

CHAPTER III. (*Continued*).

FORMOSA IN THE PAST.

SECTION VI.—RISE AND FALL OF THE SO-CALLED
REPUBLIC.

Lu Yung Fu appointed Governor-General—Hasty preparations to repel the Japanese invasion—Enlistment of volunteers—China's offer of Formosa to England rejected—French overtures declined—Japan occupies the Pescadores—Chinese terror-stricken—The island in a state of anarchy—A Republic established—Japanese expedition to take possession—Kelung occupied—Official transfer of the island—Taihoku in the hands of the mob—Foreign residents appeal to the Japanese army—The Japanese advance southwards—Tainan surrounded—The Chinese sue for peace—Flight of Chinese Governor—Japanese and Chinese losses.

THE series of defeats which China had sustained in the Liaotung Peninsula, made it evident to the whole world that she would soon have to sue for peace. The rumour was spread, by whom is not known, that Japan would, as one of the conditions of peace, demand the cession of Formosa and the Pescadores. China, therefore, sent stores of arms and money to Formosa, and, at the same time, placed the southern defences of the island in charge of Lu Yung Fu, the Black Flag Chief, who had distinguished himself as a brave general during the French war in Annam. From this time the minds of the inhabitants were greatly perturbed, and they did nothing day and night but talk of the coming Japanese invasion and prepare for it as best they could. Among the wealthy, the timid took refuge from the impending calamity by fleeing to the mainland, while the braver remained, but sent away all their treasures to Foochow, Hong Kong and other places, and the poor buried their meagre savings in the ground.

When the report came that Japan was actually fitting out her fleet to invade the island, the people were seized with a general panic. At this time, Tang Ching-sung, the Vice

Governor of the island, visited Taihoku, and to rouse the spirits of the population and stir them to hostility against the Japanese, issued proclamations, in which he referred to the Japanese as "The horrible yellow Japanese dwarfs who would carry away the women, kill the children, and reduce all to slavery". He also put a price on Japanese heads; any one killing a general should receive 500 taels besides other rewards, any one killing an officer 500 taels, and any one killing a soldier 100 taels, while for the capture or destruction of a large man-of-war 70,000 taels was promised. Incited by cupidity, the rabble of the population enlisted by hundreds, and soon the barracks at Kelung and Taihoku were crowded to overflowing. Under the influence of wine, these undisciplined soldiers made themselves so objectionable, particularly to foreigners and the local gentry, that they were more dreaded even than the Japanese; the people as a whole were plunged into greater fear than before, and in their terror hundreds went and hid themselves. Those of the Americans and English who could not arrange to leave, hired Portuguese, whom they armed and kept as guards, not only for defence against the Chinese soldiers, but also from the other outlaws.

A rumour was widely circulated at this time, that the Chinese authorities, realizing that they were powerless to prevent Formosa and the Pescadores falling into the hands of Japan, had attempted to circumvent that Government by temporarily ceding them to England, but that, when the proposition was made to Lord Rosebery's Cabinet, the Prime Minister and Lord Kimberley, the Foreign Minister, with their usual sound judgment, absolutely refused even to consider it. In diplomatic circles this rumour was considered to be well-grounded and caused France no little anxiety. One day, two French men-of-war entered the port of Bako in the Pescadores. The senior French officer, having invited the Chinese commandant on board, treated him most hospitably and told him that, as China could not possibly hope to defend the islands against the enormous fleet which Japan was about to send to attack them, the best thing for her to do would be to at once cede them to France, just for the time. He also said that France suggested this out of kindness to China, and if the Pescadores were handed over, they would of course be returned to China as

soon as ever the present storm had passed over. The Chinese commandant submitted these honeyed proposals to the Formosan authorities, but Lu Yung Fu received them with scorn, and, remembering well the bitter hostility France had shown towards China during the war in Annam, he said such proposals had better be answered with artillery fire. This shows that Lu Yung Fu and others believed that Formosa was well able to defend herself. According to the Chinese official reports, there were at this time 140,000 soldiers in North and South Formosa; but these numbers were much exaggerated, the true figures ranging between 70,000 and 80,000.

On the 23rd of March the rumours became facts. Colonel Hishijima and his men landed at Riseikaku in the Pescadores. Early the following morning, they, with the help of the navy, attacked and captured the Konpehtai Fort, afterwards occupying the town of Bako, taking 500 of the garrison prisoners and capturing eighteen guns, 2,663 rifles, over a million rounds of ammunition, 797 kegs and 3,173 bags of powder, 1,000 bags of rice, etc., etc. The loss the Japanese sustained in battle was quite insignificant, but cholera broke out among the troops and carried off over 1,500 men in a few days.

As soon as the people in South China heard what had occurred in the Pescadores, they concluded that the Japanese troops would at once occupy Formosa, and, using that island as a base, would proceed to attack the southern provinces of China. The Formosan authorities employed two steamers, the *Martha* and the *Arthur*, to convey to the island arms, money and provisions, at the same time doing all in their power to encourage the rank and file and enable them to repulse whatever attacks the Japanese might make.

Now the belief had been prevalent for hundreds of years that the Pescadores were the key to Formosa, and if the Pescadores fell, Formosa must also fall. Accordingly, when Governor Tang Ching-sung heard that the Pescadores had already been occupied, he immediately jumped to the conclusion that Formosa could not be retained, and sent his family off at once to Canton together with numerous loads of luggage, which he pretended were their private effects. As the soldiers were carrying these through the streets, they were stopped by others, who examined the luggage under the impression that

the Governor himself was about to desert them and flee. This resulted in a fight between the baggage carriers and the interfering soldiers, in which forty persons were killed or wounded. Up to this time, Tang had been priding himself on having collected so many soldiers. Now he saw, that in arming such a large number of worthless and undisciplined men, he had really acted like the man in the Chinese apologue, who, for a ride, climbed upon the back of a tiger. During the last days of April, therefore, he called a meeting of the consuls, and informed them that, having lost all control over his soldiers and others, he was quite unable to protect either the lives or the property of the foreigners in the island. From this time, both Taihoku and Kelung were thrown into a state of complete anarchy by these lawless and unrestrained men, who, throwing off all restraint, plundered and robbed by day as well as by night.

When the report came that on 18th April, by the Shimonsiki Peace Treaty, Formosa had been ceded to Japan, the military men became quite indignant. Actuated some by patriotism, some by selfish motives, they all united in declaring that the island should never become a Japanese possession, and decided to organise a Republic, making Formosa an independent State under the suzerainty of China. Tang Ching-sung, the present Governor, should be President with many officials under him. There was also to be a Parliament, each member of which was to receive a salary of one dollar per day. That this plan was almost certainly originated either in Peking or Tientsin is clear from the fact, that, a few days before the new Republic was organised, Tcheng Ki-tong suddenly arrived in Formosa. He had been the military attaché at the Chinese Legation in Paris, but had been recalled for embezzling public funds and communicating State secrets to the press. Before his departure from China, he had had repeated interviews with high officials in Peking and Tientsin, and immediately on his arrival was appointed to the responsible position of Minister of Foreign Affairs, and became the heart and soul of the new Republic.

On the 23rd of May a manifesto in true Parisian style, announcing that the new Government had been organised, was issued and circulated over the whole island. Telegrams were also sent to the European and American powers as well as to

the Governors in every district in China. The new authorities believed that the Republic would, if it could hold out for six months or a year, secure due recognition from the powers. The greatest dependence was placed on France, and telegrams passed very frequently between Tcheng Ki-tong and certain Frenchmen. One day a small cruiser, the *Beautemps Beaupré*, put in an appearance, the officers landed and had an interview with the President. This led him to fully believe that the whole French fleet would shortly come to support him. Indeed it looked as though Tcheng Ki-tong had not been altogether deceiving the people.

The new Government adopted a national flag with a yellow tiger on a blue background somewhat like the Chinese dragon flag. A large silver State seal was also made and exhibited to the people. Paper money and postage stamps were also issued according to the regular way in such cases. Having raised forced contributions from the wealthier classes, the authorities gave banquets to the people to celebrate the felicitous occasion. Thus many forgot the impending danger, and gave themselves up to make the most of the present moments. But these wild dreams were rudely interrupted by the news that five Japanese warships had already reached Kelung.

When the Shimonoseki Treaty was concluded, the Imperial Guards, who were then in the Liaotung Peninsula near Kinchow, had not yet had any opportunity of distinguishing themselves. So the duty of capturing Formosa was naturally entrusted to them. Part of the Imperial Guards left Port Arthur on 22nd May, on board sixteen transports which on the 26th assembled at Chujo island, one of the Loochoos. The following day, the 27th, Governor-General Kabayama arrived from Tokyo. Feeling that in view of the conditions prevailing in Formosa not a day was to be lost, he ordered all the ships to sail at noon. At ten o'clock on the evening of the 29th, when about five miles south of Agincourt Island, the expedition met the *Yokohama Maru*, and learned that Tamsui was full of armed soldiers ready to oppose their landing. Thereupon the whole navy, led by the *Matsushima*, headed for a landing near Point Sanshokiaku. Sixty men landed first, being divided into four detachments, two to guard the landing-place, and two to search for any of the enemy who might be lurking near. Before sunset, the in-

fantry and sappers had all landed; the next day the cavalry and artillery reached the shore, and the work was completed. Marching by mountain roads which were well-nigh impassable for carts and horses, the troops made their way towards Kelung, capturing Zuiho on the 1st of June. This town was held by 500 soldiers, led by General Ching, the commander of the Kelung division. These were routed by a single charge, and General Ching himself received a bullet as he was being carried to the rear in a sedan chair. As the Chinese soldiers who escaped spread the report from mouth to mouth that they had found the Japanese soldiers much stronger and braver than they had expected, Kelung and Taihoku were thrown into such a panic that discipline could not be maintained.

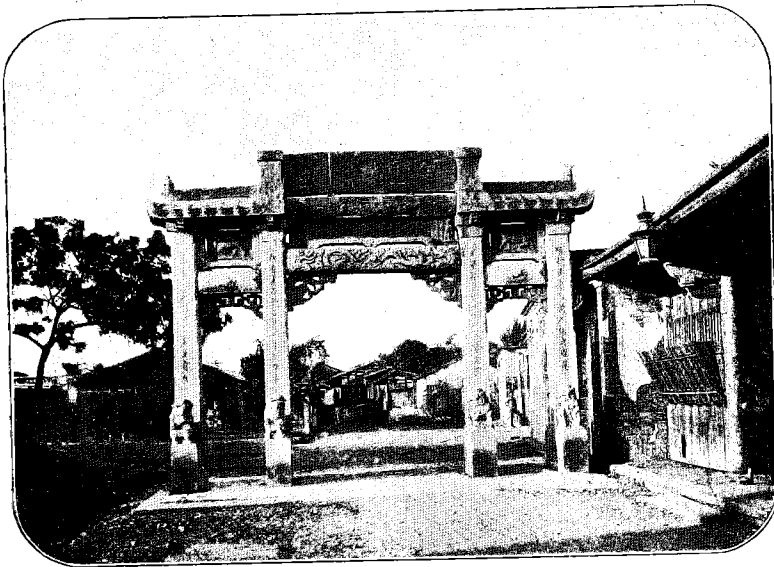
Early on the morning of the 3rd, our advance guards began attacking Kelung from the back, and, by nightfall, our army had succeeded in silencing all the forts and clearing the barracks. At this time our forces numbered 12,000; but, owing to the difficulties of transport over the mountain roads, none of our guns could be brought into use. On the other hand, the enemy consisted of twelve battalions each of 4,800 men, and they were incited to do their utmost by the promise of 30,000 taels if they succeeded in driving us off. By this and their own strong anti-foreign feelings, their martial spirits were raised to the utmost degree, and their artillery and infantry opposed us stubbornly. Yet in this battle we only had two men killed and twenty-six wounded!

While this fight was taking place on the land, the meeting for the final transfer of the island was taking place on the sea between the Japanese and Chinese plenipotentiaries who had been appointed for that purpose. The Chinese plenipotentiary, Li Ching-fang, had informed the Japanese plenipotentiary, Governor-General Kabayama, that, though he wished to land and hand over the fortifications and other property in proper style, the island was in such terrible commotion that, if he attempted such a thing and managed to reach the shore, the rebels would certainly leave off attacking the Japanese troops and come and kill him first. He therefore requested permission to perform the ceremony on the sea. After granting this request, Governor-General Kabayama asked for a list of the properties which were to be transferred. To this the Chinese

plenipotentiary replied, "I do not know the particulars. You know them far better than I do, so please make the list yourself." In accordance with this request, General Kabayama prepared a list. When Li saw it, he smiled and said, "I cannot say anything now about the cable to Amoy, as I do not know whether it belongs to China or to a private company. We must therefore settle that some other time. China has already given you the whole of Formosa. How can you suppose that she will have any objection to your taking the cable too?" The ceremony of transferring the sovereignty over Formosa was completed by half-past twelve o'clock on the 3rd of June, and thus the island, which China had torn from Koxinga's descendants by intrigue, bribery and brute force, passed again into the hands of the Japanese, in whose veins flows the same blood as filled those of Koxinga.

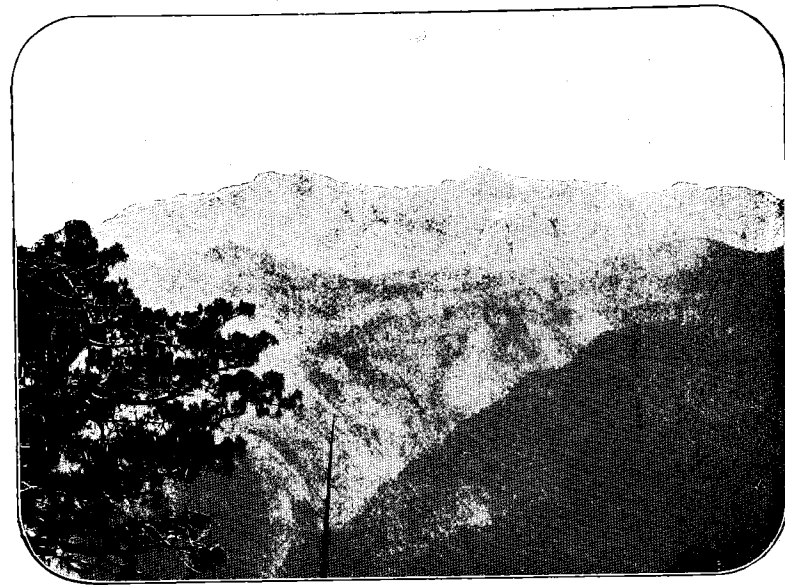
While this memorable occurrence was taking place on the sea, the interior of the city of Taihoku had been transformed into a perfect inferno. The President of the Republic, surrounded as he was by rude scamps and rogues, found himself unable to maintain the least discipline among his troops. The capital was given over to murder and rapine, and the most terrible crimes were unblushingly committed in broad daylight. Soldiers, clad in filthy uniforms, hawked about the streets stolen property consisting of solid copper or silver ware or precious stones worth thousands of dollars which they sold for three or four dollars. Krupp guns in perfect condition were sold for two or three dollars apiece. Ladies' jewelled necklaces could be bought for the same price. The thought of the deeds of cruelty by which this booty had been obtained made one shudder. Many of these brutes revelled in carnage just like wild beasts which have once tasted blood delight to feast on human flesh. Out of pure devilry, they set fire to the powder magazine and to the other places in the city where powder was stored, and took great delight in watching them blow up.

Feeling that their personal safety was endangered, the President and subordinate officials all took flight before the 11th so secretly that even Tcheng, the Foreign Minister, and the officials belonging to his department, did not know where the others had gone. The troops of the Republic, unable to



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find their head, concluded that he had fled. As soon as they found themselves without a leader, they turned robbers, and going in bands to the houses of wealthy merchants and foreigners, they plundered whom they would.

Under the impression that there were at least 20,000 soldiers defending the city, the Japanese troops at Kelung who knew nothing of these occurrences, only advanced with the utmost caution. Under these circumstances, the foreign residents of Taihoku selected Mr. Ohly, a German merchant, Mr. Thomson, an English merchant, and Mr. Davidson, the correspondent of the *New York Herald*, now consul at Antung, to go to Kelung to inform the Japanese troops of the situation and ask them to come quickly and restore order in the city. When these messengers had gone as far as Suihenkiaku, they met 500 Japanese soldiers and begged them to push on, leaving the transport column behind as the chief merchants of Taihoku would be only too glad to supply them with provisions. Accordingly the Kojima regiment hurried on with Staff Officer Akashi, and entered the city at daylight the following morning, 7th June. By dawn on the 8th, they had driven out the last remains of the enemy and captured the whole city. Tamsui was occupied on the 9th. The Chinese as well as the foreign residents welcomed the Japanese army with the sincerest joy, and white flags and Japanese flags waved from every house.

I believe the Republican army was only in existence from 23rd May to 11th June, less than three weeks, but in this short time they committed all imaginable crimes. Those who surrendered were disarmed and sent to Fokien.

Taihoku and the neighbourhood pacified, our army began on the 11th the advance south, defeating the insurgents on the way, and capturing Shinchiku on the 22nd. Turning back to Anpingchin on the 25th, we attacked and defeated Hwan Yang-shun and Ho Gya-yu, who were disturbing our lines of communication and interfering with our supplies. But henceforth our army could not achieve such brilliant success as at Kelung and Taihoku. It is true we always succeeded in the end, but we had many difficulties to overcome. There were four chief reasons for this, *viz.* :—

1. Our opponents were not regular soldiers, but men

thoroughly familiar with the country. When driven from one position, they ran off into the hills, to appear again at the head of the next wooded valley. Thus our troops wearied themselves out to no purpose.

2. We often found it quite impossible to tell who were soldiers and who not. Not infrequently, the country people who were working in their fields would turn out to be soldiers in disguise, and would at once attack any stragglers they saw.

3. The Chinese are adepts at this kind of guerilla warfare.

4. Our men were not well acquainted with the local geography. For instance, on 12th July, when Major-General Yamane advanced to attack the Chinese under Ho Gya-yu at Ryutanha, Major Bojo who went towards Daikokan, fell with three companies of foot soldiers and a small band of sappers into a strong ambush, from which they could by no means escape. At last four men decided to disguise themselves as Chinese and go for help. They reached Major-General Yamane's main body on the 16th. Relief was at once despatched, but when rescued the Bojo company were in a sad plight. They had practically no ammunition left. Their provisions were exhausted, and the only supplies they had been able to obtain consisted of a little rice. Whenever our troops were defeated, the inhabitants of the surrounding villages instantly became our enemies, every one, even the young women, arming themselves and joining the ranks with shouts of defiance. Our opponents were very stubborn and not at all afraid of death. They took cover in the houses of the villages, and when one house was destroyed by shell fire, they calmly moved on into the next, always seizing the very first opportunity of again advancing. This was true not only of Daikoku, but also of the whole Shinchiku neighbourhood, which is noted for the stubbornness and ferocity of its inhabitants. That is why it took our troops nearly two months to pacify them. Not only had our army to fight against fierce bodily enemies, but it also had to struggle against filthy water, malaria and dysentery. Our men were wearing in this hot climate the winter uniforms which they had worn at Port Arthur, were marching over twelve miles a day, and occasionally following up the enemy for twenty miles or so.

On 13th August, we attacked Bioritsu. After capturing it, our scouts were a long time before they again came into touch with the enemy. At last, on the 24th, they were discovered at Koroton. On the 25th, they were driven out of Tokaseki. The following day, before entering Shoka, we attacked and silenced the Hakkeizan fort. This was the greatest battle the Imperial guards had fought since landing in Formosa. The fort was built in a position very difficult to attack and was defended by 5,000 soldiers, many of them belonging to the Black Flag Regiment, renowned for its bravery and strength. But our army found the task less troublesome than the guerilla warfare they had met with in the villages. On the 28th, we captured Shoka, and on 2nd September, Tarimu and Unrin; and on 3rd October, having taken Kagi, we commenced to bring pressure to bear on Tainan.

Reinforcements consisting of the Second Division and part of the Fourth Division arrived at the Pescadores on 10th October with fifty warships. A part of this force, led by His Imperial Highness Prince Fushimi, landed at Hoteishi, twenty-eight miles north of Tainan; and part, led by Lieutenant-General Nogi, landed at Borio, twenty-five miles south of Takow. The Imperial Guards, being already in the island, were to approach Tainan by the direct road, the whole army being placed under the command of Lieutenant-General Viscount Takashima, the newly appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Formosa.

Thus Tainan was about to be attacked from three different directions, and as the defeated soldiers brought the news of their repulses into the city, the hearts of the residents were much agitated, and many of them left everything and fled for their lives. Even the fighting men in the city began to understand how impossible it was for them to offer any successful resistance to our men. So on 10th October, General Lu sent a message by H.M.S. *Pique* to the Pescadores, proposing to capitulate on the following conditions:—

1. No Formosans to be punished for the resistance they had offered.
2. All Chinese soldiers to be hospitably treated and sent to Canton or Amoy.

On the way, H.M.S. *Pique* sighted Lieutenant-Governor

Takashima's ship; but, being unable to communicate with it, went on to the Pescadores. On receipt of the message, the Japanese Admiral replied that the fleet would be off Anping on the 12th, and would then discuss the matter with General Lu himself or with his accredited commissioner.

On the 12th, according to promise, the flagship *Yoshino* arrived off Anping, but Lu was distrustful and would not go on board. Instead of doing so, he sent another proposal of surrender to the Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Guards through a certain English gentleman. On the 13th, the *Yoshino*, *Naniwa*, *Akitsushima*, *Hiei*, *Yaeyama*, *Saien*, etc., attacked the Takow forts and silenced them. Then a detachment landed and occupied the town, and Lieutenant-Governor Takashima informed Lu that he must surrender unconditionally or take the consequences.

On this, General Lu, conceiving that he could do nothing else, took about a hundred officers and, under the pretence of going to inspect the Anping fort, left the city and, disguising himself as a coolie, went on board the ss. *Thales* to escape to Amoy. Hearing this, the *Yaeyama* started in pursuit, sighted the *Thales* fifty miles from Amoy, stopped her and examined the passengers. Our officers found seven Chinese labourers who appeared suspicious characters and wished to arrest them. The captain of the *Thales*, however, protested so strongly that they were released. Afterwards it was discovered that one of these seven was really Lu himself.

After General Lu's flight, the remains of his party wandered about the city not knowing what to do, till the foreigners, afraid that they would begin plundering, managed to persuade them to lay down their arms. This operation took the whole of one day, between 7,000 and 8,000 rifles being eventually placed in secure custody. Then two English missionaries, Messrs. Fergusson and Barclay, went to the Japanese headquarters a few miles south of the city, bearing a letter from the Chinese residents saying that the soldiers had all laid down their arms and disappeared, and asking the Japanese to come quickly and enforce order. General Nogi entered the city on 21st October and the rest of the army soon followed. Thus Formosa came into our possession in reality as well as in name.

Our losses in the whole campaign were as under, *viz.*:—

Died in Formosa of disease	4,642
Sent to Japan for treatment	21,748
Remaining in hospitals in Formosa	5,246
Killed in battle (officers and soldiers)	164
Wounded (not fatally, officers and soldiers)	515

Unhappily His Imperial Highness Prince Kitashirakawa succumbed to an attack of malarial fever. He was a great loss, not only to the army but also to the whole nation.

The Chinese losses are impossible to ascertain, but it is said that no less than 7,000 dead were actually found on the field.