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THE LUCHU ISLANDS AND THEIR INHABITANTS.*

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I. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

MOST educated persons are aware that the Pacific Ocean holds somewhere or other an island or islands called Luchu, and the more elderly may perhaps remember to have heard something of a British exploring expedition sent there early in the century. But being a place which the globe-trotter cannot reach with comfort, and which offers to men-of-war no inducements in the way of coal or good harbours, it receives scarcely any visits from Europeans, and there is probably to-day no part of the world equally civilized that is so little known. So completely, indeed, does Luchu lie out of the way, not only of travellers, but of book-makers, that after the lapse of three-quarters of a century Captain Basil Hall's work, entitled, 'Account of a Voyage of Discovery to the West of Corea and the Great Loo-choo Island,' and published by Murray in 1818, still remains the chief authority on the subject. At the time of my own visit in the spring of last year, the only European in the whole archipelago was the Abbé Ferrié, a French Catholic missionary, who, however, lived in the northern island of Oshima, which does not form part of Luchu in the narrower sense of the word; and the only occasional visitor (also to Oshima) was Mr. Alfred Unger, of the firm of Boehmer & Co., florists, of Yokohama. My own opportunities, though unfortunately not permitting of a visit to the smaller outlying isles, were excellent for seeing both land and people in Great Luchu, as the time of year favoured travel in that warm region, and letters of introduction

* Paper read at the Royal Geographical Society, January 7, 1895. Map, p. 408.
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from the Japanese Foreign Office threw open all official sources of information, while nothing could exceed the hospitality of the native aristocracy as soon as they learnt that their strange visitor was neither missionary nor merchant, and that he could speak Japanese, which is the French of those parts. These circumstances may perhaps justify a somewhat minute account of what I saw and heard. Many items have never been described before for European readers—the marriage customs, for instance, and the two systems of ideographs. The present paper will fulfil its object if it succeeds in showing that the Luchus are no mere barbarous islands, but that, on the contrary, they possess a complex civilization, an ancient and checkered history, and a language capable of throwing welcome light on Far-Eastern philology; that, in fact, these minute specks on the map expand when properly studied, and become as full of varied interest as a drop of water or an ant's brain when placed under the naturalist's microscope.

My special thanks are due to Mr. Narabara, Governor of the archipelago; to Mr. Takeshita, late Chief Inspector of Police there; to Mr. Nishi, Mayor of Shuri; to the learned botanist, Mr. Tashiro, who has devoted years to a scientific exploration of the Further Isles; to Mr. Tamura, a Japanese planter resident in the island of Ishigaki; and to Mr. Alfred Unger, who has favoured me with several photographs. Mr. H. C. Litchfield, barrister, of Yokohama, placed in my hands the manuscript of an account of a visit to Luchu by the late Mr. H. Pryer; but unfortunately it was in too fragmentary a condition to make much use of, and contained scarcely anything on Mr. Pryer's special subject—*lepidoptera*—beyond an expression of disappointment with the specimens obtained.

II. GEOGRAPHY AND NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS.

Taken in its widest acceptance, LUCHU is the name of the whole chain of islands stretching from the south-western extremity of Japan to near the north-eastern extremity of Formosa. Taken in its narrowest sense, it denotes only the central island, Great Luchu, or this island with its smallest immediate neighbours, while other names are applied to the other sub-groups of the archipelago. Historical considerations partly explain this ill-defined usage of the term, the limits of the recently extinguished Luchuan kingdom and the nature of the Japanese claims to some of the islands having varied from time to time, as will be seen in Section III. A further cause of confusion has been the habit common to European navigators of naming and re-naming islands and groups of islands more or less at pleasure, and of mixing up their own nomenclature with the native names imperfectly understood. If we are to take early history as our standard, the Luchu islands begin at the very mouth of the Gulf of Kagoshima, in southern Japan. Are popular customs and physical features to be our guides? Then Luchu

begins only at Amami-Oshima. Shall we follow modern Japanese administrative parlance? Then the northern half of the archipelago must be omitted altogether, because incorporated centuries ago with Japan proper, and there remain only Great Luchu and the Further Isles. So arbitrary a question can never be satisfactorily settled, for it depends on a definition of terms which every one is free to define as he sees fit. Another moot point is, which of the islands shall be enumerated by name, and which omitted as too insignificant? Thirty-six is the number always given by Luchuans and Japanese alike, and it corresponds very fairly well with fact if the entire archipelago be included. When, however, the northern part of the archipelago is omitted, the orthodox number has to be made up by adding some of the very small islands to the list.

Taking the name "Luchu" in its widest sense for the purposes of this paper, and adopting the subdivisions familiar to Japanese geographers, we find that there are altogether thirty-six principal islands, which fall into six groups, as follows :—

I. *The North-Eastern Group*, accounted as belonging to the Japanese province of Osumi. It includes—

1. TANE-GA-SHIMA (*Tanega sima* of British Admiralty Chart, No. 2,412), long in shape—some 32 miles by 5—comparatively low (highest point 1,200 feet), and admirably cultivated with rice and other crops. This island is noted in history as the first point of Japanese, or quasi-Japanese, soil trodden by Europeans, the Portuguese adventurer Mendez Pinto having landed here in the year 1542, and astonished the natives so greatly by his firearms, that a pistol is still sometimes called a *tane-ga-shima* in colloquial Japanese. The population numbers over 23,000 (census of 1890).

2. MAKE-JIMA (*Mage no Sima* of the chart), a mere islet, used for raising a few cattle, and also resorted to by fishermen.

3. YAKU-NO-SHIMA (*Yakuno sima* of the chart), a circular island of some 15 miles diameter, covered with luxuriant forests, where grow the celebrated *yaku-sugi*, the variety of cryptomeria most prized for its timber. The knot of mountains forming this fine island attains a height of over 6000 feet, thus surpassing any peak on the mainland of southern Japan. Whether its origin be volcanic or not, like its mainland neighbours, has not yet been determined. The inhabitants, who number some 8,800, enjoy the reputation of an almost idyllic simplicity. Doors need neither locks nor bolts in this happy island, where theft is unknown; and a man hanging up his coat on a bush will be sure to find it untouched when next he passes by that way.

4. KUCHI-NO-ERABU-SHIMA (*Nagarobe* or *Yerabu* of the chart), 6 miles long by 5 broad, is an active volcano over 2,200 feet high.

II. *The North-Western Group*. This group, which is accounted part of the Japanese province of Satsuma, consists of three small islands, called—

5. TAKE-SHIMA (*Take Sima* of the chart), 740 feet high.

6. IWO-GA-SHIMA (*Iwoga Sima* of the chart), lit. "Sulphur Island." * The burnt red and yellow aspect of this island cone, rising over 2,300 feet sheer out of the sea, is most desolate; but the sulphur, which gives it its name, forms a valuable source of income.

7. KURO-SHIMA (*Kuro Sima* of the chart), 3 miles long by $2\frac{1}{2}$ wide, and over 2,000 feet high.

III. The *Shichi-to*, lit. "Seven Isles" † ("Linschoten Islands" of the chart). These too are all very small, though mostly high, and some are active volcanoes. A few poor families manage to pick up a living even under circumstances so unfavourable; but this group, like the last, lacks all practical importance. Its chief interest is the danger it offers to navigation. The names of the islands are—

8. KUCHI-NO-SHIMA (*Kutsino-sima* or *Yerabout* ‡ of the chart), 2,230 feet high.

9. GAJA-SHIMA OR HEBI-SHIMA (*Hebi-sima* or *Dundas Island* of the chart), 1,687 feet.

10. NAKA-NO-SHIMA (*Naka-sima* or *Pinnacle* of the chart), 3,400 feet.

11. HIRA-SHIMA (*Fira-sima* or *Disaster* of the chart), 812 feet.

12. SUWA-NO-SE-JIMA (*Suwa-sima* or *Archimedes* of the chart), an active volcano, 2,706 feet high.

13. AKUISHI-JIMA (*Akuisi-sima* or *Samarang* of the chart), 1,978 feet.

14. TOKARA-SHIMA (*Tokara-sima* or *Pennell* of the chart), 860 feet.

15. YOKO-SHIMA (*Yoko-sima* or *Ogle* of the chart), 1,700 feet.

IV. The *Oshima Group*, originally subject to the Kings of Luchu, but conquered and incorporated with his domains by the Prince of Satsuma in 1610, and now under the jurisdiction of the Japanese Prefecture of Kagoshima. This group, sometimes also called *Shō-Ryūkyū*, that is, Small Luchu, consists of—

16. *Oshima*, § or more fully *Amami-Oshima* (*Anami Oō Sima* or *Harbour Island* of the chart ||). This, the second largest member of the

* The 'China Sea Directory' gives it the alternative name of "Volcano Island," reserving the name of "Sulphur Island" for one further to the south.

† There are really eight, but "Seven Isles" is a favourite number with the Japanese; take, for instance, the *Izu Shichi-to*, or "Seven Isles of Izu," to the south of Yokohama. With regard to the term "Linschoten Islands," the 'China Sea Directory' includes under it Tane-ga-shima, Make-jima, and Yuku-no-shima; but the chart writes the name so as to cover the Seven Isles (*Shichi-tō*) only.

‡ Evidently by confusion with *Erabu-* (also written *Yerabu-*) *shima*. But whence the final *t*? Perhaps from some French mariner, who might naturally write the sound *abu* as *about*.

§ *Oshima*, lit. "Big Island," is a name of perplexingly frequent recurrence off the Japanese coast. Hence the plan of prefixing some more definite appellation, to distinguish each particular *Oshima* from its homonyms. Thus we have *Izu no Oshima* (Vries Island), off the coast of the province of Izu, etc.

|| Chart No. 873 spells *Amami* properly, and so does the 'China Sea Directory.' But all have *Oo Sima* for *Oshima*.

entire Luchuan archipelago, is some 30 miles long by 17 wide at the south-western end, which is the broadest part. It is a maze of hills, which rise in the south to over 2,000 feet; but none of them are volcanoes, and Oshima is said to be entirely free from earthquake shocks. Lying, as the island does, directly in the way of the *Kuroshio*, or Japanese Gulf Stream, the climate is excessively humid. Few days pass entirely without rain; and even when it is not actually raining, clouds and mist often obscure the sun. This state of things, disastrous in such a latitude ($28^{\circ} 20'$) to European health, favours, as a hothouse might do, the growth of a luxuriant vegetation, amongst which cycads and tree-ferns most strike the eye. It likewise favours the propagation of many lower forms of animal life, especially the dreaded *Trimeresurus* snake, of which more later on. Naze, the chief port of Oshima, lies on the north-western side of the island. It is a very dull little place, built in Japanese style and boasting a Japanese inn. The native dialect, essentially Luchuan in character, has been overlaid by the Satsuma dialect of Japanese, and forms a patois in various stages of degradation and hybridism according as the speaker belongs to town or country. The population is 51,000.

17. *KAKEROMA-SHIMA* (*Kageroma Sima* of the chart) is a very narrow island some 12 miles long, plastered up, if one may so say, against the southern coast of Oshima, from which it is separated by a narrow channel known to English mariners as *Oo-sima*, or Porpoise Strait. It boasts several small ports of export, and its coasts are much resorted to by fishermen from Great Luchu. To its south lie the small but high islands of—

18. *YORO-SHIMA* (*Ioro Sima* of the chart), 1,000 feet; and

19. *UKE-SHIMA* (*Uke Sima* of the chart), 1,353 feet.

20. *KIKAI-GA-SHIMA* OR *KIKAI-JIMA* (*Kikai-ga-sima* or *Bungalow Island* of the chart) is nearly 7 miles long by $2\frac{1}{2}$ wide, and 864 feet high. It is almost timberless, so that the inhabitants, who number over 15,000, are driven to the use of horse and cow-dung for fuel. It is noted as producing the best sugar and the best mats (known as *Ryūkyū-omote*) in the whole archipelago. Popular superstition represents it as having anciently been the abode of demons, whence its name, which means literally “Demon World.”

21. *TOKU-NO-SHIMA* (*Kakirouma*,* *Tok-sima*, or *Crown Island* of the chart), 15 miles long by 9 broad, and 2,200 feet high. This island and the two to be next mentioned are well-wooded, and produce considerable quantities of sugar.

22. *OKI-NO-ERABU-SHIMA* (*Yerabu Sima* or *Oukin*† of the chart), $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles long, from 2 to 5 miles wide, and 687 feet high.

* Apparently by confusion with *Kakeroma-shima*.

† Apparently a corruption of the first three syllables of the real name.

23. YORON-JIMA (*Yori-sima* or *Yuru Island* of the chart) is a roundish island about 3 miles in diameter, and over 400 feet high.

It has already been stated that Group I. forms part of the Japanese province of Osumi, and Group II. of the province of Satsuma. These ancient provinces are now united for administrative purposes in the single prefecture of Kagoshima, in which Groups III. and IV. are also included. The Central and Southern Groups (V. and VI.) about to be enumerated, that is, Luchu Proper and the Further Isles, have been erected into a separate prefecture called the *Okinawa Ken*.

V. *The Central Group*, or Luchu Proper, the chief member of which is—

24. OKINAWA OR GREAT LUCHU. This, the largest and by far the most important island in the whole archipelago, has a length of 56 miles, with a breadth varying from 2 to 14 miles. It has, from the most ancient times, been divided into three parts called Kunchan, Nakagami, and Shimajiri. The first or northernmost of these (also popularly known by the name of Yambara) is rough and mountainous, rising to a height of some 1,500 feet, wooded in parts, in parts barren, and everywhere but sparsely inhabited, such inhabitants as there are being despised for their poverty and rough speech and manners by the natives of the central and southern provinces. These provinces—Nakagami and Shimajiri—consist of open rolling country with low hills in the centre, are admirably cultivated, and thickly populated. The streams here, as on the other islands, though numerous, are necessarily very short, the longest attaining to a length of only about 6 miles. There is a curious stalactitic cave at Futemma, 10 miles from Nafa. The three provinces of Great Luchu are subdivided into districts termed *magiri*, of which there are nine in Kunchan, eleven in Nakagami, and fifteen in Shimajiri, the highly civilized central and southern provinces being thus much more minutely subdivided than the barren northern moor and forest land. A like division into *magiri* obtains in all the islands formerly subject to the Luchuan kings. The term, though now unknown in Japan, is said to have been current in Satsuma in ancient days. The best harbour in Great Luchu is Unten (*Port Melville* of the British charts), on the north-west coast; but it is, so to say, wasted, because situated in a hilly district remote from the centres of population and trade. For this reason the Japanese steamers and most junks repair to Nafa (or Naha or Naba, as the Japanese sometimes pronounce it), in Shimajiri, near the southern extremity of the island, which is much less good, the inner harbour being only accessible at high tide. Close to Nafa, and indeed practically forming one with it, are the towns of Tomari and Kume-mura. Shuri, the capital (called Shui by the modern Luchuans, who habitually drop the *r* in the middle of words), crowns a hill some 400 feet high standing a little over three miles inland from Nafa. No other place in the archipelago approaches Shuri or Nafa in size, and the two form a

striking contrast, Nafa being a busy port, the seat of the Japanese administration, and altogether much Japonized in appearance and in the manners of its inhabitants, whereas Shuri remains quite old-world. The castle of Shuri is a delightfully picturesque relic of early days.

The other members of the Central Group, except Kume-jima, are small and quite unimportant. They are as follows:—

25. TORI-SHIMA or IWO-ZAN * (*Iwo sima* or *Sulphur Island* of the chart). This is a volcanic cone some 540 feet high, and still active. It is the southernmost volcanic member of the Luchuan archipelago.

26. IHIYA-JIMA (*Yebeya sima* of the chart), 7 miles long by nearly 2 wide, and 963 feet high.

27. IZENA-SHIMA (*Iseña sima* of the chart), a mere islet 403 feet high. The British naval authorities unite these last two islands under the common name of *Montgomery Group*.

28. IE-SHIMA (*Iye Island* or *Sugarloaf* of the chart), $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles long by $1\frac{1}{4}$ broad, and 575 feet high.

29. AKUNI-JIMA (*Agunyeh* of the chart), 3 miles long by 2 broad, and 300 feet high.

30. TONAKI-JIMA (*Tunashee* of the chart), a mere islet 603 feet high.

31. KERAMA-JIMA is a group, whose small detached eastern members are called Mae-jima (*Maikirima* of the chart) and Kuro-shima (*Koru-sima* or *Saddle Island* of the chart). The white cliffs of Mae-jima form a striking feature in the view seaward from Nafa and south-eastern Luchu generally. The large central island is called Tokashiki-jima, while the smaller western members are collectively known by the name of Nishi-Kerama, their individual names being respectively Zamami-jima, Yagahi-jima, Aka-shima, Kuba-shima, and Keruma-jima. The chart writes Yagahi as *Yakang*, Kuba as *Kupa*, and does not name Keruma at all. The island between Keruma on the south and Aka on the north seems to have no name even in Japanese, the three islands being in some mysterious way considered as only two. The 'China Sea Directory' includes all three under the general name of *Aka sima*. The principal village and anchorage of the Kerama Group is Ago-no-ura, in the island of Zamami.

32. KUME-JIMA (*Komisang* of the chart) is some 6 miles long, also 6 miles wide in the widest part, and has two peaks—a southern one 1,028 feet high, and a northern 1,108 feet high. It has a fine waterfall visible from the sea. This outlying but thickly populated little island is one of the most noted in the archipelago, owing to the *Ryukyu-tsumugi*, a silk fabric which is exported to Japan and much prized in that country. The principal village, called Kana-gusukuhama, is situated on the south-western coast.

* Though lying so far north as to seem more naturally included in the Oshima Group, this island is always accounted as forming one of the Central Group, because it belonged politically to Great Luchu.

VI. *The Saki-shima Group*, or "Further Isles." In the British Admiralty Charts 2,412 and 2,105 it is styled *Meiaco-sima* or *Yayeyama Group*; but both these designations are founded in misapprehension, Miyako-jima being really the individual name of the easternmost large island (*Taipinsan Island* of chart 2,412 *) with its tiny satellites, while Yayeyama (or Yaeyama) is a general name for the two large western islands of Ishigaki-jima and Iri-omote-jima (*Pa-chung-san* and *Ku-kien-san* or *Nishiomote Sima* of the chart), with their satellites. Yonakuni-jima (*Kumi* of the chart †) stands alone. It may be added that *Tai-pin-san*, *Pa-chung-san*, and *Ku-kien-san* are Chinese names for the islands. The Saki-shima or Further Isles are enumerated as follows:—

33. MIYAKO-JIMA, 17 miles long by $5\frac{1}{2}$ wide. It and its neighbouring islets are comparatively low, nowhere much exceeding 300 feet. They lack timber, but are thickly populated. Water is often scarce, and in the hollows where it is kept it goes up and down with the tide. The names of the islets are Ogami-jima (*Hummock Island* of the chart), Ikema-jima (*Coruma* of the chart), (Oku-no-) Erabu-shima (*Yerrabu* of the chart), Shimoji-shima, Kuruma-jima (*Kurimah* of the chart), and—some way further to the west—Minna-jima (*Mitsuna* of the chart), and Tarama-jima (*Tarara* of the chart). The British Admiralty chart names, as will be noticed, are more than usually faulty in the case of this sub-group. It will be observed, also, that the chart gives no name at all to Shimoji-shima, but makes the latter form one with Erabu-shima by omitting the extremely narrow channel between these twin islands, and that it thus causes what are really two to appear as one. The Japanese Admiralty chart, on the contrary, which dates from 1888, is very carefully executed. Miyako-jima was the first point of Luchuan land with which British mariners became acquainted, H.M.S. *Providence*, Captain Broughton, having been wrecked about a century ago on the great *Yayebise*, or Providence Reef, which stretches to the north of it. In 1863, the German ship *R. J. Robertson* also was wrecked on Miyako-jima; and a monument, raised on the spot by order of the Emperor William, commemorates the kindness with which the German mariners were rescued and then entertained for a whole month by the inhabitants. The name of the chief village is Karimata-Minato.

34. ISHIGAKI-JIMA.—As already stated, this island and the next, Iri-omote-jima, are together known under the collective designation of *Yayeyama*. Ishigaki, a very irregularly shaped island, might be defined as a clump from 6 to 7 miles in diameter, plus two narrow peninsulas, one 11 miles long running north-east, and another 4 miles long to the west. It has many hills and mountains, of which the highest is 1,680 feet high. The chief village, also called Ishigaki, stands on the south-

* This and some of the other names are differently spelt in the other chart.

† Probably a mutilation of the second half of the name (*kuni*), which signifies "country."

west coast. The south in general, which is comparatively level, is highly cultivated with sugar, indigo, and other crops.

35. IRI-OMOTE-JIMA, $15\frac{1}{2}$ miles long by 12 wide, is very mountainous, some points close to the coast reaching a height of 1000 and even 1,300 feet, while the interior, for the most part covered with a dense growth of tangled forest, is still imperfectly explored. The chief village is called Sonai; but Iri-omote is less well peopled than its neighbours. The odious climate—with its constant downpours and violent alternations of temperature—and the rotting of timber in sluggish streams and morasses doubtless contribute to this result by producing dreadful malarial fevers, which the Luchuans call *fuchi*. The mountain recesses are for this reason viewed with well-founded dread, few that have spent a night in them escaping the scourge. The working of coal, which, though of poor quality, promised to become a profitable industry in Japanese hands, and was for a short time exported to Hongkong, has had to be practically abandoned in consequence of the alarming mortality among the miners. The difficult nature of the interior causes communication between the various villages to take place chiefly by boat along the coast. Horses, however, are also in constant use. Wild boars exist in great numbers, also pigeons, fowls, and pigs; and what with rice and fish of various kinds, the bill of fare in these Further Isles leaves even less to be desired than in Great Luchu.

Besides the large islands of Ishigaki-jima and Iri-omote-jima, the Yayeyama subgroup includes the islets of Taketomi-jima (*Roberton* of the chart), Kobama-jima (*Koubah* of the chart), Kuro-shima (*Baugh* of the chart, *Baugh* of the 'China Sea Directory'), Kami-banare-jima, or Kami-jima for short (*Inglefield* of the chart), Shimo-banare-jima or Shimo-jima (*Loney* of the chart), Haderuma-jima (*Sandy Island* or *Hasyokan* of the chart), which is the most southern of all the Luchus, and Hatoma-jima (*Isaac* of the chart). None of these islets attain to any height. All are inhabited.

36. Separate and westernmost of all the Luchu islands is YONAKUNI-JIMA (*Kumi* of the chart), 6 miles long by 2 broad, about 700 feet high, and well populated. The chief village is called Sonai (same name as that of the principal village on Iri-omote-jima). This island produces sandal-wood, mulberry, persimmon, and other valuable timber-trees. It is said that from here, on a clear night, lights are sometimes visible on the Formosan coast. Perhaps, however, only lights off the coast, such as those of fishing-boats that have come unusually far out from shore, are meant. None of the Further Isles have any decent harbours.

Such, in its widest extent, is the Luchuan Archipelago. The following is the official census of the various islands,* taken on December 31, 1891:—

* *I.e.* of such as are included in the Okinawa Prefecture.

Divisions.				Number of houses.		Population.	
Great Luchu.	Nafa and neighbourhood			...	9,872	...	39,627
	Shuri	...	...	...	5,206	...	25,880
	Shimajiri	...	...	...	18,825	...	93,968
	Nakagami	...	...	...	21,633	...	115,695
	Kunchan	...	...	...	15,189	...	80,271
	Kume-jima	...	...	...	1,275	...	5,453
	Miyako-jima	...	...	...	7,157	...	34,926
Yaeyama-jima and Yonakuni				...	3,320	...	15,061
Total				...	82,477	...	410,881

NOTE.—Nafa proper contains 7,726 houses, with a population of 26,896.

STATISTICS OF CLASSES.

December 31, 1891.

Princes.		Nobility and gentry.		Common people.		Total.	
Householders.	Family.	Householders.	Family.	Householders.	Family.	Householders.	Family.
2	35	22,567	95,082	57,981	235,213	80,550	330,330

NOTE.—Besides these, there was one foundling not included in any class.

The large proportion of the nobility and gentry as compared with the lower classes forms a curious feature in these statistics; but there is, I believe, no doubt of the exactness of the calculation.

With regard to the geological formation of the various islands of the chain, it has already been stated incidentally that many are of volcanic origin—some, indeed, still active volcanoes belching forth smoke and producing sulphur. These may be regarded as outlying members of the Kyushu line of volcanoes in southern Japan. Tane-ga-shima is not of volcanic origin, and Yaku-no-shima not certainly so. Oshima is stated by Mr. Kada Tei-ichi, who examined its geology, to be composed chiefly of metamorphic rock; but in the smaller islets to the south of Oshima, volcanic agencies still display themselves sporadically. Great Luchu and its satellites show us a totally different formation—coral reefs everywhere on the seaboard, and coralline limestone together with metamorphic rocks. Marble is found in the neighbourhood of Untens. The Further Isles to the south-west are different again, the coral along the coasts being succeeded in the interior by granite and other rocks not yet determined, except so far as that some of them have been found to be of volcanic origin. Coal likewise, as already stated, occur in Iri-omote-jima—a thing utterly unknown in the northern members of the group. The coral reefs round the Further Isles, especially to the north of Miyako-jima, and again between Ishigaki and Iri-omote, are of great extent, and make navigation in those waters unusually perilous.

Turning now to the animal life of the archipelago, we find horses, cows, pigs, goats, dogs, and cats everywhere in a state of domestication,

and small wild boar and small wild deer on the principal islands. The cattle too are small, and the horses—or rather ponies—remarkably so, the majority being only from $10\frac{1}{2}$ to 11 hands high, and some as little as 10 hands; but they are wiry and extraordinarily sure-footed. Two species of rats exist—the house rat and another smelling strongly of musk—and two or three species of bat, including the large fruit-bat, *Pteropus dasymallus*, which has been ascertained to be peculiar to these islands.* The mammal most conspicuous in Luchu by its absence is the monkey. This fact strikes one the more on account of the wide distribution of the monkey in Japan, where it ranges as far north as the extreme north of the main island, despite months of snow and ice. Luchu also has no foxes or badgers—a lucky deliverance in the opinion of Far-Eastern Asiatics, by whom these animals are universally credited with supernatural powers for evil.

Of birds some fifty species are known, including the *Erithacus komadori* (called *aka-hige* by the Japanese), ascertained by Mr. Pryer to be peculiar to these islands.† The reptilia include at least three species of frogs, one of which is a very large green tree-frog, and a salamander resembling the common Japanese species, except that it is yellow on the belly instead of red. A pretty green lacertula is common on Okinawa, as is also a chameleon. There are some harmless snakes, besides the poisonous *Trimeresurus*. The latter, called *habu* by the natives, is 4 or 5 feet long by 2 inches in diameter, and is an object of universal fear and hatred. In Okinawa, indeed, one rarely meets with it except in the forests of the north, and the islands of Kerama, Oki-no-Erabu-shima, and Kikai-ga-shima are said to be quite free of it; but in Oshima and Toku-no-shima it is ubiquitous. Not only does this dreaded reptile spring out at passers-by from the hedges, where its habits lead it to lie in wait for birds; it actually enters houses, making it perilous during the warm season to walk about the house at night except with a lantern. A letter from the Abbé Ferrié, dated June 1, 1893, informs

* The late Mr. Pryer, in the manuscript referred to on page 290, says, “Wallace, in his ‘Island Life,’ gives this bat as one of the animals peculiar to Japan; but it must be erased from the list, as it cannot be said to be found north of Luchu.” (Mr. Wallace gives it as a native of Kyūshū, the southernmost of the large islands forming Japan proper.)

† He says, in the manuscript already quoted, “This bird was originally described from Japan upon specimens obtained by Von Siebold, who unfortunately transposed the native name, which should be *akahige*, giving this name to the *komadori*, and calling the *komadori* *akakigi*. . . . It is a ground bird, and its song very sweet. I have often seen specimens in the shops of Yokohama and Tokio, and, in answer to my inquiries, have been told that they came from Korea, which is very improbable, as a long price was always asked for them, and they are very susceptible to cold, and very unsuited to stand such an inclement climate as Korea. It is now definitely ascertained that they are natives of Luchu, where they are most probably residents, and do not extend further north, as Mr. Namie, of the Educational Museum, found them in March.”

me that since my visit to him at the end of March five persons had already been bitten that season, of whom three had died. No antidote is known. The general result of such cases as do not end in death is lifelong crippling. Pecuniary rewards are offered by the authorities for the bodies of these snakes, dead or alive, and the villagers go out into the woods to secure them. Even so the number of the *habu* does not seem to diminish perceptibly, and there is at least one case within recent years of a village having been abandoned by its inhabitants because they could not cope with their dire reptilian foes. The species has been named *Trimeresurus ryukyuanus* by Mr. Pryer, and is, I believe, peculiar to the Luchuan archipelago. Several of the Luchu islands also produce sea-snakes, locally known as *Erabu-unagi*, lit. "Erabu eels," and which, though all lumped together by the natives, really belong to at least three distinct species. Most are harmless, but of one species the bite is poisonous. Of the commonest species the females are about 4 feet long and 9 or 10 inches round, the males about 2½ feet long; the females having a white belly and rings on the back, while the males have reddish bellies. A second and less common sort is somewhat larger, sometimes as much as 5 feet long; the belly reddish, with white, green, and black bands. All these can be easily caught in a depth of about 7 fathoms. The poisonous species is still larger, running to as much as 8 feet. Like vipers in some of the rural districts of Japan, these Luchuan sea-snakes are highly prized, being consumed as food by the rich, and in smaller quantities as medicine by the poor. They are smoked alive by being tied round and round a stick and placed at a suitable distance above a fire. They become nearly black in the process of smoking, and at first sight look like short black sticks to one viewing them in the Nafa market, where they are commonly exposed for sale.

Land-shells are abundant, and the waves cast up on the sea-beach a varied and beautiful assortment of marine shells. The coast waters swarm with fish, most of which, however, make but poor eating—at least, to one fresh from Japan.

The late Mr. Pryer, who visited Okinawa chiefly in quest of Lepidoptera, expresses disappointment at the results obtained, as all the specimens were either of world-wide distribution, or at least common in Japan or in Malaysia. He seems, however, to have examined only the butterflies, and even these but during a short visit in the month of May. The moths, I believe, have never been worked at all, though I was told of a monster bombyx peculiar to the furthestmost isle of Yonakuni-jima. The paucity of insect life during my own visit early in the spring was remarkable. No mosquitoes had yet ventured out. Perhaps the open nature of the country in Southern Okinawa and the constant sea-breezes prove as adverse to insect life as they are beneficial to human beings.

* Unlike the fauna, the flora diverges very widely from that of Japan, over half the species being different. About thirty per cent. of the whole are subtropical species, recalling Formosa and the Fuchau province; about twenty per cent. are tropical, including waifs and strays from such distant regions as Australia. Several kinds of live oak and pine grow in the forests of the north of Great Luchu; but though these trees are also common in Japan, the species differ. Bamboos are much rarer than in Japan, and such as occur are chiefly of a different species—probably *Bambusa vulgaris*. A banyan (*Ficus retusa*) impresses a peculiarly Indian character on the scene, and the *Heritiera littoralis* and *Tournefortia argentea*, which attain large dimensions all along the coast, lend an equally southern aspect. One feature which at once strikes the eye, is the enormous quantity of cycads growing everywhere on the hills and in waste places. They are pressed into service as an article of food, on account of the sort of sago to be got from the tree's pith. The pandanus and a large cactus (called *bōra* by the natives) are used as hedges, the latter being planted on the walls round the houses. There are several palms, many ferns, and tree-ferns. The bird's-nest fern grows to a large size both on the ground and in the trees, and there are several kinds of orchids. The white lily (*Lilium longiflorum*) grows wild. A ginger with fine yellow flowers is common, as are agaves, both of the striped and plain forms, and an immense species of arum. Two species of banana grow on the islands, one (*Musa Chinensis*)—the edible species—being comparatively scarce, while the *Musa textilis*, which is used to weave cloth out of, is very abundant. Among other cultivated plants may be mentioned sugar-cane, which is the great island staple of commerce, sweet potatoes, tobacco, indigo of excellent quality, pumpkins and many others of the gourd family, Indian corn, beans, monster radishes, and various cereals. The marvellous industry of the inhabitants makes them lay out in rice-fields every tiniest nook of land capable of irrigation, even down to the very brink of the sea. Three rice-crops are generally harvested every two years, the plan being to let the ground lie fallow during the fourth half-yearly period. Of the sweet potato, as many as five crops are raised in two years. This invaluable plant, now the staple food of the people, was only introduced here from Southern China in the year 1605, for which reason it is called *Kara-mmu*, that is, "the Chinese potato." From Luchu it was carried north to the Japanese province of Satsuma, where it is accordingly known as the "Luchuan potato;" and thence it spread to Central and Eastern Japan, where the people call it *Satsuma-imo*, from a mistaken impression of its being indigenous

* Much of the information contained in this paragraph came to me from Mr. Y. Tashiro, who has compiled a catalogue of Luchu plants, but intends visiting the archipelago once more before publishing it. He was a pupil of the celebrated Professor Maximowicz.

to that province. Native historians inform us that it was acclimatized in Luchu and passed into common use within the short period of four years after its first introduction.

Meteorological observations are quite a recent institution in Luchu, having been started by the Japanese authorities at Nafa in the latter half of 1890, and being still confined to that single station. I insert an abstract of the statistics for 1891, the last published at the time of my visit. Statistics for a single year do not perhaps count for much, even if no doubt exists as to their accuracy, and the following table is given only for what it may be worth. It will be seen that the maximum in August is $33^{\circ} 7'$ Centigrade (92.66° Fahr.); and the minimum in January, $7^{\circ} 4'$ Centigrade (45.32° Fahr.).

NAFA OBSERVATORY, 1891, LAT. $26^{\circ} 13' N$, LONG. $127^{\circ} 41' E$.

(Centigrade and millimetres.)

	Jan.	Feb.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Year.
Mean temperature ...	15.7	16.8	17.2	19.9	22.7	24.2	27.8	27.5	26.9	24.6	20.5	17.9	21.8
Mean maxima ...	19.6	19.8	20.2	23.5	26.3	27.4	31.7	31.4	30.4	29.0	24.0	21.5	25.4
Mean minima ...	12.2	14.0	14.3	16.8	19.9	21.9	24.9	24.7	24.1	21.1	17.5	15.0	18.9
Absolute maxima ...	25.1	25.8	25.3	27.9	29.4	31.4	33.0	33.7	32.7	30.6	28.8	26.1	33.7
Absolute minima ...	7.4	8.7	9.4	9.6	15.9	18.1	22.0	23.0	21.3	18.9	13.8	10.4	7.4
Total rainfall ...	35.2	169.3	195.6	516.1	454.8	113.7	217.3	421.8	280.9	31.0	98.5	64.3	2598.5
Number of rainy days...	15	21	21	17	24	16	16	16	26	9	16	17	214
Mean barometer (reduced to freezing-point)...	765.0	764.6	762.9	761.0	758.0	755.4	756.5	757.0	756.0	760.2	763.7	766.7	760.6
Mean direction of wind ...	N 39° E	N 20° E	N 42° E	N 73° E	S 48° E	S 46° E	S 17° E	S 43° E	S 56° E	N 45° E	N 49° E	N 51° E	N 81° E
Mean intensity of wind ...	42%	26%	47%	26%	33%	35%	61%	50%	37%	44%	78%	63%	33%

As in Eastern Asia generally, so here also, speaking broadly, the winter is the dry season, while the late spring and summer form the wettest season; but the distinction is less marked than on the mainland of China or even in Japan. Speaking broadly, too, the climate of Great Luchu is a pleasant and salubrious one notwithstanding its moistness, the insular character of the place softening down all extremes of heat and cold. During March, 1893, the daily variation of the thermometer at Nafa was singularly small, never more than 7° Fahr., sometimes barely 1° ; and the differences from day to day were likewise slight, varying in a whole month only between 56° and 72° . Also there was almost always an invigorating breeze. Captain Basil Hall and Dr. McLeod, who were there in September and October, and Commodore Perry, who was there off and on during the summer, speak equally highly of the pleasant climate and air of this fortunate isle.

Some of the other members of the archipelago, as already mentioned incidentally, are less favoured in this respect, notably Oshima and Iriomote-jima, with their dampness prevalent throughout the year.

Things are so bad in Iri-omote in this respect as to have given rise to a local proverb to the effect that it rains *thirty-five days a month!* The deplorable unhealthiness of this island, an unhealthiness which partly extends to its eastern neighbour Ishigaki-jima, has been already dwelt on. January and February are the rainiest months in all the Further Isles; October, November, and December the driest and least unhealthy; June and July those in which malarial fever is most prevalent. All the Luchus suffer severely from those typhoons which, brewing in the neighbourhood of Formosa or the Philippines, sweep up with such destructive fury towards the south-eastern coast of Japan.

My rides about the southern half of Great Luchu were extremely pleasant. The openness of the country, which in many places allows the ocean to be seen on either side, with colours deliciously varying according to the depth of the water above the coral reefs; the fresh sea-breezes; the alternation of hill and dale; the marvellous cultivation; the picturesque blocks of coral, standing up like ruined castles scarcely distinguishable from the real ruined castles that bear witness to a former less settled state of society; the happy-looking groups of labourers in the fields, all diligent and all most courteous when addressed;—these things made up a scene which it would be hard to match for quiet charm.

It is a curious fact, which I do not remember to have seen anywhere noted, that in the Japanese archipelago the vegetation diminishes, instead of increasing, in rankness as one travels south. Ride about Yezo during the summer months, and the grasses and tall coarse weeds are higher than your head as you sit on horseback. Central Japan does not carry things to such an extreme, the grass on the hills in summer being rarely much taller than a man on foot. In Great Luchu everything is much lower still. There are no tall grasses, comparatively few bamboos, few thickets of any sort. The country is park-like; and the hills, too, being lower than those of Japan and comprising no volcanic cones, but being rather gentle slopes carpeted with turf, the general effect is something closely approaching to typical English scenery. The early naval visitors to Luchu all remarked this, and went into raptures over it. For my own part, while granting the tranquil and, so to say, civilized charm of the scenery of Luchu, I do not think that it will bear comparison for a moment with the grander, more soul-stirring beauty of Japan—Japan volcano-guarded, snow-crowned, and flower-strewn, where cones, as graceful as they are treacherous, alternate with rich smiling plains and rugged granite peaks never trodden but by the foot of the hardy hunter in pursuit of the antelope or the wild boar. Luchu has none of these strong contrasts. It is all dimpled and pretty and on a small scale; there is no excitement in it. When I had left Nafa and was steaming up the Gulf of Kagoshima, at whose entrance the magnificent cone called

the Fuji of Satsuma keeps guard, while another volcano smokes lazily ahead, I felt as if I had said good-bye to some pretty dairymaid, and were now re-entering the presence of an empress.

III. HISTORY AND RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS.

Luchuan historians, nothing daunted, carry back the annals of their country over a period of more than eighteen thousand years; but as the books containing this so-called ancient history are barely two centuries old, Chinese and Japanese writers still remain our earliest sources of information regarding the little archipelago. As soon as the obviously mythological period is left behind, all three sources agree pretty well together, though allowance must be made for the tendency of both Chinese and Japanese so to interpret ancient events as to justify their later claims to over-lordship. Even the Japanese investigators of the present day, though more or less scientifically trained in Western methods, have not succeeded in shaking themselves free from patriotic bias.

According, then, to the orthodox account, heaven, earth, and man were all originally in a state of chaos and confusion. At length, however, Luchu emerged, and through the beneficent activity of a god and goddess named respectively Shiniriku and Amamiku, the rocks and soil were formed, trees and herbs planted, and bounds set to the ocean, so that mankind, who had hitherto lurked in caves or forests and had herded with wild beasts, were able to come forth and multiply. This god and goddess had three sons and two daughters. The eldest son, Tinsunshi, that is literally, the "Heavenly Grandson," became the first king of Luchu; the second, called Anshi, became the first nobleman, his liege; while the third was the first husbandman. Thus these three celestial brothers originated the three classes of society. Of the two daughters, one is the patron goddess of all females of noble birth, the other of all peasant-women. At this time there were no books, for writing had not yet been invented. Days were counted only by observing the phases of the moon, and seasons determined by the budding and withering of the leaves. Rice even had hitherto been unknown, the people feeding on berries and the flesh of birds and beasts. But Tinsunshi taught them both how to grow rice and how to cook it. He likewise divided the island into three parts, called Kunchan, Nakagami, and Shimajiri, and these three parts each into districts (*magiri*), which divisions have remained ever since unaltered. Moreover, he built the royal castle at Shuri. His dynasty lasted 17,800 years, coming to an end at last in the twelfth century of the Christian era, as we shall see later on.

The earliest foreign mention of Luchu (the historian does not state which of the islands he means) is contained in the Chinese annals of the year 605 of the Christian era, where we read of an attempt to find out

something about the land and its inhabitants, which failed through want of interpreters. But soon after, an interpreter having been obtained by courtesy of the Japanese, an embassy was despatched to demand peremptorily the submission of the king to the Chinese emperor. Such submission being refused, an army was next sent in 611, the king's castle was burnt, and many thousands of men and women were carried away captive. This Chinese account, as will be noticed, is both circumstantial and plausible, and is probably a true one of *some* attack on *some* island in the Eastern sea. But which island? That is the question. A thousand years later, when Luchuan history was first put into writing, when Great Luchu had risen into paramount importance, and the name "Luchu" had become more or less confined to it, people

FIG. 1.—PALACE (SHURI).

seem to have assumed without further inquiry that Great Luchu was the place meant. In my opinion this assumption should not be so easily accepted without clear proof. Japan knew nothing of Great Luchu in the seventh century; yet we hear of the Japanese Court supplying interpreters. It is, therefore, at least possible that one of the northern islands, which were then called Luchu by the Japanese, was intended, or (if we give up the Japanese interpreter detail) that Formosa is intended; for a portion of that island, much nearer to China and far more likely to be attacked by the Chinese, was also anciently known to the latter under the name of Luchu. The former hypothesis does least violence to the text of the Chinese historian. Indeed, it does it no violence at all; but in the absence of further evidence, the question remains an

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obscure one. In any case, be the incident of the Chinese raid on Luchu true or false, it led to nothing; for many centuries passed before intercourse—at least official intercourse, whether warlike or diplomatic—was renewed, though some slight mutual knowledge seems to have been slowly developed during the Middle Ages, thanks to a trade which gradually sprang up between Luchu and the Chinese of the neighbourhood of Foochow, as the junk sailors became bolder and ventured further afield.

Intercourse between Luchu and Japan followed an altogether different course. All through the early Japanese annals, from the seventh century onwards, we find scattered mentions of the little archipelago—first of the northernmost islands, and then gradually of those further south. Sometimes the precise name of the island is given, sometimes the term *Ryukyu* (Luchu) is used rather vaguely, leaving us in doubt as to which island is intended. The first opening up of intercourse, we are told, was in A.D. 617, when three men of Yaku-no-shima came with gifts to the Japanese empress Suiko. This was a few years after Japan had begun to civilize and centralize herself on Chinese models. The people of Tane-ga-shima followed suit in A.D. 678; and in the following year a Japanese envoy returned the visit, and conferred Japanese rank on the native chieftain, reaching home in 680 with a map of this “Luchuan Island,” and an account of the wonderful biennial rice-crops for which it is still famous. Not only Yaku-no-shima and Tane-ga-shima, but Amami-Oshima, became fiefs of Japan by the beginning of the eighth century; and we hear of tribute from Kume-jima, which may vaguely mean any of the southern islands, a little later. No notice of Kikai-ga-shima appears till the year 1001, when we are told that there was war with “Western barbarians” (?), whom the Kikai officials received orders from the Japanese to repel. We also learn during the next century (about A.D. 1179) of Shimazu, Prince of Satsuma, being charged by the Mikado’s government with the superintendence of Luchuan affairs—that is, the affairs of Tane-ga-shima, Yaku-no-shima, and Oshima. This, being interpreted, means that he had managed to obtain a hold on these islands for his own advantage, and, in order to legalize it, sought the Imperial sanction, which was then a purely nominal and ornamental thing. There also exist notices of a Japanese re-conquest of Oshima by warriors of the Taira clan after their expulsion from Japan proper at the end of the twelfth century.

And now we make a jump southwards across the long and stormy stretch of water separating Oshima from Great Luchu. The Japanese hero, Tametomo, a scion of the great house of Minamoto, descended from emperors, and famed for his personal prowess with the bow, having been exiled by his enemies of the rival Taira clan, passed down the northern members of the Luchuan group, conquering each island

as he went. Having encountered a great storm, his sailors were sorely affrighted. But Tametomo said, "Our fate is in the hands of Heaven; fear not for your lives!" wherefore the port at which they soon after landed was named *Un-ten*, that is, "fate heaven"—the Port Melville of our English charts. Tametomo was hospitably entertained by the local chieftain, whose sister made him father of a boy named Shunten; but as he was ever anxious to return home to Japan, he, with his Luchuan wife, twice essayed the voyage, being on each occasion driven back by dreadful tempests. The sailors suggested that the sea-gods disapproved of a woman being in the same ship with men. So Tame-

FIG. 2.—NASE, THE PORT OF OSHIMA.

tomo bade his wife remain behind and bring up their boy, whereupon he sailed back to Japan, and was seen no more in Great Luchu.

Shunten, the son of Tametomo and of his noble Luchuan wife, is represented as the Napoleon of Luchu. Seventeen thousand eight hundred years had elapsed since the time of Tinsunshi, son of the god Shiniriku and the goddess Amamiku, during which period twenty-five immensely long-lived monarchs had successively filled the throne. This very *ancien régime* had at last become effete; the government of the twenty-fifth king was as weak in effect as it was tyrannical in intention; rebellion, confusion, and usurpation were rife on every side. Shunten found himself compelled gradually to assume the direction of affairs if only to restore order—first as chief of Urazoe (which, by the way, is rather suspiciously far from Unten), afterwards of all Central Luchu, and lastly of the whole island (A.D. 1187), which he ruled in such

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fashion that peace and prosperity prevailed. Among the other civilizing agencies which he introduced, the Japanese syllabary is specially mentioned. From him, according to the received account, the dynasty which has ever since claimed the throne of Luchu as its heritage is lineally descended, though I cannot make out from the history-books that this dynasty actually governed the island in undisputed and continuous succession. On the contrary, there seem to have been frequent troubles, sometimes accompanied by the election of a monarch from among the people. These troubles began already in the time of Shunten's grandson,—famines, pestilence, and other calamities showing clearly the wrath of the gods, and producing popular discontent which caused him to abdicate; and as this abdication was in favour of a noble of the ancient royal family, we may presume it to have been less voluntary than the native annalists would have us believe. In other words, the intruding Japanese kings were set aside, and the legitimate Luchuan dynasty was restored. But again, in the third generation, rebellion broke out, and the Luchuan realm, with which Oshima had been formally incorporated about A.D. 1270, was rent in pieces. This period, which is known as the Period of the Three Kingdoms, lasted from A.D. 1314 to 1429, from which latter time forward Luchu formed one realm, enlarged by the annexation of the Further Isles, whose loss of independence seems attributable to internal feuds among the various local chieftains. Till then the very existence of these islands had been unknown, or at least unheeded, by the Luchuans proper, though the population would seem to have been formed of waifs and strays from Luchu and from Japan. Graves are still pointed out on Ishigaki-jima of warriors whom local tradition represents as clad in what we know to have been mediæval Japanese costume. Yonakuni-jima is said to have had living on it, previous to its annexation by Luchu, seventeen families who traced their descent to the great but unfortunate Japanese Taira clan, and graves on several of the Further Isles have yielded finds of *magatama*, the comma-shaped ornament characteristic of proto-historic Japan.

Thus by the beginning of the fifteenth century the Luchuan kingdom had attained its widest extent, and ranked as an imperial power, at least in its own eyes. Governors were charged with the administration of each conquered island, Luchuan institutions and customs were established there, heavy tribute was levied, and the conquered were not allowed to resort to the metropolis, the only exception to this rule being that, if a Luchuan official had no other male heir than one born to him by a native woman during his term of service beyond seas, such child—but not its brothers and sisters, and never in any case the mother—might accompany him back to Luchu. Even under this restriction, several of the proudest Luchuan families are said to owe their origin to despised colonials. Nevertheless, discontents continued to arise both in the north and in the south; nor was the real

social and political unification of the whole archipelago under Luchuan rule established till about the year 1520, under King Shoshin.

Meantime foreign troubles were brewing. China, which under Kublai Khan had recently failed in an attempt to conquer Japan, determined to add at least Luchu to her empire. Accordingly, in A.D. 1372 an envoy was sent to demand the submission of the legitimate Luchuan king, which was granted—an example followed almost immediately by the two smaller rebel states, with the result that Chinese ideas, hitherto sparingly received, poured into the country wholesale. Noble Luchuan youths were sent to study in China, and numbers of Chinese families were transplanted to Luchu. To Chinese diplomatic pressure may perhaps be traced the reunion of the three Luchuan kingdoms under one head, the great king Sho Hasshi. This monarch's tolerance of Chinese dictation was rewarded by many favours, pecuniary and other, including the grant of the surname Sho (尚), *i.e.* "Venerable," which his royal line still bears. The castle of Omono-Gusuku, on an island in Nafa harbour, was set apart as a "concession" or "factory" for Chinese traders, just as the Japanese set Deshima apart at Nagasaki for the Dutch at a later date; and in the wake of trade, there followed a notable development of the resources of the archipelago. The building of temples, fortresses, and royal pleasure-houses, the coming and going of ambassadors with numerous retinues, negotiations regarding commercial facilities, voyages as far as Canton and even Malacca—such, together with an occasional rebellion in one or other of the smaller subject islands, are the matters which the native annals now record. The good offices of the Luchuan kings were sometimes even called in to negotiate between China and Japan—a somewhat perilous honour.

Meanwhile Japan had not been blind to the growing prosperity of Luchu, and more than one prominent Japanese clan had endeavoured to acquire a share in that monopoly of Luchuan trade which old custom and Imperial sanction had vested in the Prince of Satsuma. But the latter was determined not only to keep what he had, but to get more. The refusal of the Luchuan king to help in the Japanese conquest of Korea by Hideyoshi (A.D. 1592–8) was made the excuse for picking a quarrel. It smouldered for some years; but at last in 1609, Shimazu, Prince of Satsuma, sent his general, Kabayama Hisataka, with a hundred warships and over three thousand soldiers, who first subdued Oshima, Toku-no-Shima, and Erabu-shima, and then landed at Unten, as Tame-tomo had done four and a half centuries before. Great Luchu was conquered after a resistance of forty days, the palace sacked, and the king carried off to Kagoshima, where, however, he was treated with great respect—rather as an unwilling guest, to amuse whom all sorts of entertainments were provided, than as a prisoner of war. Thence he was conducted to Yedo to do homage to the Shogun, who treated him right royally, as did the Daimyos of all the provinces through

which he passed on his way back. But the interval of two years which thus elapsed was cunningly availed of by the Prince of Satsuma to reorganize the administration of the northern islands and to explore the southern ones by means of emissaries, who assessed the tribute there at rates which have lasted to our own day. The arrangement finally agreed on, after much talk and much judicious flattery of the captive monarch, was that Oshima and the other northern members of the archipelago should remain the exclusive property of Satsuma, but that the rest should be given back to the Luchuan king on condition of his paying a suitable yearly tribute and admitting at his court a Japanese political agent, who was to exercise supervision over the foreign affairs of the kingdom. This Japanese official or his subordinates, disguised in Luchuan dress, took part, unknown to the foreigners themselves, in all the interviews which, at a later period, the representatives of western nations had with the rulers of Luchu. Nevertheless, the payment of tribute to China was not vetoed, though all goings and comings between China and Luchu were jealously watched. We even find it recorded that in A.D. 1631 the Prince of Satsuma, happening to need money, caused a retainer of his, named Ijichi, to travel to Foochow with the Luchuan traders, disguised as one of them, and that, the profit thus earned having been very considerable, the practice was afterwards repeated every year.

By this time the Luchuan polity had crystallized into the form which it ever after continued to wear. Next to the king, who bore the title of *Usu-ganashi-mē*, came the *Oji* or royal kindred, the *Anzu*, and *Sanzukwan*,—these together forming the higher nobility entitled to wear gold hair-pins in their topknot. To them succeeded the *Wekata* (*Oyakata* in the Japanese pronunciation), wearing silver hair-pins ornamented with gold flowers, and ranking as a lesser nobility. The gentry, who were distinguished by the use of silver hair-pins, were divided into three classes, called *Pechin*, *Satunushi*, and *Chikudung*. The commoners, called *Nya*, wore hair-pins of brass. Hereditary titles and official rank were kept distinct, though, as was but natural, the nobility and gentry formed the governing class, the prime minister being always selected from among the king's near relatives. In some most important respects the country really deserved the title bestowed upon it by a Chinese emperor in 1579, and still proudly inscribed on the gate of its capital city, the title of "The Land of Propriety." There were no lethal weapons in Luchu, no feudal factions, few if any crimes of violence. Order was strictly preserved, and authority duly revered. Nominally severe (being based on Chinese precedent), the penal laws were mild in practice. Class and family considerations entered, however, largely into their execution. For instance, an assault on an elder relative was more heavily punished than one on a younger; and similarly when the rank of assaulter and assaulted differed. Not only were offences punished,

but conspicuous virtue and successful efforts for the public weal were rewarded. Confucius' ideal was carried out—a government purely civil, at once absolute and patriarchal, resting not on any armed force, but on the theory that subjects owe unqualified obedience to their rulers, the monarchy surrounded by a large cultured class of men of birth, and the whole supported by an industrious peasantry. Trade occupied a very subordinate place; indeed, it scarcely rose above barter.

To European eyes, accustomed as they are to seeing things done on a large scale, Luchuan political arrangements would doubtless have seemed to partake of an *opéra comique* character. The number of the nobles was out of all proportion large, and the list of public offices and officers fairly takes away one's breath. A Council of State, Departments Financial, Foreign, and Ceremonial, Emergency Departments, Boards of Agriculture, of Tribute, of Woods and Forests, Offices for the Control of the Royal Pantry and the Royal Stables, a Censor's Office, a Herald's Office, Offices for the Control of Tribute to China and Japan, an Office for Famine Prevention by the Planting of Cycads, an Office for the Control of the Manufacture of Tiles for the Roofs of Houses, Offices for the Control of Lacquer, of Vegetable Wax, of Sugar, in fact of every important article of export,—all these existed, and crowds of others, besides governors and subordinate officials of various minutely graded ranks for the outlying islands. In reading of it and thinking of the number of officials necessary for the manning of departments, boards, and offices so numerous, one almost begins to wonder whether there could have been any population left to govern. On the *contra* side, too, it must be remembered that the agricultural class had nothing of what we call liberty, and few rights save that to live and work for their superiors. Still, taking all in all, the land was prosperous, and the items mentioned by the annalists show that even progress, though slow, was real; for the general assertion may safely be hazarded that Oriental stagnation exists only in Occidental fancy. We read of new plants, new manufactures (*e.g.* that of porcelain from Japan), and new medical methods being introduced as time went on. Some slight knowledge was likewise gained of the existence of foreign countries other than China and Japan, by the visits of European vessels which began at the end of the eighteenth century. Father Gaubil, a French Jesuit resident in China, had translated and published in vol. xxiii. of the *Lettres Edifiantes* (A.D. 1781), a Chinese account of Great Luchu and its inhabitants; and soon afterwards British ships began to appear in these waters. The shipwreck of H.M.S. *Providence*, Captain Broughton, on the large reef to the north of Miyako-jima, and the kind treatment which the shipwrecked mariners experienced both on Miyako-jima itself and at Nafa, whither they managed to make their way, drew the attention of the British naval authorities to this remote corner of the world. Accordingly, at the conclusion of the Napoleonic wars, it was determined to fit

out an expedition to explore and roughly survey this and other little-known portions of the East Asiatic seaboard. H.M.S. *Lyra*, commanded by Captain Murray Maxwell, and H.M.S. *Alceste*, commanded by Captain Basil Hall, reached Nafa in September, 1816, and remained there and in the neighbourhood for six weeks. The British navigators established the most friendly personal relations with the natives, and worked away to right good purpose, not only in surveying and chart-making, but in questioning, observing, and investigating generally. Captain Basil

Hall's account of this visit was the first European book on Luchu by an eye-witness of its customs. One of the British seamen having died, he was buried in a tomb supplied by the Luchuan Government at Amikudera, a shady spot on the seaside about two-thirds of a mile from Nafa. I was taken to see it, and found still legible the inscription in which the British commander recorded his sense of the favours received from "the king and inhabitants of this most hospitable island." By a curious irony of fate, the only part of the inscription no longer to be read is the name of the poor fellow whose memory it was intended to perpetuate. Since then, several other European seamen have been laid to rest in the same spot.

FIG. 3.—COMMON PEOPLE OF NAFÄ.

From that time forward the archipelago was visited occasionally by ships of various nations; for instance, in 1826 by Captain Beechey commanding H.M.S. *Blossom*, in 1844 by a French vessel which vainly endeavoured to open up a trade, and in 1845 by the British captain, Sir Edward Belcher, R.N., who surveyed some of the Further Isles. No diplomatic intercourse, however, was established, as the Luchuans, following their model China, always wished to avoid permanent relations with foreigners, though willing to treat with humanity and courtesy those whom accident brought as occasional visitors to their shores. They disapproved altogether of certain persons who came to stay.

These unwelcome guests were some French Catholic missionaries, of whom the earliest landed at Nafa in 1844, and a converted Anglo-German Jew named Bettelheim, who arrived as Protestant missionary in 1846. The Luchuans housed the foreign intruders, who persisted in remaining despite frequent entreaties to depart, but heeded their preaching so little that at last, after several years, both Catholics and Protestant, having convinced themselves of the uselessness of further persistence, left the island of their own accord. Meantime, far more redoubtable intruders than a few unprotected preachers of the gospel had arrived. One fine day in 1853 the American squadron under Commodore Perry, which was on its way to force open Japan, arrived at Nafa with the object of first forcing open Luchu. The weaker party of course went to the wall, the Americans established a coaling-station at Nafa, paraded the island, insisted on being received by the king, and terrified the inhabitants generally. The gain to knowledge was, however, considerable, and the *Journal* of the expedition is highly entertaining reading. Though a treaty was concluded, providing for the good treatment of American ships—a treaty which the French copied in 1855, and the Dutch in 1859—no permanent political result followed on Perry's expedition so far as Luchu was concerned, and the little island kingdom relapsed into its former seclusion. The interest of the place, to missionaries and diplomats alike, had centred in its position as a stepping-stone to Japan. With Japan itself open, all *raison d'être* for troubling about Luchu came to an end.

Leaving Luchu's relations with Europe and America, we must now go back a little to take up the more important thread of her relations with her nearer Asiatic neighbours. Politically speaking, Luchuan history for several centuries consisted in an attempt to sit on both sides of the fence, and from this attempt has arisen in our own day the so-called "Luchuan Question," which has caused many heart-burnings to Far-Eastern diplomats. With China on the one hand and Japan on the other, the kinglet of Luchu was driven into being a sort of Mr. Facing-Both-Ways; and the whole nation more or less, or at any rate the higher official class, came to have a double set of manners—one for use *vis-à-vis* the first of its inconveniently big neighbours, the other *vis-à-vis* the second. Thus the Japanese copper "cash," with which of late some of the commercial transactions of life had been carried on in the absence of any native money,* were always carefully kept out of sight when the Chinese officials were by to see. On the other hand, the Chinese year-names commonly current in Luchu were ignored as far as possible in diplomatic intercourse with Japan. Even in matters of food, the poor little Luchuans tried to make themselves all things to all men. It is, however, easy to see that of the two patrons China was

* The Luchuan Government more than once moved for the establishment of a native coinage, but the Japanese would not consent to this.

their favourite, notwithstanding the fact that Japan was more nearly allied by race. Their system of government, as has already been noticed, followed the Chinese civil, not the Japanese military type; and they always, among themselves, employed the Chinese calendar, which to Far-Easterns is a matter of the deepest import. Humiliating memories of the Japanese conquest in 1609, and the unwelcome presence since then of Japanese political agents doubtless contributed to this result. The Chinese over-lordship, on the other hand, was rather nominal than real, and the so-called tribute-ships despatched annually to Fuchau did such good strokes of business under the rose, that the Luchuans actually requested to be allowed to send *more* tribute to China than the amount originally stipulated!

Thus, for over two centuries and a half, did Luchu continue to own a double allegiance—an arrangement which, in the then state of things, with scanty communication and hazy notions of international law, worked fairly to the satisfaction of all three parties concerned. A sudden change was brought about by the opening of Japan in 1853. Japan, forced by the Western powers from her long seclusion, adopted, with singularly clever foresight, the Darwinian tactics of “protection by mimicry.” She herself became a Western power, or at any rate an excellent imitation of one; and, as we all know, one of the ways in which Western powers display their superior civilization is by annexing territory and tolerating nothing but complete, undivided submission on the part of the annexed. Accordingly, in 1872, the Luchuan ambassadors who had come to congratulate the Mikado on his resumption of the functions of government, found changes more far-reaching than they had expected. They were informed that Luchu should henceforth be cared for by the Japanese Foreign Office, and that the Luchuan king was to account himself a member of the Japanese nobility. When, a few months later, it was further announced that the Imperial Government took over the responsibility of the treaties previously concluded by Luchu with the United States, France, and Holland; when, in 1874, Luchu was placed under the control of the Japanese *Home* Office; when finally, in addition to these more or less sentimental grievances, the Luchuans learnt that an edict issued at Tokio strictly forbade their sending any more tribute ships—in other words, trading-ships—to Fuchau, it is no matter for surprise that the little court of Shuri was thrown into paroxysms of fear and impotent rage. A new embassy, which had taken up its residence at Tokio in 1873, exhausted itself in efforts to obtain Japanese sanction to the double suzerainty theretofore existing. Japan, so they pleaded, was their father, but China was their mother; and how could so tender an infant as Luchu survive without the fostering care of both parents? I believe that they even endeavoured to persuade the representatives of some of the foreign powers resident in Tokio to take up their cause. But *De minimis non curat diplomatia*; Luchu was too insignificant to be

worth listening to. The end of it all was that the ex-king was brought as a guest, or in other words a state prisoner, to Tokio, where he still resides at the *Ryukyu Yashiki*, or "Luchu Mansion," no longer as a majesty or royal highness, but as a Japanese duke. His former domains have been annexed to the Japanese empire—annexed politically, and also partially assimilated bureaucratically under the name of the Prefecture of Okinawa, which is administered by Japanese officials, the provisions of Japanese law being carried out subject to various prudent exceptions which local needs and the circumstances attending a state of transition dictate. For instance, the Luchuans are exempted from the conscription. They are also exempted from the franchise, which should perhaps be to them a still livelier cause for gratitude, seeing the discord which that gift has fomented in Japan proper. Be this as it may, one thing is certain—no other nation to whom the Luchuans could possibly be subject would have granted the franchise to them, and equally certain that they would never have granted it to themselves.

Taking all things into consideration, more especially the gentle, yielding disposition of the islanders, it is probable that a few generations will suffice to obliterate all salient distinction between annexers and annexed. For my own part, and without pretending to any skill in political science, I view such a consummation as most desirable. Not that I would adopt that shallow argument for annexation which is reiterated as commonly in Japan as it is in Europe—the argument based on kinship of race and language. According to such a method of reasoning, England ought to be annexed to the United States, which (as the geometers say) is absurd. Indeed, does not all history teach us—to say nothing of private experience—that the bitterest quarrels are those between people of the same kith and kin? and is not the chief advantage of a common language the facility which it affords for wounding and exasperating each other's feelings? Nationality consists in the possession of a common past, and the desire for a common future. It is, therefore, not on any such *doctrinaire* grounds as that of racial and linguistic kinship that the hope to see Luchu form an integral and contented part of the Japanese empire can be founded. This hope is founded simply on the gradual recognition of expediency on the part of the islanders. At present there is still a conservative or nationalist party, which looks back fondly to the old days of independence. I believe, however, that, as its members die off, they will not be replaced by younger ones holding the same views, but that, on the contrary, all classes in Luchu will realize for their future guidance a fact which the Luchuan rulers themselves constantly harped on in their dealings with foreign powers—the helplessness and insignificance of their country. Luchu is very small and very weak. In these days of ubiquitous men-of-war, it is impossible for a very small and weak state to continue independent. The sole choice lies between masters. Now, Japan is surely a better mistress than China,

and must be a more sympathetic one than any European power could possibly be. She gives roads, schools, a convenient currency, sure protection to life and property. The aspect of the streets of Nafa to-day, compared with Mr. Gubbins's description written but thirteen years ago,* shows that Japanese influence has greatly increased trade—the very point concerning which the Luchuans were most fearful. Japan enforces no religious or social crotchets, and permits no foreign commercial intercourse, so that the people of Luchu need fear neither any violent attempt to subvert their habits of life and thought, nor any unequal contest with a race stronger and craftier than themselves. On the other hand, such Luchuans as care to enter the lists, to learn Japanese and dress like the Japanese, may obtain official employment on equal terms with the Japanese, there being no prejudice of race or colour to relegate them permanently to a subordinate position. In short, from every point of view, frank acceptance of incorporation with Japan appears to be the method by which the Luchuans may best secure comfort and relative importance in the future.

To turn back a moment before quitting the subject of Luchuan history, it may be useful to remark that from the fourteenth century onwards, the Luchuan annals are evidently authentic. All before that—even the conquest by Tametomo—I hesitate to accept without better confirmation than seems to be forthcoming; but interesting evidence of genuineness of another kind comes before us in the general similarity of spirit that subsists between the Luchuan fabulous early history and that of Japan. The legend of the Creator and Creatress, and the immensely long divine dynasty that preceded the rule of purely human kings, have quite a Japanese ring.

My own conjectural restoration of the illegible pages of the early history of this remote region would be somewhat to the following effect:—that the common ancestors of the present Japanese and Luchuan nations entered Japan from the south-west, crossing the Korean Channel with the island of Tsushima as a stepping-stone, and landing in Kyushu, the southernmost great island of Japan. This is rendered probable alike by geography, by the trend of legend, and by the grammatical affinities connecting Japanese and Luchuan with Korean and Mongol. We know from history and from the testimony of place-names† that this race gradually spread eastward and northward, apparently amalgamating with some comparatively civilized native

* See an excellent paper, entitled "Notes Regarding the Principality of Luchu," by J. H. Gubbins, of H.B.M. Legation, Tokio, printed in the *Journal of the Society of Arts*, June 3, 1881.

† See a monograph by the present writer on "The Language, Mythology, and Geographical Nomenclature of Japan viewed in the Light of Aino Studies," published as No. I. of the *Memoirs of the Literature College of the Imperial University of Japan*, Tokio, 1887.

tribes as to whose affinities nothing can now be ascertained, but driving before it and killing off an earlier savage race, of whom the modern Ainos are the last remnant. A glance at a map will show why, as Kyushu filled up, the bulk of the invaders pressed east and north:—there was most land in that direction. There was also, however, some little land to the south, namely, the Luchu Islands, dotted like stepping-stones, visible one from the other, the whole way from the Gulf of Kagoshima to Great Luchu. The extremely close relationship subsisting between the Japanese and Luchuans, both as regards language and as regards racial type, forces one to the conclusion that a fraction of the intruding race took the southern route, perhaps from choice, more probably as a refuge from defeat in internecine strife. I should imagine further that there was not originally any thought of the subjection of the Luchuan archipelago as a whole to the Japanese empire, the very idea of such extended units being impossible before the days of centralization, and there being no trace of such a claim in the official Japanese annals when interpreted in their obvious sense; that wave succeeded wave at varying intervals, each successive wave of southward-bound emigrants subduing and partly incorporating those that had preceded it, because the men from the larger and more turbulent land to the north, where resources and all the elements of civilization were more abundant, would naturally overcome the weak, isolated islanders; that the legendary conquest by Tametomo preserves for us under a single name the vague native recollections of many such occurrences in the distant past; and that the historical conquest of part of the group by the Prince of Satsuma in the seventeenth century, and the recent formal annexation of the whole archipelago by the Imperial Japanese Government, show us the *modus operandi* of this southward movement under modern conditions, when improved communication and greater political power facilitate action on a larger scale. We thus see, too, why it is difficult to define Luchu exactly: the reason is that the degree of “Japonization” of the archipelago has varied from time to time, and that if we are to take language and customs as our guides, it is by no means easy to say in each case whether similarity between Luchu and Japan arises from original identity or from borrowing, or whether, on the other hand, differences should be ascribed to original unlikeness, or to the fact of one or other country having preserved intact features of the common past which the other has let drop.

Whether the predecessors of the Japano-Luchuan race in Luchu were Ainos or not, it is impossible to say. Two place-names have been adduced by a Japanese savant, Mr. Kada Tei-ichi, in support of such a theory; but that seems very little to build on.* Far more important

* The names are *Sonai* and *Hinai* on the far-distant island of Yonakuni. *Nai*, which means “stream” in Aino, enters into the formation of numerous place-names in

is the discovery by Dr. Doederlein in Oshima of numerous hairy individuals among the smooth general mass of the population. I noticed none such myself, even among the fishermen. But Dr. Doederlein expressly says that he saw many quite as hirsute on the body and limbs as the hairiest Europeans; and his stay on that island having been longer than mine, and at a time of year (August) when a greater proportion of the labouring men would go naked, he is probably correct. Should the fact be really established, it would lend some countenance to the

idea that a little Aino blood may yet survive in this outlying place, for we know of no intermixture with Europeans that might have produced a like result.

With these sporadic exceptions, the physical type of the Luchuans resembles that of the Japanese almost to identity, as is universally admitted by the Japanese themselves, who ought surely to possess a keener eye for minor differences between Mongolian and Mongolian than any foreigner can hope to have, and who do possess, as a matter of fact, a very keen eye indeed for detecting the inferiority of other Asiatics to themselves. Myself and my highly intelligent Japanese travelling companion were impressed in the same way, and I would venture

FIG. 4.—A LUCHUAN GENTLEMAN.

to suggest that the peculiarities noticed by Dr. Guillemard * arose principally from differences of dress, coiffure, and shaving.

The Japanese type having been described once for all in Dr. E. Baelz's admirable monograph, entitled "*Die Körperlichen Eigenschaften der Japaner*," printed in Parts 28 and 32 of the *Mittheilungen der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens*, nothing more need be said about it here. The most prominent race-characteristic of the Luchuans is not a physical, but a moral one. It is their gentleness

Yezo, where the Ainos still flourish, and also in northern Japan, whence they were driven less than a thousand years ago. There is also a *Sonai* on Iri-omote-jima.

* See p. 27 of his delightful 'Cruise of the Marchesa.'

of spirit and manner, their yielding and submissive disposition, their hospitality and kindness, their aversion to violence and crime. Every visitor has come away with the same favourable impression—Captain Broughton, whom they treated so hospitably on the occasion of his shipwreck in 1797; Captain Basil Hall, Dr. McLeod, Dr. Guillemard—even the missionaries, poor as was their success, and all the Japanese. For myself, I met with nothing but kindness from high and low alike. The solitary exception to this chorus of praise is Commodore Perry; but then the account he himself gives of his haughty and masterful conduct, of his violent threats, and contemptuous disregard of all international law and courtesy, renders it scant matter for surprise that even Luchuan patience should have been exhausted, and that the islanders should have resorted to deceit, which is the only weapon the weak have at their disposal against the strong. The blustering Commodore's virtuous indignation at the employment of this weapon against no less august a personage than himself, makes most amusing reading by reason of its unconscious satire.

Though the Luchuans do not impress one as a vigorous race, I noticed no cripples among them, nor yet any blind people. The only deformity that seemed somewhat common was hare-lip. Obesity was extremely rare.

(*To be continued.*)

The map of the Luchu Islands is a reduction from Japanese Admiralty Chart. The names have been translated from the Japanese by Mr. Basil Hall Chamberlain.

A JOURNEY TO TAFILET.*

By WALTER B. HARRIS.

On Wednesday, November 1, 1893, I left Morocco City with a small band of Moors, myself in native clothing, although my identity was known to the five men who accompanied me. We camped for the night about 4 miles from the city, to the south-east, at one of the small "nzalas," merely a few thatch huts enclosed in a "zareba" of thorn hedge, which give security from horse-stealers, etc., at night. These "nzalas" are erected at intervals all along the roads of Morocco, or rather the tracks, for roads, properly speaking, do not exist. The natives in charge are responsible for any theft that may take place, and in return for this responsibility are permitted by the native government to levy a small tax on any who may use the "zareba."

The following morning, November 2, we were off before daylight, our road proceeding in an east by south direction over the plain of Misfiwa, one of the large Bashaliks of Southern Morocco. During the morning two rivers were forded, the Wad Urika and the Wad el-Melha

* Paper read at the Royal Geographical Society, Monday, December 10, 1894. Map, p. 408.