



The island of Formosa: Its past and future

Rev. W. Campbell F.R.G.S.

To cite this article: Rev. W. Campbell F.R.G.S. (1896) The island of Formosa: Its past and future, Scottish Geographical Magazine, 12:8, 385-399, DOI: [10.1080/00369229608732903](https://doi.org/10.1080/00369229608732903)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00369229608732903>



Published online: 27 Feb 2008.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 6



View related articles [↗](#)

THE SCOTTISH GEOGRAPHICAL MAGAZINE.

THE ISLAND OF FORMOSA: ITS PAST AND FUTURE.

By Rev. W. CAMPBELL, F.R.G.S., of Tainanfu.

(With a Map.)

ABOUT twelve months ago the island of Formosa formed the nineteenth, and only insular, province of China; but, soon after, it came under control of its own republican government, while to-day it ranks as an integral part of the Empire of Japan. Even from the geographical standpoint rapid changes of this kind carry with them a good deal of interest, but when one thinks of the effect throughout China and elsewhere of those further changes which the Japanese have already commenced in their newly-acquired territory, it will be felt that no apology is needed for submitting the following brief remarks on this important and very productive island.

Roughly speaking, it stands about a hundred miles out from the Chinese mainland, the south-eastern part of the channel being occupied by the small Pescadores group, which formerly made up a *Ting* or sub-prefecture of Formosa. A careful calculation from the latest Admiralty chart makes out the area of the island to be 14,982 miles, its length from north to south 245 miles, and its greatest width 80 miles, the whole extent being thus larger than Holland, and about one-half the size of Scotland.

It is now well known that the eastern side of Formosa is very mountainous, that its long bisecting middle range attains a height of nearly 13,000 feet, and that several spurs away to the north-east form the steepest sea-cliffs in the world; their lofty masses, rising some 7000 feet sheer from the water's edge, and wooded to the summit, present a sight which the beholder will probably never be able to forget.

The great drawback to Formosa is the want of good harbour accommodation, and the fact of its rivers and streams being navigable only to a

very limited extent. With the exception of the small inlets at Saw-o and Black-rock Bay—which are suitable only for junks and incapable of extension—the entire line of the east coast is rock-bound, shelterless, and impracticable. Kelang harbour, to the north-east, no doubt possesses good depth of water and is open at all tides, but it, also, is too narrow, and too much exposed during the winter monsoons, to be a considerable centre of trade. A somewhat similar remark applies to the north-western port of Tamsui, as that is the mere estuary of an insignificant river, with a shifting troublesome bar which ocean-going steamers do not attempt to cross.

With all its disadvantages, the lagoon at Takow on the south-west coast is likely to become the headquarters of the import and export trade of Formosa. Its complete shelter, and good holding-ground in a part of the world where coral reefs abound, are important; while the very easy process of widening the entrance, and dredging out several sandbanks within, would secure an enormous extent of shipping accommodation. Consul Hurst's recently issued Report remarks on this subject as follows:—"A natural 'lagoon' exists at Takow, about seven miles long, by an average breadth of half a mile, and divided from the sea by a narrow 'spit' of coral throughout its whole length. The dredging of this lagoon and its conversion into a splendid harbour would be a simple and not very costly operation; but the Government have not yet been induced to take any steps in this direction, beyond ordering a preliminary survey some five years ago." It ought, however, to be added here, that any lack of harbour-room in Formosa is amply provided for at the Pescadores. Steamers reach the safe and spacious anchorages among those islands in about four hours from the port of Anpeng, and the recent victors knew well what they were about when insisting that the Pescadores also should be ceded to Japan.

One other remark under this head is, that the only fresh-water lake of any size in Formosa lies among the high mountain ranges some three days' journey south-east from the city of Chiang-hoa. The first European visit was paid to it twenty-three years ago by the writer of these notes, who named it Lake Candidius, in memory of that Dutch pastor who began Protestant missionary work in the island, about 1624. Regarding the river system, it should be remarked that, according to the geological formation of the island, most of the streams on its western side flow from the eastern mountain region across the plains, without much winding to the north or south, on their way to the sea. Of course the rainy season brings down great volumes of water, which oftentimes rush with so much force as to be quite impassable by boat or catamaran. That considerable river which debouches at the market-town of Tang-kang in the south has a direction more from north to south than any of the others, its general course being down through several valleys near Lau-long and La-ku-li, and farther on, till it flows out into the more level country of the Hong-soa county. As a matter of fact, large quantities of rice, sugar, camphor, rattan, charcoal and other products are brought to market over the streams and rivers of Formosa by means of very long bamboo rafts. These rafts draw only a few inches of water, and admit of

great loads being placed upon them. It may be added here that the general lie of the land both to the north and south of the western plain region is such that much use may be made of the streams in Formosa for purposes of irrigation; and were more effort made for storing up water near the base of the mountains, and thence distributing it over the level fields of the west, the result could not fail to be a satisfactory one. Several such undertakings have already proved both easy of accomplishment and highly remunerative to the originators.

There is nothing very special to remark about the climate of Formosa. From October till March the weather is mild, often bracing, with occasional showers in the north, but very few throughout the southern regions. The highest temperature and the heaviest rainfall are to be met with between June and September, although even then the thermometer seldom registers more than ninety degrees in the shade. Severe storms sometimes occur during midsummer, but those terrible typhoons which start in the China sea and travel northward, usually slant off at South Cape to drive with full force across the low-lying Pescadores, or over the islands of Botel Tobago and Samasana to the east of Formosa. There are no active volcanoes in the island, and only slight earthquakes are of frequent occurrence, especially in the neighbourhood of Tamsui and Kelang.

It is safe to say that Formosa is an exceedingly rich island, because the alluvial plains of the west, far stretching and well watered, offer simply illimitable opportunities for raising sugar-cane, rice, sweet potatoes, ground-nuts, indigo, ginger, turmeric, and suchlike. Moreover, its present fruit production is sufficient to show what abundant increase would follow the introduction of any kind of general and systematic method of cultivation. Large beautiful pine-apples can be had almost for the lifting, and probably not a more palatable and wholesome fruit could be found anywhere than the Sai-le loose-skinned oranges, or those juicy and delicious little *pumelos* from Bantan. During 1894 twenty-one million pounds of tea, and over forty thousand hundredweights of camphor, were shipped from Formosa. It has been ascertained that rich coalfields exist, not only in the north—where they have long been worked in European style—but in the A-li-kang region, twelve days' journey farther south. The petroleum wells at Toa-kho-ham, and the sulphur deposits near Tamsui, could also be turned to great account; while it was owing to the recent war that negotiations were broken off between the Government of Formosa and the representatives of a Chinese syndicate for conceding exclusive right to work the gold mines in the island. In short, the wealth of this still undeveloped country may be seen on considering that, during 1893, trade to the value of four and a half million pounds sterling passed through the ten or twelve European houses doing business there.

Within the limits of this paper it is not possible to make anything like a detailed statement regarding the history of the island. Traders from the opposite mainland began to visit it about the middle of the fifteenth century. On nearing it, the sight presented was a wide level shore with lofty mountains rising range upon range into the interior, and

this suggested to them the Chinese name which it still bears, that of Tai-wan or Terrace-beach. It was the same sight a hundred years later which led some Portuguese adventurers to shout out, *Ilha Formosa!* Beautiful Isle! another descriptive name which has now become current all over the world. At this early time, the island was found thickly peopled by an aboriginal race, or rather a collection of non-Mongolian tribes widely differing from each other in their appearance, language, and customs. Of course no strictly accurate account of those tribes can be looked for in the notices of this period, and one has surely some right to complain of the extent to which theorising is carried by writers like the late Professor Delacouperie, who, from such meagre data, say all sorts of things about the dwarfs, the black giants, and even the tailed men of Formosa.

Like a great many other good things, our earliest knowledge of the island comes to us from the Dutch. Wishing to share with the Spaniards and Portuguese in the lucrative trade of the Far East, their East India Company effected a settlement on the Pescadores in 1622, but the resident and provincial Chinese authorities strongly objected to this, and did not cease their opposition till the new-comers removed to the little-known, but much larger, island of Formosa. Dutch rule lasted there from 1624 till 1661, and during those thirty-seven years small military establishments were set up, and authority exercised from Long-kiau in the south up along the western sea-board, and on as far as what is now the north-east county of Gi-lan. Civil affairs were administered by a Dutch Governor with the members of his Council, who had all to report to colonial headquarters at Batavia; and one interesting feature of their work was, that not only were efforts made for the furtherance of trade, but also for bringing the natives of the island to the knowledge and obedience of the Christian faith. No fewer than thirty-seven ordained pastors came from the home land to engage in this latter service; who, besides attending to their more official duties, superintended the labours of the Dutch schoolmasters, and reduced at least three of the aboriginal dialects to a written form.

Indeed, the very success of the colony began to awaken the envy and covetousness of people living under less favoured conditions. China was then passing through that epoch-making crisis which resulted in the overthrow of the Ming, and the usurpation of the present Manchu-Tartar, dynasty; so that the unsettled times led many of the Fokien Chinese to cross the channel and try their fortune under the rule of those western barbarians, of whose influence and generosity they had been hearing so much. True, the Formosans were represented to be a warlike race, but it was believed that sharp-witted refugees like themselves would be sure to hold their own against people who were still looked upon as mere savages.

All this, however, was but the beginning of trouble to the thriving little colony at Taiwan, for that great Chinese patriot or pirate, the chieftain Koxinga, came himself to be so hardly pressed by the invading Manchus that he, too, began to think of Formosa as a place of rallying, if not of probable possession. His first move was to send over repeated

messages from the Pescadores with the view of fixing a quarrel on the Dutch ; but all pretence was set aside when he placed himself at the head of an immense flotilla of war-junks, both sea-worthy and well-provisioned, as well as manned by thousands of daring outlaws, who thought less of the fight than of the idleness and plenty they hoped to find in this newly-discovered retreat.

Meanwhile, Governor Coyett was shut up in anxious consultation with his councillors at Fort Zeelandia. Frequent were the warnings and earnest the appeals they had sent to Batavia ; but other influences were at work among the higher officials there, so that reinforcements which ought to have come never reached Formosa, thus compelling the comparatively small garrison to find shelter within the castle walls, in which position both soldiers and officials were found when Koxinga appeared to demand their unconditional submission.

The sturdy Hollanders held out for nine long weary months, during which time they made several damaging attacks on the enemy ; who, however, retaliated by perpetrating the most shocking cruelties on such Dutch people as were scattered throughout the island, their very clergymen being tortured to death, either by impalement or by crucifixion. Contemporary records unite in singling out the case of Rev. Antonius Hambroek, who was sent by Koxinga into the castle, under a flag of truce, to propose terms of surrender, and told to back these up with threats of most terrible vengeance. Mr. Hambroek was forced to leave his wife and two children (one of them described as a sweet and comely maiden of eighteen) in the invader's camp as pledges, which sufficiently proved that any failure of his undertaking would be a most ominous signal for those poor defenceless ones. And yet, this noble man was so far from persuading the garrison to surrender, that he encouraged them to continue the defence by hopes of relief, assuring them that Koxinga had lost some of his best ships and soldiers, and began to be weary of the siege. When his speech was ended, the Council left it to his own choice either to stay with them or return to the camp, where he could expect nothing but instant death. He had also two daughters within the Castle, who hung upon his neck, overwhelmed with grief and tears to see their father decided to go where he knew he must be sacrificed by the merciless foe.

But he reminded them that having left his wife and his other two children as hostages, death would be their certain fate if he returned not ; so, unlocking himself from his daughters' arms, he exhorted them all to a resolute defence, and cheerily said as he left the castle gate, that God might yet make use of him in bringing deliverance to his poor fellow-prisoners.

Koxinga received his answer sternly, and without further delay issued an order for the massacre of all Dutch captives, and of every native who persisted in the profession of Christianity ; Hambroek himself was put to death by decapitation, and the before-mentioned daughter compelled to become a member of his murderer's harem.

At length, worn out with disappointment, fatigue, and famine, the little garrison was compelled to surrender, all the public property falling

into the hands of the enemy, and the brave but heavy-hearted defenders being allowed to depart in their only remaining ship.

Strong feeling was shown by the home authorities over the loss of so rich a colony; and, therefore, on arriving in Batavia poor Coyett was arrested, and a long trial afterwards ended in his being banished to the desolate island of Pulo Ay. A vindication ought yet to be made of the character of this noble but deeply-wronged man. As for Koxinga, he died a miserable death after having been king of Formosa for little more than twelve months.

Ching-keng-mai succeeded his father on the throne, and reigned for about twelve years, but was often in trouble through his trading ships being attacked by subjects of the now dominant Manchu ruler of China. It was in the hope of fortifying himself against this enemy that royal circular letters were sent out to European merchants frequenting those seas, in which tempting facilities were held out if they would only come and open warehouses in the neighbourhood of Taiwan.

Such an offer from Ching-keng-mai would be scarcely worth referring to here, were it not that the only response to it was made from a very unexpected quarter. It certainly is not generally known that during the latter half of the seventeenth century, the English East India Company had one of their factories on Formosa for a number of years; but there can be no doubt about the matter, because the old yellow documents which were courteously produced for my inspection at the India Office a month ago, abundantly prove it. One of these letters is dated 1670, and is addressed to the King of Tywan, its opening sentences running thus:—"Charles, by the grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland; having most graciously licensed severall of his Merchants to trade into all the habitable partes of the World, amongst whom Sir Wm. Thompson, with some other Merchants, are, by the said most gracious King, authorized Governors of the Merchants to trade into these Eastern parts. Now for the directing and overseeing their Affaires at Bantam and partes adjacent, they have appointed mee (Henry Dacres), Agent. The said Henry Dacres, therefore, on behalf of the said Sir Wm. Thompson, Governor, sends greeteing unto your most Excellent Majesty; and having seen your most gracious Letter directed to all Merchants in Generall, inviting them to trade into the partes under your Majestie's Jurisdictions, has, without delay, sent this small Ship and Sloope with Mr. Ellis Crispe, Cap^t., to acquaint us with the Merchandize desireable to bee Imported, and of Merchandize proper for us to Exporte, and when wee shall bee acquainted therewith by him, and have the permission of Friendship and Affection of your Majesty (which wee moste humbly desire) wee shall requeste the said Sir Wm. Thompson's leave to sollicite your Majesty; and because we would have your Majesty know that wee are Englishmen, and a distinct Nation from Hollanders (some people of which Nation about ten years since were driven out of your Land by his Majesty your Renowned Father), we have sent on this our Shipp Cap^t. Sooke, with eight other Chinamen, who have for long time traded and been acquainted with us and our Nation." There follows a long table of conditions for the settlement of the factory, while subse-

quent letters report concerning the reception of the supercargo, and of a very favourable commencement having been made. It would appear, however, that the king's desire to benefit himself out of this trade soon gave rise to a great amount of friction, and led ultimately to the following peremptory mandate from the Court of Directors to their representatives at Bantam, the date of it being 28th Feb. 1682:—"As to the Trade of Tywan, we hereby expressly require you, that if you have made no better earnings of it before this comes to your hands, you do order our Factors to desert the Place, and bring off what they can with them. To which purpose we have written a menacing Letter to the King, and probably may send a Ship to be with you in March or April next, to go down to Tywan to fetch off our Servants; and after that to use some forcible means for our satisfaction of the debt he owes us." The "satisfaction" was obtained, with interest.

At this stage it remains only to add that Koxinga's grandson was very young when he succeeded his father in the government of Formosa, and that his officers found it increasingly difficult to maintain their independence alongside the growing success of the great Manchu authority. Accordingly, the young Prince ended the trouble by tendering his submission in 1683, thus bringing Formosa under direct control of the Emperor at Peking.

And now begins a long period in the history of the island during which it emerges only now and then in such a way as to attract the notice of Western nations. On the cessation of its own monarchical government, it and the Pescadores were joined on as a prefecture to the opposite Province of Fokien, the insular officers—both civil and military—having all to report to their departmental superiors at Foochow. For administrative purposes, that portion of the western region occupied by the now numerous Chinese was made up of what might be called the Metropolitan County of Terrace-beach—where Tainanfu now stands—the County of Phoenix-hill or Hong-soa immediately to the south of it, and Varigated-Net-hill or Tsu-lo-san adjoining it on the north. It may be remarked in passing that this Tsu-lo-san is a mere Sinicised form of the old native Tilosen; and that, on the occasion of a civil outbreak there, when most of the people remained faithful to the Imperial cause, the Emperor graciously changed the name to the one of our present-day maps—that of Kagi or Established Righteousness.

Within the limit, then, of those three counties, the population was divisible into two great classes: (1.) The Chinese themselves, by far the bulk of them being immigrants or the descendants of immigrants from the Chin-chew and Chang-chew regions of the Fokien Province; (2.) Those agricultural aborigines, who rendered a general allegiance to the Chinese, conformed to many of their customs, and knew more or less of their language, but who lived somewhat independently in small townships or hamlets of their own.

There was very little intercourse between this population and the unsubdued tribes who inhabited the remoter parts of the island; certainly much less than existed between those tribes and the earlier new-comers from Holland. The Chinese did not dare to venture amongst them,

because long years of oppression and trickery on their part had quite appropriated that western region where the native was wont to hunt and to fish, and where many of his little villages nestled in comfort and security; whereas, although sometimes acting towards them in a very high-handed way, the Dutch had come to adjust inter-tribal quarrels, to act fairly, and to prove an unspeakable blessing to the aborigines of Formosa.

The Chinese-Formosan annals of this time, and for long after, contain much that is very dry reading, being chiefly made up of vague topographical details, with an account of official appointments, clan fights, rebellions, and disasters; to which is added any number of wonderful stories about the inhabitants and productions of the island.

A valuable monograph has come down to us from one of the Jesuit Fathers, who spent some time in Formosa during the first half of last century. De Mailla writes in a sober and very interesting way about what he saw, and cordially testifies to the traces of Christianity which survived from the period of the Dutch occupation. On this subject he says:—"Before leaving Amoy, we had been informed that there were Christians in Formosa. Accordingly, we made inquiries, and certainly there are none among the Chinese; but there are traces as if Christianity had been known among the aboriginals from the time when the Dutch were in possession. We met several who were able to speak the Dutch language, who read Dutch books, and who, in writing, used Roman letters. We even found among them fragments of our five books (probably the Pentateuch) in Dutch. Those natives worship no idols as the Chinese do, and have a horror of anything approaching to such an act; and yet they perform no religious rites, nor recite any prayers. We spoke to several who acknowledged a God, Creator of heaven and earth—a God in three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. They told us that the first man was called Adam, and the first woman Eve; that these, having disobeyed God, had drawn forth the divine anger upon themselves and all their posterity, and that it was necessary to have recourse to baptism to efface this stain; of which rite, too, the very formula is remembered to this day."

Coming down to more recent times, we find that certain events which took place in Formosa during 1842 attracted the notice of many Europeans at home and abroad. The first Anglo-Chinese war had just been closed by the Treaty of Nanking, when two British ships were driven, by stress of weather, on to the north-west coast of the island, the wretched persons who came ashore being brought to await instructions from the local Chinese officials. After consultation, those civil and military underlings concluded that the opportunity was a very favourable one for enriching themselves and obtaining substantial promotion in their respective services. They commenced proceedings with a wholesale plundering of the two ships, and by inflicting as heavy fines as possible on any private individuals who had been found looting on their own behalf. Those miserable sailors and passengers who escaped the dangers of the sea were then marched down the island to Tainanfu, were most scandalously treated during four months of imprisonment there, and were

at last led out beyond the Great North Gate of the city, where they suffered decapitation to the number of one hundred and ninety-seven.

The report sent up to Peking quite ignored the cessation of the war with Britain, represented that two of the enemy's battleships had attempted to land troops on Formosa, but that during a severe engagement the Imperialists proved equal to the occasion, attacking and vanquishing the foreign barbarians with great loss of life. Trophies of war were also forwarded in the shape of articles which had been stolen from the two ships, while marks of the Imperial favour were besought for those who had conspicuously distinguished themselves in securing this most glorious victory.

Of course, there was a terrible outburst of feeling amongst Europeans in China when the real facts of the case came to light. Some would have at once proceeded to overthrow the dynasty, and few dissented from the proposal that the services of the still present squadron should be made use of; but wiser counsels prevailed in the end, for in the face of a profound expression of regret from Peking, the condign punishment of many Formosan officials, and the peace which had only recently been proclaimed, it was felt that this question was one we could not well take out from the region of diplomatic treatment.

An incident of much greater fatefulness to the island took place during the autumn of 1860. Once again there is war between Great Britain and China, and this time hostilities are terminated by the provisions of the Treaty of Tientsin. It is in accordance with Articles 8 and 11 of this Treaty that two ports in Formosa are declared open to foreign trade, and British subjects professing or teaching the Christian religion are free to go anywhere beyond, if supplied with passports counter-stamped by the local officials.

The result was that Consular offices were speedily opened at Takow and Tamsui, sub-offices being also provided at Tainanfu and Kelang. Before long, too, European warehouses and bungalows were established there, with accommodation for the European officers who were to administer the Customs Service. To meet the religious wants of the people, a Dominican Mission had already been at work for a few years, but in 1865 the English Presbyterian Mission broke ground at Tainanfu, to be followed seven years later by the only other Protestant Mission in the island, that at Tamsui from the Canadian Presbyterian Church.

These various concessions furnish conclusive evidence of the progress which had been made since the time when only a part of western Formosa was included in the Chinese Empire. The very fact that they were possible in a land then so much overrun by savages, shows that the Chinese population must have steadily increased, and is a testimony to their possession of at least some qualities which cannot be undervalued. No doubt instances did occur where the aborigines adapted themselves to the new order of things; but, generally speaking, how was it possible that such tribes could increase and thrive in daily touch with a shrewd, industrious, and plodding race like the Chinese?

What threatened to be a very serious interruption to the later prosperity of Formosa took place towards the close of 1874. About two

years previous to that, a boat, from the Loochooan part of Japan, was wrecked on the east side of the island, and its crew murdered by the Bau-tan savages there. Soon after, the Japanese authorities presented a claim for compensation against the Government of China, but it was met in a very evasive way, and the interchange of several plainly-worded despatches was followed up with a curt intimation from China, that she refused to be held responsible for the action of savages inhabiting an extra-territorial region like the east of Formosa.

The response called forth was a sufficiently startling one; for the people of Japan itself were ignorant regarding the destination of a certain warlike expedition which left their country under sealed orders about this time. In a word, Japan accepted the ultimatum from Peking, caused the mysterious expedition to be landed on South Formosa, and very soon succeeded in chastising those whose cruel treatment of shipwrecked people had become a byword.

Hereupon, however, China entirely changed front, and made loud complaints of what was described as sending military forces into the territory of a friendly Power. All right, said the Japanese, the forces will be at once withdrawn when China acknowledges her responsibility, and meets the expenses of sending them to Formosa; which concessions were ultimately obtained only through mediation of Sir Thomas Wade, the British Minister at Peking. The incident must have cost China millions of money, for everywhere along the coast preparations were made as if war with Japan was all but certain.

One outcome of these proceedings was the desire shown by the Chinese Government to adopt measures for a more thorough development and defence of the island of Formosa than had ever been contemplated; and, accordingly, instructions were issued to Tang Tih-chiang, Governor of the Fokien Province, an officer who was known to be as just and capable as he was free from the superstition and hide-bound conservatism of his class.

No wonder, then, that under this administration, and especially during His Excellency's repeated visits to Formosa, a great amount of progress was made, and many more reforms decided upon. For example, roads were opened across the island, several of the aboriginal tribes subdued or pacified, coal-mining undertaken, telegraphs and railways introduced, and Formosa raised to the rank of a separate province of the Empire. Indeed, had his life been prolonged and Imperial help been forthcoming, there is some likelihood that this island might still have remained a rich Chinese possession, and a strong defence against any hostile foreign fleet.

The next occasion on which Formosa emerged from obscurity was during the Franco-Chinese war, twelve years ago. Many stirring events took place then, including the bombardment of Kelang and Tamsui, with that strict blockade which French men-of-war kept over the island for a period of nearly six months. A very outstanding figure all through the struggle was Liu Ming-Chuan, who directed the operations against the French, and who afterwards became the first Chinese Governor of Formosa.

Whatever effect this war had elsewhere, it left China with one more opportunity for acting in a generous and enlightened way while legislating for Formosa. And it cannot be denied that the Governor's forward policy did receive a certain amount of encouragement; but the man was evidently far in advance of those puissant old reactionaries who control everything at Peking. They ought to have abundantly backed up their really capable representative, and who knows but Formosa might have been acknowledging his authority to-day?

It was under Liu Ming-Chuan in 1885 that that fresh and all-inclusive division of territory took place which still holds good. According to this scheme, the whole of Formosa and the Pescadores are made up of four prefectures; these, again, being subdivided into eleven counties or districts and five sub-prefectures, two of the latter including all the eastern side of the island, and one of them the whole of the Pescadores group. Their native names are as follows:—

1. The northern prefecture of TAI-PAK, made up of the three counties of Sin-tek, Tam-sui, and Gi-lan; with the sub-prefecture of *Ke-lang*.

2. The middle-western prefecture of TAI-WAN, made up of the four counties of Hun-lim, Tai-wan, Chiang-hoa, and Biau-lek; with the more eastern sub-prefecture of *Paw-li*.

3. The south-western prefecture of TAI-NAN, made up of the four counties of Heng-chun, Hong-soa, An-peng, and Ka-gi; with the sub-prefecture of *Phe-aw* (the Pescadores).

4. The eastern prefecture of TAI-TANG, made up of the two sub-prefectures of *Pi-lam* and *Hoe-leng-Kang*, with headquarters at the middle-eastern centre called Tsui-hoe.

If it be objected that this distribution must have embraced a large extent of country occupied by independent non-Chinese tribes, the reply is that Liu Ming-Chuan did everything in his power to make it a reality and not a mere name; for his efforts were unceasing to bring those head-hunting savages within the restraint and protection of the common law. Nor was he satisfied with simply issuing orders for the accomplishment of this; for, on at least one occasion, the writer of these notes was an eye-witness of the Governor's self-denial and pluck in directing operations against savages whose ceaseless midnight attacks had depopulated one of the inland valleys. At that time the Governor had for months been living this life of hardship, and next year the *Peking Gazette* was able to report that 478 villages, containing an aggregate population of 88,000 aborigines, had already given in their allegiance. It should be added that by far the majority of these made voluntary submission, severe measures being resorted to when all other expedients had failed; for the Governor was determined that, no matter what might be done or left undone during his term of office, the hurtful and most scandalous practice of head-hunting should be completely stamped out.

Another matter which had much attention given to it under this administration was that of providing Formosa with railways. The proposal was to have one main line all down the west side of the island, adding on branches as they came to be called for, and there was no interruption till all the surveying part of the work had been

finished. Raising of the necessary capital caused some delay, but railways in Formosa are now an accomplished fact.

The general terminus of the two lines, which have been working during the past five or six years, is in the town of Twa-tiu-tia, a short distance up the Tamsui river. One of the lines crosses the country for about twenty miles over to Kelang, while the other comes down the island for forty-four miles to the county town of Sin-tek. Of course, it is beyond all question that the completion of this work would be a very great boon to every one.

And now, it is quite time to say a few words about still more recent and more sweeping changes than any that have been yet referred to. I happened myself to be travelling through Japan when that culminating point in the war was reached—the fall of Port Arthur. The appearance of the lounging, well-fed Chinese prisoners who were then at Osaka was noticeable, and those regiments of tight little fellows who were in marching order for the field of action seemed fit for anything. There could be no doubt as to what was coming, for every one believed that the proud, unwieldy, and traditional foe of the country would soon be suing for peace at any price.

At that time it was surely an insult to Japan, and the very height of folly, for the Chinese to take the initiative in this direction by sending over Mr. Detring, a foreigner in their employ, to try and arrange matters with the *Eh-law*, or dwarf slaves, as the Japanese are often called in China. The officials at Hyogo wouldn't speak to him, but simply gave orders that he should be shadowed by policemen till he left the place. Nor was the next commission much more successful. It was made up of several high-class mandarins—including the Governor of Formosa—but no proper credentials had been given them, and negotiations were not even entered upon. The third attempt was made by the mighty Li Hung-Chang himself, whose full powers at once led to the Treaty of Shimonoseki, according to which peace was restored by China consenting to pay a war indemnity of thirty-five million pounds sterling, and ceding to Japan the southern half of the Liau-tung peninsula, with the island of Formosa and all its dependencies.

There is reason to think that the proposal to occupy Liau-tung was a piece of mere diplomacy on the part of the Japanese; because, so far as natural resources are concerned, the place is useless, while huge warlike establishments would have been necessary to retain it. It was otherwise with Formosa, for that is a country rich in coal and agriculture, one which completes the line of islands reaching up so easily through Majicosima and the Loochoos to Japan itself; and one, especially, whose occupation had long been a cherished aim of the subjects of the Mikado. Wishing, therefore, to make sure of the island, an additional demand was made, about which discussion was certain to take place; and so Japan gave up the Liau-tung peninsula on the European Powers guaranteeing an additional seven and a half million pounds of indemnity, no objection at all being made to the cession of Formosa. The whole transaction may become more intelligible to us on remembering that the Oriental mind is very fond of working in curves, its method of obtaining any desired object being to say a great deal about something else.

The Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed on 17th April of last year, but three weeks previous to that the Pescadores had already been bombarded and taken possession of, and it is at this point the Japanese were much blamed for their long delay in carrying out those clauses of it which refer to Formosa. Chinese rule in the island quite ceased on its being formally handed over to the Japanese at the end of May, but it was months after that before anything was seen of the new authority throughout the region south of Chiang-hoa, and it is easy to understand how this position of things should have given rise to an amount of lawlessness which brought suffering and death to many a home.

No doubt local order of a kind was maintained through the establishment of a short-lived republic in the walled city of Tainanfu, the capital of the island; where, it may be added, the English Presbyterian Mission has its headquarters, the few missionaries being the only Europeans resident there. This effort at self-government was chiefly due to thousands of soldiers belonging to the Black Flag division of the Chinese army, who had been sent over here during the earlier stages of the war. They conferred with some of the leading citizens, and both agreed that the Brigadier-General Liu Yung-fu should be proclaimed president of a republic, and that all should unite in doing whatever they could to thwart and drive away the invaders of their land.

As might have been expected, however, the whole movement ignominiously collapsed when the Japanese army halted within a day's march of the city to prepare for the attack. Many of the Black Flags ran off to the hill region, while Liu Yung-fu saved himself by escaping in the disguise of a woman carrying a baby.

After this, the four great gates were closed, and an ominous silence brooded over the city, people going about carefully as if walking on the thin crust of a volcano. There seemed no way to avert the approaching doom, for the Japanese soldiers were irritated at having to fight every inch of their way over this newly ceded territory, and every one knew that terrible reprisals would be made in the place where the Black Flags had entrenched themselves.

It was on the Saturday afternoon of the President's flight that a deputation of leading inhabitants sought out the missionaries and pleaded with them, for God's sake, to go and bring the Japanese into the city in peace. The undertaking was anything but free from risk, because it was difficult to ascertain how far this request indicated the general wish of the people, and native Christians in different parts of the island had been cruelly murdered on a charge of being in collusion with the Japanese. However, another and even more influential deputation came forward to say that they would put their request in writing, so that any one might see where the responsibility lay, and that this service was being rendered by the missionaries at the people's own urgent desire.

The sun was just setting when all the needful preparations were made, but not an hour was to be lost, and therefore, taking the stamped document with them, my two colleagues went out from the Great South Gate on their errand of mercy. Nineteen unarmed Chinamen accompanied them, but they plodded along in silence. The stars were shining

brightly, and stillness reigned everywhere, till the party was suddenly stopped by the *ping* of a rifle, and the loud challenge of a Japanese sentry. Signals were made, but they were immediately surrounded and led to the presence of the General, who consulted with his officers, and afterwards told them of the acceptance of their invitation, and that the army would begin to move before daybreak, having Mr. Barclay with the nineteen Chinamen in front, and Mr. Ferguson with several officers proceeding somewhat in the rear. It was also plainly stated that, on the slightest show of treachery or resistance, the soldiers would open fire, and the whole city be burned to the ground.

The time occupied by that long march back again was, indeed, an anxious one; and as the missionaries drew near, and saw the city closed, their hearts sank within them lest some fatal interruption had taken place. That sound, too, seemed something more than the mere barking of dogs. Could it be possible that the roughs of the city had broken out at last, and were now engaged in their fiendish work? They looked behind, and saw only a wall of loaded rifles; in front, but there was no hopeful sign; and the strain was becoming almost insupportable, when the great gates were swung wide open. Hundreds of gentry were seen bowing themselves to the ground, and in a minute more the flag of the Rising Sun was waving over the city.

It would be out of place to say much at present about the future of Formosa under the altered condition of things, and only a few remarks are necessary on changes which have already taken place, and others which are almost sure to follow. Among the former may be noted—(1) that the Mandarinate has now left the island, bag and baggage. Now, it is no part of our duty to speak evil of dignities, or of anybody else, but twenty-five years' observation leads to the conclusion that there are tremendous difficulties in the way of regarding Chinese officialdom with anything like feelings of confidence and respect. No doubt some members of the class are capable (from the native point of view), unselfish, diligent, and really helpful to the people. Generally speaking, however, this countless host, from the viceroy down to the lowest *yamen*-runner, goes on the fundamentally pernicious principle that the country was made for the mandarins, and not mandarins for the country. (2) The influence of the so-called literary class is now gone for ever in Formosa. These are the gentry who swear by Confucius and all his opinions. They are held in high esteem, the *οἱ πολλοί* looking upon them as dungeons of learning, and as very fortunate in being able to make potsful of money at teaching and in every low kind of pettifogging. About seventy per cent. of their learning is a mere fraud, and consists in the power of memorising the classics and keeping close to the traditional comments which have been made upon them. Their anti-foreign tendencies are well known, and it would be difficult to find anywhere a prouder or more narrow-minded and impracticable body of men. (3) The Japanese authorities in Formosa issued a proclamation last February forbidding the importation of opium, except for medicinal purposes. This action has not attracted much attention, although it is a very significant one. The first Chinese anti-opium edict appeared in 1729, having also been directed

against the use of the drug in Formosa, and ever since the island has had an evil reputation in this respect. The importation during 1893 (the last year unaffected by the war) was 5680 cwts., valued at £419,839. But everything is to be changed now, for the Japanese say that the whole thing must be stopped, and a clean sweep made of the opium. The proclamation is very suggestive reading after the voluminous report of our own late Royal Commission on this subject.

But it is unnecessary to make further enumeration of changes already accomplished in Formosa, and as for those which are still to come, one may forecast a little by considering, on the one hand, what Japan itself now is; and, on the other, the expressed determination of its rulers that Formosa, body, soul, and spirit, must be made a part of their empire. Connecting these two things, then, it goes for the saying that, before long, good roads will be all over the island, that the railway will be carried down from north to south, harbours opened, and a proper currency introduced, with parliamentary representation, upright officials, skilled native doctors, newspapers, and cessation of work every seventh day in all Government offices. Of course, too, there will be things to vex the soul of the European merchant and the ardent Christian missionary, but patience must be exercised, and great things still be expected from such a people as the Japanese have proved themselves to be. The movements of populations under the new order of things will be interesting, and be likely to appear in (a) the departure of many Chinese from Formosa; (b) steady increase in the number of Japanese immigrants; and (c) in the result of civilising influences brought to bear on all the non-Chinese-speaking tribes. These and other matters make up a problem of first-class importance, and one cannot but accompany Japan with gentle wishes through this critical, yet very hopeful, period of her history.

BRITISH UNITY.

By ARTHUR SILVA WHITE, Hon. F.R.S.G.S.

It is a commonplace to speak of the British Empire as being the greatest, the most powerful, and the most pacific that the world has ever seen. Ours is an eclectic epitome of all preceding empires, and therefore signalises a genuine advance in the development of national life. It owes its origin, its growth, its power, not to state-craft, nor to state-aid, and relatively little to aggressive wars. It is not of artificial expansion through the selfish nursing of monopolies; still less is it the sequel to an ambitious Imperial policy. It is the People's Empire—bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh—the creation and the heritage of a freedom-loving race. In a word, it is a political organism, fulfilling definite national functions.

Again, the British Empire makes for peace and not for war. Peace, it has been said, and said with truth, is the greatest of British interests: its preservation, therefore, is the first duty of our statesmen. Peace at