

islands of sandstone formation, surrounded by numerous little coves affording safe harbours for fleets of fishing-junks, was examined with more curiosity than its appearance or importance could otherwise have called forth, and the mean huts that occasionally appeared planted on the declivities were peered at by at least twenty glasses, which the quickly repeated cry of "land in sight" brought on deck.

The scenery reminded me forcibly of that of the N. W. coast of Scotland; and if, instead of vessels with mat sails, painted bows, and high trelliced sterns, there had been compact boats, with well-set tanned canvas spread to the breeze, the association would have been complete.

Upwards of 300 large junks passed us, standing out to sea to pick up their night nets. They average about twenty-five tons, and are peopled by entire families of men, women, and children, many of whom have never been on *terra firma*.

About noon we entered the channel of Hong-Kong, and made our number to H. M. ship *Blenheim*, 72, Captain Sir Thomas Herbert.

We anchored in the midst of men-of-war and transports, in a port where, a few short months before, ships were scarcely ever seen. Along the shore, and scattered over the breast of mountains rising to the height of 1500 feet, were wharfs and

extensive stores, forts and magazines, streets of huts and commodious houses, a bazaar and a market place, besides some comfortable bungalows and handsome country-houses, belonging to the public functionaries, built at considerable elevations, to command fresh air and a fine view. Ten months before, when Sir Henry Pottinger first landed, he lived in a pitched tent!

Then three small villages contained the entire population, amounting to about 4000; now there are upwards of 12,000 souls in our new town alone, and the great difficulty is, to restrain the rapid increase in proportion to the gradual advancement of the colony. As much as 6000% has been already received during the last year from the sale and lease of lands, and hundreds of desirable lots are marked out, which will be eagerly purchased at a high price when people become fully aware that government will guarantee its powerful protection.

It has many advantages over Macao, although there are several who advocate the superiority of the latter place. Doubtless an old established settlement has its benefits at first, and its closer proximity to Canton secures a gain of time; but this is more than balanced by the superior and safer anchorage of Hong-Kong, and the greater facility we shall have in maintaining a strict

obedience to our rule, and greater ease in defending it against attacks.

*1st of June.*— I left the ship at four o'clock in the morning, with Keppel and a small party, to attend Major C——, the principal magistrate, on an official tour of inspection throughout the island; we were rather late, so he had preceded us. We missed the better path, and had to scramble up the face of the steep and rather high mountain, — an effort which, after our four months' cruise, pumped all the breath out of our bodies. Fine green fern and rich grass clothed the entire surface, and would do capitally to fatten sheep and cattle. When we at last reached the summit, we could see the sea on both sides of the island, and a beautiful and heart-stirring sight was the bay below, in which floated our squadron, containing a portion of the brave band sent to invade the largest empire in the world.

Half way down the narrow and precipitous valley, we saw our good friend the Major seated, surrounded by some soldiers and Chinese servants waiting our approach. We accordingly made the best of our way, and found it no easy matter to stop our *way* when our sea-accustomed legs had fairly gathered impetus. I think nothing is more painful than a rapid descent after a fagging

ascent ; however, some cold tea the Major had in readiness quickly revived us, and on we pressed.

A stream, as like a Highland burn as possible, bounded over the rocks, leaving small basins at every turn until it reached an expanse of ground near the bottom of the valley, where its clear waters were turned into muddy paddy fields. The path now wound round a tongue of land to the left into a small dell, where there were a few houses built in a line. The patriarch and ruler of this community was standing foremost, ready to receive us. This universal custom of acknowledging the superiority of age has been recognised by us throughout the island ; and it is agreeable to see so amiable a usage in practice among the most lawless orders of the Chinese, which these islanders are. In this little village they were exclusively employed in agriculture.

The road was shaded here and there by a species of Scotch fir common in Spain and Portugal ; shrubs of wild pomegranate, pine-apple, and the mangoe, but in no great abundance, grew by the sides of the several rivulets. We walked eastward along the southern shore to Titam Bay, where it was once proposed our port should be ; but although a considerable harbour, the south-west Monsoon raises a disagreeable swell, and might,

when it blew hard, be difficult for ships to work out against.

At the head of this bay, the principal village, Chuck-ni-wan, is situated, — a great resort for fishing-junks, which are generally manned by the most lawless ruffians. The unprotected inhabitants frequently suffer from their depredations.

As this village was the post of importance, the magistrate assumed all his dignity, and paraded all his power. He marched in front; we, the guests, followed, and the soldiers and servants brought up the rear. The little children stood with their fingers in their mouths as we passed; the men looked stupid, and the women inquisitive; and thus on we went. But, unfortunately, the road was narrow; houses to the left, the sea close at hand to the right, and at a corner, tied by a rope from a post to an iron ring through its nostrils, stood a small wild mountain cow, which, as soon as we approached, by a vigorous onset broke its tether, and charged straight for the proper person of the magistrate, who made the best use of his activity for some distance, and at last, by an agile leap over an aloe hedge, planted himself in an old woman's garden, — the owner, I believe, of the frantic beast, — who, losing sight of the Major's judicial dignity, only remembered the trouble likely to attend the recovery of her cow, and gave

it him with the ability and heartiness of all old women of every country, when they are inclined to vituperate. We did not visit the elders *this* time, but passed on to the bed of a mountain torrent, well shaded with trees, where we found a substantial breakfast ready prepared.

After a siesta for a couple of hours, our portion of the party shook hands with Major C —, and followed a guide on our return home. We ascended a sufficiently steep hill to the summit, and here the north side presented a bank of brushwood descending to a level, called the "Happy Valley," spread over with paddy fields, except at certain spots where there were cottages surrounded by indifferent gardens. A good road is in progress of construction along the shore, and a cut of some depth through an intervening hill is nearly completed. We were surprised to see wharfs and foundations for extensive storehouses laid with a fine grey granite, and wrought with a finish that would reflect credit upon a London mason. They were private property.

It is the general opinion that when the merchants make Hong-Kong their place of residence, it will, being a free port, attract the shipping of all nations, and consequently transfer the principal trade from Macao, and the Chinese will then become the carriers to and from Canton.