

entries as this in his journal—"Village of Assolee—near it were fields of wheat, pigeon pea and millet. Mahalgau—the fields onward from this village were of wheat, millet, and more rarely of pepper, sweet potatoes, etc. (By sweet potatoes is not meant a particular variety of our own potato, which belongs to the nightshade family of plants, but a kind of *convolvulus* whose tubers are eatable.) Waroda village—near this, plantations of plantains occur."

The intellectual state of the people resident in these villages may be inferred when it is stated that in the first of them, a place of about fifty houses, there was no school, and no person old or young could read; while in the second, of eighty houses, one was that of a rain-maker (!); and in the last, a small town of 300 houses, the rain-makers occupied three dwellings.

From these facts—and they might easily be multiplied a hundred fold—it is painfully apparent how much the Indian villagers require to be taught at least the rudiments of education, and, above all, how much they need to be instructed in the doctrines and precepts of our holy faith. In social matters, no reform is more urgent than one which shall reduce the crushing weight of marriage expenses, as now imposed by foolish and tyrannical custom, and emancipate the unhappy victims from the bondage in which they are held by the money-lenders: to whom they have mortgaged the produce of their lands.

The agricultural resources of India are so vast that, with proper management, it might not merely support its own population, but furnish in addition supplies of one kind of grain or other to feed a great portion of mankind. All that is needful to effect this desirable result is simply to provide some apparatus for utilising the water, which falls in torrents from the sky at certain seasons, and escapes away to the ocean without having been made to render man the service it might have been expected to furnish. Let India be properly irrigated, and we shall no longer have our feelings harrowed by reports of famines in that land. At the same time, let us not shut our eyes to the fact that the difficulties which have to be overcome are considerable. If our London Government ruled over all Europe, with the exception of Russia and Turkey, and if the vast population over which its authority extended were the reverse of public-spirited, so that, in every emergency their first thought was not of putting forth their individual exertions, but of asking the Government to lead the way in action, the position would in some respects be analogous to that we at present occupy in the East. One might be ready to say, the way to stop famines from occurring is easy. Construct upon the Thames a vast network of channels for transmitting water to the country through which the river passes, and build across it a very powerful embankment, to furnish such a fresh-water lake as may feed the channels. Do the same upon the Clyde and the Tay, and the Humber and the Severn, on the Seine, also, and on the Loire, and the Tagus and the Rhine and the Rhone. Let an identical system be pursued with the Po and the Tiber, with the Elbe also, and the Oder and the Vistula, as well as with the upper part of the Danube. Then may you laugh at famines, even if rain from heaven should in great measure be withheld. Very well, one might reply; but it is to be presumed that operations so extensive would cost a great many millions of money. A government which does not always find its ordinary expenditure met by its income, can only raise money by imposing new taxes, or by borrowing, both of which expedients it wishes if possible to avoid. Let its intentions be ever so beneficent, you must give it time to

carry them into effect. The opening of the Ganges canal some years ago was a proud triumph; while the hearty good will with which the Indian authorities have laboured for years on the lower portion of the Godavery, partly to render that river more navigable, partly to construct expensive works with the view of promoting irrigation, gives solid ground for believing that, if time be granted them, they will yet utilise to the fullest extent all the great Indian rivers, and ultimately succeed in preventing the recurrence of those famines which from time immemorial have desolated portions of the glorious Indian land.

#### M. ROUHER.

It is impossible to read the French political news in any daily or weekly journal without constantly meeting with the name of Monsieur Rouher, now one of the most prominent and influential statesmen in France.

The career of this minister of Napoleon III shows how success may often be ascribed to the unforeseen and trivial circumstances, from which no one would have anticipated any result. M. Rouher was first known, and then became celebrated, by an incautious expression which escaped his lips in the heat of debate, and to which, in cooler blood, he in vain tried to restore its real meaning. His descendants should, out of gratitude, inscribe the word "catastrophe" on their coat of arms, for it was this word which changed the unknown advocate, the most obscure member of a mediocre ministry, to his own surprise, into a great public celebrity.

Eugène Rouher, the Senator, Minister of State and of Finance, is now fifty-four years of age, and springs from a family, members of which for the last fifty years have held judicial offices. After finishing his studies at the college of his native town, Riom, he went to study law at Paris, became an advocate in 1837, and established himself as such in 1840 at Riom. The department of Puy de Dôme, or Auvergne, as that part of the country was formerly called, has always been very monarchical and conservative, although during the reign of Louis Philippe, the most violent opposition newspapers, supported by money from Paris, were published there. Consequently, actions against the press were quite the order of the day, and the Opposition, who were desirous of winning to their ranks the young and tolerably wealthy advocate, entrusted to him, directly after he had settled in the department, a large number of these cases to defend. As a barrister, he had not eloquence. He was not a ready speaker, was unacquainted with brilliant metaphors, and his variations on the word "liberty," then so much in fashion, showed the timid *dilettante*, rather than the skilled professor, in these press prosecutions.

However, he was thoroughly successful. These trials brought his real judicial knowledge to light. He earned a great deal of money; and, in the year 1843, he married the daughter of the Mayor of Clermont, the chief town of the province, and through this marriage became a considerable landowner. Then he completely broke the loose bands which tied him to the liberal party; and in 1846 boldly came forward as government candidate, at the elections for the Chamber of Deputies, under the patronage of the minister, M. Guizot. But the bitter feeling against one who was considered to be a renegade was so great, that even many conservatives voted against him, and he obtained only a few thousand votes.

Under the Republic, with universal suffrage, he was

more fortunate: 42,000 electors named him as deputy to the Constituent Assembly; and when this body had finished its labours, during which M. Rouher always voted with the Right, 52,000 voters sent him to the Legislative Assembly.

The deputy of the department of the Loire, Citizen Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, had once heard his young colleague, Rouher, speak in the Constituent Assembly, and when asked his opinion on the talents of the speaker, he replied, shaking his head: "It seems to me as if this citizen did not possess the capability of rightly expressing his own thoughts."

No one understood this oracular sentence: they turned away with a shrug from the deputy with the languid countenance, weary eyes, and world-renowned name. Six months after M. Rouher was Minister of Justice. He had never exchanged a word with the then President of the Republic, and was utterly astonished when the President of the Council of Ministers, M. Ferdinand Barrot, informed him that it was the express wish of the first magistrate of the Republic that he should accept a portfolio. Till 1851 he remained under several ministries at the head of the department of Justice.

It was at this period that he let fall that celebrated word, to which we have before alluded, and which made Rouher known from one end of France to the other. On the morning before one of those important sittings, which during the second Republic often became so stormy, Louis Napoleon said to Rouher—

"They wish again to try to extinguish you with the glorious Revolution of the 24th February, 1848. The people really believe that they were all Mirabeaus or Dantons! We must for once hold a mirror up before them, in which they may be able to see a faithful likeness of themselves in all their littleness!"

Rouher, meditating on these words of the President, went to the Assembly, and it so happened that immediately after his entrance he had to ascend the Tribune to answer an interpellation as Minister of Justice.

"Be cautious—the chamber is very much excited to-day!" his colleague Baroche said to him.

"Certainly, certainly," he replied, rather absently, ascended the Tribune, and replied in a few impetuous words to the interpellation. The murmurs of the Assembly excited him still more; and when at last he heard the cry from the Left, "That was just what was said before the 24th February," his presence of mind completely forsook him, and, still under the impression which the words of the President of the Republic had made on him, he raised himself up to his full height and exclaimed with a voice of thunder—

"Your boasted Revolution was nothing more than a catastrophe!"

Only those who have been present at a French National Assembly can have the faintest idea of what now happened. Clapping, shrieking, hissing, threats and insults, followed without end! The tumult lasted for more than half-an-hour, and M. Rouher, who had retired to the ministers' bench, might well have feared for some minutes that his person was not secure from violent treatment.

In vain he explained, after quiet had in some measure been restored, that he had used the word "catastrophe" only in the sense of an unforeseen event. It was of no avail: amidst universal hissing "l'homme à la catastrophe" was again forced to leave the tribune.

Foreigners cannot understand the deep impression which such scenes make on the public in France. This innocent word flew like wildfire through the land, and became a sort of test by which some showed their hatred

to the Republic, and others the most unbridled fury against the Government. And the man who had provoked this "catastrophe" in such an innocent manner, could scarcely believe his senses when he contemplated this terrible ferment; but he had an opportunity thereby, such as had never before been presented to him, of studying his countrymen. But he had not much time for this: a vote of want of confidence, a few weeks after, caused the fall of the entire ministry and led to the *coup d'état*. Rouher remained in the chamber as a simple deputy, who could no longer speak, as the Left would not allow him to say a word, and always brought up afresh the recollection of the "catastrophe." At the consultations which preceded the execution of the *coup d'état* at the Elysée, M. de Morny proposed the deputy Rouher as a minister. A dry "No" was the reply of the President, who gave as his reason the following words, which well characterised M. Rouher: "C'est l'homme des demi-mesures!"

The new order of things was, however, scarcely established, when the President, now unrestricted in his authority, offered M. Rouher a portfolio, which he accepted; but a few weeks after he retired, together with M. de Morny, as they refused to countersign the decree which confiscated a portion of the property of the Orleans family. How greatly this much-talked-of decree confused the minds of the most faithful and devoted adherents of Napoleon III is proved from the simple fact that Morny, Napoleon's own brother, refused to sign it as minister. Time has cooled down this excitement, and it has been argued also that the word "confiscation" was falsely applied, as three courts of law confirmed that this property did not belong to the Orleans family, but to the State.

Napoleon gave the retiring minister the vice-presidency of the newly-created Council of State, and till 1855 he was almost forgotten, when the Emperor again called him into the ministry, and gave him the portfolio of Agriculture, Trade, and Public Works. Since that time to the present M. Rouher has never left the ministry; and in these twelve years has at different times presided over all the branches of the Government in France, with the exception of War and Marine.

The reader will remember that, after the Italian war, the Emperor, in the year 1859, thought the time had arrived in which a more liberal direction might be given to the Constitution. One of the chief measures taken in this sense was to appoint a minister, whose duty it should be to defend the Government in the chambers. Billault was the first who held this difficult post; and after his death, in 1862, Rouher became his successor.

It was the general opinion that the Emperor had made a mistake in this appointment, as it was well remembered that Rouher's oratorical talents had not shone in the chambers of the Republic, and his "catastrophe" speech was again brought up to the remembrance of the French nation. To succeed Billault, one of the best and most talented orators of France, was not an enviable inheritance for any man. But after his first speeches all saw how greatly they had been deceived. Often has M. Rouher, during the last five years, gained the victory over all opponents. Clever, undoubtedly, as a politician, we must not forget that, as a minister of Napoleon III, his opinions, whatever they may be, have to give way to those of his imperial master, whose will is supreme. Rouher, like all the other ministers, is only the executor of the Imperial will; but, as he is the only one in the whole Cabinet whose gift of eloquence can be employed with advantage in the chamber, a much more important

place in the councils of the sovereign is assigned to him than to any of his colleagues.

In general, the sketch of those official speeches of which we have been speaking is drawn out for him by the Emperor's own hand. He works out the ideas, and then reads the whole to the Emperor; which, after it has been corrected, is communicated to the rest of the ministry. The morning before the sitting Rouher has another audience, when, often at the last moment, not unimportant changes are made. The really marvellous memory of Rouher has grown with all this exercise of mind.

Rouher, in a word, is just the man whom Napoleon III requires—without ambition, without independence, and wonderfully endowed with talents and tact. To have discovered him out of the mass of parliamentary mediocrities, and to have made him pliable to his absolute and inflexible will, is the merit of the Emperor alone.

We must add to this sketch that the private life of Rouher, as well as his personal honour, have never in the remotest degree been subjected to the criticisms of the enemies of the empire.—*From Daheim.*

### "OLD WEDGWOOD" WARE.

THE publication of interesting and profusely illustrated biographies of Josiah Wedgwood, by Miss Meteyard and Mr. Jewitt, has given an extraordinary impetus to the collection of the works of that remarkable man. The demand for the earlier productions of the manufactory at Etruria has sharpened the wits of dealers, both honourable and unscrupulous; and as the latter form, alas! an overwhelming majority, a few hints for the guidance and protection of ingenuous and unwary collectors may not be unacceptable.

In the first place, then, it is a duty which every collector owes to himself, to distrust, *primâ facie*, dealers in articles of *virtù*, rare pottery included. This apparently uncharitable dictum is justified by the fact that there is nothing of this kind which perverted ingenuity will not essay to imitate and traffic in, from a Raphael to a scarabæus. It is perfectly notorious to collectors that counterfeit antique furniture, Roman, Greek, and early English coins, Etruscan vases, bronzes of the classic period, implements of the primæval ages, old Sèvres and Dresden china, and other varieties of pottery, aboriginal weapons, mediæval seals and manuscripts—in fact, everything commanding the fictitious prices paid by collectors, are manufactured on a large scale. The publication of the names and addresses of the people who follow this disreputable calling would be a public duty, were it possible to be sure that the dealers have not sometimes been themselves the dupes of the manufacturers of these wares.

Let it be stated, however, at once, that, in the writer's opinion, the successors of Josiah Wedgwood are quite incapable of knowingly lending themselves to such traffic. Nevertheless, their works, and those of John Adams and Co., of Hanley, who are equally entitled to the benefit of the saving clause, are periodically visited by professed dealers in "Old Wedgwood," and the articles there purchased are afterwards palmed off upon the uninitiated for the almost priceless productions of the Wedgwood and Bentley period. These dealers—mostly Jews—buy up job lots of ware, which they at once offer unblushingly, and at fabulous prices, as "the genuine article," or else attempt to "doctor" it into a resemblance of the old ware, by a variety of processes little known beyond the craft. For instance, some few years since the

writer went into a pretentious-looking shop in the Strand, and requested to be allowed to examine a pair of jasper flower-pots. The moment he took them into his hand, he knew by a raspy "feel," peculiar to new biscuit pottery, that in all probability they had been in the oven within six months from that time. The assistant volunteered the information, "You have the genuine article there, sir;" and the price demanded was eight guineas. They might have been purchased at Etruria for ten or twelve shillings. Various devices are resorted to to remove this tell-tale asperity of surface; and it is not long since that two Jew dealers, having quarrelled, one of the fraternity disclosed that his rival was in the practice of immersing new goods in a butt of stagnant soft water, trusting to the viscosity of the bath to give them that exquisite smoothness of surface which is one of the most marked characteristics of "Old Wedgwood," but which time alone can impart in perfection.

The greatest windfall for dealers in "Old Wedgwood" happened in this wise. Contemporary with Josiah Wedgwood there lived at Hanley one Elijah Mayer, a persevering and fairly successful copyist of the great master. Much of his ware, in the black basaltes and cane-coloured bodies, was highly meritorious. Elijah Mayer was succeeded by his son Joseph Mayer, an eccentric old gentleman, who died about seven years since worth a round quarter of a million of money. At his death, his executors came into possession of a large quantity of choice pottery, the earlier productions of the house, on which lay undisturbed the dust of half a century; for, although Mr. Mayer had been out of business many years, the remnant of his stock had never been sold. A considerable proportion of this ware was made after original Wedgwood models, of which, however, it fell far short. Scouting their prey from afar, the London dealers in "antiques" swooped down upon this accumulation and bought it up by cratesful. They then removed it to London, and cautiously introduced it into their shops and windows as "Old Wedgwood," frequently obtaining from the inexperienced, for the better specimens, more pounds than they had cost shillings. Many pieces of this ware are stamped "E. Mayer," and this appears to have been a source of perplexity to some of the dealers; but there was one, at least, who found a way to surmount the difficulty, for he told a friend of the writer that this stamp was the name of Wedgwood's designer or manager, and was merely a private mark for the facilitation of business.

One more illustration of the "tricks of trade." Some time since, the art director of one of the leading firms in the Potteries obtained a spoilt copy of a group of figures in parian, for the purpose of making some experiments in colour. The experiments were made, and the group was put aside as worthless; but, before it had been consigned to the "shord-ruck," it caught the eye of a Jew dealer, who either begged it or bought it for an old song. Bringing it up to London, he submitted it to the inspection of a distinguished—one might say illustrious—statesman, who lightens the toils of office, and beguiles the hours of retirement, by indulging in the gentle passion for rare specimens of the potter's art. The dealer represented the group to be a remarkably scarce and valuable piece of Italian pottery of the *cinquecento* period: a fabulous sum was paid for it: rumour says £50. The fortunate possessor, unwilling that such a treasure should be wholly lost to the public, sent it to South Kensington, whence, however, it was ere long ignominiously expelled on being accidentally seen and identified by the modeller.