

Sir Edward Belcher (1799-1877); Arthur Adams. *Narrative of the voyage of H. M. S. Samarang, during the years 1843-46; employed surveying the islands of the Eastern archipelago; accompanied by a brief vocabulary of the principal languages.* (London : Reeve, Benham, and Reeve. 1848) Volume 1. pages 324 – 358

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CHAPTER X.

QUELPART, AND THE KOREAN ISLANDS.

Island of Quelpart – Landing at first opposed by the Fishermen – Observations effected on shore, by appointing Sentinels to intercept the curiosity of the Natives – Symptoms of hostility – Surprised at midnight by a body of the inhabitants with torches – Disperse quietly to their homes – Watch-fires on the Great Island – Visit of the Chief to the Ship, accompanied by most discordant music – Dress and Manners Visit to a superior Chief on the Great Island – His curiosity to understand the object of our Expedition – Punishment of an Offender – Make the Tour of the Island – Proffers of hospitality from a young Chief – Arrangements for making a formal visit to the Examiner – March to the City – Misunderstanding and return to the beach – Proceed to the Southern Islands, and are visited by an intelligent Civilian Chief – General remarks on Quelpart and the Quelpartians – Departure for the Archipelago of Korea – Survey estuaries – Features of the Country – Habits of the People – Return to Quelpart – Sail for Japan.

As the summer Solstice had now arrived, when very heavy gales are expected in these seas, I was exceedingly anxious to get into some of the northern ports of the Korea before its effect might disturb the efficiency of our Chronometers. On the evening of the 23rd of June, we sighted the Island of Gotto, situated at the south-western extremity of the Japanese Group. Here we met the anticipated gale, but by dint of carrying canvas, crawled under the lee of Gotto, which we rounded about seven on the following morning, experiencing a very heavy squall as we opened the land westerly. That night as the gale moderated, we increased our canvas and fetched over to the Island of Quelpart, under the protection of which we continued beating, until we got its northern island under our lee. At daylight we bore up, and about 6 o'clock anchored off the southern bay of this island, which here forms a channel with the great island, about two miles in width. The current set strongly through to the southward.

As soon as our sails were furled and boats equipped, preparations were made for landing the tents and instruments ; upon which a body of fishermen, natives of a small village on the near slope of a hill, assembled to receive us, and motioned to land at what they considered a more eligible spot. Being inattentive to their wishes, one of them deliberately placed his shoulder to the stem of my gig and pushed her off, the others at the same time waving either to depart or land more to the left, which was clear of rocks. Our Chinese interpreter was unable to make them comprehend, and probably mistaking his attempt to parley for indecision, I thought it better to put the matter beyond further doubt ; directing the men, therefore, to pull in, I leaped on shore, with a musket, followed by my crew, with their arms, and took possession of the mound. They instantly perceived that we were not to be trifled with, and a better understanding was soon established between us. One of the elders, who appeared to understand Chinese characters, was 326 informed in writing of the object of our visit, which as explained by our interpreter, “to catch a small piece of sun, and measure the land,” was probably equally unintelligible. It is very probable, however, that our mysterious dealings with the sun had a much stronger effect in preventing any further opposition, for we soon found them disposed to be friendly and assist our people in bringing water, erecting the tents, &c. On the arrival of the barges for orders, they were very anxious to inspect them, and on noticing the brass six-pounders in them observed, that they had much larger guns in the great island. We several times endeavoured to ascertain the name of the island on which they were, but could gain nothing beyond O-tcheou-san, which I well knew was merely their term for the land. As visitors increased they began to be more inquisitive, and so troublesome, that I was at length compelled to post sentries to keep off those who had not permission to approach ; the parties, moreover, with which we were now in contact, were so filthy in their manners and persons, that it became a matter of necessity to keep them aloof. With some their curiosity, or impertinence, carried them so far beyond the bounds of decorum, that they were very soon taught that the white-faced foreigner was able to punish their presumption, even without the assistance of weapons. As some doubts were entertained of the amicable disposition of these people, who quitted us rather sulkily and as if by signal, due care was observed shortly before sunset, in doubling our guard at the tents, by the crew of one of the cutters, whilst the further force of the barges moored in the bay, made it sufficient to have repelled any attack.

327 Shortly after midnight, however, whilst taking a nap, during a cloudy interval, which prevented

my observing the stars, I was awakened by cries and yellings in our rear, followed very shortly by the natives rushing towards us, each brandishing a torch. These sudden alarms afford excitement and excellent practice to Officers and men, and in no point more so than as a trial of their coolness and forbearance. Both barges were ready for action on the instant; eighteen loaded muskets, with bayonets fixed, awaited the approach of the enemy, and close as they were, not a mistake occurred. Many were "eager for the fray", but it was not our province to commence hostilities, nor do I think at this moment that the natives came down upon us with any warlike intention, for I afterwards found that an inferior Officer and his party from the great island landed about that time, and probably conceived it to be his duty to inspect us, and show his people that he entertained no fear. It was rather a hazardous experiment, as the mistake or want of nerve of one man might have sacrificed a dozen; it is also possible that these villagers might have deemed us weak enough to be frightened by their display of torches; their surprise to find so many muskets pointed towards them caused the greater body, however, to retire with more precipitation than they advanced. A few of the band advanced in a friendly manner, and among them the chief alluded to, but the nature of his errand did not transpire, as we could only communicate by the Chinese written characters, and darkness did not at all favour his trusting himself in our hands. They very shortly dispersed to their homes, leaving us to take 328 care of the stars; and it is highly probable that to this early lesson, teaching them that we were ever on the alert to any interruptions inimical to our duties, rendered our subsequent transactions with them more easy. We found that a vigilant look-out was also maintained on their part on the summits of all their high hills, where guards in little square forts were always to be observed moving about, and at stated hours, near sunset, and during the night, signal fires were passed along the posts, in succession, commencing from that nearest to the ship or boats. By day, this was effected by smoke, which was very cleverly, as well as prettily performed, by throwing wet chopped straw, and sometimes paddy husks into the fire, producing instantaneously a dense white column, afterwards used, in imitation, by ourselves for surveying signals. Some of the Officers thought that they could distinguish symbols in the form of the lights, but these I did not perceive, and when we consider that their telescopes are of the most miserable description, and that with ours, of the very best quality, that it was but a conjecture, and the distance also between the objects in question being, at least, three miles, I think there is no ground for that inference.

Preparations were now made for carrying on the survey of the island by the ship and boats, in the event of any difficulty arising on the part of the authorities; my instructions strictly prohibiting any measure of this nature being effected by force or against their consent. On the 30th of June it was intimated that one of the Quelpart Generals would visit the ship. Every preparation being made for his proper reception, shortly before noon three 329 large boats were noticed coming from the main island, but as both wind and tide pressed them southerly, they made but slow progress. The largest boat, which bore the Chief and his party, consisting of his suite and band, the latter producing the most discordant sounds that were ever emitted under the name of music, from brass tubes, at length reached the ship, and the General stepped upon our quarter deck, where he was duly received by the Officers and guard, and saluted with three guns, the customary compliment to a Chinese of similar rank. He was a light built, but compact man, about 5ft. 6in., of rather handsome features, inclined to Grecian, with rather sharp forehead, small eyes, but intelligent, and with feet very small in proportion to his size. His hair appeared to be dressed much in the fashion of the people of Loo-Choo, but in place of the Cameesashee and Oosisashee pins, it was confined by a delicate network bag, composed of brown silk. The hat, which is a light fabric, and most beautiful piece of workmanship, is composed of the fine outer fibres of the bamboo, dyed black, and woven into a gauze, like our finest wire-work. [* The hat is also furnished with a fine covering composed of very fibrous paper, so well glazed, at the same time so flexible, that it was generally mistaken for oil silk. This is prepared both by the people of Loo-Choo, as well as the Chinese, by a solution of the gelatinous sea-weed, Agal Agal (one of the Alga?), which will be noticed hereafter.] The rim is about two feet in diameter; the cone rises to nine inches, having a diameter at the truncated vertex of three inches, where it is slightly convex, and has one or more peacock's feathers attached in a kind of swivel, 330 forming a graceful head-dress, and one not unbecoming a military character. Beneath this hat our chief was decorated by two necklaces or collars, one composed of large ultramarine-blue balls, apparently of porcelain, the centre being about nine-tenths of an inch in diameter, diminishing in size towards the extremities. The other fastened behind the left ear and crossing the breast, but this was composed of long tubular pieces, about a quarter of an inch in diameter, by two inches in length, tapering at the extremes, and apparently amber, having a dark coloured red bead between each. In his hand he carried a wand of office, of a dark black wood, with a black silk braid, plaited about six inches inwards, from the greater, and terminating in fringes. These constituted his official marks, or baton, of rank and office.

His personal dress consisted of a fine loose shirt of grass cloth, trowsers and stockings in one, of a species of nankeen, and leathern boots of very neat workmanship, in the loose Wellington style, the upper part being of a black velvet; a loose tunic, of open texture, approaching to coarse grass cloth or muslin, having the cuffs lined and turned up with scarlet silk, confined by a broad sash of blue at the waist, completed the house dress. But in the costume of state now before us, there was superadded a military cloak or scarf, descending

from each shoulder in folds behind and before, turned up at the cuffs with red silk, representing two very useful sleeves. The attendants were dressed similar to the people of Loo-Choo, some with boots, others with sandals, constructed very neatly of straw; and those of military habits performing the duties of Sergeants, Provost-Martials, or personal guard, 331 wore a kind of gaiter, protecting the leg from the knee to the ankle.

Our guest appeared to be quite at his ease, and on going round the ship, paid the most minute attention to every object likely to interest a warlike people. The size of the guns, weight of the shot, chain-cables and cooking apparatus in the galley chiefly attracted his attention. If I should venture to select any particular object which appeared to make an impression of power, it certainly was the chain-cable ; he recurred to it several times, and observed, to use the interpreter's words, "he say must have strong man do that work." His merriment was very much excited at our sheep, goats, fowls, &c. ; "he say all got proper house " ; but in descending to the lower deck, its comfort, arrangement of the seamen's messes, &c., a sight of admiration at any time, even to our own countrymen, perfectly astonished him. He trembled, I even suspect, to find another world, and more men lower down, and wished to return to the cabin, where he was greatly delighted with the performance of a musical box.

After partaking of sweetmeats and wines, &c., he acquainted me that a greater General than himself, the Commander of the forces, expected me to visit him at the great island ; we therefore proceeded thither with our boat force in state, taking every Officer who could be spared. Having landed in a very convenient spot, sheltered by two reefs, we were conducted to the presence of the Chief, under a very miserable military tent, which would not even shelter us from the sun, where we found him seated within a space, enclosed on three sides by a folding screen, so contrived as to form (by additional pieces) small 332 chambers behind him. He received me sitting, when to put an end to any forms of etiquette which might be in contemplation, and in order to arrive at that point of equality upon which all our measures were to be conducted, I planted myself sans ceremonie on the mat near him, and shook him by the hand, in true English style, a compliment which I observed somewhat to discompose him, although his assumed gravity quickly vanished.

The customary formal questions were then put. From whence do you come ? What do you want ? When do you go, and where ? To these interrogatories I made a general reply : "that my Queen had sent me to visit foreign countries, in order to correct the charts by which our vessels might navigate in safety, and that it was important we should obtain a knowledge of the hidden dangers surrounding their island, in order that none should be wrecked upon its shores ; that to effect this in a proper manner, it was necessary to observe the sun and stars, and make other measurements from the various hills about the island ; but that we had no wish to enter their towns or interfere with their people, and I therefore hoped that he would give them strict injunctions not to interfere with any marks which we might erect, and that our operations would not disturb the harmony which ought to exist between all nations ; that our object was for the benefit of mankind in general, and that he must not consider me as the servant solely of my Sovereign, but as that of all nations ; that immediately our operations were completed, we should proceed to Korea, and endeavour to see the ruling power there, and then call at Japan for refreshments on our return to China."

333 He appeared to comprehend these matters clearly, issued his orders in compliance with my wishes ; and expressed himself very anxious to see the map of the world, to understand the very great distance which the Queen of Great Britain had sent one of her great war-ships to work for their benefit, which he remarked, showed a very kind disposition. This map I promised to give him when we met again at the great city, where he had arranged that I was to be introduced to the Examiner, the de facto Governor of the island. As to Korea, he considered that we should not be able to meet any great men, but very many soldiers, and very brave ("large hearts"), cautioning me at the same time, not to allow myself to be entrapped by them.

Everything having been satisfactorily arranged between us, sweetmeats and sake (or Sam-schoo) were introduced, and the customary curiosity about the texture of our clothing, uniforms, &c., was indulged in. Anxious to procure Bullocks and vegetables for my ship's company, I had taken the precaution of bringing with me samples of the different supplies of cloth, flannel, cotton, &c., as a means of exchange, and enquired if such could be obtained. This point being also satisfactorily arranged, we were preparing to take our leave, when I found that an inquisitive member of the rabble which pressed upon us, almost beyond the controul of their police, had been carrying his curiosity to an impertinent excess upon one of the Officers, who in his indignation had repelled him more roughly than he anticipated. This circumstance, however, soon proved that they possessed the power to punish an offender when necessary. Without any forms 334 of enquiry, or drum-head court martial, the delinquent was pointed out by the Provost, suddenly seized and brought before the police magistrate, by four sturdy fellows, and he was then made to kneel uncapped, with his hair untied, or, as a seaman would term it, 'adrift' ; this condition of the hair serving with the Chinese and other tailed nations, as an important hold on refractory characters. His crime, as I supposed, having been recited to him by the head policeman, or Provost, the magistrate bowed towards him, which being construed into passing sentence, he was, with very great rapidity, bared from the waist to the knees and forcibly thrown on his face ; being confined in this position by the four policemen, a fifth now appeared, a distinct official, prepared to carry out the sentence. The instrument used for this purpose may be compared to a huge bat, or Harlequin's wand in shape, but longer,

wider, and heavier, with a long handle; it appeared to be of ash, and bent freely like the wand alluded to. The operator placing himself in a convenient position, and measuring his distance from the culprit so as to inflict his blow with the knees almost bent to the ground, swung this instrument over his head, and brought it down flat over the back part of the hams, a little above the knee joint, with a force apparently sufficient to break the limb, but for the flexibility of the instrument. I interceded to prevent the repetition of such torture, but at least a dozen of these terrific blows were inflicted before my wishes could be explained and acted upon. It appeared to me to be a most severe punishment, yet the instant the culprit was released he nimbly tucked 335 up his garments and fled, possibly accustomed to this mode of castigation.

Taking leave of the Chiefs, we returned to the ‘ Samarang ‘, and on the day following commenced our tour of the island, the ship accompanying us within short signal distances, and anchoring at night. During our progress we were very strictly escorted by the military guards, which maintained a respectable distance inland, probably to preserve order, and prevent our free communication with the natives ; wherever we reached their batteries or military stations, there was a great display of banners, spears, &c., but no communication.

The several districts of the island appeared to be under the control of independent chiefs, or magistrates, and according to their disposition did we find our operations facilitated or retarded. About the third day of our progress, it was found convenient to sleep in the boats, in a very well sheltered and retired little bay, about one quarter of a mile from one of their towns. The chief personage, a young man about five-and-twenty, and of very prepossessing manners, came down to visit me at the station, examined the instruments, and issued very decided orders in our favour. When he understood that it was my intention to sleep in the boat, he endeavoured to persuade me to accept the use of his house, and to render me the more independent, offered to vacate it, and allow my own people to guard it. Aware of the general craftiness of these people, and suspecting that they would be glad to make one of us a prisoner, I still felt so much confidence in the genuine feeling of this chief, 336 that, had it been consistent with my duty, I should have gladly taken advantage of this opportunity of seeing more into their habits, &c. ; but considering that on these occasions, the leader of such expeditions should “in his own person and place”, set the example of endurance, and not accept a luxury which his officers could not enjoy, I declined the invitation . Another important consideration which occurred to me, was, that if I had been either willingly or unwillingly detained, either by design or mistaken hospitality, the zeal of the Officer left in command of the boats, might have led to some untoward misunderstanding. As the fishermen had disturbed our marks, and were not friendly, there were many of our party who were not inclined to give our new acquaintance credit for the integrity of his intentions ; they were, of course, on the alert, and suspicion, heightened by the exhibition of some flashes of fireworks during the night, put us on the qui vive, or under arms, and somewhat troubled our rest.

On the morning following, we found the people well-disposed ; and moving onwards to the next station, I was again favoured with a visit from our friend, the young chief, inviting me to breakfast, but finding that I still declined the honor, he caused a small basket, or canteen to be put into the boat, containing what evidently had been prepared in case of my declining his invitation, and motioned me to take them with me. The contents were fish, vegetables, pickles, rice, and Sake, in white metal and porcelain vessels, the latter certainly of some value to them. Even this did not satisfy the suspicions of some of our gentry. However, about noon, at a station, a little inland, and 337 about five miles in advance, and apparently beyond the limits of his district, we found that he had followed us in one of their unwieldy boats, and mounting to our station, set all the people at ease about our penetrating so far into the interior. My friend now acquainted me that the Examiner had sent me a present of Bullocks, which were on their passage from the city, and intimated a wish that I would go there with all convenient despatch to visit that personage, and that he would be there to receive me. Returning him his canteen and vessels, and exacting a promise that he would visit the ship on her anchoring, we parted, and, about 4 o’clock that evening, met the boats containing the Bullocks, which had been sent off to the ship to be embarked. The ship anchored about a mile from the landing-place, and early the ensuing morning, a special invitation was forwarded to a ceremonial breakfast, and introduction to the Examiner in the city, which was accepted ; and as the chiefs thought the ship too far off to visit, she was moved as close to the shore as safety admitted, her fore-foot having at one time touched a rock, which ought not to have been under us. Selecting a party, including marines and blue jackets, of thirty men, under arms, as a guard, and accompanied by about six officers, we landed at the beach, in front of the city, where several thousand people, including troops, with their banners, were drawn up to receive us. My friend was not amongst the officials, and considerable shuffling and evasion appeared to mark the conduct of the military chiefs. At length mats were brought, and the chiefs and myself being seated, some little communication took place about horses, the number of attendants, &c., all of 238 which appeared to have been satisfactorily arranged, and the horses led out in readiness to mount. Still some unseen difficulty seemed to cause a restlessness amongst the chiefs, whilst messengers were repeatedly passing between them and the city. I shall therefore take advantage of this pause, and describe the outer parts of the capital of Quelpart.

The space on which the city stands, is in a broad valley, situated about the centre of the northern

coastline, having a conspicuous flat eminence on its eastern side, and a small river, or copious stream, on the west. The country immediately surrounding it on all sides, being peculiarly barren. The city wall, on the face exposed to the sea, occupies a line of about 500 yards, containing seven bastions, apparently with embrasures throughout ; but no guns were noticed, excepting in these bastions, and from their report, when saluting, of no importance. The depth of the walls, which form a parallelogram, is about 200 yards. The main gates, which are inland, and seaward, are in recesses formed by two of the bastions, with apparently one additional gate on the eastern angle. The height of the walls is about twenty-five feet, and from their structure here, as well as in other parts of the island, I am induced to believe are of European design. They are unlike the works of China or Loo-Choo, and manifestly convey the impression of a knowledge of the art of defence. Their present condition and appearance, added to the slovenly manner of repairs, where attempted, tend to confirm the opinion, that they were designed by a more warlike people, and that the present race have neither the tact for keeping them in a condition for action, nor are possessed of the ordnance for rendering them respectable. Their force, therefore, could only be reckoned as to numbers in hand to hand conflict.

Matters being now arranged, I was informed, after a delay of, at least, an hour, that they were prepared for our reception. The officers mounting their horses, which, fortunately, I had insisted upon their providing, and the force shouldering arms, we proceeded to the eastern gate, which we found closed, whilst the batteries above were crowded with people. Under any other circumstances this alteration of arrangement in avoiding the great sea gate, and refusal of admission here, would have touched my pride, and induced me to return to the ship, but I had an object in view of more importance : I wished to enter their town, and make the friendship of their chief, an object, possibly, as related to future communication with Korea, of national importance ; moreover I conceived that these disagreeable arrangements might result from the vacillating conduct of some timorous official.

It was now intimated to me that the Examiner desired to pay me the greatest compliment which he could offer, and that he wished me to enter in state by the great city gate, on the land side, the officials having been deputed to arrange this ceremony. I directed them to lead, and conducting us by a circuit of about a mile and a half, we at length reached the avenue which led to the land gate. If this scheme was concocted in order to entrap us, it was well managed, had they possessed the courage to carry it out. To speak the truth, I had already made up my mind to stand the brunt of my act, and had taken into consideration the position of the town, as under the point blank range of the guns of the ‘ Samarang ‘. The boats also armed with four field-pieces, and congreve-rockets, were at the beach, within sixty yards of the walls, with thousands to fall under a few discharges; and last, not least, the handful of picked men under my immediate command ; I could not imagine, therefore, that these people could be such idiots as to provoke hostilities. The avenue in front which led to the main gate, was scarcely more than ten feet wide, not affording room for more than four men abreast, and two for active operations. Their troops lined this road, with spears on our left, and fortyeight matchlocks, with lighted matches, on our right. The projecting bastions, which formed a very deep recess to the gate, were frowning over our heads, at a height of above thirty -five feet, thronged with people, and requiring merely a handful of pebbles to exterminate us. In the face of this we advanced to the gate. A parley was held and a messenger arrived, refusing to admit so large an armed force into the city, “it was against their laws.” They were then informed that these matters had been already arranged, and that I declined further parley. The period had now arrived when it became necessary to exhibit to them the contempt which we entertained for their Forces. Assuming the command by the order of “Silence “, I reversed my little band, having half of the marines in front, at the charge, the Officers in the centre, and the remainder in rear ; and giving the order to “Advance “, we steadily cleared our way past the matchlocks and “stone range “of the walls, and then forming square on the nearest commanding ground, gently captured a stray General, and gave him to understand that the safety of his head depended very much upon his piloting us safe ; these arrangements completed, we advanced very leisurely along the western walls, until we reached the beach.

To show how completely some of our party entered into the spirit of this little affair, I overheard a discussion which took place among the marines, whilst resting in square. One, calculating the odds, observed, “Well, there were enough of them to have smothered us “; the other coolly replying, “Nonsense, they were not more than two hundred to one jolly “! We had yet about 200 yards to traverse, and here we found the ground kept by a regiment vijlailmen, stationed six feet asunder, so as to admit of the free use of their weapon. The handle of this dangerous weapon was about three feet in length, with an arm of eighteen inches, jointed in iron, and studded three inches from the extremity by nine studs, or nails, similar to those used in portcullis gates, &c. A single blow from this weapon would probably indent a musket, and render it useless ; against cutlasses it might become superior; and to unarmed men, terrific. Between these lines we continued our march, and reached the position, covered by our boats, in safety. Here I summoned one of their chiefs, and informed him, by a written communication, that I was ashamed of their conduct, and that I could no longer consider them entitled to respect. This produced a fresh invitation. “The breakfast was prepared, the chiefs awaited me, and the sea gate was open, to enter upon my own terms.” To have accepted their hospitality under these circumstances would, I

considered, have lowered the character of the Flag ; I therefore caused the interpreter to commit the following to paper, and forwarded it to the Examiner :

342 "I regretted that either bad advice, or pusillanimity, on the part of the Chiefs of Quelpart should have marred the pleasure which I had anticipated, of paying my respects to the Examiner, to whom, personally and individually, I felt under great obligation. That notwithstanding all that had occurred, and as a proof that no such indecision would be found upon our part, I should be happy to receive the Examiner, his Chiefs and attendants, to any number, on board the ' Samarang ' , where they might be assured of a reception befitting their rank, and I should wait until 3 o'clock for their reply." In a short time they acknowledged "that they had lost face "(were disgraced), and further communication being out of the question, I retired to the ship, and quitted the anchorage. I felt great disappointment at the nonappearance of my friend of the two previous days, who had not exhibited himself in any capacity ; and as all the chiefs of the neighbouring districts were, probably, present, it frequently occurred to me that he was either a near connexion of the Examiner's, or had been ordered to remain aloof. That he was a first-class Mandarin, or Chief, we knew, from his hat and feathers, as well as from his own people, who showed him greater marks of respect, although unattended by Officers, than any authority I had hitherto met.

It was evident that there existed a party hostile to us on the island, and I am inclined to suspect that it was military. The day previous to our visit to the city, on passing a fortified town at the sea shore, a gun was fired, in the direction of my gig, the shot dropping short.

As this might have been intended for a compliment, 343 and the shot (as I have seen even in a British battery) accidental, I did not notice it further than by signalling one of the barges to close, and pulled directly in for the spot from whence the gun had been fired. A second discharge, which passed the ball quite close enough to our heads to put the intention beyond doubt, induced me to return them the compliment, from the six pounder in the barge, tiro por tiro (shot for shot), as the Spanish have it ; and this put an end to their amusement.

We found, after quitting the city, that a similar feeling prevailed at one of our stations about ten miles to the westward ; the report of this transaction, by Mr. Richards, the second master, in command of one of the cutters, was to the following effect. He had been despatched in advance to exhibit a signal upon the extreme point in view, and as the period of his arrival was about the time that his people should breakfast, he landed one of the men to stand by the signal, whilst he anchored off and allowed the crew to get their meal. Shortly after, the natives came down in great numbers, and endeavoured to force the man in charge of the signal, over the cliff into the sea ; not being able to effect a landing in time to prevent this act, Mr. Richards fired a musket over their heads, to intimidate them ; this they derided, and using brands, which they probably brought from their watchfires, endeavoured to burn him out, by setting fire to his clothes. Further delay was impossible, and the discharge of the brass gun and some muskets, served to disperse them, wounding, as he suspected, one of the most forward in this outrage. On my arrival at the station they had retired, and this proved the last attempt 344 to annoy us, or our marks. As to the act of firing on them, Mr. Richards was aware that upon a former occasion of the people destroying our marks, the chiefs desired "that we would fire the guns on them, as they had already sufficient warning." Nothing further transpired until we reached the southern side of the island, where, being short of fuel, I intended to complete from one of the small uninhabited islands ; within which a convenient, if not secure, anchorage seemed to offer. A small, flat island within, also presenting a most convenient opportunity for completing our water, I determined upon making it one of our principal stations, particularly as I noticed an extensive walled town immediately within us, where numerous banners were displayed.

We had not occupied our position long, before we received a visit from the chiefs, who professed themselves anxious to be on friendly terms, and brought with them presents of sweetmeats, cakes, sake, fans, writing paper, as well as drawing, envelopes, and the portrait of the Emperor of Tcheousan (or Korea). Amongst their party was another young chief, also a civilian, who very soon contracted a friendship, and promised to use his exertions to obtain for me one of their state hats. After a great deal of communication, carried on by the intervention of our Chinese interpreter, in writing, he consented to visit the ship, in the company of one of my officers, the observations at that moment not permitting me to quit my post. On his return, I found that he had been very sea-sick, probably from having taken wine, but had previously been shown every object of interest, and appeared to be highly delighted. He very soon recovered his composure, and 345 from the various questions which he put, and his enquiry after a map of the world, a telescope, &c., proved that he was a well-educated, and very intelligent person. Having intimated that he was aware that the map had before been requested for the Examiner, and that he should be happy to be the medium of conveying it to him, I lost no time in obtaining it from the ship, promising him the telescope upon our final meeting at the eastern island, where he had arranged to meet, and bring the hat and other objects of interest. I left with him a few seeds of various Melons, Cucumbers, Orange, Shaddock, Chinese Plum, Pumpkin, Mustard, Cress, and Lettuce. This produced a further solicitation from him, which seemed to imply that he understood something of Pharmacy. He produced specimens of the Strychnos or St. Ignatius bean, which he informed me, he had obtained from China, through

Korea, and that he knew that it was brought to China by an European vessel. I endeavoured to ascertain how he had obtained this fact, and taxed him with having visited China himself. This he denied, but admitted having been at one of the chief cities of Korea, visited by the junks from China as well as Japan. He was unwilling, or fearful, to afford me any information respecting this latter place, but he most distinctly combatted any idea of their being either dependent or subject to any control but that of Korea. I despatched a messenger to the ship for some of the beans of the Strychnos, which had been presented to me by the Padres of Batan, and begged him to accept them, in the hope of obtaining further information, but the approach of evening, and the presence of others, who seemed to act 346 as spies, put an end to our conference. They seemed to be very much surprised at the facility with which our Chinese interpreter expressed himself in the court dialect of China, and particularly at his assisting us, probably termed here, as in China, barbarians. They were so far, or pretended to be, ignorant of our transactions with the Celestial Empire, that they doubted the assertion of the interpreter, that England did not pay tribute to China ; and when informed of their submission and payment of six millions of dollars, as ransom at Canton, and further discomfiture, and payment of twenty-four millions, at Nankin, they termed him a very bad man, to tell such untruths of his country.

Another gross insult, similar to that noticed at our first visit, occurred here, but on this occasion, I not only allowed justice to take its course, but insisted on the instant removal of the offender from the island. On the 14th of July we completed our tour, resuming our old position off the eastern island, which, as we were unable to obtain any native name either for it, or any of the other islets, or promontories, I have thought fit to designate as Beaufort Island, after our worthy chief, at the head of the Hydrographic department.

I am not aware that any European has before landed on, or surveyed, this island, although from its representation on the charts of former navigators, it is roughly, but incorrectly, exhibited. Throughout its extent it has but one safe anchorage, and that happens to be on the spot where, with our customary good fortune, we first dropped anchor. The second temporary roadstead, from whence a vessel would be compelled to seek an offing, at 347 the first symptoms of a north-westerly breeze, is off the city first visited. The third affords shelter from the north, by the east, to N.W., and offers an escape to leeward, if requisite ; this is on the western extreme, and within its outer islet, which was named Eden Island. A fourth temporary, but dangerous, anchorage is off Hooper's Island, near the southern city, but this is open from west to south-east, and is too confined to admit of beating out, should wind and sea come in suddenly.

Water appears to abound on the southern side of the island, but only in the case of Hooper's Island could it be procured easily. On Barlow Island, the south-westernmost of the group, it is easily obtained, but there is not safe and convenient anchorage near it. At the north city it may also be found. We endeavoured to procure wood by purchase, from the authorities, but it was doled out in such small portions, that it did not repay the trouble of sending for it. Nevertheless it is abundant in the mountains, and on two of the off-lying islets, to be procured by slight labour.

The general appearance of the islands, as viewed from the sea, is inviting. There is a pleasing variety of hill and dale, and on the northern and eastern surfaces much cleared land, cultivation rising probably to the level of 2,000 feet. Above this, all appears to be buried in thick forests of Pines, and other northern trees, even to the highest peak of the island, which, from our computations, from various stations, reaches the height of 6,544 feet. This was named Mount Auckland. Towards the northern and eastern parts, some of the cones, which reach elevations of from 500 to 800 feet, are so very smooth and 348 circular, that, with their little batteries, or watch-towers, on the summit, exhibiting some tiny banners, appear almost to be the work of art. This, probably, results from their method of cultivating the sides, as all the furrows appear to be made horizontally, which, in process of time, by the constant falling down of the ridges, would effect such a regular outline.

The productions of the island do not appear to be at all equal to the wants of the population, and are in very small variety ; Rice, Wheat, Barley, sweet Potatoe, large Russian Radish, Maize, and small garden produce, comprise all that we noticed, either in the grounds under cultivation, or amongst the people. This does not appear the result of any deficiency in land fit for cultivation, but rather in the very poor nature of the soil. Of their agricultural implements we can afford but little information, as our knowledge of these matters is completely confined to the fields bordering the coast. Hoes and spades, after the Chinese fashion, were the only hand implements; a species of plough of very rude construction, was also noticed, but its perfect inefficiency for the purpose intended, renders it unworthy of description. I endeavoured on one or two occasions, to excite their attention by the offer of useful seeds, which I always carried in my canteen for this purpose, but, with the exception of my second friend at Hooper's Island, no one appeared to attach any value to them. With respect to the materials for clothing, they appear to depend chiefly on home manufacture, whilst all articles of superior quality are imported from Korea.

In the construction of their houses their mode is similar 349 to that of the people of Loo-Choo ; those within cities being covered with red tiles, and otherwise ornamented, but they affirm that these tiles are brought from the continent. The houses of the lower orders are thatched, and very nearly resemble those of the Meia-co-shima ; the sides are occasionally built of stone, they are in a similar manner surrounded by stone walls

about six feet in height, completely concealing all within ; but in this poor region, where soil is possibly in some measure dependent on climate, very few trees or even shrubs are to be noticed. The people themselves appear to be composed of several races; the superior class is entirely distinct, of the small Tartar mould, and very beautifully formed. Although active, and from their general dress, liable to constant exposure, they still exhibit great effeminacy when at ease, being invariably attended by a species of page, carrying boots, slippers, fan, &c. ; but these again are far more effeminate than their masters ; pale, slovenly, and disgusting, with loose wavy hair, creating almost a doubt as to their sex. These are invariably the military chiefs and their attendants. The second class Officers are robust powerful men, ranging between the height of five feet seven and nine. Their dress is coarse, and their manners in character with their subordinate situations. The soldiers are of the Tartar feature and build, sturdy compact men, of broader features, and probably averaging five feet six to eight. Their dress consists of the simple blueish coarse grass-cloth tunic, confined at the waist with very loose unbleached trowsers, reaching to the knee, and straw sandals, the hat is generally of a dirty brown felt. The civilians are of a superior 350 conformation to the military chiefs, of whom they take precedence, and are of the same class as those of similar rank in Loo-Choo. Probably from less exposure, their complexions are clearer, but their features are more elongated ; they are of a larger mould and approach nearer to the European, attaining the height of five feet eight to ten. All the lower classes are nearly similar, being fishermen ; they are a very sturdy well-knit race, but do not attain any great height. They are powerful, lifting much heavier weights than our people, who on their part, beat them in activity. Of their women none were noticed but those belonging to the labouring class, excepting an occasional inquisitive portion of face, which merely enabled one to assert that they appear fair. Those of the labouring class were only noticed when taken by surprise, and they certainly had no cause for their extraordinary alarm and rapid flight. They are small, very short legged, particularly from the knee to the heel, with an apparent tendency to heaviness about the feet and ankles, and withal disgusting. Their manners, excluding the superior class, differ from any nation with whom I have held communication : they are filthy in person and habit.

Their fishing vessels are very few, and of the most miserable construction ; many rafts were noticed, and from these facts I suspect that fishing is barely permitted to those licensed to pursue this vocation. It is highly probable that Quelpart, occupies the position of one of the penal settlements of Korea, and the information from my friend at the south city, would tend to confirm this opinion ; viewing it in this light, we must not feel surprised at the gross manners complained of, and it will readily account 351 for the variety in the races of beings, which were found assembled. This will further account for the low state of cultivation, as no individual would take that interest in improving a soil, upon which his descendants would possess no interest, and from which he would possibly be removed at the expiration of his term of banishment.

The position in the Sandy Bay of Beaufort Island was determined to be in Lat. 33 29 / 40"N., Long. 126 53' 5"E., Var. 2 30' 33"W. The geological features of the islands are decidedly volcanic, the entire southern side being either close grained grey, or greenish basalt, or a scoriaceous tufa. The appearance of the highest peak, when free from clouds, appeared to be the lip of a small crater, but from the abundance of trees, nearly to the crater edge, long since dormant.

On the 15th we took a temporary leave of our friends at Quelpart, and steered a northerly course on our now bond fide voyage of discovery, into the Korean Archipelago. We had, indeed, charts of this region, but they were of as much use as one of the Antarctic Regions, would be to show where icebergs might be looked for. One comfort we retained, and no doubt many of my readers will smile when I state that we continued to feel the bottom with the lead-line. This is, however, an important relief to one navigating a sea so studded with reefs, islets, and islands, as that of Korea. Our object at present was like that of the dove from the ark, to seek the first dry, or secure spot, on which to fix our first position, and this at 8 o'clock the following morning, was obtained on an isolated reef, affording us, in addition to innumerable distant islets, the command of a very interesting group, distant about three miles ; some of its islets, crowned 352 with sharp peaks, rising to the height of two thousand feet. Having completed our work upon this reef, from which we and our instruments were nearly swept away by a sudden wave, we quitted, about 3 o'clock and proceeded to the examination of this new group. It was found to be composed of three islands, two large and one small, deeply indented and forming a most complete harbour within, as well as a very snug bay without. The ship was anchored in the outer bay, and the day following devoted to the survey of the island. The natives, which occupied four distinct and exclusive villages were civil, and conducted one of my assistants to the summit of the highest peak. The necessity for expedition did not afford us time to observe more of these people than that their occupation seemed to be solely fishing, and that they had a tolerable fleet of well-found substantial boats. There did not appear to be any military persons amongst them, the elder of the village, generally well marked by age and silver hair, appearing as the sole authority ; they were all clad in home-spun grass cloth, but of very poor material. In compliment to the Secretary of the Admiralty, the harbour formed by this group received the name of Port Hamilton. Quitting this position we made another stretch northerly, and with our customary good fortune discovered another small group, amongst hundreds of islands in sight, offering very complete shelter to the ship, and our term-day being

at hand it proved a most desirable spot for making our Magnetic Observations. Here the ship was secured, and leaving the Officer in command to make the necessary clearance of its summit, erect a large cone for a signal, and prepare our tents, we started with the boat-force to explore the terra incognita, within ten miles to the northward of us, which we 353 conjectured to be the main land of Korea, and where I little doubted of meeting with some Magistrate, or other Authority, with whom I might communicate. After four days exploration we found ourselves almost as much bewildered as when we commenced our labours, and notwithstanding that we had ascended what we considered its Rivers, for many miles, and, with the utmost anxiety, had repeatedly drunk enough salt water, to satisfy ourselves that no fresh stream entered into their composition, we returned to the ship to complete our term-day, and make one more effort where a final chance yet remained. That also proved unsatisfactory, and from the explorations made, I have every reason to conclude, as well as from the various information picked up from the elders of the villages with whom we communicated, that we were still merely upon the outer islands of the Archipelago ; as in reply to the direct question put by the interpreter, they informed me, that I could not reach the residence of any principle Mandarin in less than twelve days, and they were conversant with the general rapidity of our movements. They, moreover, intimated, that I should not until then, meet with troops, or guns of brass, similar to those they observed, and examined, in our boats. The mountainous district throughout presented a most barren and bleak appearance. Rugged precipitous peaks composed occasionally of Granite, and at times of light-grey Basalt, embellished but rarely with trees, or even vegetation beyond the grey lichens, afforded from their very desolation, when brought into contrast with the few green islets beneath, an interesting scenery. One of my principal stations, elevated about one thousand feet above the sea, 354 and from its architectural features termed "Abbey Peak "formed an exception. From the summit of a steep mount covered with a luxuriant vegetation on the north and south, but abruptly cut off from the vertex on the west, the entire cliff was composed of slender Basaltic columns, and by some freak or convulsion of nature, so displaced as to assume the most fantastic, as well as picturesque forms, occasionally enlivened by what I at first mistook for moss, or ivy, but which upon closer examination, proved to be that most beautiful production, allied to the Lycopodium lepidophyllum, or stone plant, so common in the vicinity of San Bias, on the western coast of Mexico. Nor were flowers wanting to adorn this interesting little spot. The Tiger-lily abounded and bloomed in great perfection, as well as Heath-bells, Orchis, Fox-glove, &c. As nature seemed to offer but very scanty means of subsistence on land, beyond the artificial collections of earth, forming the gardens to their little stone-built cabins, their resources if not obtained from places inland, were from the sea ; but from the specimens of nets and boats which we noticed, they were very far behind other nations in this pursuit. English hooks of various sizes, knives, scissors, and needles, were offered to them, but either from fear of their superiors, or ignorance of their true value, they were declined. On one or two occasions they produced their Sake [* Sometimes spelt 'zakki' by the Dutch.], in compliment, and I returned it by sweet wine, which they appeared to esteem, but most carefully brought back the bottle, supposing it to be of value. They were surprised to observe it thrown into the sea, and on recovery it was soon conveyed as a treasure to the Chief, or his nearest friend. In all their transactions with us, I noticed an 355 irresolution, a fluctuation between violent opposition to our landing in the first instance, and after this act had been consummated, an equal disposition to friendship, clouded by the fear of displeasure from some unseen source.

In all our enquiries, here, as well as at Quelpart, the terms applied to the land were, invariably, T-chosan or O-tcheou-san, and this was confirmed by enquiry, made through the interpreter. As the harbour of Tchosan, so named by Broughton, should be somewhere in the neighbourhood examined by us, it is highly probable that he was misled, in a similar manner, by their reply to his enquiry for the name of the land [* Tsyo-syon arid Tyoo-seyn are the Japanese names for Korea, which favours this observation.] In the same manner it is very probable that Tanna, in the New Hebrides, obtained its name, as the natives did not recognize that name at the period of our visit in the ' Sulphur ', in 1840. Tanah is the Malay name for land, and it is probable that the Malays, which traversed all the coasts of New Guinea, as well as the off-lying islands, extended their excursions even to the Feejees, many of their words evincing a great affinity to that language.

Our boats had penetrated within estuaries which would easily have accommodated the 'Samarang', as high as 34 40' N., and at their extreme points the channels appeared still open as far as the eye could reach, without the slightest traces of civilization, beyond the few fishermen at the beach ; our provisions had now, however, become so far reduced as to render departure necessary, and we, therefore, shaped our course for Quelpart, where we had yet to obtain final observations.

356 An island not before noticed, invited the delay of a few hours, and measures were taken for making the survey. As it was distant from Quelpart, as well as from the Korean mass, I had not dreamed of opposition, but the master, on landing, in a deep bay on its northern side, was opposed by the fishermen, who made attempts to snatch the muskets from his crew. As they were met with firmness, they fell back, and the Chiefs coming over to my gig, which had then landed on the other side of the bay, everything was soon satisfactorily arranged through our interpreter. These little skirmishes are rather hazardous ; a little more violence on either side might have caused the loss of life, and upon no feasible ground, both parties fancying

themselves in the execution of what they deemed to be their duty. So far had the feeling changed, that the master ascended the mountain above them (about 1,200 feet), and after taking up other stations returned to his boat; the crowd remaining about me amusing themselves very happily. Before leaving, they brought their Sake bottle, which, after tasting, we returned the compliment with sweet wine, and took our leave.

I was not a little gratified to find on my return to Quelpart, that every minute mark which we had left, was still standing, and one which had been beaten down by the rain or cattle, replaced, and the white-washed stones adjusted, as nearly as possible, to their former positions. I mention these little facts in order to show that there were parties who were not unfriendly to us.

A petty Mandarin from the great island waited on me, and informed me, that the Chief was in expectation of a visit on the other side of the channel, but our duties ³⁵⁷ requiring my presence here, I despatched one of the Lieutenants to go through the leave-taking ceremony, offering to take charge of any letters for Nangasaki. He was further instructed, to enquire most particularly after my two civilian friends, and the state hat, which had been promised. A telescope was sent, to be presented if the hat should be produced : otherwise, not. The return message was quaint, but decisive ; no hat ; no letters ; many compliments ; wishing a good voyage, but expressing chagrin that I did not eat the breakfast provided for me. The Chief interpreter who came across explained that the hat and feather were honourable distinctions, like my epaulettes, and could only be conferred by the higher powers. He intimated, that now I was known, the Examiner might apply to the Emperor to have these things presented on my return.

I cannot take leave of the Korean Islands without recording some notice of the change, which appears to have taken place, in the laws and habits of the people, since the visit of the 'Alceste' in 1816; unless the author of that voyage misconceived their feelings and motives, in resisting any desire to land or communicate. The intercourse that subsisted between the Koreans and ourselves, aided by a competent Chinese interpreter, was of the most courteous description ; accompanied by an avowal on my part, that I did not wish to enter their towns, and coupled with an assurance that my duties would confine me to the coast-line, or to such eminences only as they consented to my having access.

That they feared the loss of their cattle I firmly believe, for on every occasion of our boats approaching the ³⁵⁸ shore, the herds were driven into the interior. They must certainly have a law relative to the admission of strangers into their towns ; and it seems highly probable that some power exists at Quelpart, as at Loo-Choo, by which they are enabled, under due caution, to entertain and facilitate the operations of visitors, according to circumstances. On one occasion, I obtained permission to cut down some Pine trees for spars, but after the third was felled and embarked, the authorities withdrew their consent ; not from any fear of the consequences, but because one old man chose to embrace the tree, condemned to the axe, terming it his "child": doubtless his private property.

One other point, noticed by us, does not coincide with the observations in the 'Voyage of the 'Alceste'. We found the Chinese written characters understood everywhere by the heads of villages, military Chiefs, and civilians, and frequently when a boat landed, the Officer has been shown a paper in that character, which, when brought to the interpreter, appeared simply to enquire, "what is your business ?" Two large sheets containing letters, each an inch square, in Chinese characters, came off with the Bullocks from the northern city ; they appeared to be public documents, covered with a waterproof varnish, and are now in my possession. The characters under the picture of the Emperor presented to me, were also Chinese.