

SAVAGE ISLAND OF FORMOSA TRANSFORMED BY JAPANESE Wonders Worked in a Few Years With a People That Others Had Failed to Subdue—A Lesson for Other Colonizing Nations.

LONDON, Sept. 24.—The Times to-day publishes the following article from a correspondent, dealing with Japan's transformation of Formosa: To achieve success in any art three things are necessary—native talent, close application, and experience.

The art of colonizing is no exception to the rule. Hence the Germans have failed in their attempts at colonization, notwithstanding their close application, either from want of native talent or from lack of experience; but most probably the fact that the first attempt in any art is usually a failure has been the cause of Germany's non-success.

For this reason Japan's first attempt at colonizing is particularly interesting, especially as the Island of Formosa, which is Japan's first colony, properly so-called, offers difficulties to a colonizing nation which in the past have appeared insurmountable to many other nations.

The Island of Formosa has ever been a favorite haunt of outlaws from China and from various other countries, and the savageness and unruliness of the population were so great that those parts of the country which were conquered several times were never colonized.

The Spanish and the Dutch made attempts at colonizing Formosa, but they gave it up in despair. The Chinese left the land virtually a wilderness, and the French and English, who might easily enough have acquired it, preferred not to put their foot into the interior of that savage island.

Taming the Wild Natives.

Therefore, when Japan demanded Formosa after the conclusion of the Chinese-Japanese war of 1894-5, China was willing, if not glad, to cede it, and Li Hung-Chang remarked sarcastically that Japan would find the island an exceedingly bad bargain.

When Japan entered Formosa she found the coast at the mercy of pirates. The interior was ruled partly by the savage aborigines, partly by organized bands of outlaws and robbers, who plundered ships wrecked on the coast and murdered the crews who approached the island. While Formosa was in the possession of China trouble with the United States and other countries was frequently caused by these

murderous attacks on the crews of foreign ships. China was probably glad to get rid of the unruly island.

The conquest of the island took a year, and on the 31st of March, 1896, it was placed under civil administration. But the former Chinese officers and officials who used to be on duty in the island, and who feared to be deprived of their positions, joined hands with the unruly elements of Formosa, instigated them to revolt against their new rulers, and the country was constantly in a state of restlessness and turmoil up to the end of 1901, when a sweeping movement of the troops rid the island at last of its revolutionary elements.

Leniency in Enforcing Laws.

Though the country has hitherto enjoyed only a few years of complete peace under Japanese rule, the appearance of the country and the spirit of its formerly savage inhabitants have already completely changed, and the natives begin to understand the blessings of Japanese rule and to praise it.

The policy by which Japan has achieved this remarkable success has been the following: Japan has, so far as possible, respected the prejudices of the inhabitants, and has tried rather to gently guide than to coerce them on the path of civilization.

For instance, the ancient "Peace Corps," which was established by the Chinese and which protected the inhabitants against the raids of armed banditti, and against fire, floods, and other natural calamities, was maintained, but at the same time the enlightened laws of Japan were introduced. However, while these laws are in the main applied with their full force to the Japanese residing in the island, they are modified in the case of the aboriginal inhabitants whose lack of civilization makes them unable to appreciate at once civilized conditions and the necessity to respect those laws whereby civilization is upheld.

Curing the Opium Habit.

Even the opium habit has in so far been respected that the natives are not punished for consuming opium, though opium smoking and dealing in opium is a crime for which Japanese citizens in Japan and in

Formosa as well are punished with penal servitude of varying degrees. But in order to gradually diminish the amount of opium consumed, on the same principle on which a drunkard may gradually be weaned from his drink, the Japanese Government has made the opium trade a monopoly, which it judiciously uses for at the same time permitting and discouraging opium smoking.

Only confirmed smokers are able to obtain opium, and they can secure the drug only under the strictest surveillance. The Government controlling the supply of opium does it out through licensed agents to licensed smokers, and the police watch with the greatest vigilance that the circle of opium smokers does not get enlarged.

At the same time moral pressure is brought to bear. All doctors have constantly to point out the evils of opium smoking to the grown-up, and all school teachers have to warn the children against the injurious and demoralizing effects of the opium habit.

The population of the island amounts at present roughly to 3,000,000 people, of whom in September, 1900, 169,064 were opium smokers. By the end of March, 1902, only 152,044 were registered and licensed as opium smokers, the decrease of 17,020 having been caused by death or by the discontinuance of the opium habit, and this number will no doubt rapidly be further reduced by the wise policy that is being pursued.

It is significant that the opium imported, which represented in 1900 a value of 3,392,602 yen, amounted in 1903 to the value of 1,121,455 yen only. From a revenue point of view the policy restricting the use of opium in Formosa is no doubt unfavorable, for it means to the State a serious loss of income on the one side, and increased expenses for administration and the surveillance of opium smokers on the other side.

While the Japanese Government has in no way tried to hurt the susceptibilities of the natives by meddling with their religion and their customs, it has given them tangible proof of the benefit of Japanese rule by improving in every respect the conditions of the people. In the first place, the

law-abiding toilers are no longer terrorized and tyrannized over by robber bands, and enjoy freedom under a just Government. In the second place much has been done for their bodily welfare.

The country used to suffer much from epidemic diseases, which were largely caused by the wretchedly bad water which the natives obtained from stagnant pools and contaminated streams. Consequently the Japanese set about to provide a supply of pure water.

The total number of artesian wells that have been bored in Formosa is not available, but in the Taihoku district alone, where about one-tenth of the population is living, more than 800 wells have been sunk.

Fine System of Schools Started.

Education being the basis and starting point of all progress, Japan has introduced her splendid educational system in Formosa. There are schools for the Japanese, with 60 teachers and 2,000 pupils, and there are 130 elementary schools for the natives with a teaching staff of 521 teachers, who are educating 18,149 children and transforming them into civilized beings.

However, Japan is not satisfied with providing elementary education for the natives, for it is her ambition to give to Formosa the best she has to give. Consequently Japan has established for the use of the natives a medical school, a Japanese language school, and a school for training school teachers.

The medical school in Formosa has the grand distinction that it is the only school in the Far East which gives a regular course of the modern science and practice of medicine to students of Chinese origin. It is domiciled in Taihoku, and at the present moment about 150 students are studying medicine there under the guidance of competent Japanese professors.

The Japanese language school serves two objects. Its purpose is to spread the Japanese language among the natives, and at the same time to furnish opportunities to the Japanese to learn the native languages, and thus to prepare them to act as teachers and interpreters in the interior.

The happiness of the individual depends

not only on his security, his freedom from tyranny, and on his bodily wellbeing, but also on his prosperity. Consequently Japan has made it her aim to increase the prosperity of her new colony.

Making Network of Railways.

When Japan took over Formosa there were no roads in existence, but strange to say there was a short piece of railway which was almost useless, so badly was it built and so wretchedly was it managed. Railway fares and freights were changed almost daily, and trains were run "when convenient."

Understanding the fundamental requirements of Formosa, the Japanese started methodically upon road making in many parts of the island, and according to a recent report of the United States Consul more than 1,000 miles of road have already been built. At the same time the Japanese Government mapped out a comprehensive scheme of railways, on which it proposes to spend 28,800,000 yen, or almost £3,000,000, an amount which for a country like Japan sounds almost fabulous.

The piece of railway which the Japanese found in existence has already been thoroughly reconstructed, and a new line from Shinchiku to Takao was commenced simultaneously from both termini with the greatest energy. Between 1897 and 1903, 95 miles of railway were laid, 37 stations were built, and 210 freight cars and passenger wagons and 20 engines introduced.

During this period the number of passengers carried has grown fourfold and the quantity of goods transported tenfold. Besides, light railways were introduced, of which 125 miles were laid within a few months. A further 52 miles of light railroads are about to be built.

The post, telegraph, and telephones have also been introduced with the greatest success. Between 1896 and 1902 eighty-seven Post Offices were opened for the public throughout the island, which, in 1902, handled 13,285,195 letters and post cards and 114,779 parcels, and issued 336,297 domestic money orders. The length of telegraph wire has grown from 900 miles in 1896 to 2,600 miles in 1902, and 1,350 miles of tele-

phone wire have been laid, over which in 1902 3,690,228 messages were sent.

The native industries which were carried on in Formosa when the Japanese arrived were pursued in a very unsatisfactory fashion. Scientific cultivation, and even thorough cultivation, of the fruitful ground was unknown; the natives relied chiefly on the bounty of Nature unaided, and though the Formosa farmer did obtain two, and even three, crops of rice in a year, his harvest was not proportionate to his toil and his income was totally inadequate.

Through the improved methods which have been introduced by the Japanese, the production of rice has increased by 10 per cent. between 1896 and 1902. The production of tea has grown fivefold between the same years, and the other agricultural staple products, such as sugar, sweet potatoes, cane, ramie, jute, turmeric, &c., all show a very large increase.

The enormous forests also were insufficiently utilized, and the wastefulness of the natives was such that, for instance, camphor oil was treated as waste by the native refiners, who extracted camphor from the wood. The consequence of the reforms which have been introduced by the Japanese has been that the production of camphor has steadily increased from 1,534,596 kin in 1897 to 3,588,814 kin in 1903, and the output of camphor oil has risen from 638,603 kin in 1897 to 2,670,561 kin in 1903.

Mining likewise was carried on in the most superficial and improvident fashion, and consequently the maximum of labor yielded but a minimum of result.

By patient tuition and gentle insistence the Japanese have succeeded in introducing improved methods in all industries. The farms yield better harvests, the forests are scientifically exploited, and millions of young camphor trees have been planted in suitable places, and the mining industry has made an enormous progress in the last few years.

Banks and Currency System.

The improvement in trade and industries of Formosa naturally made apparent the need of improved banking organs and an improved currency system. Consequently,

the Formosan Bank was established as the central banking organ in the island, and private banking offices were opened in the more important centres.

Post Office savings banks have also been opened, and have had a highly gratifying success. The number of depositors has increased from 5,847 in 1896 to 41,145 in 1902, and the amount deposited from 228,487 yen in 1896 to 763,575 yen in 1902.

The currency of Formosa also had to be reformed. Formosa used to be a country, where the medium of exchange was bullion, not coin, exactly as in China, and the bulky copper coinage used to make commercial transactions of any magnitude well-nigh an impossibility. This antediluvian monetary system has now been replaced by the up-to-date monetary system of Japan.

Japan has poured money like water into Formosa. She has established factories for making brown sugar, white sugar, glass, paper, &c.; she has sent out many of her ablest men as administrators, and she will no doubt in due time receive her reward for her enlightened policy.

Only a few years have elapsed since the island has been completely pacified. Nevertheless, the economic ordinary progress which has already been made is very striking. The increased prosperity of the inhabitants may be seen from the fact that the general revenue, which is principally derived from Government works and undertakings, the opium monopoly, customs, and various taxes has expanded from 2,711,522 yen in 1896 to 12,738,587 yen in 1903, having grown almost tenfold.

The ordinary local revenue, which is chiefly composed of taxes on land, houses, businesses, &c., has risen from 747,850 yen in 1898, to 1,932,220 yen in 1902, having almost been trebled in four years. In the collection of the general and local taxes, no undue hardship has been exercised in order to obtain these magnificent results.

It is, therefore, only natural that the population of Formosa has rapidly increased pari passu with the development of its resources. In 1897 the population of Formosa amounted to 2,455,357, but in 1903 it had risen to 3,082,404.