

on the route from America to China. He little thought that long before such a line was established the Japanese ports would be open and a large trade in tea, silks, etc., already begun. As he had but a few days to spare he was not in a frame of mind to submit placidly to diplomatic circumlocution and the delays of evasive correspondence and Oriental ceremony. He immediately dispatched an officer to the authorities of Nappa, with a request for the grant of a tract of land upon which to establish a coal depot, which he would either rent or purchase, as they might elect, for the privilege of buying in open market such supplies as he might need, and that his men should be relieved of that close espionage while on shore to which they had formerly been subjected. These requests were referred to the Governor, who came with great haste from his castle at Shui and gave the Commodore and his officers a sumptuous entertainment in the town hall of Nappa. An effort was made by a profusion of hospitalities and much ceremonious show to divert the Commodore's mind from the main subject at issue, but without success. He demanded an answer to his requests, and finally, after many evasive replies had been given, a written answer was handed him. It was in Chinese, and when interpreted proved to be the customary assertion of the poverty and insignificance of the islands, rendering them and their trade valueless to foreign nations. It said that if the people were willing to sell what little they had to barter the Governor would interpose no objection; but as for granting a coaling station and having a line of steam vessels constantly calling there, it was not to be thought of for a moment, as it would be a source of endless trouble. It also stated that the officers who had followed the men so closely while on shore were not spies but guards, who had been appointed to protect them from harm and prevent them from wandering off into the jungle and becoming lost; but as their presence seemed to be distasteful they would be ordered to cease their attentions.

This reply was so unsatisfactory that Perry at once arose to terminate the interview, remarking that he would land his forces in the morning and take possession of the Governor's castle until such a time as they learned to treat foreigners with due courtesy and grant them the privileges customary among civilized nations. The Governor still demurred and complained that they had already been put to great loss and inconvenience by having surrendered one of their temples of worship for a hospital; that because they were weak and defenceless he oppressed them; and that he might as well cut off their heads at once and take possession of the whole country. In vain Perry urged that he desired to pay a fair price for everything he wanted, and expatiated upon the great benefit the islands would derive from trade and intercourse with the outside world. The Governor simply replied that the islands were but a mere speck in the ocean; that the people were poor, had nothing to trade, and desired only to be left alone; but that if he were determined to rob them they were powerless to resist. This doleful plaint was made just as the Commodore was de-

parting, and he stopped long enough to remark that he had not harmed them in the past and had no intention of doing so in the future; that he was willing to pay rent for the temple, although he well knew that it was the place customarily allotted to Chinese and Japanese visitors, and that he would visit the castle at noon the next day with an escort of marines.

This threat had the desired effect, for about ten o'clock the next morning a deputation came on board the flagship and announced that his Excellency the Governor had concluded to accede to the wishes of his august highness the Admiral, and would do all in his power to gratify and aid him. Accordingly a deed for twenty-five acres of ground was executed to the United States, and natives were set to work constructing coal sheds. A bazaar was opened where Loochooan products and manufactures were sold to the officers and men, who soon came to be on quite friendly terms with the hitherto reserved natives. The coal sheds were completed in a few days, and the coaling station for American steamers was ready. Little did Perry think that thirteen years would elapse before there would be a line of American steamers plying in those waters, and that when such a line did come the coaling station would be a port in Yedo Bay, open to the trade of the whole world, and that this station he was having so much difficulty in establishing would be left alone in the ocean solitudes, far from the route of travel; and as little did those Loochooans think that in after years they would long in vain for those same advantages they were so earnestly striving to prevent Perry from thrusting upon them. But so it was, and so it is ever with our boasted wisdom and foresight.

The squadron took up winter quarters at Hongkong, Macao, Shanghai and other ports, having been increased by arrivals to ten vessels. In November, however, the movements of certain French and Russian men-of-war led the Commodore to fear that efforts were being made to forestall him in Japan, and he at once ordered the fleet to rendezvous at Loochoo, whither he immediately sailed. While waiting at Nappa for delayed vessels, he took occasion to explore the islands and become better acquainted with the natives and their manner of living. The officials and people were much more cordial and free in their intercourse with their visitors than they had formerly been, saluting them as friends on the street, and even the women in the markets sat quietly in their stalls and sold their eggs, fowls, vegetables and pork, instead of screaming and hiding at the sight of a bearded face, as they had done before. The Commodore was entertained at the castle and was greeted by the Governor as an old friend. The coal mine from which the station was to be supplied was explored and gave promise of yielding great quantities of a good quality of coal, an article upon which the natives, who used only wood and charcoal, placed but little value.

The products of the islands proved to be rice, sugar, sweet potatoes, barley, millet, wheat, cotton, tobacco, beans, peas, sago and various edible fruits and roots. Small black cattle, hogs, goats and horses were numerous.