

FAMINE NOW SCOURGES JAPAN, THE HOME OF THESE PICTURESQUE PEOPLE.



AMERICAN NURSES IN JAPAN.



EXPERT EMBROIDERER WORKING A LION'S HEAD.



DRINKING AT A BRONZE DRAGON FOUNTAIN.



MARQUIS ITO AND FAMILY.



ARRANGING HER HAIR BY THE AID OF AN AMERICAN LOOKING GLASS.



A HIGH CLASS BEGGAR WHO HIDES HIS FACE FOR SHAME.

stands. It seems to be filled with giant bamboo fishing rods poised in the hands of fishermen. In one sense they are fishing rods. Their owners use them in drawing up the precious red stones from the depths of the ancient water-course.

Mogok is literally built on rubies. The soil of the valley is full of the rich stones. A little digging and a little washing and they are free from the prison where they have been waiting since creation, like the Sleeping Beauty, for some one to let them out into the light where they may capture the eyes of men. Had it not been for these drops of blood enmeshed in the soil, Mogok would be a small village instead of a town of 8,000 inhabitants.

The traveller who takes the trouble to go by steamer up the broad Irrawaddy to Thabeikyang, and then by pony for a day and a half toward the eastward over the precipitous hills, will find himself in the neighborhood of Mogok. Bungalows and temples peer out of the foliage on the hillsides. Not so many ages ago the valley in which the town is located was the bed of a great river. Now what is left of it flows through a narrow but deep canal, leaving the deposit of rubies uncovered.

The stone shot with blood which is called the ruby is everything at Mogok. The stranger seen on the streets is thought to be in the town buying rubies. No one can imagine him to be there for any other purpose. Practically

the whole population, men, women and children, is engaged in gathering or handling the gems. The wealth of Mogok is reckoned in precious stones. What the wealth is one may gather from the number of pagodas on the hillsides, for every one who becomes rich is expected to celebrate his fortune by erecting a pagoda or monastery.

Walking on the streets everywhere one sees evidences of the occupation of the people. They are digging with their flat spades in the ruby bearing earth, or they are washing out the gravel, or they are cutting rough stones beneath little shanties open to the street, or they are selling them in the market, from little brass trays. One thing is remarkable about the people. Unlike the diamond miners at Kimberley, they do not watch so closely over their treasures. It is not unusual to see a little tin containing a number of the laboriously won stones standing on the ground entirely unguarded. For hours it may stand there unmolested. One may pick up the cup and examine the stones without any protest from the owner.

The purpose of the huge bamboo fishing rods is revealed on a visit to a native excavation for getting out the "byon," or ruby bearing earth. In appearance and object they are not unlike a New-England well sweep. They are intended for hoisting the "byon" from the "well" made in the ground. After being raised to the surface the "byon" is taken to a watermill near at hand. This is a small circular inclosure paved with stone. The earth is stirred up while water passes over it, until nothing remains except clean sand and stones. Men, women and children then sort out the gems, using sieves, and stow them away in small cotton bags to be sold later at the bazaar. At the bazaar those who have stones to sell squat on the ground and display their wares on small brass trays.

Even into this faraway corner of the globe the economical methods of the English and Americans have been introduced. A few years ago an English company obtained the exclusive right to mine rubies in Burmah. By the terms of the concession, however, the company is obliged to grant licenses to natives who desire to look for these precious stones. This company mines rubies as the Minnesota iron mines are worked. Narrow gauge cars are used to convey the pay dirt to the big washing tanks. The gravel is stirred up in the tanks with big wheels operated by power. In some way, by the use of lead bullets, most of the large and small stones are separated. The larger stones are discharged into a special room which only Europeans are allowed to enter. Here they are sorted out and put under lock and key. The material is then passed on to another room, where Burmese make a search for the smaller stones. What is left is then sold to contractors, who go through the refuse and pick out the watch jewels.

In the old days, before Great Britain obtained control of Burmah, and the arrogant Theebaw sat on the throne at Mandalay, rubies above a

certain size were claimed by his highness. The ruby cutters of Mogok discovered a way to get around this difficulty. They cut up the large stones into fragments which were small enough to escape his claim, and they did their work so secretly that his agents at the mines failed to learn of the discovery of the large stones. Since the English company has been doing the mining large stones get out of the country occasionally.

"PUNCH'S" NEW EDITOR.

None will cavil at the choice that has made Mr. Owen Seaman Editor of "Punch," vice Sir F. C. Burnand, retired—not even those nine hundred and ninety-nine Englishmen in a thousand who believe that they can direct "The Times," write a play, or run the doyen of Britain's comic papers better than any one else. "O. S." has long been familiar to the lover of humor as a writer of light verse who combines wit and knowledge in the happiest manner; and to the inner circle of the initiated he is known as a "staff man" of proved ability. Like Sir Francis, he is a Cambridge man, although it does not appear that he contributed to "The London Charivari" while he was an undergraduate. His first appearance in the pages that have been opened to so many brilliant artists and men of letters was on January 13, 1894, when he contributed a parody of Kipling's "Rhyme of Three Sealers," under the title of "The Rhyme of the Kipperling." As parodist, indeed, he is best known, but he has done also, and is doing, admirable verse on political events. He was thirty-six when he joined Mr. Punch's regular staff in 1897, and he has been assistant editor of the paper he now directs for the last three or four years. His published verses include "A Harvest of Chaff," "In Cap and Bella," "The Battle of the Bays," and "Borrowed Plumes."—The Sketch.

HOW SHE WON.

Bishop Olmstead of Colorado, in an address on perseverance, said:

"Let me underscore this word 'perseverance' with an anecdote about a little girl I used to know.

"This little girl, whose father was a clergyman, lay abed one day with a bad cold, and in the afternoon, being bored, she decided that she wanted to see her father—to get him to tell her a fairy story, or something of that sort.

"But her father was busy.

"He is writing his Sunday morning sermon," said the mother, "and he must not be disturbed."

"But I want to see him badly," the little girl persisted.

"No, dear," her mother repeated. "He is busy. We can't interrupt him."

"The little girl, persevering, frowned. She glared at her mother, and sitting up in bed, she said:

"I am a sick woman, and I want to see my minister." She saw him.

JAPAN FAMINE'S EXTENT.

Many Millions of Persons Suffering from Lack of Food.

When Russia and Japan met at Portsmouth to talk peace Japan craved an ending of the war far more than the rest of the world realized. Like the youth in the Spartan fable, Japan concealed a wolf under its garments that was verily gnawing into its bowels. Russia, too, was bleeding inwardly, but the Bear could not keep its internal wounds a secret. Every one knew of the mutinies and massacres which were weakening Russia at home. Few, however, except the reticent Japanese themselves, had knowledge of the fearful famine which menaced the three northern provinces of their country and which threatened with starvation a half million people. In silence Japan suffered, for fear her enemy might discover her affliction and take advantage of it.

Even with the end of the war news of the ravages of the famine in Japan has leaked out slowly. A native pride has caused the people of Nippon to conceal the true enormity of their misfortune. As a high Tokio official recently expressed it: "Our motto is 'Bushi wa kuwandedo takai yogi,' which means 'Even when the samurai has not food, he keeps a toothpick in plain sight.'"

Not since the deadly famine of 1840 have the Japanese suffered such a disastrous failure in the rice crop as occurred last June. Overwhelming floods devastated the paddy fields of Miyagi, Fukushima and Iwate, the three chief rice provinces of the empire. At the present time thousands of people are living on roots and leaves of trees, mixed with small quantities of flour or rice. In the northernmost province of Miyagi, which suffered most, and where only one-eighth the usual rice crop was harvested, whole villages have been subsisting on acorns, ground up and made into a bitter sort of bread. In the larger province of Fukushima, where three-fourths of the crop was ruined, 300,000 natives are suffering from want of food. Iwate, the southern neighbor of Fukushima, although it best escaped the scourge of the elements, contains 100,000 inhabitants, who cannot live, says Mr. Miller, the American Consul General at Yokohama, without "speedy and prolonged aid." The total loss in crops is estimated at \$14,000,000.

In spite of its tremendous war debt, the Japanese government is doing what it can to relieve distress in the stricken provinces. It is doing what England has done in India in famine times. Instead of feeding the starving natives outright,



OWEN SEAMAN. The new Editor of "Punch."

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