

The earliest British description of Korea

From: Basil Hall (1788-1844), Voyage to Loo-Choo, and other places in the eastern seas, in the year 1816. Including an account of Captain Maxwell's attack on the batteries at Canton; and notes of an interview with Buonaparte at St. Helena, in August 1817 (Edinburgh : Printed for A. Constable & co.1826)

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COREA — SIR JAMES HALL'S GROUP — HUTTON'S ISLAND — SHALLOW BAY ON THE MAINLAND — AMHERST ISLES.

When the day broke, on the 1st of September, 1816, we expected to have found ourselves close to the shore, but no land could be seen from the deck ; and it was not until the sun rose that the look-out man at the mast-head could distinguish a faint blue ridge, lying at a great distance to the Eastward. The announcement of land being in sight is at all times an enlivening sound ; but upon this occasion, it carried with it peculiar interest. The country we were now steering for was so completely unknown that it held no place on our charts, except that vague sort of outline with which the old map-makers delighted to fill up their paper, and conceal their ignorance. This practice has done great disservice to geography ; because the mere embellishments of one fanciful and original artist of this description become, in the hands of a copyist, established landmarks ; and thus the error is propagated and repeated till the eye grows as familiar with the outline of the unknown parts of the earth as with the best surveyed coasts. So strongly, indeed, do we learn to associate an idea of reality with what is constantly presented to our view, that at first when we come to examine the actual state of the fact upon the spot, we are perhaps more surprised to find it different from what is laid down in these imaginary maps, than we should have been to discover them accurate, though this would have been little short of a miracle, and the other is the occurrence to be looked for. In the case before us, we had soon reason to believe ourselves in a region the exclusive property of those ingenious map-drawers alluded to, who survey the world in their closet ; for on approaching the land, and making observations to ascertain our true place, we discovered that according to one authority, we were sailing far up in the country, over wide forests and great cities ; and according to another, the most honest author amongst them, our course lay directly through the body of a goodly elephant, placed in the centre of a district of country in token of the maker's candid confession of ignorance. From this time, for many weeks forward, we shut up our Atlases, Neptunes, and other nautical authorities, and trusted solely to our own resources ; or according to the professional phrase, to lead, latitude, and look-out ; though, in truth, it was only the first and last that we had to depend upon, it being useless to know the latitude of places as yet laid down on no chart.

By nine o'clock in the morning, we were not far from a group of three high islands, cultivated in the lower ranges next the sea, and wooded to the very summits. The fields were divided, as in China, by stone walls very rudely built ; but we missed the extreme nicety in dressing and laying out the ground so conspicuous in that agricultural country. As all places were alike to us, and equally unknown, we steered for the nearest island, the most southern of the group, and came to an anchor about noon in a fine bay, sheltered from all winds except the South. 57 The meridian observation placed these islands in 37° 50' North latitude, and our chronometers made them in 124° 50' East longitude.

Our anchor had scarcely reached the ground, when a small boat was discovered paddling off to us full of people, and on looking more attentively, we saw a village in a little nook at the north-western side of the bay. The natives came boldly on till within about fifty yards of us,

when they lay upon their oars to take a more leisurely survey before they ventured nearer. The result appeared not to be such as to encourage farther proceedings, for they would not come alongside, although we made all the signs we could think of to persuade them. Our only resource, therefore, was to man our own boats and pay the first visit ourselves. As we rowed towards the shore, the boat turned back likewise, and followed us as fast as possibly to the village. The inhabitants, who received us with looks of distrust and alarm, were evidently uneasy at our landing, for they were crowded timorously together like so many sheep. Having tried every art to reassure them, but in vain, we determined to leave our unsociable acquaintances, and without waiting for an invitation, to take a look at the village. This measure elicited something like emotion in the sulky natives, several of whom stepped forward, and placing themselves between us and the houses, made very unequivocal signs for us to return to our boats forthwith. We persevered, however, and continued to advance, till a couple of stout fellows fairly took us by the shoulders, and turning us round, pushed us very rudely in the direction we came from. There is no saying exactly how far our forbearance might have endured, had the natives proceeded to carry the joke much farther ; but as our object was by all means to conciliate their good will, we took their incivility pleasantly, affecting not to understand their wishes to get rid of us altogether, but pretending to suppose they merely desired us to avoid the village. We therefore altered our course, and began to climb the hill which rose on the North-Eastern side of the Bay.

There was nothing in the appearance of these islanders which we recognised as Chinese, in dress, language, or appearance, and in their manners there was none of that courtesy which we met with everywhere in China. It was at once quite evident indeed that they were a much ruder people. Their colour was a dark copper, and the expression of their countenances, though certainly rather forbidding, was not as some of our party described it savage : I think this epithet much too strong, yet there was undoubtedly something wild about them, though not amounting to ferocity. They were dressed mostly in a loose white frock, barely reaching to the knees, made of an extremely coarse material, apparently grass-work ; below which the legs were covered with wide trowsers of the same stuff; on their feet were tied sandals, made of rice-straw, plaited into the thickness of half an inch, and bound to the feet by thongs, the only neat article in the whole dress. Their hair, which was black and glossy, was twisted into a curious conical bunch, or spiral knot, on the top of the head, and there was not the least appearance of the Tartar tuft. Two or three of their number, who seemed principal persons, wore vast hats, the brims of which extended a foot and a half in all directions, so as completely to shade the body of the wearer. The top or crown, on the other hand, was disproportionably small, being made no larger than just to fit the top-knot of hair, which stood eight or nine inches above the head. This strange covering, which looked more like an umbrella placed over them than a hat, appeared to be made of horse-hair, varnished over ; its texture was open, and the whole quite light, being tied under the chin by a band of oval red and yellow beads.

Though it was at first a little vexatious to discover that our Chinese interpreter did not understand a word these people said, it certainly added to that adventurous sort of interest which belongs to travelling in regions where the inhabitants differ in every respect from those we have seen before. It was like being transported to the moon, or to some other planet, where nothing existed in common with our previous knowledge. Everything we saw was strange to our eyes, and we felt certain that each fresh step we took in the voyage was to prove equally fertile in unknown scenes and novel incidents ; it was impossible, in short, to go wrong ; a new world was all before us where to choose, and if we failed to derive instruction and pleasure from what we saw, the fault was our own ; the materials for both lay thickly around us.

Our next object, seeing that we could open no useful communication with the natives, was to look about in order to ascertain if the main land, called in the Jesuit's map Corea, could

anywhere be distinguished. With this intention we commenced climbing the hill, which labour, by no means trifling, was lightened by the discovery of a small winding path, not unlike a sheep-track, though we saw no 60 animals of this description. From the top of the peak which rises in the centre of the island, there could just be discovered what was supposed to be the continent, at a great distance off, between which and the spot upon which we stood lay a countless number of islands of all sizes and forms ; some clad with foliage, and others quite bare and rocky. The temperature of the air, which below had been intolerably hot, was here comparatively cool and refreshing ; and as we found a rich matting of grass spread on the summit, with here and there a sweet-scented shrub, we were tempted to prolong our stay ; and having taken the precaution to bring our dinner with us, remained for upwards of an hour, enjoying the splendid prospect opened for the first time to European eyes.

The world, of late years, has been so industriously beat up by voyagers and travellers, that it becomes no easy matter to light upon any spot respecting which nothing whatsoever shall have been told before ; and I find it difficult to describe the sensation of pleasure excited by the consciousness of being the first to witness so stupendous a scene as this multitude of unexplored islands presented. I could observe, however, that this circumstance affected the individuals of our party very differently. Some who were elevated by it to a high degree of excitement, were not satisfied with anything short of the most rapturous expression. Others seemed careless of the thing itself, but were proud of it as a rare exploit in travelling, and took occasion to crow, as they expressed it, over their absent friends on the embassy, who, poor people, merely saw the interior of China, a country traversed repeatedly by Europeans, while it was their more favoured lot, they said, to be classed amongst original discoverers. There were some, too, who felt nothing at all about the matter, but whose awkward attempts to imitate the enthusiasm of the others were sufficiently ludicrous.

We varied the road on returning, by striking out of the path by which we had climbed up, and paid somewhat dearly for our enterprise, by scratches and bruises amongst a brushwood of prickly pears and brambles, growing on a surface of steep rocks, broken across by frequent ravines on the northern side of the island. In process of time, by hard scrambling, we came once more in sight of the village, lying immediately at the base of a cliff, over the brink of which we could peep down and see what was going on, without being ourselves perceived. The women, none of whom had been seen previously, were now discovered before the doors of the cottages engaged in husking rice, by beating it in great wooden mortars. Most of them supported children on their backs, whose little heads wagged to and fro by the motion of the pounding operation ; but habit had probably reconciled these little wretches to this rude species of cradle, for they appeared fast asleep. Whilst we were thus occupied in stealing a view of the ladies, all of them, as if by one consent, threw down their pounding implements and hurried off to their huts like rabbits in a warren. For a minute or two we were at a loss to conjecture the cause of this sudden movement ; till one of the frigate's boats was observed to row round the point forming the western side of the Bay. No more was seen of the women ; for when we clambered down the rocks and reached the village, the men and the 62 children alone were there to receive us. Enough however, was discovered of these timorous damsels to satisfy us that their feet were not mutilated on this island, as in China. The natives were now, in a slight degree, more friendly, or rather less unfriendly, than they had been at our first landing ; they permitted us to walk through the village unmolested, but would not suffer us to enter a single house. The walls of these wretched abodes were ill constructed of canes plastered over with mud, and were not built in straight lines, but in curves, and all at different angles. They were thatched with reeds held down by straw ropes, and quite destitute of neatness, order, or cleanliness, the spaces between the huts being choked up with piles of dirt and puddles of dirty water. The valley, at the end of which this comfortless village was situated, possessed considerable beauty, though not thickly wooded : it was cultivated in the lower parts with millet and buck-wheat ; tobacco also was growing in great abundance.

In our hasty passage amongst the houses, for there was little attempt at a street, we saw several bullocks, and a great supply of poultry, but no inducement could prevail on the natives to sell or exchange one of them. They held in no estimation our dollars and gold money ; and nothing else that we offered them appeared to possess value in their eyes except wine-glasses ; but even of this solitary taste we could scarcely take advantage. One of the principal persons, or a man whom we assumed to be such from the dimensions of his hat, looked so wistfully at a claret-glass during a display which was made of the contents of our picnic basket to entertain the natives, that we prevailed upon him to accept it. We were now in hopes, when the ice had been broken, that we should commence a traffic. But in a few minutes the same native came back, and without any ceremony thrust the glass again into the basket, and walked off, accompanied by all the party except one man, who the moment the angle of a rock concealed him from the view of his companions, eagerly pointed to a tumbler in use at the moment to lift water from a spring, and having carefully hid it in his bosom, returned to the village by another road, evidently apprehensive of being detected by his countrymen.

It is scarcely fair, perhaps, to judge of people upon so short an acquaintance, at a moment, too, when with some reason they might be under the influence of alarm at so unusual a visit. The same, however, might be said of other people equally ignorant of foreigners ; but I certainly never encountered, during any voyage, people more resolutely unsociable than these islanders. A disdainful sort of sulky indifference, rather than any direct ill-will, was the most obvious trait in their deportment. They were very rude to us, it is true, and lost no opportunity of suggesting the fitness of our immediate departure. It seemed always irksome to them to take any pains to comprehend our signs, and often, when our meaning was made clear to them, they treated it with the most provoking contempt. On one occasion, I tried for a considerable time to induce an elderly man of the party to let me have a singular kind of rake which he carried in his hand ; but he would accept nothing in exchange ; and at last finding that I persisted, he laughed heartily for a moment, and then as if repenting of being betrayed into good humour, placed it in my hands, and gave me a violent push from him, accompanying this insulting action by a loud angry speech, doubtless not more civil, followed by many abundantly significant gestures, implying that the sooner I took to my boat, and left him and his inhospitable island, the better he would be pleased. In this unkindly sentiment all his companions heartily joined, so that every one was exerting his ingenuity in attempts to get rid of us. One man, in his anxiety to explain that we could not do a more acceptable thing than proceed to sea, caught hold of a scrap of paper which fell from one of our sketch-books, and lifting up a piece of driftwood from the beach, placed the paper across it like a sail, then blew upon it to make us observe that the wind was in a right direction. The little boys and girls, who indeed were our only friends, crowded round, apparently sensible of our attentions ; for they were soon quite at their ease with us. The same cordiality on the part of the children prevailed everywhere we went to, however uncourteous the reception of the parents might be. In the charts which were constructed of our discoveries in this quarter, Captain Maxwell named these islands Sir James Hall's Group, in compliment to my father as President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh ; the idea being suggested to him by observing elsewhere a cluster of islands named after Sir Joseph Banks.

At eight o'clock in the evening, the ships weighed anchor, and stood to the South-eastward. We were utterly uncertain what was to be met with next ; but every one was in high spirits, at the prospect of encountering new scenes and new people. After sailing for a considerable distance in the dark, it became expedient to anchor, as we knew not whether we were far from land, or close to it. When a cast of the lead was taken, it was discovered that we were in eighty fathoms water ; notwithstanding which Captain Maxwell determined to remain where he was. It is not very common to anchor in such great depths, from twenty to thirty fathoms being generally considered deep water ; but, during this voyage, we practised it

constantly, with the greatest effect ; and I mention the circumstance, as its utility and convenience may not suggest themselves, or possibly may be as little known to some other professional men, as they certainly were previously to me. In unknown seas, especially in coral latitudes, nothing can be more dangerous, or more harassing to an officer, than navigating at night. The next moment may place the ship on a reef, or what is very common, the ship may be drifted, by the current, past the object in view, and the labours of the precious day-light be all lost during the darkness. Against such evils, the practice of anchoring, if the water does not much exceed a hundred fathoms in depth, is a complete security. A ship rides more easily, even in exposed situations, under such circumstances, from the long scope, and consequent greater elasticity of the cable, which is also less liable to be cut than in shallow water. The confidence and the security thus given, afford an ample compensation for the trouble of getting the anchor up again from its deep bed in the ocean.

While treating of technical details, I may perhaps be allowed to mention another practical device, which, though not new, is certainly very little used, but was found highly advantageous 66 on this occasion. It is common, when sailing along coasts, or when it is necessary to anchor frequently, to lower the yards, square them, and furl the sails, as often as the anchor is let go. Habit has made this almost an essential point in seamanship. The practice with us was never to lower or square the yards on any occasion, unless forced to do so by the violence of the wind ; but merely to clew the sails up, and if required to furl them aloft. The advantages of this were, that without a moment's delay, with a few hands, and in the darkest night, sail could be re-made on the ship. In the usual routine of a man-of-war's duties, this practice would be considered exceedingly slovenly ; but on the present service it was of great consequence, not only in rendering the ships more efficient, but by essentially saving the wear and tear of the ropes and sails, an object of vital importance, when so completely removed, as we were, beyond the reach of dock-yards, and other places of re-equipment.

In sailing along these unknown seas, and more particularly when threading our course amongst rocky islands, or when coasting past shores of whose nature we were entirely ignorant, my little brig, which drew only twelve feet water, was sent about half a league ahead, to sound the way, and to look out for dangers. In general it was found sufficient in clear weather, to keep the sounding-lines perpetually going, and to station a midshipman aloft, with a glass at his eye, to assist the ordinary look-out-men placed at the mast-heads and foreyard arm. But when the weather became hazy, or it was thought necessary to carry the ships into situations peculiarly suspicious, a boat was sent forwards to pioneer the course, even for the 67 *Lyra*. In this way we were enabled to visit in safety many places that must have been inaccessible, or extremely dangerous to a ship like the *Alceste*, whatever degree of vigilance might have been used. This service was at times a very fatiguing and anxious one ; but on the other hand the interest excited by it was unceasing, and for ever varying. At first our ignorance of the peculiar kind of navigation, and the apparent dangers which beset it, rendered the anxiety insupportably great, and the degree of watchfulness indispensably necessary for the safety of the ship, almost too much for the bodily frame. But after a little practice, most of this apprehension vanished, notwithstanding the causes of alarm having greatly increased. The habit of taking much rest in a short time was also soon acquired ; so that the fatigue and anxiety, instead of augmenting with the occasion, often became less as the difficulty and the sources of real apprehension became greater. In point of fact the risk of shipwreck, to which we were constantly exposed, though at the beginning of the voyage it affected every one on board pretty much alike, in a few days became so familiar that every trace of reflection about it was removed from the thoughts of all but one person on board. The load of his cares, indeed, are in general rather increased than lightened by the universal indifference of those around him, who, though of course quite as much concerned in the result, are unquickened in their vigilance by high responsibility, and whose duties, therefore, naturally become mere matters of routine, very

far from commensurate with that anxiety, which can be felt by the Captain alone. The tendency of strict discipline, such as pre- 68 vails on board ships of war, where almost every act of a man's life is regulated by the orders of his superior, is to weaken the faculty of independent thought ; and on all ordinary occasions this answers extremely well. But when the ship is placed in circumstances where success depends on the individual reflection of those who have been previously taught not to think for themselves, but to act solely at the suggestion of other minds, this mechanical principle is found to be a serious defect in the system. I have seen occasions, when a ship was sailing amongst ice-bergs in a dark night and stormy weather, or amongst rocks and sand-banks, when her safety depended entirely on individual vigilance — yet not a soul on board could be brought to feel the least anxiety, and each man and officer, as his turn of duty ceased, rolled into bed, and was asleep the next moment, leaving the waking captain to manage the ship as he best could, every one else being quite ready to take his chance ; that is to say, never thinking about the matter.

On the morning of the 3d of September, the ships again weighed, and stood under all sail towards the islands, with which the sea to the Eastward and Southward was thickly studded as far as the eye could reach. By two o'clock of this day, we had approached the outermost group, and the passages amongst them appearing to be free from danger, we sailed through, and anchored in a little bight or cove on the Eastern side of the largest. As these islands lay so close to one another, we were obliged to make a zigzag course, in order to pass amongst them, and this winding about brought us in sight of a singular-looking cliff, which we determined to visit after anchoring. Accordingly, 69 at half past three, as soon as dinner was over, we set out to explore the island ; and the geological appearances which had engaged our attention at some distance, proved in the highest degree curious when more closely examined.

The North-eastern end of this singular island is composed of close-grained, whitish granite, and the middle part of micaceous schistus, disposed in strata nearly horizontal, but dipping a little to the S.W. This stratified mass is cut across by a granite vein or wall, forty feet wide ; from which innumerable lateral veins of all sizes, from three feet in width, to the tenth of an inch, are seen to penetrate the schistus. The strata hereabouts are also so much broken and distorted as to leave no doubt of the action of some violent force. At no great distance from this curious scene, a whinstone dike cuts across the same strata of schistus, in a plane nearly at right angles to that of the great vein of granite. The strata at this junction are considerably bent, but not to the same extent as in the vicinity of the granite. On proceeding farther to the South, about ten or twelve yards from the spot last described, stands a high rugged cliff of breccia, or pudding-stone, composed of water-worn fragments of various rocks, evidently the shingle and gravel which at some remote period must have formed the bottom of the ocean, though now raised several hundred feet above high water mark.

The appearances above described are not given as new ; on the contrary, they are familiar to every geologist ; and it is on this very account that they are mentioned. Humboldt somewhere remarks the wonderful uniformity which obtains in the 70 rocks forming the crust of the globe, and contrasts this regularity with the diversity prevailing in every other branch of natural history. The truth of this remark was often forcibly impressed upon our notice during the present voyage ; for wherever we went, the vegetable, the animal, and the moral kingdom, if I may use such an expression, were discovered to be infinitely varied ; even the aspect of the skies was changed, and new constellations and new climates cooperated to make us sensible that we were far from home. But on turning our eyes to the rocks upon which we were standing, we instantly discovered the most exact resemblance to what we had seen elsewhere.

Captain Maxwell was so highly amused with the interest taken by the geologists of our party in these scenes, and with the earnest manner in which the advocates of the rival theories

debated the question, each armed with a bag full of appropriate specimens, that he determined to christen the island after the celebrated Dr. Hutton, whose theory he seemed to think the best adapted to explain the phenomena before us; an exercise of authority, by the way, which the Wernerian combatants took much amiss.

Whilst this scientific controversy was raging below, a party of the natives had assembled on the edge of one of the cliffs in dispute, and were taking a share in the discussion, quite as intelligible, it was observed by a wag of our party, as the more learned argumentation on the beach. Be this as people think, the natives appeared greatly incensed at our breaking up their rocks at such a rate; and indicated by indignant shouts, and the most significant, though ill-mannered gesticulations that we were far from welcome. As the angle of the cliff on which these rude islanders were perched, was not less than two hundred perpendicular feet, directly over our heads, we thought ourselves fortunate that they confined themselves to signs and clamour, instead of using the more potent argument of a shower of stones.

We considered it prudent, however, not to tempt them too far; and therefore rowed to a little bay on the western side of the island, where we discovered a good landing-place, on a smooth beach composed of spangles of mica, glistening from end to end, in the setting sun.

The natives had crossed the promontory, and were ready to receive us, as we leaped upon the wet sand, for it was low water, and our boat had grounded on the shelving beach. We walked straight up to the inhabitants, took our hats off, and made them a low bow; upon which, the foremost of their number addressed us in a long speech, in a tone of voice that was heard on board the ships half a mile off. We replied in a more moderate key, in English, that we intended no mortal any harm, and merely begged leave to walk over the island. As this was about as much lost upon them as their own harangue had been upon us, a more intelligible language was tried, by our walking directly along the path towards the brow of the highest hill, a rule, it may be mentioned, which it is useful to follow in strange places, that as soon as possible a general view of the country may be obtained; after which if there be leisure the details may be examined. The natives put a negative on this resolution, as far as they could, without using absolute violence. Sometimes they placed themselves directly across our path; and sometimes bawled in our ears some very angry words, at the full stretch of their voices, apparently impressed with the belief that mere loudness would make their words more intelligible. It is more than probable that these people had never before met with any one who did not understand them; and it may be reasonably supposed they ascribed our inattention to deafness. To a person who is unconscious of the existence of any language but his own, the circumstance of meeting people who do not comprehend him, and whom he does not himself understand, must be a very perplexing phenomenon. To us, who are familiar with the idea of many languages, this dilemma is scarcely intelligible; but many incidents led us to believe, that the people whom we met with on this coast were utterly ignorant, not only of other languages, but of the fact that any such existed at all.

One very busy personage now took his station before us, and baring his neck, drew his fan from end to end along his throat; and then, with no great gentleness, went through a similar ceremony with the necks of his visitors. Hereupon a great speculation was set afloat amongst us, as to the import of this significant gesture. One thing was plain, it had reference to cutting off heads; but our party was equally divided in opinion as to whose heads were to suffer. Some thought the natives were in alarm for themselves, while others considered this ugly sign as a threat to us. We went on, however, till we reached the summit of the island. From this spot, a small village was discovered, at the distance of half a mile, built on the side of a hill, at the base of which lay a small creek, just large enough to afford shelter for two or three fishing-boats. The sea-breeze, which had never been strong during the day, now gradually expired as the sun went down, and was succeeded by a sultry calm. It would

have been delightful to have sat for half an hour in one of the houses, or to have bathed in the little stream which we saw running close by the village. But upon the first motion we made in that direction, the natives raised such a shout, and looked so much distressed, that we gave up the contest, and turned towards our boats. All was now changed ; instead of obstructing our way, and roaring in our ears, they were all smiles and assistance : a man on each side seized our hands, and warning us of every obstacle, escorted us along the path, and over the slippery stones on the sea bank, with a degree of assiduity extremely ludicrous. Sometimes this friendly aid took the shape of a push, and sometimes of a pull, both sufficiently expressive of anxiety to see us depart. On reaching the boats, four or five athletic handsome-looking fellows stripped off their clothes, and leaping into the water, caught hold of the gunwale of the boat, ready to launch us from their inhospitable shore with as much momentum as possible.

There was but little difference between the dress of the people of Mutton's Island and those we visited on the first of September. The greater number dressed their hair in the conical top-knot before described ; but in some instances it was left to fly loose, in a wild-looking style ; in others confined by a narrow gauze fillet, on the side of which was wrought a small star-like ornament ; but not 74 one of their beards and whiskers had ever known a razor. Every person we saw smoked from a long hollow reed or cane, having a small hole bored at one side, near the extremity, like the stop of a flute, capable of holding a minute portion of tobacco ; a large gaudy-coloured paper fan carried in the hand completed the equipment. The children were amazingly diverted with us, and showed none of the surliness of the grown-up people, but examined our clothes with great attention ; occasionally manifesting their surprise by the most boisterous shouts. This admiration became quite general when a watch was displayed. By their manner of inspecting it, we conjectured that its use was utterly unknown ; one of the seniors, however, showed that he comprehended the use of the seals, by pressing one of them for some time on his coppercoloured hand, and exhibiting the impression to his companions. While the watch was under review, and just as their shouting had subsided into unaffected and silent admiration, one of our party indiscreetly fired his fowling-piece at a bird in the air. In all probability, it was the first discharge of fire-arms they had ever heard ; for they flew back several paces, like a shoal of fish when a stone is cast amongst them. This unlucky incident removed the only chance we had of gaining their confidence ; for even the watch had now lost its attraction ; and we re-embarked, much entertained with the whole scene, but somewhat provoked with ourselves, for the small impression our civilized manners had made upon these primitive islanders.

During all the ensuing night it was a dead calm, and the sea as smooth as a sheet of glass ; a gentle 75 current glided silently past us to the Southward, but without causing the least ripple on the surface. At nine o'clock we got under weigh, to be ready for the sea-breeze which soon came to refresh us, well nigh burned up by the rays of the sun blazing both from above, and by reflection from the bright mirror round about. On the breeze catching us, we stood boldly on, right in the midst of the islands, and in less than an hour the view of the main ocean was so completely shut out, that we lost all trace of the track by which the ships had entered this fairy archipelago. Our navigators and surveyors were busily employed in taking an account of the most remarkable of these islands. But as this was soon found to be a hopeless task, attempts were made to jot down on the charts at least each different cluster or distinct group : at last even this was abandoned in perfect despair ; and it was reluctantly confessed, that many months perhaps years of labour would be required to form a correct map of this magnificent scene. It was one, however, so well calculated to rouse the attention of the most unthinking person amongst us, that even the seamen, whose habits dispose them very little to observe what is passing around them, were quite astonished.

About an hour after taking the meridian observation, it was discovered that we were drawing in with the main land ; and in a short time villages, single houses, and cultivated fields, were

distinguished along the shore. A broad belt of enclosed and cultivated country extended to a considerable distance from the sea, along the sides of a range of mountains lying parallel to the coast. No harbour nor break in the land was visible till about three 76 o'clock, when a projecting point came in sight, on rounding which a noble bay was discovered, indenting the land for four or five miles. On sailing farther in, however, it proved a mere shallow basin, and we therefore let go our anchors far out in five fathoms water. As the ships passed the promontory, a crowd of the natives came down to the water's edge, and hailed us with loud and angry shouts, the ungracious tone of which was becoming by this time but too familiar to our ears.

As soon as the ships were secured, Captain Maxwell, Mr. Clifford, and I proceeded in one of the Alceste's boats towards a considerable village, or rather town, in the North-western angle of the bay. On drawing near it was discovered that the whole population were in a commotion, much resembling the sort of bustle into which a colony of ants are thrown by the thrust of a spade. This sensation extended to a fleet of boats riding at anchor off the town, the crews of which were busily employed weighing anchor, and getting their oars to pass. Before we could reach the landing-place, eight or ten of the largest vessels were seen steering towards us, escorted by more than a hundred canoes and small boats bustling and paddling along in tumultuous procession. Every boat, even the smallest that had a mast at all, was decked out with long streamers, and crowded almost to sinking with people. On arriving within a couple of boats' lengths of the headmost vessel, our ears were saluted with sounds not unlike those of the bagpipe, which issued from three pipes, or trumpets, played by men raised high in the bow of the boat. In the middle part of the deck, between the masts, we discovered a huge blue umbrella, held by two men over 77 the head of a very important-looking personage, seated cross-legged on a mat, surrounded by attendants in richly-coloured dresses. The chief himself, for such he was dubbed the moment we beheld him, is worthy of a particular description. His principal garment consisted of a showy robe, or mantle, of blue satin, in whose ample folds he was well nigh lost ; in front hung down his venerable white beard, as far as a rich embroidered girdle, confining the robe. On his head was placed a hat of a size in proportion with that of the other parts of his dress ; the rim measured not less than three feet, over which rose a very small peaked crown. In his right hand he wielded, with an air of mighty importance, a slender black rod tipped with silver, from which hung at one end a small slip of black crape, and a narrow leather thong was tied to the other end — symbolical, it was thought, of the summary course of justice in . In his left hand he grasped between the thumb and little finger his pipe, trimmed from time to time by an attendant, stationed for that purpose close to his elbow, who took the tobacco from a silver box carried by a little boy.

As there could be no doubt that this was the principal person, we rowed straight alongside, and stepped on board his boat to pay our respects. He answered our salutations with grave civility, but neither rose nor asked us to sit down. The music now stopped squeaking, and the universal hubbub that had the instant before prevailed amongst the boats ceased likewise ; the rowers and the scullers were all at a stand, and our conference commenced, somewhat inauspiciously, by the old chief pointing to our boats with his rod of office, thereby 78 very clearly giving us to understand that we must not stay longer upon his quarter-deck. To humour him in this fancy, we immediately took our seats again in our own boats ; but here our old dilemma arose for want of language. We did what we could, however, in the way of signs, first to show our wish to visit the country ; and finding our signals either unintelligible or not agreeable, we pointed to the Alceste and invited him to visit us. This he comprehended much better. In the meantime, the other Korean boats, some of them ten times as large as ours, had gradually moved round from the rear, and were nearly encircling us. We had arms ready, but it would have been easy for these boats, had they been so disposed, to have closed upon us. As soon, therefore, as we suspected treachery, we pulled off and prepared for an attack. The old gentleman perceived this movement, and being

innocent of any hostile design, looked about him to discover the cause of our apprehension. We explained to him that we preferred an open space to such a crowd of vessels, upon which he gave orders, which were promptly obeyed by the intruding boatmen, who hurried back to their stations in an instant.

The whole procession, like a royal regatta, now proceeded slowly towards the Lyra, to the sound of the pipes, which began to play the instant the boats went on. Captain Maxwell and I rowed to one side of the brig, while the chief's boat was placed on the other in a very seamanlike style. To get on board was not so easy a matter, and it was all our discipline could accomplish to keep the sailors from laughing at the manner in which the old chief got up the gangway, encumbered as he 79 was with his immense robes. As the evening was fine, we thought it best to entertain our guest on the quarter-deck, instead of inviting him to my little cabin, hardly large enough, as some one observed, to hold the old gentleman's hat. Chairs were accordingly brought up, but the chief seemed to despise these European inventions, and would accept of no accommodation but his own mat. Even to this he at first objected, leaving us completely perplexed to discover his wishes. It has occurred to us since, that the publicity of the conference may have displeased him, and we regretted not having carried him below, however inconvenient the accommodation. At length he sat down, and immediately the whole of his own crew, and the men from about twenty other boats, leaped on board in all directions, to assist at the ceremony. Some of them climbed into the rigging, others established themselves on the poop, and one unbroken line of copper-coloured wondering faces was ranged along the hammocks from stem to stern. When every one was seated, silence and something like order was established, and the chief, drawing his pipe from his mouth, and flourishing his wand, commenced an oration which lasted fully five minutes. When he had concluded. Captain Maxwell, who had listened with admirable gravity and a look of respectful attention, made a reply in English, not quite so long, but quite as much to the purpose. The chief opened his eyes, stared, listened, and looked round to his attendants, as if to inquire the meaning of all this ; but obtaining no satisfaction from the appeal, as they all shook their heads, he called to a person who seemed to be his secretary, and touching him with his rod, made him sit down before him. The secretary 80 COREA, took his place with all due formality, and having rubbed his cake of Indian ink upon a neat blue stone which he carried with him, drew forth his camel-hair brush, and arranging a long scroll of paper on his knees, began at the chiefs dictation to write a dispatch, the by-standers assisting from time to time in the composition of this document, which they no doubt thought was to set all matters right. When completed the chief looked it over, and then handed it to us. We looked at it too, but were obliged to shrug our shoulders, and signify our ignorance with the best grace we could. The chief was exceedingly provoked, and showed by his gestures and the angry tones of his voice how stupid he thought us.

His disappointment and surprise are not so unreasonable as they at first sight may appear. In China, Japan, Corea, and at most of the islands of those seas, the spoken languages differ so completely in sound, that when the several inhabitants of the countries meet, and try to converse, they are mutually unintelligible as long as they confine themselves to oral communication ; but the instant they have recourse to the written character, they understand each other perfectly. This written language, which is altogether independent of sound, is the same in each of the countries alluded to, while the spoken language on the contrary is different in all of them. In these respects the Arabic numbers 1, 2, 3, exactly resemble the written Chinese characters. There is nothing in these symbols by which their pronunciation can be determined, and in fact every nation of Europe uses different words to express them in speech. In China, and the countries adjacent, this principle, with us confined to 81 numerals and to algebraic signs, extends to the whole language ; and, as a knowledge of reading and writing is very generally diffused in those countries, it was quite natural that the Coreans should be surprised at the ignorance of people of our pretensions.

As we made no progress in the mutual expression of our wishes, we had recourse to a language which is pretty well understood all over the world -that of the bottle ; and the disturbed features of the irritable old chief speedily became smooth, under the genial influence of our most powerful ally, a glass of cherry-brandy. To the Corean boatmen, and other villagers who came on board, we distributed rum, which as usual made us all good friends. The chief alone, however, who seemed to be sitting on thorns, was never long satisfied with anything, but was continually ordering and counterordering his officers and people in the most petulant manner. More than once he waved his rod, and ordered all hands into the boats, but as soon as he turned round, the people leaped on board again. One fellow, who probably had got double allowance of grog, made a great commotion behind the chief, where he had stationed himself across the hammocks. The old man after bidding him as we supposed hold his tongue, to no purpose, ordered him into confinement, and he was carried off to the boat.

The suite of the chief were dressed in loose white robes, large hats, wide trowsers tied at the ankle, and cotton shoes turned up at the toes. There stood also some persons near him, whom we took to be his body guard. Of these soldiers, some carried nothing but a bow and arrows, whilst others ⁸² were armed with swords. Their head-dress consisted of a low conical hat, made of thickly-plaited grass, on the top of which was fixed a small gilt ornament, with a tassel of raw silk, and half a dozen peacock's feathers worked together.

It had become nearly dark by this time, and matters were hanging rather heavy on our hands, when the chief ordered his boats to be got ready, and called two of his attendants to assist him in rising, an operation too undignified it appeared for him to attempt alone. In compassion to the old man's difficulty of locomotion, I had set the carpenters to work the moment he came on board, to construct a platform, along which he now marched out of the ship, with much more ease than he had entered. He remarked the difference, and seemed more pleased with this mark of attention than he had been with anything else we did to accommodate him. So far all seemed well. But there was still something amiss, as the boat did not put off, but continued alongside, the old chief sitting stock still and silent, with his unlighted pipe in his mouth. In utter ignorance of what was expected of us, we thought it could do no harm to pay him a visit : probably this was what he waited for, since he made room for us to sit down on his own mat, and then looking round, appeared sorry that he had nothing to entertain us with ; at least we conjectured that this was the difficulty, and therefore sent for a bottle of wine, which the chief no sooner saw, than he called for three or four bowls, and made his pipe-bearer pour out the wine ; then touching the vessels with his rod, made us all drink before he would taste a drop. The oddity of his entertaining the company at their own expense seemed not ⁸³ to Strike him ; on the contrary he did the honours with much cheerfulness, and for the first time, was quite at his ease.

After sitting for ten minutes, we took our leave, and the Corean boats rowed in the direction of the town for about a hundred yards, then suddenly turning their heads round, proceeded towards the Alceste. As it was now dark, we had not dreamed of more visiting, and being sufficiently tired with the day's work, were congratulating ourselves with all these ceremonies being at an end, and that the remainder of the evening was at our own disposal, when it was announced that the venerable chief was on his way to the commodore. Captain Maxwell by dint of hard rowing reached his ship in time to have the quarter-deck and accommodation ladder lighted up, and everything arranged for the reception of the chief. He was evidently much struck with the appearance of the ship, particularly when he entered the cabin, and found himself in a large and elegantly-furnished apartment. Captain Maxwell showed him the way and begged him to sit down, but he would use nothing but his own favourite mat. The sentinel, however, at the cabin door had orders to stop every one from entering but the chief himself, and seeing no reason for admitting the mat-bearer more than the others, some minutes elapsed before this essential part of his establishment could be found. Meanwhile,

the old man looked about him, astonished at the unexpected splendour of the apartment ; and as Captain Maxwell had changed his jacket for a long coat, he did not at first recognize him. On discovering his mistake, he laughed for the first and I think the only time, and his behaviour afterwards was certainly less constrained. He did not relish being left alone with us, however, and seemed ill at ease till the secretary and three or four others were called in.

It appeared that he had forgotten the fate of his dispatch on board the Lyra, or else he wished once more to fathom the depth of our ignorance, probably not conceiving it possible that the owner of such a dwelling should be unable to read or write. Whatever his reasons might be, he ordered his secretary to prepare another writing without delay, and as soon as it was examined, handed it with great formality to Captain Maxwell. The original document is now in my possession, as well as the translation, made by the interpreter to the British Factory at Canton, which runs thus : —

"Persons, of what land are you ? — of what nation ? — On account of what business do you come hither ?— In the ship are there any literary men, who thoroughly understand, and can explain what is written?"

We readily conjectured that something to this purpose must be the import of the writing : had we known it then, however, as correctly as we do now, the knowledge would have served us little purpose, for we had no means of reply, except indeed to the latter part of the question, which Captain Maxwell answered in a manner certainly the most effectual that could be devised. He did it, however, with so much ceremony, and at the same time such perfect gravity, that it was singularly ludicrous. Having called for his clerk, he proceeded to imitate the chief, and wrote a letter which he presented with a low bow. This dispatch was not quite so long as the chief's, and 85 contained simply this : — "I do not understand one word that you say."

The chief not doubting in the least that he should understand the writing as soon as he looked at it, carefully inspected the paper, and turned it first one way and then another, but all to no purpose. At last he looked towards Captain Maxwell with an inquiring air and pointed impatiently to the paper. Captain Maxwell took up the chief's letter and did exactly the same, implying an equal degree of ignorance : but it was not till a considerable time had elapsed that the chief saw the similarity of their predicaments, and finally gave up all hopes of communicating by any means but signs.

On turning round, his eye happened to catch a mirror which was hanging between the ports, on one side. Captain Maxwell took it down and placed it in the old man's hands. He seemed mightily pleased with the image which it reflected, for he stroked his beard and pulled it from side to side for some time with an air of great complacency. One of the suite, whose curiosity overcame his good manners, could not resist the temptation, and stealing behind the chief, took a sly peep likewise. The appearance of another face over his shoulder, completely oversetting the chief's good humour, the offender was scolded in set terms, and then dismissed the cabin. A similar discipline was exerted over the poor secretary, who thrust his head between Captain Maxwell and his clerk, while they were concocting a reply to the letter. Thus scarcely five minutes passed over our irritable guest's head, without something occurring to discompose him, although we sometimes suspected this constant exercise of authority about trifles, 86 might be assumed merely to impress the strangers with an idea of his importance. But whether or not this fretfulness was feigned while in the cabin, no one could doubt the sincerity of his displeasure a minute after he came on the quarter-deck to take leave. On passing the gun-room skylight, his quick ear caught the sound of voices below, and looking down he detected some of his people enjoying themselves, and making very merry over a bottle of wine with the officers of the ship. On his bawling out to them, they

leaped on their feet, and hurried up the ladder in great consternation. The alarm soon spread along the lower deck to another jovial party of the Coreans, who were carousing with the midshipmen.

All over the world it seems to be an Englishman's maxim to give his guest more to drink than is good for him, and accordingly, most of the Coreans came stumbling up the ladder half tipsy, and staggered across the deck, to the great wrath of the chief, who disapproved totally of these symptoms of familiarity. The first one or two who made their appearance, bolted over the gangway into their boats, and thus eluded the chief's scrutiny ; after which he stationed himself at the hatchway, and caught each man as he came up, punching him soundly with his little rod in a very undignified manner, until the culprit by calling out betrayed himself. One poor fellow, the broad sleeve of whose robe was filled with biscuits given him below, managed to slip past, and on to the opposite side of the deck. The chief left his post, and set out in chase round the quarter-deck, to the unspeakable entertainment of the sailors. As the weight of the biscuit retarded the offender's speed, 87 he managed, just before the chief reached him, to slide his whole cargo into a coil of rope, and then surrendered himself prisoner. But the old man, catching a lantern from one of the sidesmen, pointed out the stolen goods with an air of great exultation, as a proof of the efficiency of his discipline. On finding no more people come up, he went down to the main-deck, and by rummaging about under the guns, and amongst the pumps, satisfied himself that no one was concealed. At length he took his leave, after inviting us, as we thought, to visit him on shore the next day.

On returning to the Lyra, well tired with the day's work, I found about a dozen Corean boats anchored in a circle round the brig, but from the crews being all asleep, we conjectured they were not there for the purpose of watching us, but were expecting the chief to return. We roused them up by banging one of their own gongs ; and they no sooner discovered, by our pointing to the shore and making signs, that the man with the large hat and long beard had gone in that direction, than they bestirred themselves to get their anchors up, and soon left us to ourselves. The Corean boats resemble those of China in many respects ; their bow and stem, however, are not so upright, but project at an angle of thirty degrees with the water. The whole cable is wound upon a reel turned at the ends by winches, and not coiled away as with us. It appears to be made of a long grass very neatly twisted. To the cable is attached a very primitive description of anchor, being merely two bent elbows of a darkcoloured wood, which sinks in the water, a property, in some instances, assisted by stones fastened to the crossing of the flukes and the shank, both of which are made of wood. When not under sail, these boats are impelled by oars, rude in appearance, but effectual enough in practice, consisting merely of a pole, to the extremity of which a flat circular board is laced by thongs. Every boat also carries over her stem, and frequently on both quarters, a long oar — which serves the double purpose of steering, and of skulling, as it is technically called, an excellent method of giving impulse to large boats, in which the natives of China and the adjacent countries excel all other nations. This method, by the way, is well worthy of imitation in crowded rivers, from its taking up literally no room. In the Thames, and in all other European, as well as American rivers, the use of the skull, if I am not mistaken, is confined almost entirely to small boats. In China I have seen vessels of more than a hundred tons, propelled rapidly by means of several skulls, with four or five men to each ; and I am confident it might be usefully applied to our river barges, instead of the huge sweeps or oars now in use, which not only take up unnecessary space, but are not nearly so efficient. The Chinese skull, it may be observed, is made to work on the smooth top of a nail or bolt, about as large as the little finger, the top of which fits into a small hollow space cut in the oar, whereas with us the skull is made to turn in a nick in the stem.

At day-break next morning, a considerable bustle was observed on shore, and shortly afterwards the persevering old chief again embarked and rowed to the ships, accompanied by a still more numerous escort of boats and people, who had assembled du- 89 ring the

night from the various villages lying round the bay. The morning was very fine, and nothing could be more brilliant than the appearance of this procession, with flags and streamers flying from all the masts, and gay crowds of people covering every deck. They came slowly towards us, beating gongs and playing lively martial airs on their shrill pipes. The *Lyra*, happening to lie nearest to the shore, was first honoured with a visit. We determined to entertain our guest below upon this occasion, but as the cabin was not quite ready for his reception, he was allowed to walk about the decks, and to examine things as he pleased, a degree of liberty for which he seemed very grateful. Presently he proposed to go below, but on the way down was nearly wedged into the hatchway, the opening being barely sufficient to admit his prodigious hat. If he was disappointed with the confined accommodation, compared to that of the *Alceste*, he was too well bred to notice such things, and even condescended to sit on a chair', when he saw there was not a bit of room for his mat. A pair of globes first attracted his attention, with the motion of which he expressed a childish sort of delight. In the same way, the pictures in the books amused him, as well as the mirrors, spy-glasses, and everything he saw.

The chief was accompanied this morning by a person, whom, from the richness of his dress, we supposed to be a man of rank. He looked, however, so unwell, probably from being a little sea-sick, that we took it into our heads he must have come on board to consult the medical gentlemen. The idea was no sooner started than we set about confirming ourselves in the mistake, by making signs ⁹⁰ to express illness, and pointing to the cause of our anxiety. The poor man, who, from the urbanity of his manners, acquired amongst us the name of the Courtier, not knowing what we would be at, replied, as people do on such occasions, by a civil look. Following up our original idea, the doctor was sent for, who felt his pulse, made him expose his tongue, and as far as could be accomplished, inquired into his ailments — an absurd enough discipline for a man in perfect health. The chief meanwhile looked on with great gravity, and both he and the patient probably believe to this hour that such a ceremonial forms merely a part of our established etiquette.

When the doctor had done, the Courtier was freed from farther scrutiny, and he commenced examining the books lying on a shelf near him with so much apparent interest that I begged him to accept one. He grasped it with eagerness, and, after clasping it to his breast, dropped it cunningly into his long sleeve, which, like the same part of a monk's dress in Europe, forms a most capacious pocket. I had not the least thought of any return for this gift ; but a minute afterwards, when the old chief's back was turned, the Courtier slipped his fan very mysteriously into my hand under the table. Seeing that this was to be a private transaction between us, I sent it away with equal secrecy by my steward, who was placing the tea things. Unfortunately my precaution was rendered fruitless, for on the cabin becoming exceedingly hot, I rang and desired my servant to bring me a fan, and he not knowing there was any mystery, naturally brought back the Courtier's present. The stern old chief recognized it immediately, and ⁹¹ rose half off his chair, his great hat fluttering like a flag in the wind with rage, while the poor Courtier stood trembling from top to toe, ready to sink into the ground with fear. I interfered and endeavoured to explain, that if there was any one in fault it was not the Courtier. But it was a long time before the old gentleman was appeased and resumed his seat, allowing the Courtier to keep his book, while I carefully locked up the fan.

Breakfast not being quite ready, our restless visitor became desirous of seeing more of the ship, and proceeded towards the deck; but happening to discover as he passed the officers sitting at their table, he turned to the left, into the gun-room, instead of going up the ladder. Without waiting for any invitation, he steered straight into the first lieutenant's cabin, which he examined minutely. His curiosity in these matters induced me to invite him to go along the lower deck — a proposal which delighted him greatly. But it was impossible to keep on the state-hat during this adventure, the deck being only five feet high ; so that at length it came off to the old boy's evident mortification. He was amply repaid, however, for this sacrifice of

dignity, by the multitude of objects which lay before him. Scarcely a sailor's bag or chest escaped his scrutiny ; and wherever he commenced his researches, nothing short of a thorough overhaul, during which everything was tossed out, would satisfy him. He rummaged over the midshipmen's drawers and lockers, tumbled a whole case of marine accoutrements out on the deck ; and turned everything he could lay his hands on topsyturvy. He next went to the kitchen, where he lifted the lids from the cook's boilers, dipped his 92 little rod into the boiling cocoa, and inspected all the tea-kettles and coffee-pots. The lustre and sharpness of one of the ship's cutlasses delighted him so much, that I asked him to accept it. The offer seemed to produce a great struggle between duty and inclination, but it was of no long duration, for, after a moment's consultation with the Courtier, he returned the glittering weapon to its scabbard, and, as I thought with a sigh, restored it to its place. What his scruples were on this occasion I could not imagine, for he had no such delicacy about anything else, but seemed desirous of possessing samples of almost everything he saw. Of course, he was freely supplied with each article he pointed out, which, as soon as it was given him, went straight to his immense sleeve, which soon hung down with its cargo, like the pouch of an overgorged pelican. He contrived at length, when sufficiently loaded, to hobble up the hatchway ladder, and as soon as he reached the air, looked about and laughed, like a schoolboy who, for the first time in his life, has been indulged with a peep at a raree-show.

In this interval the natives, by our free permission, had been busily employed in taking the dimensions of the brig with lines and rulers ; together with an exact inventory of the guns, shot, spars, rigging, boats, and everything capable of enumeration. They were much puzzled at this moment as to the number of persons on board, for I found the surveying commissioner, with his note-book in his hand, in the midst of a party of young gentlemen, who I suspected, were amusing themselves at the Corean's expense, as they were all laughing, and he was looking very grave. They stoutly denied having played 93 off any humours on the native; but I had reason to suspect they had been misinforming him as to our numbers, for when I extended my fingers eight times to him, he erased an entry from his book, and substituted the new information, with a look of much satisfaction.

The old chief, who must needs be everywhere, came rustling up to us during this dumb-show conversation, and laying his hand on one of the carronades, seemed as I thought, to wish it should be fired off. Nothing was easier than gratifying him in this matter, for as it was ready loaded and primed, nothing was required but to lift off the leaden apron and cock the lock. I then looked to see that no boat was in the way, and pulling the lanyard of the trigger, off went the gun, the whole being the work of not more than four or five seconds. Had a thunderbolt fallen amongst the natives, it could not have astonished them more ; and their admiration rose to the highest pitch, when they observed the shot strike the water, close to the ship, and rebound eight or ten times before it finally disappeared. They could scarcely, indeed, believe their senses, and looked incredulously at one another, when I showed them a thirtytwo pound shot, such as had been fired. They handed it from one to another with looks of unfeigned wonder, and with that sort of respect which a ball of this magnitude seldom fails to excite, even in minds more familiar with the power of gunpowder than the poor Coreans.

In the meantime, Captain Maxwell came to us, and breakfast being ready, we prevailed on the indefatigable old chief to attempt the hatchway once more. When fairly seated at table, he ate 94 heartily of everything placed before him, appearing particularly to relish a dish of hashed pork. A knife and fork were given him, certainly the first he ever beheld, but after a little instruction, he used them not only without much awkwardness, but to such satisfactory purpose, that he declined substituting for these strange implements, a pair of Chinese chopsticks, which were offered him. When tea was given him without sugar or milk, on the supposition that he would prefer it in the Chinese fashion, he looked to the right and left

before tasting it, and observing us drinking it differently, held up his cup with a look of reproach to the servant, and insisted upon having his share of the good things.

The facility with which this Corean chief, who but a few hours before must have been entirely ignorant of our customs, could accommodate himself to our habits, was very remarkable. On many occasions where he could not be supposed to act from our immediate example, he adopted the very same forms which our rules of politeness teach us to observe ; and if we did not deceive ourselves, this observation which was actually made at the moment, is so far curious as it seems to show, that however nations differ in the amount of knowledge, or in degrees of civilization, the usages which regulate the personal intercourse of all societies possess a striking uniformity. As far at least as my experience goes, I have remarked, in a considerable range of the social scale, that where there is at bottom a sincere desire to please, which is quite compatible with the most savage as well as the most refined state of society, the forms in which this disposition is expressed, are pretty much alike in all. 95 When breakfast was over, and the boats again manned, and ready to shove off, we signified our intention as well as we could, of landing at the town, to which it was thought the chief had given us an invitation the evening before. This interpretation of the matter he either would not, or could not, be made to take up ; for as often as we pointed to the shore, the old man pointed to the frigate. The morning, however, was wearing fast away, and it became necessary to decide the matter one way or other ; taking therefore to our boats, we rowed in the direction of the landing-place. The chief, evidently in great perturbation, having first turned his boat's head towards the Alceste, made his people lie on their oars. Upon seeing this, we rowed alongside of him, to discover if possible what was amiss ; but the old chief took no notice of us, till he had held a council of war with his attendants ; then suddenly and much to our surprise, he stepped over his own gunwale into Captain Maxwell's gig. This manoeuvre was construed by some into a desire on the chief's part to keep us company ; while others ascribed it to his wish to show publicly that he had no hand in conducting strangers to their inhospitable shore ; that compulsion, in short, was used on the occasion. Whatever was his motive, he sat for some time composedly enough ; but before many minutes had elapsed, he repented of his too ready compliance, and eagerly made signs for us to go back.

It was now our turn not to understand this dumb language, and we rowed merrily onwards. As we approached the beach, the old man's distress augmented ; and when at length our keel touched the sand, and the bowman, by leaping out 96 to fix the gang-board, actually landed on the forbidden soil, he held up his hands in despair, drooped his woe-begone countenance on one side, and drew his hand repeatedly across his throat, from ear to ear, unequivocally implying, that some one or other must lose his head on the occasion. This was perplexing enough ; but as we had now fairly done the deed, and reached the shore, it was thought that without any great aggravation of the offence, we might enjoy the satisfaction of a walk in this unexplored country. Accordingly, we stepped out, followed in very miserable plight by our venerable friend. As it was low water, we had to scramble through sea-weed and wet sand for about fifty yards, before reaching a dry spot, where a halt was made in order, if possible, to console our worthy companion. We tried to signify that our wishes went no farther than to walk about for half an hour, to stretch our limbs stiffened by so long a voyage ; after which it was our intention to return on board to dinner. To the latter part of our discourse, which consisted in making the action of eating and pointing to the ships, his only reply was, to repeat the beheading motion with which he had before endeavoured, in the boat, to work on our fears or our compassion. "How can I eat with my head off?" was the interpretation suggested by the late Dr. M'Leod, a man of infinite jest, as every one knows who has perused his most amusing narrative. The humorous manner in which this was spoken, made all our party laugh ; but our mirth only augmented the chief's distress, and we began seriously to fear that we had proceeded too far.

The town, however, not being half a mile from 97 the spot where we had landed, our purpose was merely to walk through it, to climb the wooded hill behind, and to return by the top of the ridge to our boats, which were ordered to wait at the beach. Before advancing many paces, however, we were surrounded by upwards of a hundred of the natives, and there was reason to think we might pay more dearly for our curiosity than at first had been reckoned upon. A word from the chief at this instant might have finished our expedition in a trice ; but on appealing to him against this interruption, he spoke some words to his body-guard, which consisted of four soldiers armed with bows and arrows. The military soon got the better of the populace, by pelting them heartily with stones ; thus inverting the usage of more polished communities, where these missiles are the established weapons of the mob.

The road being now clear, we turned to prosecute our walk, when lo ! the old chief was in tears, literally sobbing like a child, with his head resting on the Courtier's shoulder. This was rather too much ; for however pitiable and ludicrous it may now seem, it had then a very different character, and all idea of going farther was instantly given up. Every one regretted that matters had been pushed to this extremity, but Captain Maxwell probably more than any other person, as he had been in some degree urged into it, against his better feelings and sounder judgment.

The case being now hopeless, the boat was launched again, and we returned to our ships. The signal was made to weigh, and I stood out to sea in the Lyra, to sound the passages in the direction pointed out. I observed, however, that the Al- 198 ceste did not follow immediately ; and I learned afterwards, that the old chief had paid the Commodore another visit, just as the frigate's anchor was leaving the ground. His appearance was quite changed ; his sprightliness, unceremonious manners, and insatiable curiosity, having given place to a cold and stately civility. He appeared much embarrassed, perhaps from an apprehension of having given offence. But if it were so, he was soon undeceived in this matter, as he could not fail to perceive, that however his want of hospitality had disappointed the wishes and expectations of his visitor, no trace of ill will could abide on Captain Maxwell's mind. On the contrary, every attempt was made to repair the injury done to him, by our landing on his territory. He was offered many presents, but declined them all ; till at last just when he was going away, Captain Maxwell urged him so earnestly to accept of a large Bible, that the old man could not refuse, and they parted mutual friends.

We quitted this bay, the only point at which we touched on the peninsula of Corea, without much regret. There was so little that was conciliatory or inviting in the manners of the inhabitants, that we had not much expectation of being able by a longer stay to establish a useful or friendly intercourse with them. The venerable chief indeed, with his snow-white beard, his pompous array, and his amusing and active curiosity, had made a considerable impression upon us all. On the other hand his unmanly distress, from whatever cause it arose, inevitably took away some of the respect with which we were disposed to consider him. This circumstance, however, gave the whole picture a 99 peculiar interest, and we forgot what was ridiculous in the old man's character, in the uncertainty which must probably for ever hang over his fate.

Frequent mention has been made of the recourse we were obliged to have to signs. But after a time we discovered this method of communication, so much alluded to in voyages and travels, to be often very fallacious. There is no saying what advantage might arise from it after a long acquaintance, even supposing the oral language unknown ; but certainly when the parties are total strangers to each other, the language of signs in many cases is almost useless. It was remarked, indeed, more than once upon the present occasion, that when either the Coreans or the English made signs, unaccompanied by language, their signification was readily understood by the by-standers of the nation using them, though absolutely incomprehensible by those to whom they were addressed. This might arise from

the essential differences in the habits, and general tenor of thought in the parties respectively ; or it might be, that the individual persons of each nation being acquainted more or less with what was wished, would have little difficulty in apprehending the meaning of any particular point which it was the object of these signs to communicate. Be this as it may, there could be no doubt that our presence was disagreeable, and our departure the great object of their wishes.

The extreme promptitude with which we were met at this remote spot, and the systematic pertinacity with which our landing was opposed, not only on the continent, but even at islands barely in sight of the coast, certainly imply an extraordinary degree of vigilance and jealousy on the part 100 of the government. One can understand this better in China, where the circumstance of a strange ship calling at one of the outports, is a possible, though not a probable, event ; and where the government, instead of encouraging foreign trade, are perpetually on the watch to repress all attempts at an extension of foreign intercourse with their Celestial Empire. But in Corea, where there is infinitely less probability of a foreign ship ever calling, the same watchfulness against foreign interference, is far more curious. We need not look so far, perhaps, as the coasts of the Yellow Sea, to be convinced how slowly nations arrive at enlightened ideas on the subject of external relations, as there are not wanting individuals, and perhaps whole countries in Europe, who still maintain this repulsive Korean system to be the wisest. And it might be curious to trace on the globe the different steps or shades of liberality in this respect. Beginning with Corea and Japan, the least sociable of all nations, we next come to China, the commercial resources of which mighty empire are dribbled sparingly off at the solitary port of Canton. Manilla, which is strictly ruled by the principles of the Spanish colonial system, is but a single degree better. Proceeding to the westward we come to Java, where the restrictions and monopolies of the Dutch are still felt, though of late somewhat modified. When the Straits of Sunda are passed, a nobler field of view is opened in British India, the Isle of France, the Cape, and still farther westward, the free continents of South and North America. After again crossing the Trade-winds, we come within the influence of English intelligence on both sides of 101 the Atlantic ; though even in these latitudes we may perhaps detect some anomalous views of the subject quite worthy of

During the 6th and 7th of September, we steered to the Southward and Westward, amongst the islands, which lay in thick clusters along the coast, and for many leagues out at sea. As most of them were inhabited, frequent opportunities occurred of seeing the natives, who generally assembled on the highest point of the rocks to look at the ships passing. The water was generally shallow, and many large boats at anchor were busily employed fishing with hooks and lines, and sometimes with nets. For more than a hundred miles we continued to thread our way amongst this immense archipelago, any probable enumeration of whose numbers we discovered to be impossible. The whole sea within the horizon viewed from the deck was crowded with islands ; and when we ascended to the mast-head, groups beyond groups, like clusters of stars in the milky way, were discovered lying as far as the eye could reach. The largest island was estimated at about six miles in length, and some of them were mere rocks. Many were cleft by valleys, which became the channels of small streams ; and all being more or less cultivated, and frequently wooded to the very top, the scene was not only interesting from its novelty and magnificence, but was often extremely picturesque and beautiful. Of this coast, as I have before said, we possessed no chart having the slightest pretensions to accuracy ; and, indeed, during the greatest part of our course, for nearly two hundred miles, we were sailing, according to the best authorities, considerably in the interior of the country.

The tides swept occasionally with much rapidi- 102 ty through the narrow channels, rendering great caution at all times necessary to avoid being carried on the rocks. About four o'clock in the afternoon of the 7th of September, after the sea breeze had died away, and left

us drifting along with the tide in a perfect calm, a reef of rocks was discovered at no great distance, over which the tide was boiling and foaming most furiously. The anchor, by which two men, with axes in their hands, were always stationed day and night, was cut away; but owing to the strength of the current, the violent jerk with which the ship was brought up snapped the cable in two. Another anchor, to which the chain cable was attached, was let go in a moment, and arrested the ship's farther progress : this was just in time, as the stern swung only a few feet clear of a ledge of sharp-pointed rocks, capable of piercing through the ship's bottom at the first touch. As soon as the tide slackened, we removed from this unpleasant situation, and sent boats to explore in all directions. The reefs were discovered to form a breakwater, behind which there lay a perfectly secure harbour, where both ships soon anchored.

This conversion of an evil into an advantage is a frequent occurrence in nautical affairs. The shoals and rocks which in one view threaten the mariner with shipwreck, often afford him, when duly taken advantage of, the very means of his security. It was the saying of a distinguished philosopher, deeply engaged in experimental researches, that whenever he found himself stopped by a difficulty, or when he encountered what was usually termed a failure, he was certain of being on the brink of a discovery. The same maxim will apply to the science of navigation, as well as to others ; but it remains for the genius of such men as Smeaton and Rennie to realize the promise — by converting, for instance, the formidable dangers of the Eddystone rocks into the leading mark for Plymouth Sound ; which in its turn by a similar species of alchemy, is transmuted from a dangerous and inconvenient roadstead, into one of the securest harbours in England.

The *Lyra* was enabled to anchor so much nearer the shore than the *Alceste*, that we commanded a view of a pretty large village, entirely hid from the frigate by rocks and trees. The male inhabitants, as usual, had retreated to the highest point of the island, but we could discover in the village, by means of our glasses, several women. We thought they looked fairer than the men, that is to say, less brown, for the whole race were dark. They were also somewhat differently dressed, as they wore a white robe, open in front, and reaching a little below the knee, fastened round the waist by a dark-coloured narrow zone. Their hair, however, was dressed like that of the men, in a high spiral bunch or knot, over which was sometimes thrown loosely a plain white handkerchief. Before the door of one of the houses, some damsels, very scantily attired, were busily engaged in husking rice, by beating it in mortars, attended by a group of women and children, winnowing corn in the Chinese manner, by throwing it in the air. The only species of work which we saw the men engaged seriously in, at any of these islands, was fishing, and making and repairing their nets.

We landed, and walked to the village, where two men and a dog were the only living creatures ¹⁰⁴ that were waiting to receive us. If there was any difference, the dog was the least surly of the three ; but on none of them could we make any impression by means of signs, or by offers of buttons and other valuables, which we brought with us to bribe their good-will. They would neither speak nor move, or if they did exhibit any show of life, it was by an occasional wave of the hand towards the ships. Our past experience had prepared us to expect a cool reception, but certainly we had not expected to have a whole village to ourselves. We gladly took advantage, however, of the only opportunity we had yet had of carrying our researches within doors.

Nothing very curious rewarded our pains ; but as there is perhaps no other description of a Corean house on record, a few words may not be out of place. The door was made to turn on an upright moveable bar, fitted into a cross-beam above, and a hole in the threshold stone below. Before it lay a neat smooth little court, surrounded by a close hedge, of a sweet-scented red and white flower, resembling the honeysuckle in shape. On the ground were lying some bundles of corn, and two wooden mortars, with double-handed pestles, for

removing the husks. Cooking utensils were ranged along the wall on one side of the door; to the left of the court were several corn stacks. The house was overshadowed by large trees, whose leaf resembled that of the Portugal laurel; and the trunks of these trees and the ends of the house were covered with a thick matting of small-leaved ivy. Nothing within corresponded to the taste and neatness of the exterior. The room, for there was but one, was dark and dirty, the walls and roof being either covered with cobwebs or glazed by the action of wood-smoke. The floor was diversified by hill and dale, much in the manner of some cottages which I have seen nearer home, with the appropriate appendage of a lake here and there. The fire-place stood between two large boilers, sunk deep in rude brick-work, the use of which vessels we could not surmise. On the hot embers of the fire lay a couple of fish, one of which, a fine fresh haddock, we took the liberty of helping ourselves to, in the inhospitable absence of the rightful owners. On the wall opposite to this miserable fire-place, were ranged on two shelves a goodly store of coarse crockery, and two or three round shining metal pots and pans. On one of the shelves also stood what seemed two wooden stools, handsomely carved, and varnished with the brilliant lacker used in China. These implements, if we did not mistake their use, certainly appeared much too fine for the rest of the establishment, and quite out of place standing on a shelf. The roof was of thatch, resting on a net-work of rods, and the eaves extended more than a yard from the walls, at once affording shade to a narrow verandah in front of the house, and giving shelter to the windows from rain — a precaution quite necessary to its existence, as it was composed of oiled paper, pasted over small square openings in a wooden frame. The walls themselves were built of stones and mud, most inartificially put together — a want of neatness and skill which did not apply to the more difficult branch of architecture, the frame-work of the roof, this being constructed precisely on our principles, with a king-post and rafters, very neatly morticed in their proper places.

Having completed our inventory, we returned 106 to the two surly guardians of the village, who by this time were somewhat more communicative, and presently yielded completely to Captain Maxwell's good humour and invincible patience. As soon as he caught a smile on one of their lips, he insisted on shaking hands, and then drawing the native's arm familiarly through his own, fairly marched him off. I could do no better, I thought, than follow this example, and thus all four jogged along till we reached a house on the side of the hill, where a halt was agreed upon, and signs made to explain that we should have no objection to smoke a pipe with our new friends. The object in view was if possible to establish something like a friendly intercourse with these jealous people, and in time possibly this might have been effected. But while we were getting acquainted by slow degrees with these two men, our attention was taken off by a Corean boat, which entered the bay at this moment, and rowed directly to the village. The crew jumped hastily on shore, and came up the hill towards us at a rapid pace, and with no very friendly looks or gestures. Captain Maxwell and I were alone, and without fire-arms. It was possible, we thought, that violence might be intended, but it was clearly the safest plan to imply just the contrary; and, accordingly, we met them at the entrance of the court with confidence and good humour. Their object proved anything but hostile; for they sat down with us, and hastily filling their pipes, lighted them for us themselves, and begged us to smoke. Our language appeared to have something ludicrous in its sound to their ears, for they laughed in the most immoderate way at some of our expressions, and made us repeat the words England and Maxwell 107 over and over again, the whole party, to the number of eight or ten, bursting into a violent laugh the moment they were spoken. After the first civilities, such as they were, had been interchanged, the strangers crowded round, and by their gestures and looks seemed desirous of examining the different articles of our dress. To gratify them in this matter I thought was easy enough; but they wished to carry the inspection to the utmost extent, and were not contented with taking off my hat, coat, and gloves, but must needs investigate the shoes and stockings, and finally expressed some dissatisfaction at my declining to proceed farther than the removal of my waistcoat. Captain Maxwell, who stood by with a Corean pipe in his mouth, was as much

amused as any of the party ; but he declined being searched, and the natives were willing to leave him alone on condition of my submitting. No part of my dress excited so much interest as the stockings. Holding them up to one another, they shouted, " Hota ! Hota !" upon which we took down the word Hota in our vocabularies as the Corean for stockings ; but in the next minute we heard the same word applied to several other things, which made us suspect the word meant good, or wonderful. Similar errors are very apt to be committed by persons who visit a people with whose language they have not the least acquaintance. To learn the native expressions, therefore, equivalent to "What do you call this ?" should be the first point aimed at ; and it may generally be caught by watching closely when new objects are shown to them.

It was reasonable to hope that the other villagers, who had fled on our approach, would now be induced to return, on seeing so cordial a communication established between us and their countrymen ; but as not one of them came down, it was determined we should go in quest of them. We therefore proceeded up the hill, in expectation of coming suddenly upon the inhabitants, and thus obtaining a view of their females, not one of whom had been seen at a less distance than half a mile. But our companions took good care that this manoeuvre should not serve, as they went along with us, and shouted so loudly, that their comrades and the women having due warning, kept themselves effectually concealed. At length we came near a ravine, in which most probably the fugitives were hid ; for the Coreans made violent objections to our further advance. The discussion which now ensued led to the discovery of a singular faculty which these people possess of imitating sounds. One of them, in his anxiety to arrest my further proceedings, seized my arm, and pinched it so severely, that I turned upon him, and exclaimed, "Patience, sir !" He instantly let go his hold, and repeated what I had said with the most exact articulation and tone. On hearing these words from their companion, the others made the attempt likewise, with equal success ; so that nothing was heard for some minutes but "Patience, sir !" This incident, by furnishing a new topic, had the effect of making us better acquainted with one another ; and all the way down the hill we amused ourselves by instructing the Coreans in English. Our scholars were so apt, that before reaching the boat some of them could repeat a whole sentence so correctly, that the boat's crew when they heard the Coreans speak, actually believed they understood our language. 109 Before quitting the shore, we invited them, in the best manner we could, to come off to the ships in the morning. One of the natives, it was imagined, comprehended these signs ; for he first made preparations, as we thought, for going to bed, placed his head on his hand, closed his eyes, and snored very emphatically. After a second or two he started up, affected to look about him, and then laid his hand upon Captain Maxwell's shoulder, with an air of welcome. This piece of dumb show was variously rendered. Captain Maxwell conceived him to say, that if we would go away for the night, we might expect to be well received next day ; whilst I understood it as a promise on the part of the Corean to visit us in the morning. Both guesses were wrong ; for the man never came near us, and our reception when we did land again was the reverse of welcome. In one respect alone we probably never erred, namely, in supposing our presence irksome ; for the only measure the natives heartily approved of was our preparation to depart.

On the 9th September we landed a little before sun-rise, in hopes to find the villagers still in their houses ; but they had again given us the slip, and not a mortal was to be seen anywhere. Thus foiled in all our endeavours to conciliate this inhospitable people, we determined merely to take a look round us from a high peak near the centre of the island, and then to plague them no more.

On our way to the summit, three or four of the Coreans joined us ; two of them were of last evening's party, the others were strangers. On reaching a grove of fir-trees growing about half way up the hill, one of the new comers strongly objected 110 to our proceeding farther ; but we pursued our way notwithstanding. On reaching an open space, where there happened to be a decayed stump of an old tree standing in the centre, one of our

companions fell on his knees before it, touched the ground with his forehead, and clasped his hands before his breast in the attitude of prayer. This proceeding had all the appearance of a stratagem to dissuade us from going farther ; for the other Coreans took no notice of their companion's prostrations, and he himself seeing that his proceedings had made no impression upon us, got on his legs, and walked very sulkily away. During all our intercourse with the Coreans, we could detect no other circumstance indicative of any religious observance. No temple or idol, or even a tomb, was anywhere to be seen in or near their villages. In China it was otherwise ; every village, however small, had its temple filled with jolly images, and was surrounded by numerous burying-places, built in the shape of a horse-shoe, white-washed, and conspicuous at a considerable distance.

In the course of our walk we fell in with a drove of six fat bullocks, of a diminutive breed, but the Coreans would not exchange them for our dollars, buttons, fire-arms, or anything we had to offer them. Dogs were the only other quadrupeds we saw ; but amongst the trees we observed pigeons and hawks, and on one occasion an eagle. In the fields also, wherever we went, not only amongst these islands, but in China and elsewhere, we invariably met with our old and familiar friend the common black crow, a bird which, as far as I have observed, is equally at home in all parts of the globe.

No persuasion could induce any of those sulky 111 natives to take their breakfast with us on board. As an expedition in the boats had been projected for this morning, we wished, if possible, to have the companionship and assistance of the natives, and we hoped to make it worth their while to attend us. But they absolutely refused to become our pilots, and they despised everything we possessed.

Before setting out, we determined, by means of observations on an island near the anchorage, that the latitude of this harbour is $34^{\circ} 22'$ North, and the longitude $126^{\circ} 2' \frac{3}{4}$ East.

Our course in the boats lay amongst islands grouped thickly together, all of them inhabited, and very neatly cultivated, especially in the neighbourhood of the numerous villages which everywhere lined their shores. The peak at which we aimed, as usual, proved further off than we had calculated upon, and cost us some hard climbing before we reached the summit, though not more than six hundred feet above the level of the sea. The main land of Corea was just discernible from this elevation, and all round us the sea was studded in the most astonishing manner with the islands so often mentioned. We set ourselves separately the task of counting them. One person, by enumerating those only which were evidently separated from the rest, or round which the sea could distinctly be traced, made the number a hundred and twenty. Two others of our party, by taking into account the probable number forming each group, made a hundred and thirty-six, and a hundred and seventy. These results merely show the impossibility of speaking with precision on the subject. When, however, it is considered that 112 even the lowest number, a hundred and twenty islands, could be counted from one spot, and that for upwards of a hundred and fifty miles we had been sailing without intermission amongst islands not less crowded than they were here, some idea may be formed of this wonderful scene, the very existence of which, I believe, was not even suspected in Europe before this voyage.

On descending the hill, we found our dinner laid out on one of the boat's sails for a table-cloth, spread under the shade of a thick grove of oaks, growing by the side of a cold spring of water gushing from the mountain side. There was a village not fifty yards off, which we explored before dining, in hopes of finding some natives to join us. It was nearly deserted, for only two of the inhabitants remained. One of these was a very plain old lady, who took no sort of notice of us, but allowed us to pass her door, before which she was seated, without even condescending to look up. The other was a middle-aged man, industriously employed

in the manufacture of a straw sandal. He showed but one degree more curiosity than his fair fellow-citizen, just raising his head for an instant, and then resuming his work with perfect composure. In order to rouse this stoical and incurious Corean, we thrust a button into his hands, which he received without the least show of gratitude, and put into a bag lying near him, but still went on with his work. Another button offered in exchange induced him to surrender his handywork ; and I mention the circumstance as being the only instance which occurred during our visit to Corea of anything like traffic. We made signs that we wished to examine his house,— that is to say, we opened the door and walked in. 113 But even this proceeding elicited no show of interest in our phlegmatic shoemaker, who seizing another wisp of straw, commenced a new pair of sandals, as deliberately as if we had been merely a party of his fellow-Coreans inspecting the dwelling, instead of a company of European strangers, unlike what he could ever have seen before, or was ever likely to see again.

During dinner, we detected the heads of five or six of the natives peeping at us over the hill-top behind us. We held up our bottles and glasses, and tried to bring them down to us, but they refused to stir a single step nearer. The boat's crew, who in the meantime had been rambling about the hills, now joined the villagers, and speedily became very good friends with them. The present indeed was not the only occasion on which our men found no difficulty in conciliating the good-will of the natives, when the officers, with ten times more effort, could often make no successful advances. This arose probably from the very different feelings and objects with which we severally undertook the task. Our manners may have become in some degree constrained, by an over-anxiety to please, thus defeating the object in view by exciting distrust and alarm. On the other hand, the sailors, by habit unreflecting and inoffensive, never dreamed that their unaffected frankness could possibly be misconstrued, and sometimes gained without effort the very point we were unsuccessfully aiming at.

The Coreans on the hill, seeing that we took no notice of them, continued creeping onwards little by little till they appeared fully in view on the slope of the bank. At last one of them, actuated apparently by a sudden impulse, started on 114 his feet, and strode boldly down to us. Without pausing an instant, he walked straight up to Captain Maxwell and offered him his lighted pipe. In return for this bold overture, the Commodore, having first accepted the Corean's pipe, stood up and filled him a bumper of wine. The native drained the glass to the bottom, and holding it up to his friends on the hill, roared out in ecstasy, Hota ! Hota ! His raptures instantly brought down the whole party, who, unlike most of their countrymen we had met before, made no scruples about accepting our hospitality, and several bottles of wine were soon emptied. There was now some reason to hope that the difficult passage to a Corean's heart had been discovered ; but at the very moment we conceived ourselves established in their good graces, one of them unluckily looked over his shoulder, and beheld the sun just touching the horizon. In a moment all his joviality and confidence were dispersed; and thinking it too good a hint to be lost, he rose from the ground, patted us sharply on the shoulder, and pointed to the setting sun ; then reclining his head on his shoulder, closed his eyes as if asleep, and most unequivocally made signs for us to retire to bed without delay. We endeavoured, by drawing another cork, to protract our stay a little longer, but they allowed us no peace or quiet till all the things were ordered into the boat, and preparations made for departing. The whole party then accompanied us to the water's edge, helped us rather roughly to embark, and expressed the most lively satisfaction when they were fairly rid of us.

This was the last we saw of the Coreans ; and no one was sorry to quit a country where at every 115 moment he was made sensible of being considered an object of distrust, perhaps of ill will, to people he was disposed to treat with confidence and kindness. A future voyager would do wisely to carry along with him a person skilled in the Chinese written character, and acquainted with some of the spoken languages of those seas. He ought

likewise to have more leisure on his hands than we had, since it is manifestly impossible, in a hurried visit such as ours, effectually to overcome the extreme distrust of strangers evinced by this most unsociable of nations.