

CHINA. No. 3 (1885).

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# REPORT

BY

MR. L. C. HOPKINS

ON THE

# ISLAND OF FORMOSA,

DATED OCTOBER 12. 1884.

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*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.*  
1885.

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LONDON :

PRINTED BY HARRISON AND SONS.

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*Report by Mr. L. C. Hopkins on the Island of Formosa.*

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*Sir H. Parkes to Earl Granville.—(Received December 3.)*

My Lord,

*Peking, October 13, 1884.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose the accompanying Report on the Island of Formosa, which has been prepared at my request by Mr. Hopkins.

It shows, among other information of a general character, that the value of the trade carried on by foreigners at the two Formosan Treaty ports, Tamsuy and Taiwan, fluctuates between 7,000,000 and 8,000,000 taels, or rather less than 2,000,000*l.*, and that the customs revenue on that trade is about 500,000 taels, or 166,000*l.*

I have, &c.

(Signed) HARRY S. PARKES.

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Inclosure 1.

*Report on the Island of Formosa, compiled from Official and other Sources.*

*Description.*

THE large island known to foreigners as Formosa, and by the Chinese as Taiwan, owes its former name to the Portuguese, who thus called the Settlement they made in 1590 at Kelung on the north-east coast, the designation being afterwards extended to the whole island. Formosa lies about 90 miles from the coast of the Fuhkien Province, between 21° 53' and 25° 16' north latitude and 120° 15' and 122° 4' east longitude. Its greatest length is 235 miles, and at its broadest part it is between 70 and 80 miles across. The area has been calculated at 14,000 square miles, and the total population, guessed rather than computed, at from 2,000,000 to 3,000,000, probably an excessive estimate.

Formosa consists roughly of two regions, one a flat plain about 20 miles broad and extending along the west coast for nearly the whole length of the island; the other, a mountain region, through the centre of which runs a high axial range from north to south, with a succession of lofty peaks forming the watershed, one at least of which, Mount Morrison, reaches an altitude of more than 12,000 feet. Between the mountains and the plain lands lies a belt of low, somewhat barren, hills of clay formation. The flat country is almost entirely occupied by Chinese; the mountains, as exclusively, by wild aboriginal tribes. The Pepohuans, or civilized aborigines, are hemmed in between the two, dwelling in some places on the plain, sometimes also inside the mountains, which on the east form a rugged, high, and impracticable coast, but mainly on the borderland of hills just mentioned.

The Formosan seas are well known for their dangerous typhoons, which occur mostly between June and October. Their violence during the height of the storm is almost incredible. The torrents of rain appear like masses of steam being swept along the ground, while the surface of

the rivers is, or seems to be, lifted bodily in sheets and thrown on the land. These tremendous storms render the want of good harbours round the coast the more felt.

Earthquakes are also frequent, and it would appear that a very severe one, which is recorded in 1782, must have brought about a complete change in the outlines of the coast.

The climate of the island is more equable and more humid than the nearest parts of the mainland. In summer the thermometer seldom exceeds 90°, and during winter ranges between 50° and 70°.

Residents, however, both European and Chinese, suffer considerably from remittent and intermittent fevers, and these assume a very deadly form on the east coast, where dense forests cover the whole surface of the mountains. Both among the Chinese troops sent there some years since to subjugate the savages and to form military stations, and the colonists from the mainland whom the authorities settled in the extreme south and south-eastern extremities of the island, the mortality from fever has been excessive.

Diseases of the eye are also common amongst the natives. On the other hand, the climate of south Formosa seems peculiarly beneficial in arresting or suspending the progress of phthisis, even in advanced stages.

#### *Population.*

The population is peculiar and somewhat interesting, being composed of four distinct elements:—

1. The independent savages ;
2. The Pepohuans, or reclaimed savages ;
3. The Hakka immigrants from the mainland ;
4. The non-Hakka Chinese, also immigrants from the mainland.

The independent savages, perhaps of Malay race, and divided into a large number of clans, inhabit the whole region of forest-covered mountains of central and eastern Formosa. Their time is passed in hunting, but they do not lead a wandering life, and do not depend entirely on the proceeds of the chase for subsistence. Those of the men who, through age or infirmity, are unable to hunt, till the ground with the women, raising crops of millet and other food for the rest of the tribe. The women also weave cloth of two kinds, known as "savage cloth" and "pine-apple cloth," the first a sort of grass cloth, the latter a fabric made from pine-apple leaf fibre. These people live together in villages, and, in spite of the extreme hostility which they not unnaturally bear to the encroaching Chinese, are by nature civil and polite. In the constant skirmishes between the Chinese borderers and the aborigines, the day is by no means always to the former; indeed, the savages appear sometimes to regain lost ground.

Scattered throughout nearly the whole length of the island, and generally inhabiting the sterile and hilly lands at the foot of the great mountain ranges, where they are neither free from the covetousness of the Chinese settlers, nor always secure from attack by the untamed aborigines, are the Pepohuans, or reclaimed aborigines of the plain. They are the ancient pre-Chinese inhabitants of the flat lands, from which they have been gradually driven by the Hakka and other Chinese settlers, until they now are being pushed on to the very verge of the savage territory. Large and well-built physically, they are mild and inoffensive in disposition, and seem to have received Christianity and teaching from the Dutch in the seventeenth century. They have been ousted from their lands and pressed further and further east by the Chinese, principally by means of foreclosed mortgages. The Chinese are always ready to lend on the security of

land, and the Pepohuans, a careless race, are equally ready to borrow, but not to pay, and in this way most of the land has changed hands. On the east coast, commencing about 25 miles south of Kelung, and extending some 14 miles further to Suao Bay, lies a fertile and beautiful plain or valley. Its popular name is Kapsulan. Bounded inland by a semi-circle of mountains, the valley is one vast rice field, studded with Pepohuan villages, and recent Reports mention that Christianity is spreading rapidly amongst this population. The Hakkas, or Chinese immigrants, not being the agricultural Fuhkien men, form a strongly marked and important feature of the Formosan population. It is they who carry on the barter trade with the savages, whom they supply with guns, powder, and knives, mostly of their own manufacture, receiving in exchange skins, hardwood, camphor, and the native cloth. They are the camphor manufacturers also, and have many thriving villages on these border marches, where they live independent of the Chinese administration. Up to 1874 many of the large Hakka villages would not even allow an official to enter their fortified precincts. The rule of the Chinese magistrate reduced itself to the industrious and orderly population (mostly people from Fuhkien) of the western plains, official aid being sought for at times only in serious cases of lawsuits (not criminal cases, which were settled according to lynch law), by one or the other of the parties in the numerous self-governed villages.

These independent village communities carried on the barter trade with the savages, in which no outsiders could participate. Even official communication with the savages in most instances was only carried on through the independent savages and Pepohuans. Some change has taken place since that time, however, and aborigines in small numbers may now be met with at the capital of the island and at other large places.

The fourth and last element is the Fuhkien agricultural colonists, who call for no special remark. In 1877 a system of assisted emigration of Swatow coolies was commenced under Government auspices. Grants of land were made to the immigrants in the hitherto uncultivated regions between Taiwan and the extreme south of the island.

#### *Communications.*

Besides the natural defect of a dangerous and on the western side a shoaling coast offering very few harbours, Formosa has hitherto suffered from an almost total want of the means of internal communication. Good roads are the more required, because the natural water communication is very poor. If even the rough tracks which now do duty for roads were improved, immense benefits would accrue; and were really good roads established, produce could be brought down to the ports at half the cost and half the labour now expended.

As a result of the invasion in 1874 by the Japanese, the Chinese made some efforts to put their communications with the east coast on a less precarious basis, and pushed a military road or track down parallel with the sea on this side from the north, between Suao Harbour and Hua-lien-chéng, a distance of some 65 miles. Savage tracks were also improved to facilitate crossing the central mountain ranges from west to east. These foot-paths must have been known for years, for they must have given the means of allowing the emigration of Pepohuans and of the few Hakkas who have formed Settlements on the east coast near the north of Pelam. It appears the savages have always had in their mountain fastnesses regular lines of communication from north to south, for in 1874 central points of converging paths, evidently much frequented, were

found, and information then obtained confirmed the great extent of country these paths traversed.

In the western plains of south Formosa the main traffic from the south to the capital of the island (the city of Taiwanfu) passes over paths one foot and less broad, through paddy-fields and for short distances over cart roads. The latter during the whole summer or rainy season are nothing less than river beds draining the surrounding fields, and requiring foot passengers at some places to wade up to the waist in water. The permanent rivers become in summer dangerous to pass, as the ferry-boats, imperfectly manned and handled, are sometimes swept away by the strong current.

#### *Ports and Harbours.*

Formosa contains two Treaty ports, Tamsuy on the north and Taiwan on the south-west coast of the island. When the latter city was opened in 1865 the port of Takow, from which it is distant some 25 miles by water and 30 by land, was made a dependency of it, and, as such, open to trade. Kelung is similarly treated as a dependency of Tamsuy.

#### *Kelung.*

The spacious harbour of Kelung is well sheltered during the south-west monsoon, though somewhat exposed to north-easterly gales. It has the advantage of Tamsuy in not being a bar harbour, so that vessels can enter and leave at any time or tide. It is the best sea-port of the island.

#### *Tamsuy.*

The port known as Tamsuy is properly called Hoowei, and is merely a fishing village near the mouth of a small river bearing the same name; it is of no commercial importance other than being the anchorage for foreign shipping and such of the native craft as are too large to proceed up the river to a large city called Manka (or Banka), now officially also, since its erection into a prefectural walled city, T'ai-pei-fu. This place is the commercial capital of the district. Close to it is Twatutia, where the tea business is mostly transacted. All imports, after paying duty at Tamsuy (Hoowei), are immediately taken to Manka for local consumption or distribution. During heavy rains the river is much swollen, and brings down quantities of sand which have accumulated at the entrance to the harbour in the form of a narrow bar, on which the sea breaks with great violence during stormy weather. This forms a serious impediment, and vessels can never be certain of entering or leaving the port, as, with a fresh breeze, it is lined across the entire mouth by a foaming surf. In mid-channel there is only from 9 to 10 feet at low water. When once gained the anchorage is safe in all weather, but as a port of refuge from the gales of the Formosa Channel it affords a very inhospitable retreat.

#### *Takow.*

Takow, on the south-west coast, is the only harbour on that coast available for vessels during the entire twelve months of the year. It is situated on the edge of a lagoon, the entrance to which is through a chasm about 70 yards broad. Ape's Hill, over 1,100 feet high, shelters it on the north and east, while Saracen's Head protects it on the north-west. The lagoon is about 10 miles long by about 3 broad. Takow has the advantage of an inner harbour, excellent in its way, but owing to the shallowness of the water on the bar, vessels drawing more than 12 feet

cannot enter, while the extension of sandpits renders the accommodation very limited. A very fine harbour could be made here, however, at an expenditure not very great (estimated, indeed, at 40,000*l.*), and quite insignificant when the importance of the object to be attained is kept in view. The requisite steps, though long talked of by the authorities, have never yet been taken, and matters are rapidly becoming so bad that Takow is being deserted by foreign shipping in favour of Anping.

#### *Anping.*

Anping, the port of Taiwan, from which it is distant 2 miles, is simply an open roadstead, where the shipment and discharge of cargo are attended with much risk, and it can be visited with safety only during the north-east monsoon.

Tankkong and Koksikong are small ports on the west coast frequented by native junks.

#### *Suao Bay.*

The only harbour on the east coast is Suao Bay, about 40 miles south of Kelung. Though small, it is safe and easy of access. The Kelung coal-field is known to extend to it, and a seam was discovered, and for a time worked, by the Pepohuans close to the shore.

#### *Lights and Beacons.*

The Formosan coasts are lighted by two lights, one of the 4th Order on Fisher Island, in the Pescadores, visible for 15 miles, and one of the 6th Order, at Fort Zelandia, Anping; and by two beacons: entrance beacon, Tamsuy, and Bush Island beacon, Kelung Harbour. A third lighthouse is now near completion at the extreme southernmost point of Formosa.

In 1877 a line of telegraph, the exclusive work of the Chinese pupils of the Foochow Arsenal, was constructed between Taiwanfu and Takow.

#### *Administration (Civil).*

For administrative purposes, Formosa is held to be part of the Government of the Fuhkien Province. It consists of a single circuit, or Taotai-ship, styled Taiwan, the holder of which is by special appointment likewise Literary Chancellor of the island. Up to the year 1876 this circuit contained only one Prefecture, that of Taiwan, with head-quarters at the city of the same name, and comprising four district magistracies (Fengshan, T'aiwan, Chia-i, and Changhua) and five sub-Prefectures (T'aifang, Luchiang, Tamsuy, Komolan, and P'enghu, or the Pescadore Islands). In accordance, however, with Memorials from the high authorities of Fuhkien, an Imperial Decree was issued on the 17th January, 1876, constituting a new Prefecture of North Formosa, styled T'ai-pei-fu, with its head-quarters at Banka, near Tamsuy. Subordinate to this Prefecture, two former sub-Prefectures were raised to district magistracies, viz., Tamsuy and Kamolan, now styled I-lan-hsien, and a third, Hsin Chu, was created.

#### *Administration (Military).*

For military purposes the island forms a Brigadier-General's command.

The Governor of Fuhkien is by Decree under standing instructions to pay periodical visits of inspection to Formosa.

*Fortifications.*

In 1874 a new fort was commenced about a mile to the south of Anping, from the designs of a French engineer, and the works have since been completed and armed with five 18-ton Armstrong guns, eight smaller Armstrong guns, and two Gatlings. For the defence of Takow, Saracen's Head was strengthened by a fort, and another small work was built to protect the inner harbour. In 1880 six Armstrong guns arrived as armament for these works, four 7-inch  $6\frac{1}{2}$  ton and two 6-inch 80 cwt. muzzle-loading, which have since been placed in position.

A number of small forts or gun-towers of apparently little use were constructed in 1883 on both sides of a narrow part of the Tamsuy River, about 4 miles from the mouth of the harbour.

*Products.*

The natural resources of Formosa are capable of a development which is practically limited only by the demand for its products abroad, or the possibility of finding a market for them. Lying partly just within and partly just without the line of the tropics, and containing both rich level plains and high mountain ranges, it is not strange that, apart from its mineral resources, of which coal, sulphur, and petroleum are already known to exist in its very imperfectly explored territory, the island should produce rice, sugar, tea, camphor-wood, hemp, indigo, rattans, hard woods, turmeric, and cassia.

By far the largest exports, however, under present conditions, are tea and sugar, tea from the north and sugar from the south-west part of the island.

*Tea.*—The trade in the former staple, it must be remembered, dates only from the opening of Tamsuy, not more than twenty years ago. The export has greatly extended within this period, and has hitherto shown no signs of having reached its limit. Little care appears to be given to the actual rearing of the plant, and the fine flavour of the Formosan Oolongs is due entirely to the natural fitness of the soil. The production, limited as yet, is capable of being indefinitely increased, for large tracts of ground upon the hills and tablelands still uncultivated are admirably adapted for the growth of the tea plant. As it is, every year new ground is planted, and the cultivation is being steadily pushed back on to the very edge of the aborigines' forests. Almost the whole of the Formosan teas is taken by the United States.

The accompanying Table shows the export of tea during the last five years :—

						Piculs.*
1879	..	..	..	..	..	85,032
1880	..	..	..	..	..	90,475
1881	..	..	..	..	..	96,446
1882	..	..	..	..	..	90,303
1883	..	..	..	..	..	99,050

In 1866 the total was only 1,356 piculs.

*Sugar.*—In south Formosa the main article of export is sugar. Unlike the sugar-producing tracts of the mainland of Fuhkien, those of this island require and obtain no extraneous aid to second the efforts of the soil. Guano, bean-cake, and such like manures are unknown to the farmers, and the only drawback is the uncertainty of the water supply. The cultivation of the cane is entirely in the hands of peasants, too poor and too ignorant to try to improve the methods of cultivating and crushing the

\* 1 picul = 133½ lbs.

cane, and accordingly great waste takes place. In spite of these defects, Formosan sugar is in favour on account of its purity and the large proportion of saccharine matter it contains, and because it crystallizes well. In 1869 Japan began to draw its needed supplies of brown sugar from Formosa, and a considerable quantity was also shipped to Australia. Japan is now the largest consumer; next come the North China ports, then Australia, and some goes to San Francisco. In Japan and the north of China the sugar is chiefly used in confectionery. In Australia it is refined and converted into loaf.

The following Table shows the comparative export during the last five years :—

						Piculs.*
1879	..	..	..	..	..	701,684
1880	..	..	..	..	..	997,625
1881	..	..	..	..	..	718,585
1882	..	..	..	..	..	573,145
1883	..	..	..	..	..	734,653

In 1865 the total was 145,894 piculs.

*Camphor.*—Camphor used to be one of the most important exports from the island, and is still shipped thence to Hong Kong, though foreigners have but little interest in it at the present time.

In his Report on the trade of Tamsuy for 1872 Mr. Colborne Baber writes :—

“The trees which produce this valuable article are not found within the district marked on maps of Formosa as Chinese territory. They occur only in the country of the aborigines, or upon the immediate border. The manufacture of camphor necessitates the destruction of the trees, which are never replanted; as the country becomes denuded the aborigines recede, and the Chinese effect a corresponding encroachment. As a consequence the border country is in a continual state of disturbance, and fearful outrages are committed by both sides on every opportunity.”

*Coal.*—Rich seams of coal exist in the north-east of the island, which had long been worked in the neighbourhood of Kelung by the Chinese, and coal of good quality exported. In 1874 the Provincial Government of Fuhkien engaged Mr. Tyzack, a mining engineer, who, after a preliminary survey of the field, was dispatched to England to procure miners and machinery.

Operations were commenced in 1876 at the Kelung Government colliery. Boring began in June, and was continued till a depth of 326 feet had been reached. Shaft sinking followed in October, and was carried to a distance of nearly 300 feet, a short tramway being also laid from the pit's mouth to the shore. The output was not at first more than 30 to 40 tons a-day; this yield was afterwards increased, in spite of various difficulties experienced by the English Superintendent. The vicinity is specially unhealthy, the Chinese hewers were always supplied in insufficient numbers, and the chief Chinese Superintendent of the mine was constantly changed and often obstructive. In 1882 the authorities dismissed Mr. Tyzack and all his English staff, being apparently dissatisfied with the output of the colliery. Their places were taken by two Chinese from the Foochow Arsenal, and the single remaining foreign engineer left in June 1883.

The following figures show the export of coal for the last five years, so far as it came under the cognizance of the foreign Customs, but it should be observed that Chinese gun-boats have been allowed to take away large quantities of coal free of duty, and the figures therefore do not represent the true amount exported :—

\* 1 picul = 133½ lbs.



						Tons.
1879	..	..	..	..	..	28,823
1880	..	..	..	..	..	24,654
1881	..	..	..	..	..	46,178
1882	..	..	..	..	..	42,202
1883	..	..	..	..	..	31,818

*Petroleum.*—Petroleum has been found in a place called Oulan, in the north-east part of the island, and an ineffectual attempt was made to work it in 1878, but was soon abandoned.

Petroleum has also, it is said, been found a few miles south of Takow.

*Sulphur.*—Large numbers of sulphur pits are known to exist close to Tamsuy, and it has been estimated that several hundred tons might be produced annually in this locality alone. The manufacture, though forbidden by the authorities, goes on by private individuals.

Other products of the island exported are: indigo, grown in the north, and sent principally to Amoy and Shanghae; hemp, which, though coarse in fibre, finds a good market in the north of China, owing to its cheapness.

Pith, or rice-paper, so-called, is a Formosan product. The plant grows wild on the hills near Tamsuy, and is brought down in pieces 2 or 3 feet long, and exported mostly to Canton, where the paper is used chiefly for drawing or painting purposes.

*Rice.*—Formosan rice is of fine quality, and such large crops are produced that the island used to be known as "the granary of China." There are two varieties cultivated: upland rice, grown in the mountains and of especially good character; and that grown in the low-lying lands of the western plain.

#### *Imports.*

Opium constitutes by far the largest portion of the import trade into Formosa. The inhabitants, though poor, are seldom destitute, and perhaps the dampness of the climate predisposes the people to an extensive use of the drug. The following figures show the comparative import (so far as it comes under the cognizance of the foreign Customs) for the last five years into the island:—

						Piculs.*
1879	..	..	..	..	..	5,550
1880	..	..	..	..	..	5,796
1881	..	..	..	..	..	5,880
1882	..	..	..	..	..	4,596
1883	..	..	..	..	..	4,018

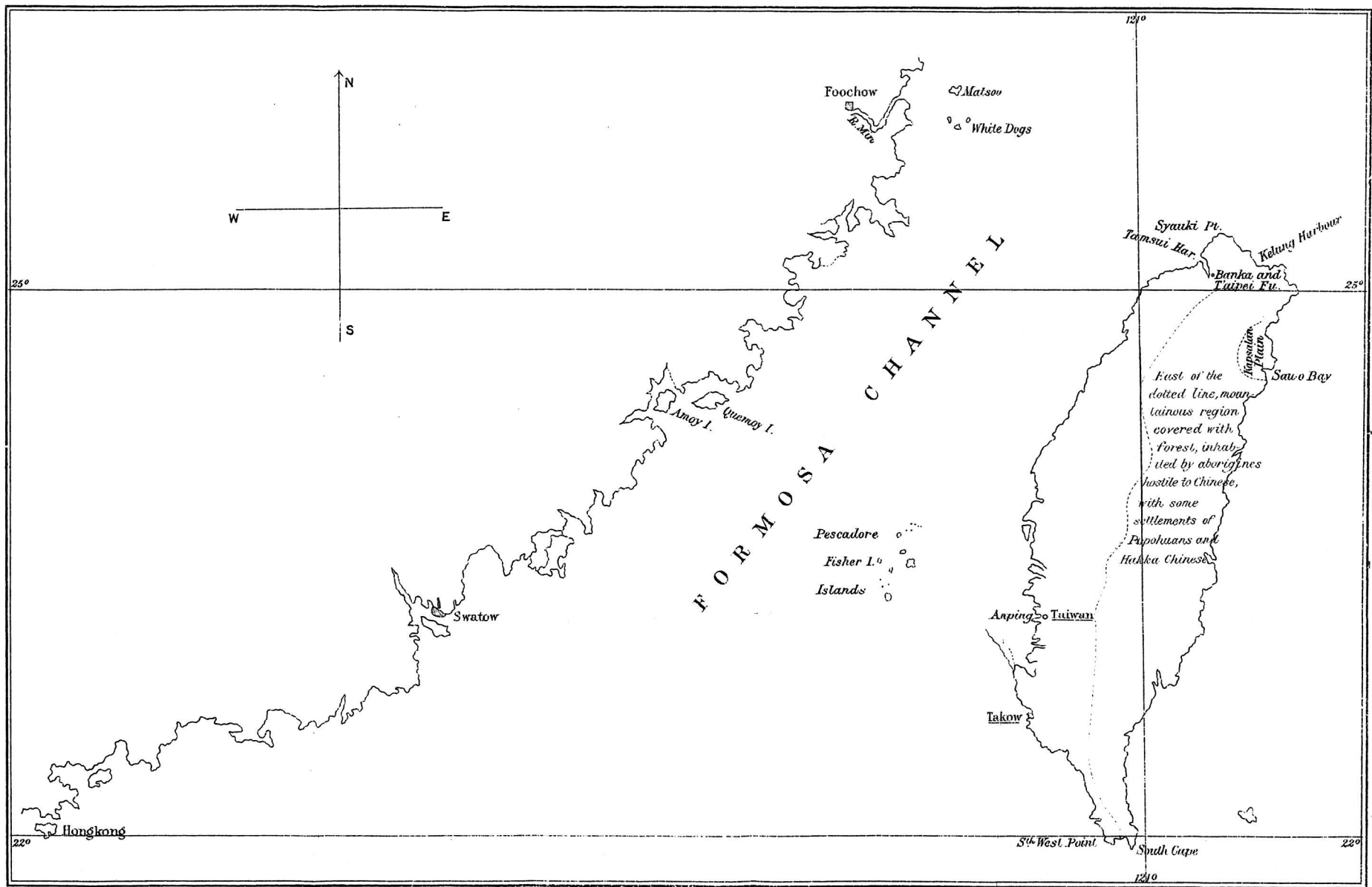
Finally, the two Tables given below show the relative value of foreign trade at each of the two ports of Tamsuy and Taiwan from 1879 to 1883:—

TAMSUY.						Taels.†
1879	..	..	..	..	..	3,632,410
1880	..	..	..	..	..	3,907,436
1881	..	..	..	..	..	4,140,807
1882	..	..	..	..	..	3,982,417
1883	..	..	..	..	..	3,535,021

\* 1 picul = 133½ lbs.

† 1 tael = 5s. 8d.

MAP SHOWING THE  
 ISLAND OF FORMOSA  
 AND THE ADJOINING  
 COAST OF CHINA



## FORMOSA.

9

## TAIWAN.

					Taels.*
1879	..	..	..	..	3,750,925
1880	..	..	..	..	4,527,544
1881	..	..	..	..	4,059,311
1882	..	..	..	..	3,170,667
1883	..	..	..	..	3,172,996

The customs revenue for the last year was: for Tamsuy, 296,931 taels; and for Taiwan, 194,895 taels.

October 12, 1884.

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 Inclosure 2.

*Map showing the Island of Formosa and the adjoining Coast of China.*

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\* 1 tael = 5s. 8d.