixedly at a book; his lips was movin', but he seemed in a kind of rapture. When I hollered to him, he jumped all over and barked at me like a dog. At the same time he grabbed up a cigareet, stuck it in his mouth, took it out, looked at it and fired it down again.

"A light broke on me. 'So she got you, too? says I.

"'Hooppitty Hoppitty Hippitty Yerhoop!' says he. 'That's just what she's done! I'm three days out. Not a smell of smoke in three days! My soul has gone away and won't have any more truck with me. I don't know who I am, nor why. I've been trying for an hour to find out how much three and two make. Take your money and leave me to my fate.'

"With this picture in my mind I broke for town. Halfway there I was chawin' a latigo-strap like a wolf. When I hit the street, I jumped through the drug-store door.

"'What you got for a man that's quit chewin'?' I gasps to the boss,

"'Franky Frenchman's Fool-Killer,' says he—and with that he turns his head and expectoriates satisfactorily into the spittoon.

"Seeing him, I near died of a broken heart.

"'The next crack will be at your expense,' I told him. 'You hike out somethin' for my case,' I says. He shoved me out a package, just like that."

Mr. Scraggs poked my gift.

"Just like that. I put the whole bizzee in my trap and chomped on it like a lion. I walked around the town, chompin' on it. I waved my jaws till my face ached. Seemed to me like I'd never done anythin' in all my life but bite Injy-rubber. And then I pushed madly for the first stud-poker game.

"When I got there, nothin' was movin'. This here tin-horn I mention was polishing his muss-tache with both hands, whilest he talked to a few hangers-on.

"I became ashamed of that choon'-gum and I stuck it under the table, very sly and surreptishus. I felt like a man again.

"'Fire the engine up!' says I. 'Gimme five stacks to practice on.'

"The gam hopped gleeful toward the table and give the drawer a yank. She stuck. He cussed and pulled harder. She came open with a jerk and a kind of long, sticky s-m-aaa-ack, followed by strings of gray.

"The gam arose from where he'd sot on his backbone and looked at the drawer.

"'We're not doin' any business to-day,' says he, showing me my little eagle-bird.

"'What's happened to the trade?' says I.

"He simply p'inted to the hunk of gum (which I had most unforchinit jammed ag'in' the drawer).

"'My wildest fancies have got exceeded,' says he. 'Do you want to hear a weird and willful tale of woe?'

"'Of course not,' I says.

"'All right,' says he. 'I'll tell you.'

"'Well,' says he, 'here's the way she comes up. I'm a lost one in the wilderness out at a telegraph station. I see where I get my talents buried in a napkin made of soleleather, hence I get handy with a deck of cards in front of the lookin'-glass. My work is so good after a while that I lose my whole salary to myself, and yet watchin' careful all the time in the lookin' glass. I'm fit to handle the steamboat trade, But I aims higher: I buy me a ticket to Noo York and hunt up a place where they hew to the line, let the chips fall where they will.

"'What's your noo box o' tricks?" says the Murphy that run the joint.

"'Well," says I, "nothin' new, but the good old reliable line. The world is my oyster, as Hamlet says, and I've got openers."

"'H'm," says he, makin' a fat man's shift in his chair and pushin' his seegar into the other corner of his face. "I want you to understand this is a dead-straight game run here, my bucko—yet you look good—s'pose I've come in an' laid thirty cents or so on the king, coppered. Lift the joker out of that deck an' le's see what happens."

"'He threw me a pack and I riffled and boxed 'em.

"'"Why, you lose," says I, much surprised as the king come out open on the turn.

"'"And not so worse," says he. "Play on!"

"'I slid 'em out of the box to the last card. "You only lost your footin' once," says he. "The way you beat my corner play was a little obvious. Exercise your little finger till it's soopler. You can handle a role tonight. But mind this," says he as he grunted himself on his feet, "this is a dead-straight house. If anybuddy *ketches* you bein' technical, we jump you, from me to the cop on watch. You get five per cent."

"'Well, sir, that was the loveliest little bower of rose-buds you ever smelt! Checks was joolry. We didn't have change for nothin' below a fifty-dollar bill. Our line of customers was these tur'ble knowin' young men of the world, who'd stood the terrific experience of a college careerin'. They was a darin' outfit. They was so fast they couldn't help talk about the pace they was hittin', and what they didn't know about the game of faro was my business. It was like bein' knocked down in the street by a strong man and have money pushed into your clothes. I did things at that table that never happened before in a civilized community. I was so youthful, you know, and it was a constant problem to me whether they'd stand for biting off the corner of a card to make things come my way.

"'I run in rhinecaboos that 'ud make a heathen Scandahonian farmer fall off his hay-wagon, but them men of the world simply contributed yallerbacks—oh, good old yallerbacks!—beautiful to the eye; soft to the touch, *so* encouragin' to the feelin's! I reckoned I'd buy the durned old Western Union an' get even with the cuss who used to pound it to me from up the line—Ouch! vanished dream! Sweet vision stuck to earth by that con-cussed, snappy, stringy, bouncy, mud-colored foolish food fer flighty females you see before you!

"At this p'int," said Mr. Scraggs, "he shot his fingers at my gum, breathin' hard an' glitterin' his eyes.

"'Yes, sir!' says he. 'There lies the cause of my roon! And such a fiddlin', triflin' stuff to wreck a man!' He got some of his breath back. 'You orter ask "How?" says he, 'and I reply, "By contractin' the habit"—not of gnawin' it'—he adds hasty, 'but steppin' on it. Here was I sittin' on sunset clouds and floatin' over the beautiful scenery, till there comes a cold blast of the winds of chance, and from that moment my path in life was strewed with the discard from rosy lips. For two solid weeks I did nothin' but scuff my feet or flag a shine-stand to get rid of the day's gatherin' of gum. Them Eye-talians used to grin in a way that made me want an open season on furriners, as I cantered up to 'em, smicky-smacky, smicky-smacky, trailin' soft gray hairs behind me like a retired minister's whiskers.

"'They'd look up at the sky and make dago remarks, whilest they curried my feet with a brick, till the cold sweat of mortification melted my b'iled collar. And once a flapdoodle actor goat, with a red, white and blue hatband, got gay and told me not to use such naughty words about these tributes from the mouth of beauty. I swatted the air where he'd been when I started to hit him an' he took me by most of my trousers and turned me ten somersaults. How was I to know he was Honest Mike, the Deck Hand, who chucked the villain over Brooklyn Bridge every night and Saturday matinee?

"'Well, I'll cut it short. No matter where I fleed, the fiend pursued me. I went to the opery one night, to get my frazzled nerves soothed by the champion yelpers of the pack. For two solid hours I lived untroubled, not even worried by the show, as I couldn't understand a word of it an nobuddy on the stage had complaints too deep to sing about; but comin' out, me enemy waited on the edge of a step and I landed astride of a stout lady's neck, beggin' her pardon and fightin' a half-dozen men for five minutes. When I explained, even the stout lady laughed.

"'The boss at my joint cussed himself into asthma, wondering what the sticky stuff, tracked all over his new seven-dollar-a-yard carpet, was.

"'But I ain't agoin' to weary you with trifles. One day the boss tipped me off that there was a bunch of alum-eyes due that evenin'; he said they was fellers that had took the college course, but recovered, and that the bowlegged elephant song and dance that extracted money from our regulars would be looked upon with reproach by the newcomers. I got nervous. Playin' ag'in' them little first-crow roosters had been bad practice. I soaked my hands in warm water and prepared as best I could, but when I saw that gang before me I knew why they was called alum-eyes. They puckered my soul up, my hands got too wet with sweat for business—you know your fingers has got to be not too dry, to slip, and not too wet, to stick, if you're turnin' out high grade work.

"'Well, I was excited, yet it was a reel pleasure to be up against reel men.

"'I had a habit of running my fingers over the rung of my chair, to keep 'em in right shape. 'Twas a thing nobuddy could complain of, and the game just held on to its hat and flew. How much money you had was the limit, and to put my little bank on the other side of the river, quick, was the idea of the alum eyes.

"'I forgot everythin'. I was fair hollerin' inside for joy. My buckers had a good square chance to catch me at it, if they could, and I was haulin' money when—well, Fortune had patted me on the back with one hand, while she got ready with a black-jack in the other. In my state of feelin' I put a heel, a chewin'-gum-covered-heel, on the rung of that chair and took it off again, without noticin'. As the play stood, the outfit had me whipsawed. I drug my fingers over the rung of that chair, that chewin'-gum-covered-rung, without noticing; then I wiggled my fingers in a Chinee ketch-as-ketch-can over the box and raised 'em with a playin' card firmly stuck to each finger. *Then* I noticed, yes; and everybody noticed. Silence fell six foot deep. One of them alum eyes says:

"'That may be magnifercent, but it ain't Hoyle."

"'And I excused myself by ducking under the table and jumping over the banisters.

"'Once on the street, I hooped her for the corner. My play was to wait till the crowd went out and then see the old man, who had a rubber-band on my roll.

"'I thought I'd peek around the corner until all was clear, then rush the boss with my hard-luck game of talk, extract a little of the juice of the root of evil from him, then fold my legs like a jack-rabbit and silently lift myself through the breeze, back to the sage-brush—back to where the prairie-dog and the owl and the rattlesnake live in harmony together—never expecting the rattlesnake, so long's there's plenty of young dogs and owls.

"'The game must have busted when I took the fence, for here come the bunch of alum-eyes right up the street. I had the curiosity to wait and hear what they was talkin' about, as I had a corner to duck behind when they come close. Well, I waited, and I didn't hear nothin' I'd care to write home to mother. They made me so cussed mad, I overstayed my time. Just when they got within range, I started to hop swiftly backwards. But I didn't. No. My feet had grew fast to that sidewalk. Seems the city had been mending the block pavement, as usual, and some horney-souled son of toil had spilt a square of coal tar on the sidewalk. Me to the middle of the coal tar district, of course—you can chew coal tar, you know; I've done it.

"'So, as I remarked, I didn't gracefully side-step. Exactly not. I gave one yank and landed with my knees up in the air. Them feet was riveted fast, you bet, and my joints just had to yield accordin.'

"'"What is this we have?" said one alum-eye.

"'There was a gas lamp on the corner. They knew me by my face.

"'"Are you going to deal flagstones with your feet?" asks one of them.

"'Let's pull down the blinds. It was their whirl at the bat. They brought all the folks, includin' the old man and Tommy the cop.

"'They yee-hooed on my feet till I had to holler for mercy. Then they sat on the curb and rocked and hollered like the pack of fools they were. They tried to lift my shoulders up, but found that m'coat had took a violent affection for the sidewalk, too. Some of 'em didn't even try for the curb-stone then. They rolled around on the sidewalk and kicked their legs, whilest I frayed my vocal chords readin' their customs and habits to 'em.

"'But I was in a runnin' noose; the harder I cussed at 'em, the worse they laughed.

"'"Ain't he the slick one though!" says the old man, holdin' on to his stummick with both hands. "Don't do nothin' more to him for a minute, boys, or the coroner will be sittin' on me."

"'Every time I gee-nashed my teeth an' tried to reach 'em they waltzed on one leg and shrieked. There must 'a' been nigh three hundred fools watchin' and havin' the time of their lives. Little messenger-boys was there, the night-watchmen took a peep, ladies with a past improved the shinin' present, the dago shoeblacks heard the racket and come runnin up and hollered, "Choon'-gum extract! Ten' a cent!"

"'And there I lay, flat on my back, with my knees in the air, scart to move, because I couldn't wiggle a finger without the crowd throwin' a fit. Oh, murder! Le's out it! They unlaced my shoes and snaked me out of my coat, and instead of bein' sad at them pathetical shoes and coat lying in the coal-tar, the boss fell over sideways and the rest was too feeble to stop me as I broke away. I made that block in two stocking-footed leps.

"'I had a hundred or two in my pants. I bought three dollars' worth of coat and shoes from a second-hand store for fifteen dollars and a promise that if anything happened I wouldn't mention the shop to the police. Then I come here, far from the gadding crowds, far from the lady with the developed jaw-swing, and I get—that.'

"Here," said Mr. Scraggs. "he p'inted to my chewin'-gum and wiped his white brow off with his white handkerchief, and he says: 'Have we come to this?'

"I swallered hard and looked at him.

"'Have you such a thing as a plug of terbackker in your possession?'

"'Yes,' says he, surprised. 'I have.'

"'Well,' says I, 'rather than to further add to your troubles, I'll break my word to a lady—gimme that plug! We haven't come to this—this has come to us.'

"So I explained, and he opened his stock exchange. I reckon he was right about the bad effects of chewin'-gum, too, or may be what's a medal winner in N' York ain't art west of the Missouri. Anyhow, you don't hear me kickin' about that nice missionary young lady. If I cared for joolry, I'd be wearin' that tin-horn's diamon' chest protector right now. Gum has different effects on different people. 'Twas fatal to his constitooshun."—By Henry Wallace Phillips, in *Collier's*.

Doubling Our Navy.

Within three fiscal years from July 1st last, says the *Washington Times*, the United States Navy, according to the present plans and progress of work, will be more than doubled in the number of vessels of all types and strength. The number of battleships will have augmented within that time from 12 to 27 in number, with a still greater increase in strength. This does not include the two new battleships that are now being designed with the intention that they be made larger than any fighting craft now afloat.

The battleship section of the navy has been increased nearly 75 per cent. in strength and exactly 50 per cent. in number since July 1st last, up to the present time, six new battleships having been added to the fleet within that time. Three more will be added within the next two months—the Kansas, Minnesota and Vermont—in time to participate in the Jamestown Exposition, and three more—the South Carolina, Michigan and Nebraska—within the next two years. The New Hampshire, Idaho and Mississippi will be completed shortly afterward, and then will come the two new monsters which are hoped by the Navy Department to prove a surprise to the fighting world.

Rear Admiral Evans at Hampton Roads is in command of the biggest fleet of battleships that ever entered American waters. It comprises 15 battleships, and the four battleship divisions will be made complete with the addition, within a few weeks of the Minnesota, now being put in readiness at the Norfolk yard. Later, the Massachusetts, which is undergoing repairs, will join him and then the new battleship Vermont, and then the Kansas. This will give him 19 firstclass modern battleships, ranging in tonnage from 10,288 to 16,000. Aside from these, Admiral Evans will have at the Exposition at different times about 20 cruisers, torpedo boats and other smaller craft.

The battleship strength of the navy, as it now stands, numbers 18, the Oregon and Wisconsin being in dock for repairs and general overhauling at the Bremerton yard, Puget Sound.

According to the present plans of the Navy Department, the first line of sea defense of the United States will be made up of 25 battleships by the close of the next fiscal year. Whether the possibility of a war with Japan or any other country within the next few years is responsible is not known, but certain it is that word has gone from the White House that work must be rushed with all possible speed on all ships under construction, especially those of the larger types, with the view of having each completed at the earliest possible date.

To expedite all construction work within a year from May 1st, the Bureau of Construction will be clear of all contracts now let or under contemplation, except those for the battleships South Carolina and Michigan, two colliers, a number of destroyers and the two 20,000 ton vessels.

Plaster and Acoustics.

In a paper upon this subject Nussbaum, the noted German architect, calls attention to the fact that in cases where good acoustics are required immediately on completion of the room, the choice of the ceiling and wall plaster is of some importance, especially where a soft timber (tone color) is desired. Thus, in concert halls, for instance, mixtures of lime and sand or cement, lime and sand are out of place as a plastering, only a mortar of plester of Paris promising the desired effect. Sand should not be added to the upper layers of this mortar, and a careful smoothing of the surface should not be neglected, so as to avoid all roughness and irregularities.

Plaster of Paris prepared entirely without sand has a favorable action; it is best made of gypsum burnt to white heat. The strongly elastic, delicate surface of this plastering is particularly advantageous for the reflection of the sound waves and for obtaining a soft timbre.

With regard to the transmission of heat and sound such plaster is also of advantage but the period of drying for it and the masonry underneath must be taken as higher than for plaster of mixtures of lime and sand or lime, cement and sand. The latter disadvantage, however, is offset by the fact that paint or coverings of veneer fabrics, wall paper, etc., can be applied immediately after the drying, while the alkalies of the lime, and especially those of the cements, may cause injury to such, often very valuable, furnishings as soon as the plaster becomes damp. The latter circumstance may be brought about by the formation of sweat even where all other causes of dampness are kept off by proper arrangements, while the conversion of the alkalies into carbonates in the interior of rooms takes place exceedingly slowly, because a certain percentage of water, not inconsiderable for cements, is required in the mortar for the process.

"Prevention is better than cure," says the familiar proverb. So familiar indeed is that proverb that we lose its force. We need to be reminded that prevention is better than cure because it saves us time, money and suffering. We also need the reminder that prevention is a great deal easier than cure. Many times disease which might have been prevented cannot be cured at any cost. About one-sixth of the deaths of this country are due to consumption. The use of Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery has saved thousands and thousands of men and women who suffered from obstinate cough, bronchitis, "weak lungs," bleeding of the lungs, and similar ailments, which, if neglected, or unskillfully treated, lead to consumption. Ninety-eight per cent. of those who give "Golden Medical Discovery" a fair and faithful trial, are perfectly and permanently cured. The is nothing "just as good" as Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery.

How Linen is Made.

The making of linen is one of the most ancient of crafts. Thousands of years ago, before the great pyramids were built, Egypt was famous for her flax and exported the cloth made from it to every port of the Mediterranean, which then comprised about all the known world. The earliest mention of flax by any author occurs in the account of the plague of hail, one of the plagues which Moses brought upon the Egyptians because they would not let the chosen people go. (Exodus ix: 31.) The Bible is full of references to the making of linen. King Solomon brought horses out of Egypt and linen yarn. In Isaiah mention is made of "that work in fine flax," which was the principal employment of the Egyptians; in Joshua we are told that Rahab concealed the Hebrews spies "with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof;" and in Proverbs is the much-quoted reference to the virtuous woman who 'seeketh wool and flax and worketh willingly with her hands."

The wrappings of the Egyptian mummies were invariably of linen, and the durability of this antique fabric is shown by the fact that, though it was woven two or three thousand years ago, portions of it are strong and in fairly good condition to-day.

According to Herodotus the clothes of the Egyptians were almost always of linen. He says that they had long linen shirts or robes, fringed at the bottom, and that this fringe was made of the thrums or the ends of the webs; and the ancient writer must have been correct, for thrums used for this purpose can be seen on many of the mummy cloths now in different museums. The Egyptian priests, of whom there was a great multitude, for this old and mysterious country was a land of temples, were obliged to dress in either linen or cotton, for wool was deemed a profane attire, not suitable for holy men. An ancient writer says, "Flax, that cleanest and best production of the field, is used not only for the inner and outer clothing of the most holy priests of the Egyptians, but also for covering sacred objects."

Except that it was woven on hand looms this ancient linen was probably made very much as it is to day. The flax was pulled up by hand and laid in bundles in the sun to dry. It was threshed to free it from seed and the bundles were laid in the river for four or five days to rot so that the fiber might be separated easily. It was then stacked up to dry and finally hackled, spun into thread and woven into both fine or coarse cloth. Sometimes these were plain and sometimes they had curious figures woven with gaily colored threads.

Through the succeeding centuries linen was grown and woven in much the same way wherever the climate was suited to the production of flax and wherever the people were sufficiently civilized to indulge in any sort of arts and crafts. With the introduction of machinery, cotton, on account of its cheapness, almost superseded linen as an article of clothing, but the latter retained and still retains its popularity for table and bed linen. To have a good supply of beautifully patterned table cloths of Irish damask is the ambition of every good housekeeper to-day. For it is well known that the very best damasks are manufactured in Ireland, which, by reason of its damp, moist climate, is peculiarly well fitted for their production. The flax can be raised there to equal if not to excel any country in the world, and the water possesses some peculiar property that makes it unrivaled for bleaching. So it often happens that large quantities of linen manufactured in other countries are sent to Ireland to be bleached.

A field of Irish flax in flower, with its thickly growing, long, gracefully drooping stems tipped with their delicate blue bells that sway in every breeze and seem always on the point of ringing out some message from the fairies, is one of the prettiest sights in the world. When the Irish crop of flax is ripe it is pulled up by hand, just as the ancients used to do, though in Australia and parts of this country it is machine mowed like grain. This flax is then buried in natural bogs, that abound in every part of Ireland, or in ponds, for the process of rotting, or retting as it is technically called. This takes any time from ten days to two weeks, according to the weather and the condition of the flax. In Belgium the flax is put to rot in a slow running river at Courtrai, which system is said to be superior to the Irish and gives the Belgian flax a world-wide reputation. But in Ireland the government very sensibly refuses to allow the rivers to be used for this purpose.

When the flax is taken from the water it is spread out on the grass to dry. This early stage of the manufacture of linen is not a beautiful process to watch or even to be within smelling distance, for the appearance of the crop is sodden and unsightly and the odor is overpowering. When the flax has been purified somewhat by exposure to the sun and air it is either built up into stacks or carried off to the scutch mill, where the fiber is cleared of refuse. It is then ready to se d to the great mills in Belfast, where by various stages of preparation the last vestiges of bark left by the scutcher are removed and the flax is ready for hackling, as the process of drawing it out into fibers is called. It is then spun into thread and reeled. The most interesting process of all is seen in the great weaving sheds, where on hundreds of looms are woven all varieties of linen, from the plain fabric intended for ordinary wear to the beautiful figured designs produced by the Jackuard machines.

Having passed successfully through all these processes the linen is ready for its final stages, bleaching and finishing. And in this operation Ireland is preeminent. Most of the Irish mills are surrounded by immense bleaching grounds, where thousands of yards of linen are stretched on the thick turf to slowly whiten in the sun, an operation that takes from six to eight weeks.

The largest linen mill in the world is on York street, Belfast. It employs some four thousand five hundred operatives and manufactures linen of all grades.

These beautiful Irish linens will last for years if they are well taken care of, but they should never be ironed with a very hot flat, as the heat from the iron makes the threads brittle and weak. The European housewife takes great care of and pride in her linens, and it is not uncommon for her to use the same tablecloths and sheets that formed a part of her grandmother's dowry, and she confidently expects to leave them in good condition to her daughter.

About Beads.

Do you know how the pretty colored glass beads are made that are so much used for necklaces and fancy work? The process is very interesting and curious.

First the glass is melted in a pot, and while in this state is colored. It is then taken from the pot by two workmen, who expand the mass and form it into tubes by blowing into it down their blow pipes. Then, while it is still soft, they draw the tubes out to great length, while the tubes, of course, get more and more slender as they grow longer. On cooling, these are broken up into lengths of about a foot—twelve inches—each. Next these lengths are "annealed," or toughened, and cut evenly into short bits. After this the roughly cut beads are mixed with ashes and sand, then put into metal cylinder over a brisk fire, and turned round and round very rapidly as they soften with the heat. Then they are thrown into water and shaken until all the ashes and sand are cleaned away, leaving the holes free; and finally they are threaded on strings, ready for packing and selling. This is the process through which the common beads go before they are fit for use. Beads of finer quality undergo a great deal more cutting and polishing before they leave the factory.

The Black Locust.

Through the courtesy of Professor H. P. Baker, forester in charge of the Iowa experiment station, we are able to present the following facts relative to the black locust, a tree concerning the growing of which a good many inquiries are being made: While the locust is found in practically every state in the Union, it is only native to high slopes and ridges from Pennsylvania to Georgia and westward to the Indian Territory.

In many ways it is one of the most valuble trees that can be grown in the northern states. If allowed to shift for itself, the locust is quite likely to come to destruction through a small insect called the locust borer, which bores through the trunk and branches. It is safe to say, however, that the damage from this source can be entirely done away with or greatly reduced by proper planting and management.

When the small trees are put on to good, well drained soil and cultivated so that they are kept growing rapidly and cut as soon as they are of size for posts, there will be a very small per cent. of damaged trees. The borer enters the trees most easily when the growth begins to decline, and it is for this reason that they should be kept growing rapidly and cut when of proper size.

The tree is easily grown from the seed, which is borne in small pods that ripen early in the autumn. The seed may be gathered as long as the pods remain on the tree and may be left in the pods and stored in a cool, dry place, or, if the seeds are removed from the pods, they should be buried in moist sand in a cool place.

Germination and growth may be greatly hastened by soaking the seed for twenty-four hours in water which is at first several degrees below boiling point. After soaking, the seed should be planted at once, as they will fail if allowed to dry out. The seed should be planted in the spring in good garden soil in rows about fifteen inches apart if hand cultivation is to be given. The seed should be sown thick in the row and covered lightly. During the first year the seedlings will make a growth of from one to two feet and will be ready to transplant to their permanent location the following spring, when, in order that they may form straight trunks, they should be set about four by four or three by six feet apart.

They can be grown by themselves or with other species, such as the osage orange, hardy catalpa or Russian mulberry. The tendency of the locust to sprout may be entirely prevented if a row or two of some other tree like the Russian olive, hackberry or cottonwood surround the grove, as the locust sprouts will not grow in the shade. The locust should be planted on good, well drained soils. On wet, undrained soils its growth is slow and the tree is short lived. In the west it succeeds well on sandy soils. On good soil and with proper cultivation a three to six inch round post may be grown in from six to ten years, while after cutting the stumps will send up sprouts which make extremely rapid growth and produce a good crop of three to five inch posts in from four to eight years regardless of the borer.

Famine Scenes in China.

Pitiful tales of the famine in China, where 15,000,000 natives in the hunger stricken provinces along the Yang-Tse-Kiang river have undergone the ravages of slow starvation until death or the relief expeditions delivered them from their sufferings, are told in letters just received at the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions in New York from William H. Gleysteen, who headed a relief expedition from Pekin.

Describing the scenes as he viewed them from a launch on the Grand Canal, Mr. Gleysteen says that at stops along the canal swarms of women and children surrounded the boat and begged for food. Mothers held up their skeleton babes and bared their shrivelled breasts as evidence of their great need. Reaching the center of the district, at Chinkiang, Mr. Gleysteen found the streets lined with men, women and children, all begging and many dying. The Chinese had sold all they had that they might keep from starving. Beams were torn from huts and sold, and in one pawnshop which he visited he found over 10,000 guns and thousands of shoes in pawn.

Clothing, bedding, all were sold or pawned, writes Mr. Gleysteen. People lived on leaves from trees, on certain weeds and on barks of trees, which were ground fine. I saw long rows of trees without a bit of bark on them. Finally men began to migrate. A man would put a few things he still owned on a wheelbarrow, perhaps his wife pulling, he pushing and struggling children at the side. Hundreds of thousands of such families left home and went to the cities, where concentration camps were formed.

Mr. Gleysteen said the work of relief was principally effected by employing thousands of Chinese in canal digging. Payments for work alone were made in tickets for flour. Hundreds of women found employment in the canal trenches, and many of them worked better than the men.—*Ex.*

Memory of Sleepwalkers.

The memory of sleepwalkers is occasionally prodigious under the influence of the dominating impulse that moves them. There is an instance of a poor and illiterate basket maker, who was unable to read or write, yet in a state of sleep he would preach fluent sermons, which were afterward recognized as having formed portions of discourses he was accustomed to hear in the parish church as a child more than forty years before. Quite as strange a case of "unconscious memory" is referred to by Dr. Abercrombie. A girl given to sleepwalking was in the habit of imitating the violin with her lips, giving the preliminary tuning and scraping and flourishing with the utmost fidelity. It puzzled the physician a good deal, until he ascertained that when a child she lived in a room adjoining a fiddler who often performed on his violin in her hearing.—Pearson's Weekly.