

sugar are cultivated extensively, and a large trade carried on with the mainland in these articles, as well as in camphor, grass-cloth fibre, dyewoods, &c. Of late, owing to the facilities afforded by foreign ships and steamers, the carrying of native produce has been passing into the hands of foreigners. Sir Harry Parkes states that when the trade of Formosa was thrown open by treaty the word "Tai-wan," which is the name for the whole island, was employed, leaving the port best suited for commerce to be determined afterwards. The port of Tai-wan-foo was subsequently chosen, but, unfortunately, it has a very bad anchorage, and the harbour is shallow from the accumulation of sand at its mouth. A much better port is to be found near the north end of the island, called by foreigners Tam-suy, from a river of that name, but the native town near the mouth is called Haw-be, and this seems destined to become the British port for trade. About ten miles up the river is a fine town of 50,000 inhabitants, called Bang-ka, situated in the centre of a plain highly cultivated and surrounded on all sides by high hills clothed with verdure, and presenting most magnificent scenery. The water throughout the island is said to be unwholesome for drinking, and particularly injurious to strangers; but Mr. Swinhoe mentions that at Tam-suy a stream of water has been brought down from the hills by an aqueduct as a substitute for the bad water of the plains. He also states that great quantities of rain fall from November to May, making the climate comparatively cold.

In the towns of Haw-be and Bang-ka, and in the surrounding populous region, Messrs. Douglas and Mackenzie preached day by day for ten days, distributing Testaments and tracts, which were eagerly accepted by the people, who treated the missionaries with great kindness, and listened attentively to their message.

In regard to the past history of Formosa, little is known of it before 1624, when the Dutch occupied a district of the island around Tai-wan-foo, with the consent of the Chinese, who had no direct control over Formosa at that time. During the occupation of the Dutch, which lasted about thirty years, they were by no means neglectful of the spiritual interests of the natives, as may be gathered from the following extract:—

"In 1626 George Candidius, a Protestant divine, was appointed minister to the settlement; and he took great pains to introduce Christianity among the natives. At the Governor's request he gave his opinion on the prospects of propagating the Gospel in Formosa. He considered both the dispositions and circumstances of the people favourable for their conversion to Christianity. God blessed his labours, so that during a residence of sixteen months, part of which was occupied in studying the language, he instructed 120 of the natives in the Christian religion. The number of Christians, it is said, daily augmented; the intermarriage of Dutch and natives was practised; churches and schools were multiplied, so that in all, many thousands of the islanders were converted to Christianity and baptized. But the Dutch Governors in India were cautious of encouraging the conversion of the Formosans, lest it should give offence to the Japanese, with whom they had commerce, and by whom Christianity was then heavily persecuted. Thus, as often elsewhere, the interests of true religion were sacrificed on the altar of mammon, and the knowledge of salvation withheld for money."

At length the great Chinese pirate Koxinga determined to expel the Dutch, and after various conflicts and the siege by Koxinga of the Dutch stronghold at Tai-wan-foo, the latter were driven from the island in 1662. During the siege an heroic act of one of the Dutch pastors is thus narrated:—

"Among the Dutch prisoners taken in the country was one Mr. Hambroock, a minister. This man was sent by Koxinga to the Governor to propose terms for surrendering the fort; but in case of refusal vengeance would be taken on the Dutch

prisoners. Mr. Hambroock came into the fort, and was well received, and he was allowed to speak to the Governor, and to explain to him the reasons for his refusal to surrender. He was very kind in his manner, and was very polite in his words. He was very kind in his manner, and was very polite in his words. He was very kind in his manner, and was very polite in his words.

Afterwards the Dutch were driven from the island, and the Chinese took possession of it. The Dutch were driven from the island, and the Chinese took possession of it. The Dutch were driven from the island, and the Chinese took possession of it. The Dutch were driven from the island, and the Chinese took possession of it.

LETTERS

An correspondent from China writes concerning Dr. Maxwell's mission to Formosa. He says that he has seen the map of the island, and that he is very much interested in the progress of the mission. He says that he has seen the map of the island, and that he is very much interested in the progress of the mission.