

THE IMPERIAL FAMILY OF JAPAN.

The Present and Future Rulers of the Island Empire Which Is Entitled to Its New Given Designation, "The Great Britain of the Orient."

THIS transformation of Japan from an obscure nation without rank or recognition 40 years ago to one occupying a place with first class powers, like Germany, Great Britain and the United States, has been termed the great miracle of the nineteenth century. And the one man most conspicuous in this work of regeneration, especially in later years, by which that nation has in a sense de-centralized itself, is its present ruler, the emperor, who is called the most enlightened and progressive man in the island empire, and worthy to rank with the greatest men of our time.

To understand fully the extent and

illies of nobles had arisen, and imperial authority was weakened by the looseness of the succession, dependent as it was upon the arbitrary will of the sovereign, who could name any one he chose as his successor. The throne thus became the prey of rival factions and princes. A governor general, or generalissimo, called the "shogun," was therefore appointed. The first "shogun" was the renowned Yoritomo, who about the end of the twelfth century became so powerful that the mikado's authority was merely nominal.

The only attempted invasion of Japan on a large scale was that of the Mongols under the great Kublai Khan in

no treaty with a foreign power was considered binding. The shogun, indeed, was merely a very convenient buffer between the invisible emperor and the foreign envoy, who, while apparently in absolute power, was yet clothed with no real authority. This policy of deception wrought its own downfall, however, when, setting under orders from the imperial court at Kyoto, the shogun or tycoon of Choshiu, in 1868, fled upon ships of the treaty powers, in return for which the Japanese were thoroughly whipped and compelled to pay an indemnity of \$500,000.

The first Japanese embassy to visit

ance on the stage of public affairs at a most critical period of his country's history. Fortunately for Japan, and to the infinite betterment of international relations, this descendant of a hundred generations of imperial ancestors was equal to the emergency. The product of a seclusive dynasty extending through more than 1,500 years, nursed among traditions of royal prerogatives and taught to believe himself a heaven descended son of the gods, yet Mutsu Hito, casting tradition and precedent to the winds, comprehended to regard himself as a mere mortal.

The second son of Komei by his wife, the Empress Asuka, he was connected on his mother's side with the famous family of Fujiwara, or "wistaria meadow," which had furnished Japan with innumerable emperors since the eleventh century. A conservative by birth and nurtured by all the forces that make for despotism, the young emperor nevertheless put away the temptations that beset him to continue the feudalism, the seclusiveness and the tyranny of the ancient regime and resolutely set his face toward civilization and progress. He was aided in this,

lightened peace or civilization." And this term selected to designate the reign of Mutsu Hito was in no sense a misnomer, for it constitutes a new, a separate, era in the history of Japan, which within the span of less than 40 years has made an advance unparalleled in the annals of any other nation. The shogunate had not perished without disturbance, for there was rebellion, almost anarchy, in the years 1867 and 1868; but by 1871 even the ancient feudal system was uprooted, all titles of the court and territorial nobles were extinguished, and the bearers of them were afterward known only as noble families, or "kazoku." That year, also, an embassy of 49 persons sailed from Yokohama to visit all the countries with which Japan had treaties, thus signifying that the government that sent them was firmly based, absolute and supreme.

The emperor was married in February, 1869, only three months after he had attained his sixteenth birthday, to the Princess Haruko, who was born in May, 1850, and is consequently two years and six months older than her royal consort. The empress was a

groom drink cups of saké together, the only formality required being the transference of the bride's name from her father's family to her husband's in the government registers.

Still, as royal couples go, the emperor and empress are fairly contented and happy. As a princess the empress is said to have been very pretty, petite of figure, intelligent and animated, even noted for her beauty, which, as the Japanese standard differs so much from ours, may be accepted on trust. When young, she was celebrated for her proficiency in writing original verse and playing correctly on the native "koto," or harp of 13 strings. It is generally agreed that all Japanese ladies are charming, even though their style of beauty does not appeal to the occidental taste, and both men and women are noted for their politeness and captivating manners.

Along with the change wrought in other directions by the transformation of Japan there was one innovation which can hardly be regarded as commendable, and this was the substitution of European garb for the picturesque costumes of ancient Japan. All the court officials were required by law to wear it, and black coats, white neckties and gloves, with black trousers and boots, have replaced the graceful robes.

Formerly the empress dressed her hair in the Japanese fashion, and on state occasions wore in a single day

her forehead high and her head finely formed. The first song sung in our school was one which the empress herself wrote. She looks as if the pomp and ceremonies of the court were rather a bore to her.

The Japanese change in costume did not of course necessitate a relinquishment of the crown jewels, and the empress has a very fine collection of gems, which is valued at \$100,000. The two sovereigns are allowed for their maintenance about 3,000,000 yen a year from the civil lists, which is rather more than half that sum in dollars.

"May the imperial house rule through 10,000 generations. The empire of Japan shall be reigned over and governed by a line of emperors unbroken for ages eternal," say the Japanese. But there was a time not long since when the imperial succession seemed to hang by a very slender thread, and today the danger of a break in the long dynasty line is by no means averted, for the only son of the emperor was at one time sick high unto death and has never enjoyed robust health.

Yoshi Hito, who was installed crown prince of Japan at the age of 16, was born Aug. 31, 1879, and is now 21 years old. It was not long ago that Dame Rumor had it that he was coming to America in search of a wife, but this was proved incorrect by the betrothal soon after of the prince and a daughter of the Fujiwara clan, the Princess Sadu Kujō, thus acting in accordance with precedent and selecting a wife from the Japanese nobility. His father was married at the age of 16, but the prince has not inherited his good health, and, in fact, is said to have consumption, and has been carefully nursed along until though young enough for the matrimonial venture. His wife, who has been selected with especial care in view of dynastic considerations, is talented and highly educated, strong and healthy, though only 15 years old, and recently a little schoolgirl in short clothes studiously absorbed in her lessons.

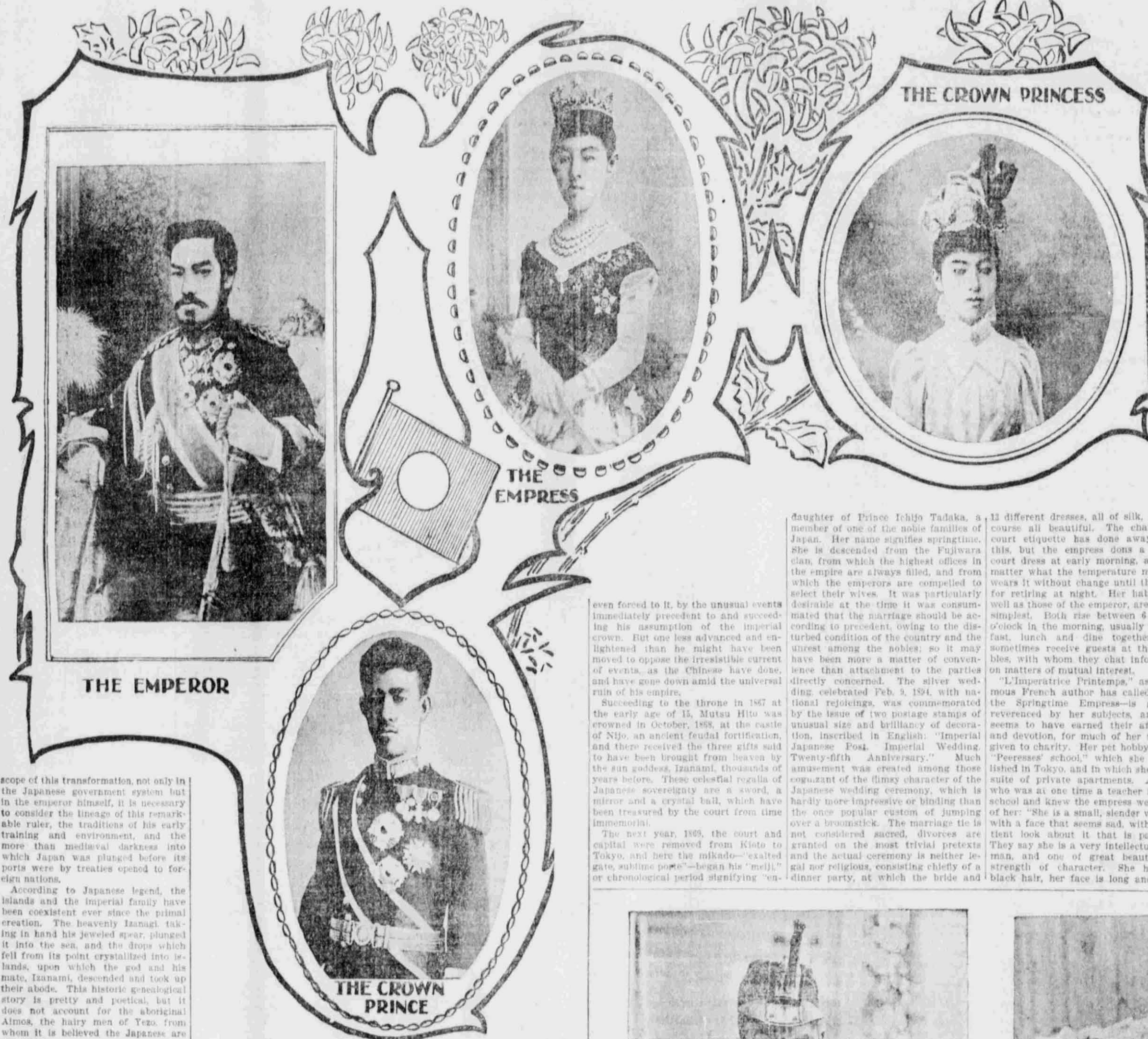
They were married on the 10th of last May, and the ceremonies attendant upon the function were most magnificent, the bride presents alone aggregating more than \$200,000. An audience to all the foreign ministers followed the ceremony, and afterward a reception and banquet, to which 2,000 persons were invited. Another innovation was the asking in marriage of the princess by the prince, instead of having her "appointed" by imperial go between.

It indicated a complete revolution in social affairs and accentuated the inauguration of a new order of things. But after the people had recovered from their surprise they realized that the dead past was buried and that their future emperor and empress were to be much more in touch with themselves than any one of the ancient line from which they boasted their long descent.

The Japanese lament not only that their prince lacks his father's genius and superb health, but the equally notorious fact that he is not a descendant in the direct line from both sides of that imperial house which shines so lustreously in their country's annals. He is, indeed, the son of the emperor, but not of the empress, his mother being Mrs. Yanagisawa, a court lady of noble blood, but what is known in Japan as a "secondary wife," or concubine, the mikado being allowed a dozen of this character, "in order that the emperor may not be without an heir." But even as it is, the imperial house of Japan has come perilously near to extinction in the direct male line, for all the children born to the emperor by his secondary wives—the empress being childless—none remains to perpetuate the dynasty save this sickly young man of 21.

These four comprise today the representatives of that heaven descended line of the original mikado. All Japan regards them as the visible embodiments of power, majesty and authority. Most strikingly conspicuous in this imperial group is the great mikado himself, who has thrust his nation forward to a first rank among the powers, who has astonished the world by the efficiency and perfection of his army and navy, who has shown that he and his people possess wisdom and forethought, as well as a surplusage of energy, and who in a single generation has developed the latent resources of the country beyond the anticipations of the most optimistic believer in mankind's boundless possibilities.

FREDERICK A. OBER.



THE JAPANESE ROYAL FAMILY.

scope of this transformation, not only in the Japanese government system but in the emperor himself, it is necessary to consider the lineage of this remarkable ruler, the traditions of his early training and environment, and the more than medieval darkness into which Japan was plunged before its ports were by treaties opened to foreign nations.

According to Japanese legend, the islands and the imperial family have been co-existent ever since the primal creation. The heavenly Izanagi, taking in hand his jeweled spear, plunged it into the sea, and the drops which fell from its point crystallized into islands, upon which the god and his mate, Izanami, descended and took up their abode. This historic genealogical story is pretty and poetic, but it does not account for the aboriginal Atsuts, the hairy men of Yezo, from whom it is believed the Japanese are descended.

However, the semi-mythological period is rather extensive, and it was in about the middle of it that the Japs were ruled by Jingo Kogo, an empress regent who conquered Korea and whose son, deified at his death, became the Japanese god of war. The first real emperor, Jimmu Tenno, ascended the throne about 600 B. C., according to the official, but mythical, chronology. Successes of Japanese history give no credence to this tale of the first mikado, who was born of a dragon, and ruthlessly cut down the record nearly a thousand years. Whether he dates from the year 600 B. C., or, as the modern critics assert, from the fourth century A. D., the present mikado has an undoubted lineage from the latter date and can trace his ancestry back to Nin-toku, who reigned between 332 and 399 A. D.—that is, he is either the one hundred and fourth or the one hundred and twenty-third in the direct succession who has sat upon the throne, and can boast a genealogical tree beside which that of many a scion of royalty pales into insignificance.

Many of the reigns are authenticated by contemporary events which are well known, such as the introduction of Buddhism into Japan in the year 552, when a prince of Korea presented the emperor with a collection of books and idols. The Buddhist faith was declared to be fully tolerated in 593, under the first acknowledged empress of Japan, Suiko, and just 100 years later the national beverage, "saké," was invented. Fifty years after gold was first discovered and money coined, but it was not until about 825 that a native alphabet was invented. By this time great fam-

1231. After this was repelled centuries of civil war succeeded, at the end of which the shogunate of Tokugawa was founded and practically ruled Japan from 1603 until 1867, during which period the country enjoyed a profound peace. Christianity was introduced in 1549, and the Portuguese were given permission to trade at certain ports of Japan. They became unruly and were banished in 1639, when their privileges were transferred to the Dutch, who held the commercial monopoly for more than two centuries.

It was America, the country discovered by Columbus in his search for 21, the first European to visit and write of Japan, that first sent to open diplomatic communication with the mikado's country. This was the famous expedition of 1852 under Commodore Perry, which was successful in the double sense that a treaty was wrested from Japan—the first it ever concluded with any nation—and the seed was planted which germinated and has developed into the Japan of today. Commodore Perry, however, and all the foreign envoys who followed in his wake scrambling for their share of Japan's commercial possibilities, made the mistake of treating with the shogun, or the tycoon, as he was sometimes styled, instead of with the mikado. For, while the shogun may have been the de facto ruler, the only visible embodiment of authority, yet the despot de jure was the mikado, seated in his royal palace at Kyoto, without whose sanction

any foreign country was sent to the United States in 1860; but the signing of treaties with our government had excited popular distrust, and the emperor who had dispatched the embassy was assassinated in a public street of Yedo in broad daylight. But the Japanese, unlike their brother orientals, the Chinese, accepted the lesson of their defeat at the hands of the foreigners as evidence of the invincible power of the "outside barbarians" and did not need to be thrashed again. They were receptive and intelligent and chose to copy the western civilization to benefit by its teachings and assimilate what they could of its progress, rather than oppose it and be crushed. At this juncture the recuperative force that had lain dormant for centuries in the imperial line asserted itself, the "shogunate" was abolished, the antiquated feudal system ended, the "daimios," or territorial nobles, and their "samurai," or military retainers, shorn of their titles and privileges, and all power was centered in the mikado.

It was the shogun or tycoon who had met Commodore Perry and signed the treaty that brought about the transformation of Japan, and it was the then reigning emperor, Komei, who practically repudiated that instrument. Komei died in 1877, and his son and successor, Mutsu Hito, the present emperor, came to the throne, to which, in 1868, he had been declared heir apparent. He was born in 1852, at the very time the Americans were entering the ports of Japan, and made his appear-

even forced to it, by the unusual events immediately precedent to and succeeding his assumption of the imperial throne. But one less advanced and enlightened than he might have been moved to oppose the irresistible current of events, as the Chinese have done, and have gone down amid the universal ruin of his empire.

Succeeding to the throne in 1867 at the early age of 15, Mutsu Hito was crowned in October, 1868, at the castle of Nijo, an ancient feudal fortification, and there received the three gifts said to have been brought from heaven by the sun goddess, Izanami, thousands of years before. These celestial regalia of Japanese sovereignty are a sword, a mirror and a crystal ball, which have been treasured by the court from time immemorial.

The next year, 1869, the court and capital were removed from Kyoto to Tokyo, and here the mikado—exalted by the western civilization to benefit by its teachings and assimilate what they could of its progress, rather than oppose it and be crushed. At this juncture the recuperative force that had lain dormant for centuries in the imperial line asserted itself, the "shogunate" was abolished, the antiquated feudal system ended, the "daimios," or territorial nobles, and their "samurai," or military retainers, shorn of their titles and privileges, and all power was centered in the mikado.

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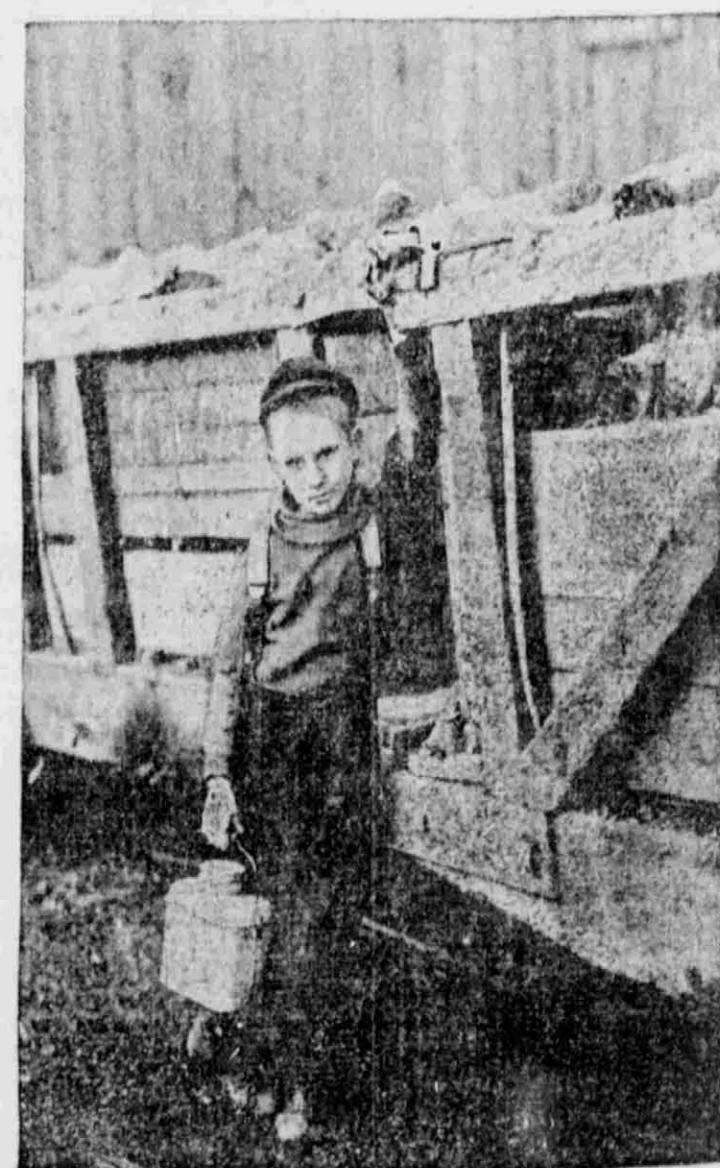
daughter of Prince Ichijo Tadaka, a member of one of the noble families of Japan. Her name signifies springtime. She is descended from the Fujiwara clan, from which the highest offices in the empire are always filled, and from which the emperors are compelled to select their wives. It was particularly desirable at the time it was consummated that the marriage should be according to precedent, owing to the disturbed condition of the country and the unrest among the nobles; so it may have been more a matter of convenience than attachment to the parties directly concerned. The silver wedding, celebrated Feb. 5, 1894, with national rejoicings, was commemorated by the issue of two postage stamps of unusual size and brilliancy of decoration, inscribed in English: "Imperial Japanese Post. Imperial Wedding. Twenty-fifth Anniversary." Much amusement was created among those cognizant of the flimsy character of the Japanese wedding ceremony, which is hardly more impressive or binding than the once popular custom of jumping over a broomstick. The marriage tie is not considered sacred, divorces are granted on the most trivial pretexts and the actual ceremony is neither legal nor religious, consisting chiefly of a dinner party, at which the bride and

12 different dresses, all of silk, and of course all beautiful. The change in court etiquette has done away with this, but the empress dons a heavy court dress at early morning, and, no matter what the temperature may be, wears it without change until the time for retiring at night. Her habits, as well as those of the emperor, are of the simplest. Both rise between 6 and 7 o'clock in the morning, usually breakfast, lunch and dine together, and sometimes receive guests at their tables, with whom they chat informally on matters of mutual interest.

"L'Imperatrice Printemps," as a famous French author has called her—the Springtime Empress—is greatly revered by her subjects, and she seems to have earned their affection and devotion, for much of her time is given to charity. Her pet hobby is the "Peersess" school, which she established in Tokyo, and in which she has a suite of private apartments. A lady who was at one time a teacher in that school and knew the empress well says of her: "She is a small, slender woman, with a face that seems sad, with a patient look about it that is pathetic. They say she is a very intellectual woman, and one of great beauty and strength of character. She has jet black hair, her face is long and thin,



From photographs taken especially for this paper.



TYPICAL ANTHRACITE MINER AND BREAKER BOY.

INTERESTING NEWS BOILED DOWN.

If all the money in the world were divided equally, each person would get about \$20.

Two of the greatest literary productions of the Chinese are a dictionary in 5,000 volumes and an encyclopedia in 22,387 volumes.

A vigorous crusade against unsightly advertising is now being waged in Boston, and a club which has become in-

terested in the matter has offered a prize for the set of 12 photographs which shall best illustrate the disfigurement of landscapes in the vicinity of the Hub in the way indicated.

The Glasgow corporation has just given \$2,000 for a picture, "The Coming of Spring," by E. A. Hornel, the most advanced impressionist artist in Scotland, one of the original members of

the "Glasgow school." Mr. Hornel's works are for the most part gemlike color schemes resembling mosaics.

Chin Tan Sun, who lives in California, is said to be the wealthiest Chinaman in the United States.

Robert B. Browning, a Union veteran living in Mass., has come into possession of a large scarf worn by General Israel Putnam during the Revolutionary war. Mr. Browning's grandfather married the general's daughter's

youngest daughter, who inherited the scarf and gave it to her son, Mr. Browning's father. It is six feet long.

The proposed cable from Copenhagen to Iceland will be 104 miles long and will cost \$850,000.

The Marquis of Granby, Sir Herbert Maxwell, the dean of Winchester and many well known anglers in England have united in support of a plan to place a stained glass window in Winchester cathedral in memory of Isaac

Walton. The remains of Walton rest in Prior Siltstede's chapel, and the proposed window would overlook his grave.

Marshall Bishop, the oldest resident of Aroostook county, Me., will be 100 years of age next Christmas. He recently walked from his home to Fort Kent—a distance of 45 miles—refusing the offer of a lift of ten miles from a passing driver on the plea that he thought walking the only perfect exer-

cise and that he wanted to take a look at the crops as he went along. He is now on the return trip.

A peach grower near Georgetown, Del., protected his trees from the depredations of fruit thieves this summer by conspicuously displaying this legend on signs nailed to the fence surrounding his orchard: "Caution! This fence is surrounded by a live electric wire!" The wire could be seen on top of the fence strung on glass insulators, and no one attempted to meddle with it. But now that he has marketed his crop the owner of the orchard admits that it was a "dummy."

At Kysack, Alaska, halibut is caught weighing 350 pounds, cod 42 pounds and salmon 58 pounds.

The British government is the owner of over 25,000 camels. Several thousands are used in India to carry stores and equipments when the regiments are changing quarters.