WILEY

A Journey among the Highlands of Chili

Author(s): E. C. Young

Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (Sep., 1905), pp. 307-318

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1776316>

Accessed: 21-06-2016 02:26 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at
<http://about.jstor.org/terms>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Wiley, The Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to The Geographical Journal

Vice-President, Colonel Leek, were the forerunners of very splendid work which has been accomplished in more recent times, and this Society has done all it could to help and encourage exploration by subscribing to the Exploration Fund, by bringing out that valuable work of Prof. Ramsay's, 'The Historical Geography of Asia Minor,' and by lending our instruments to many travellers in the country. But still, until we received the results of these explorations we were in great ignorance of Asia Minor. But we must now feel what a good return we have had, consisting of the labours of such men as Ramsay and Wilson, and Myres and Hogarth; and another result has been the valuable map of Colonel Maunsel, and still another the excellent paper we have just listened to from Colonel Massy. I think we must all have been impressed by this fact, that there can be no intelligent knowledge of history without the help of geography, and for that reason I think that the work that has been done by this Society to encourage exploration in Asia Minor is work of which we may be proud, and I trust we shall be able to continue to do so on every possible opportunity.

The PRESIDENT: The hour is now so late that I am afraid we have no time to call upon other speakers. I will simply propose a hearty vote of thanks to Colonel Massy for his excellent paper.

Colonel MASSY: I should just like to answer Lord Ronaldshay. Everything is a matter of comparison, and when one travels over some of those almost tractless mountains, he will find his ideas of a road somewhat changed. These roads you could pass on wheels. As to the railway, I do not think there will be very many tunnels at all. I happened to stop in that country for over a week with the engineers when they were considering the routes by which it would be best to reach the Chakut river. Then it would reach the Taurus, and then it would pass through one single tunnel, and that would be a very long one; but having passed out of that, the railway would take a bend to the south, and then it would bend to the west, gradually going to the side of the cliff. The whole height is not great, and then there would be the tunnel; that would bring it to about 800 feet, and then, bending round the loop, it would reach the plain. I don't think I have anything further to say, except to thank you for the great patience you have shown in listening to my paper.

A JOURNEY AMONG THE HIGHLANDS OF CHILI.*

By E. C. YOUNG.

THE following lines describe the writer's experiences during an autumn journey in North China, in the province of Chili. The greater part of the province of Chili, it should be explained, is a vast alluvial plain which stretches northwards from the Gulf of Chili to the mountainous region which separates it from Shansi and Mongolia, and it was in this latter district that the journey was made in the autumn of 1904. The chief object of the expedition was to explore a little-known and unsurveyed district to the north of Cho Chau, a large provincial town on the Franco-Belgian railway between Pekin and Pao-ting Fu. A route survey was to be made for the benefit of the British Intelligence Branch of the North China command, and much kind assistance was

* Map, p. 368.

received from Colonel Wingate, the head of the department, who moreover despatched an Indian surveyor, Abbaz Khan by name, to assist in the survey. A secondary but also important part of the scheme of operations was to trace as much as possible of the course of a river called the Chu-ma Ho, which as yet had only been partially surveyed. My party consisted of seven members besides myself, viz. Abbaz Khan, my "boy" or body-servant, a Chinese Mohammedan to cook and "do" for the Indian, three survey coolies, and, last but not least, an English sheep-dog of mine called "Shep."

The first day's march from Cho Chau was over a level plain which stretched almost to the foot of the hills, and it was not until well on in the afternoon that the ground began to rise; the road now became rougher and rougher, and was sunk below the level of the ground, in some cases to a depth of 15 feet. Leaving the main road, we struck across country, and by dusk reached the tiny hamlet of San-tsaw-an, nestling in a valley formed by the spurs of a prominent mountain which was our objective.

The following morning broke fine, and, after an early breakfast, arrangements were made for the ascent of the mountain (Peak No. 23, as it was called), a "fixed point" on the maps of the Intelligence Department, from which, being 3500 feet high, it was hoped that a useful reconnaissance of the country before us might be made, whilst possibly a glimpse of the Wu-tai Shan—a mountain of some 9000 feet, situated in the direction of our route—might be obtained. Peak No. 23 was an innocent-looking mountain, resembling in shape the half of a sugar-loaf, and in the clear morning air it looked so close and easy of ascent that we gaily contemplated returning by lunch-time. No provisions were carried, therefore, and those of the party who were not selected for the ascent were ordered to remain in camp and stand by to pack the mules and strike tents as soon as they saw us returning. The path was a mere goat-track, which, leading over a low pass, dipped down into the valley which lay immediately at the foot of the peak. Here we engaged a guide from some peasants working in the fields, and after about a mile began to ascend, and were soon zigzagging our way up the side of a rugged and precipitous slope, where, at a short distance, the path was quite invisible, and where a stumble would have sent one ricochetting into the valley beneath with long odds in favour of a broken neck. Higher and higher we climbed, till one's legs almost refused to surmount the rocky steps and boulders over which the track continued. After about an hour of this, we reached the crest of one of the spurs of the mountain, where the track ran at a reasonable gradient for some distance. Pursuing our course, we found that the eastern slopes of the mountain were considerably less steep than those on the west where we had ascended, and we were agreeably surprised to find that cultivation was continued

about two-thirds of the way up to the top of the peak, suggesting that there must be water at hand somewhere. Presently, to our delight, we came on some pear trees heavy with beautiful yellow fruit; and in the twinkling of an eye the coolies were in the branches shaking down scores of luscious fruit, which we fell on literally tooth and nail. They were delicious, and in our somewhat ravenous condition their flavour was as nectar. A little further on we came to a few houses nestling right under the peak, where a rivulet of clear cold water was trickling down the mountain-side. We now thought ourselves within easy reach of the summit, but another hour's hard climbing up the steep sides of the cone was required before we at length reached the top, by which time it was almost noon. The day was fine, and, though not as clear as might have been wished, there were magnificent views displayed on all sides. No. 23 was a real peak, and, the summit being only a few feet in circumference, the landscape was laid out before us on all sides like a map. To southward the wide plain of Chili stretched to the horizon like some dull green sea, the numerous villages and towns showing as mere patches of brown on its surface, whilst the course of the Chu-ma Ho could be distinctly traced from Cho Chau to the point where it emerged from the hills. It was to northward, however, that our eyes were turned; and here the resemblance to the sea was also maintained, though in this case it was a stormy sea whose waves were rugged, jagged mountain-tops which continued in endless ranges as far as the eye could reach. Nothing in the nature of open ground could be discerned, but peak beyond peak and range beyond range in unbroken succession, whilst no signs of inhabitants or cultivation were visible. The hills were barren and rocky for the most part, but on some a scanty covering of grass or stunted scrub coloured them a dull green, which, further and further towards the horizon, the haze of distance changed gradually into purple and light blue. Amid such a countless multitude of lofty hills, it was impossible to select any one as being the Waw-tai-shan, and we had to content ourselves with making a rough sketch of the general features of the surrounding country and taking sights with the theodolite to a few of the most prominent peaks which seemed to lie in the direction of our route. This done, it was high time to descend, for we were all shivering in the chilly blast, and, moreover, it was now 2 p.m., and we had no wish to make any part of the descent in the dark. The descent was a slow and rather wearisome job, as we were stiff and tired, and it took nearly as long to come down as it had to go up, so that it was after five when we eventually reached the camp. The net result of our labour was rather disappointing, as, although we had had a fine view, yet no particular advantage had been gained, whilst we were all more or less footsore and tired out by the stiffness of the climb.

Next day our march lay across the low grass-covered foothills

which separated the real mountains from the plains, and by evening we reached the small town of Chang-fang, which, though shown on our maps as being some 10 miles to the west of the Chu-ma Ho, was found by us to be actually about a mile to the east of that river. We found an inn there, the last we were destined to meet with till the completion of our journey.

Chang-fang marked the limit of explored country in this direction, and it was with a pleasing feeling of expectancy that we set out next day. A few miles north of Chang-fang the river Chu-ma Ho emerges from the mountains, and a short walk brought us to the water's edge. The river at this point was some 100 yards wide and from 3 to 5 feet deep, without bridge or other means of crossing. After much delay and useless jabbering, a guide was secured who piloted us over a ford some 400 yards down-stream.

Although the frequent fords made us look on the Chu-ma Ho with some aversion, the river was a beautiful sight, dashing and rippling over its rocky bed, its water as clear as crystal, its banks hedged with perpendicular cliffs and lofty hills which were clothed in short green brushwood which autumn was already streaking with purple and gold. Animal-life was conspicuously absent, and the lonely character of the gorges was but accentuated by the dull roar of the river as it forced its way over its rocky bed hushing all other sounds, and making it surprisingly difficult to call to one another at any distance. Our road was a mere track, which, sometimes hugging the foot of the hills and sometimes losing itself in the boulder-strewn shingle of the river-bed, was always rough and impracticable for any kind of transport except the sure-footed mules and donkeys which were always to be found at every village. Occasionally we saw flocks of goats browsing on the steep mountain-sides, and the ubiquitous Chinese pig—black, hairy, and dirty, as usual—was always to be seen in the villages, as were also a few cows and oxen used for ploughing the patches of land which the thrifty peasantry contrived to cultivate wherever the soil was sufficiently free from rock. Apart from the villages, however, there was a singular absence of living creatures, either feathered or furred, and although the brushwood must assuredly have held game, we saw no sign of it, though the natives told us that deer and even wolves were to be found in the hills. The roughness of the track, and the frequent delays caused by the numerous fords, made slow progress the rule, and we only averaged some 10 miles a day on this part of the route. The first night out from Chang-fang we camped at a hamlet called Liu-tuling, a picturesquely situated cluster of houses surrounded by orchards of Persimmon trees, whose large yellow fruit looked like luscious oranges.

The following day we continued to hug the river, with its usual succession of fords, until reaching the village of Hsi-munn-ling, where we were told we must take a roundabout route through the hills, as

the river was too deep to be forded. The road now entered a sombre ravine between steep and lofty hills, which, shutting out the rays of the afternoon sun, made it as dark as though it were actually dusk. Of habitations there were none, and the intense stillness and dank vegetable smell reminded me strongly of the dense jungles of Assam where the sunshine never penetrates. An hour's march brought us to the foot of a rocky slope, which, rising at an abrupt angle to a height of some 1800 feet, was dignified with the name of a pass. Surveying over ground of this type is not easy, and our progress was very slow, whilst halfway up the pass we took a wrong turn, which landed us in a *cul-de-sac* at the foot of a precipice, from which we had to retrace

GORGES ON THE CHU-MA HO, WITH NATIVE BRIDGE.

our steps; so that it was not till 5 p.m. that I reached the summit, where, according to the kindly Chinese custom, there was a little temple built for the use of travellers. Doubtless the idea is a pagan one—the Buddhist shrine testifies to this—but in practice the temples, which are nearly always found at the top of all important passes, must often be of real benefit to wayfarers, especially in winter, when the shelter thus afforded would enable the traveller to light a fire and make some defence against the bitter cold of North China. I have no doubt that many a poor Chinaman has offered up a genuine prayer of thanksgiving on reaching one of these mountain shrines.

The following day was cold and windy, and our route again followed the course of the river with its usual succession of fords. We crossed

two bridges, ingenious structures composed of rough logs laid across piers built of basketwork cribs filled with stones, the roadway being made of stout wattled willow mat. The fords were particularly deep and numerous on this part of the river, and we were wetted and chilled continually in the cold wind, so that we ought to have "caught our deaths of cold;" but none of the party suffered in any degree from the constant wettings they experienced. Our troubles with the fords were nearly at an end, however, for by four o'clock we reached the junction of the Chu-ma Ho with its most important tributary, up whose bank we were told our road lay. The main river here makes a bold curve to the south-west, and disappears between frowning hillsides as though plunging into the "bowels of the earth," the sudden hushing of its ceaseless murmur resembling the stillness following on the disappearance of a train into a railway tunnel. The tributary was a mere mountain stream, at this season merely a foot or two in depth, meandering through a stony valley about half a mile wide, which, judging from the water-worn shingle with which it was strewn, serves as a channel for the overflow of the stream after rain. By dusk we had reached Se-shih-ko, a rather larger village than those we had hitherto met with, where they boasted that they once *had* had an inn, but that for want of custom it was now occupied by the residents of the place.

At Se-shih-ko we made a very late start, as our mules and their drivers had gone away somewhere, and did not turn up till nearly ten o'clock. Meanwhile, the result of repeated inquiries showed that the tributary stream whose course we were pursuing would take us too far to the north-east, thus diverting us from the unexplored regions we wished to traverse. I therefore decided to leave the stream and take a hill road to the south-west, hoping in this way to strike some feasible route leading in the desired direction. Accordingly we commenced climbing the hills soon after leaving Se-shih-ko, and, after a long gradual ascent, reached the top of the Tan-tze-ling pass by about 4 p.m. Here again it was our luck to get separated from the baggage party, and by the time we reached the foot of the pass darkness was upon us, and the survey had to be stopped. I decided to halt here for a day. It was, unfortunately, foggy and damp the next day, so that no astronomical observations were possible, and photography was also of dubious value, and the greater part of the day was therefore devoted to "plotting" our work and overhauling our gear. A reconnoitre of the position showed that we had again joined the main stream of the Chu-ma Ho, whilst inquiries led me to believe that I had at last hit on the direct route into the unexplored track beyond the Great Wall for which I had been searching. Having already surveyed so large a portion of the Chu-ma Ho, I was loth to leave it altogether, whilst it was by this time quite evident that the time at my disposal would not admit of as long an excursion beyond the Great Wall as I had originally

intended; I therefore determined to divide my forces, and despatch Abbaz Khan to make a leisurely survey along the main river, whilst I, with the picked men of the party, made a rapid journey to the Great Wall, and as far as possible outside it, returning by the best route I could find to rejoin the Indian at Pan-ch'ung, a place apparently of some importance, to which it seemed I should be certain to find a road. The next day, therefore, I divided the party, and sending the "police-man" and two other men with Abbaz Khan, and taking only the "boy," the "volunteer," and the best of the survey coolies with me, I started *en route* for the Great Wall.

It was a dripping foggy morning as we left Peng-taw, and I was struck with the strong resemblance that the country hereabouts bore to the uplands which border on Dartmoor. The frowning cliffs and towering mountains which hitherto had hedged our route had now given place to rolling hills of more modest height, whilst the grass-covered valley, with its low stone walls and browsing sheep, looked very homelike viewed through the morning mist. Our road, as usual, followed the course of a mountain stream, a minor tributary of the main river; but the going was better than we had experienced since entering the mountains, and we made fair progress. We ascended gradually throughout the day, and this had the effect of dwarfing the hills to some extent, whilst the country was undoubtedly more open than that we had hitherto been travelling in. Late in the afternoon we sighted a stone tower in the distance, which we decided must be on the Great Wall, and before long we saw the wall itself climbing the hills to right and left of our route. A short pull and a strong pull brought us to the top of the pass and to a gate in the Great Wall, where the aneroids showed us to be 3000 feet above the sea—the highest point we had yet reached, with the exception of Peak No. 23.

It would be easy to write a glowing description of the Great Wall of China, and, indeed, one could find plenty such already printed in the various books describing this world-famed structure, but truth compels me to state that, though striking and interesting in its way, it did not inspire that open-mouthed admiration that one might have expected. The "Wan-li-chang-ch'ung" (or ten thousand "li" wall) is at this point about 20 feet in height by, say, an equal width (I did not take any actual measurements), and is of earth faced with masonry; it is flanked by numerous square "cavaliers," or watch towers, from whose crenelated battlements the Chinese braves in olden times doubtless kept watch and ward against the barbarians of the north. The wall is in fairly good preservation at this point, and as far as one could see it stretched in an unbroken line to east and west. Its most striking characteristic, perhaps, is the relentless manner in which it pursues its way up hill and down valley, over crag and mountain crest, undeterred by rock or fell, here spanning a mountain torrent, and there

apparently vanishing into the clouds as it became hid in the mist-covered mountain-top; it seemed as though those old Chinese builders must have simply revelled in overcoming the difficulties which Nature placed in their way, and one could not but speculate on the manner in which this gigantic undertaking had been carried out.

Evening was drawing on as we descended the pass and entered the village of Ma-tsui, a place which derives its importance from its being the headquarters of the mandarin in charge of the gate in the Great Wall through which passes the main route between the two important provincial towns of I Chau and Hsuen-hwa Fu. There is quite a large yamen here, and though the mandarin was away at Hsuen-hwa Fu, his subordinate very politely provided us with rooms in the yamen, and we exchanged calls and were on excellent terms. There is a break in the chain of mountains at this point, and a picturesque jumble of hills flanks the road, making Ma-tsui a place of considerable strategic value. The wall appears to split in two here and encircle the village and its environs, for towers and walls met us at every turn, and there were at least three gates at different quarters of the compass. A particularly striking view was afforded by a temple perched on the top of a low conical hill, its walls being coloured a bright pink, which, contrasting with the dark indigo foliage of the fir trees that clustered round, and the light green of the grassy hillside, made a bright and characteristically Eastern picture. I was up early the next morning, and bribed a sleepy and tousled Chinaman to accompany me up one of the more accessible hills to a tower on the wall, whence a magnificent view of the country before us was obtained; range beyond range of hills stretched before and beneath us, and one could clearly trace the course of a river, which, I was assured, was the only practicable route in the direction in which we wished to go. A careful reconnaissance with the field-glasses corroborated this opinion, and I was able to get a good idea of the route we were to follow, though I was disappointed to find that the eternal ranges of hills effectually prevented any view of the Wu-tai-shan mountains, which I had hoped would be visible from here. It was a perfect morning, and the scenery was delightfully varied and picturesque; numerous mule caravans were coming up the pass, laden with charcoal and cloth and other merchandise, each mule with a basket-work muzzle on his nose, which was usually decorated with a gaudy crimson rosette, whilst the leading animal carried a deep-toned bell, from which proceeded a hoarse but melodious jangle as the plucky little beast stepped lightly over the rocky path. Starting early, a few miles brought us to the river I had espied from the wall that morning, and inquiries proved that it was identical with the tributary whose course we had followed to Se-shih-ko, so that we had gained but little by our flank march to Peng-taw. Our road now turned north-west, which was the direction I was anxious to pursue, and, keeping parallel with the

river, crossed a fine park-like stretch of ground dotted with walnut trees and orchards of pear and date trees. A brief halt for lunch was made in a shady clump of trees adjoining the track, and then, pushing on for a mile or so further, we entered a narrow defile between steep and frowning hills, where our troubles began. The going soon became atrocious, and for the most part the track was indistinguishable from the stream, sometimes running up one bank and sometimes the other, and more often than not meandering in the bed of the stream itself. Huge boulders and shingle paved the way. For 5 stony miles we dragged our weary shins through this pitiless defile until, just before dark, we reached Ta Miao, a tiny village which was destined to mark the limit of our progress northwards. The people here were kindly disposed ragamuffins, who stated that we were the first foreigners they

MOUNTAINS NEAR THE GREAT WALL, WITH WHITE ROCK AND VILLAGE OF NANG-SHI-KO IN FOREGROUND.

had ever seen—a statement which they corroborated by the inordinate curiosity they displayed, men, women, and children all crowding round the camp and watching my smallest movement with the deepest interest. Like the inhabitants of all the villages we had passed through since entering the mountains, they seemed extremely poor and ignorant, whilst there were an extraordinary number of persons suffering from goitre; I estimated the proportion of those afflicted with this disease at about 20 per cent., and I fancy that is a moderate estimate. Their clothes were of the poorest description and often in rags, and in many cases they hardly knew the value of the dollar and its subdivisions which are current throughout the Treaty Ports and their surrounding districts. The villagers seemed so anxious to oblige us, that we did not grudge them the harmless but rather irritating amusement of gazing on us at every possible opportunity.

But it was now time to count up the days remaining for the return journey, and to decide on our next move. As I was already in some danger of overstaying my leave, I decided to turn back and make with all haste for the nearest point on the railway, which it seemed was near I Chau. This settled, I engaged mules, and we returned as quickly as possible over the road we had already surveyed until we reached a point some 3 miles inside the Great Wall, where the road diverged from our former route, and where it was accordingly necessary to again take up the survey.

The character of the country had now begun to change; the valleys were broader and the hills lower, with the result that cultivation was more general and the roads far easier, and the next day we made capital progress during the forenoon. At mid-day, however, we again struck one of the tributaries of the Chu-ma Ho, and following this on its southward course, the going became so shingly and rough that even such hardened pedestrians as we were were reduced to a slow and wearisome crawl. At night we camped at the village of Yu-taw-tsun, and on resuming our march next day we soon found that the going improved rapidly, and that in fact we were now entering a far less sterile district than we had hitherto met with. By 10 a.m. we rejoined the main stream of the Chu-ma Ho, which had now lost its wild and dashing character, and was a broad but shallow river only a foot or two in depth, so that there was no difficulty in crossing it. A few miles beyond the river we reached Pan Chŭng where Abbaz Khan's party were awaiting us, and after a brief halt we all travelled on together. The Chinese were in capital spirits at the thought that the hard marches were now nearly over, and that they were soon to be back in the land of pork and rice, and, the road being smooth and level, we made good progress and reached Ling-tze-nan by nightfall.

Our march from Ta Miao had been so rapid that we were now said to be only some 18 miles from Liang-kaw-chuang, the nearest point on the railway, and I had some hopes of getting there next day. Hitherto we had been following the main caravan route from Ma-tsui to I Chau, but we now left it, partly in order to avoid a high pass we were told of, and partly because I wanted to stick to the river as long as possible for the sake of the survey. Foot passengers and traffic apparently preferred the shorter route, and our road was therefore deserted and solitary. A few miles further and we bade a final farewell to the Chu-ma Ho, whose course we had followed so long, and with whose clear cold waters we had such an intimate and personal acquaintance; and after crossing some low hills we entered a beautiful woodland glen where oak and birch and other familiar trees gave a peculiarly homelike aspect to the scenery; the autumn tints were on the leaves, and after the rugged mountain scenery we were used to, the easy slopes covered with shady graceful trees were a delightful

change. The "close" nature of the country was not, however, favourable to rapid surveying, and it was not till 4 p.m. that we finally cleared the woods and found ourselves in a narrow valley between low rolling grass-covered hills. There were no signs of cultivation, and, with the exception of a few solitary huts at intervals of a mile or so, the place was uninhabited, whilst long grass that reached to our knees stretched before and around us as far as the eye could see. It was a curious and very unusual type of scenery for this part of China, where the plains are usually dusty and cultivated on every square inch; but the mystery was afterwards explained when we found that we were approaching the ancestral tombs of the emperors of China, and that these solitary grass-covered valleys formed part of the "Chin-ti" (or forbidden ground), which is reserved as a sort of "buffer state" to protect the tombs from the evil spirits of wind and water which are popularly supposed to come from the north. No one is allowed to settle or to cultivate land in this area, and the huts we saw were those of the watchmen appointed to guard these preserves. I was surprised to find that no objection was raised to our passing through, but apparently the road is free to all, and indeed the next day we met crowds of coolies going to cut grass, so that presumably the reservation is not a very strict affair. We pushed on as rapidly as possible, but by dusk there was still no sign of any village to be seen, and we were therefore obliged to camp for the night in company with the evil genii of the place, who, however, did not indulge in any special manifestations for our benefit. A short walk next morning brought us to the railway at Liang-kaw-chuang, and our journey was ended. The railway at this point is a small branch line especially constructed for the conveyance of the emperor and his suite to the imperial tombs on those occasions, usually every alternate year, when he goes to worship there. The solitary morning train had left before we arrived, and as we therefore had to wait till next day, we sought the hospitality of a large lama temple close at hand, where the lamas (for a consideration) gave us capital quarters and every attention.

The time was now come to return to Tien-tsin, and, in conclusion, it may not be out of place to glance briefly at the results of the expedition. The actual journey, from the time of our leaving the railway at Cho Chau to the day of our arrival at the western tombs, had taken just fourteen and a half days, during which time we had marched 150 miles, which, deducting the day spent in climbing Peak No. 23, which is not included in the mileage, and also allowing for the day's halt at Pong-taw, gives an average of about 12 miles a day. That we did not achieve a greater speed than this is due, firstly, to the fact that a route survey was kept up the whole way, and, secondly, to the extremely rough ground we traversed, and to the numerous fords, which occasioned a great deal of delay during the first half of the journey.

This comparatively slow progress and the short time at our disposal necessarily limited the scope of our operations, and, realizing this, we made a point of, at any rate, doing our work thoroughly as far as it went, and accordingly we tried to make the survey as connected and continuous as possible, an attempt in which we were so far successful that we were able to map the Chu-ma Ho pretty thoroughly the whole way from Chang-fang to where we left it near the western tombs, and as this happened to be an unexplored part of its course, our work was of some value. Its main tributaries were also explored to some extent, and surveyed with sufficient accuracy to enable a very fair idea to be obtained of the general system, and incidentally we obtained a traverse of the rather important trade route between I Chau and Ma-tsui. From the tourist's point of view the journey proved an unqualified success, for from first to last we travelled through picturesque mountain scenery of the most striking description, and the continual exercise, combined with the rough healthy open-air life, made us as hardy and "fit" as could be, so that, as I involuntarily remarked to Abbaz Khan on the day that we returned to Tien-tsin, we were fit to walk anywhere.

Finally, I must not fail to give a word of hearty acknowledgment of the services of my fellow-travellers. Abbaz Khan showed himself throughout an industrious and careful surveyor and an intelligent and reliable subordinate, whilst the Chinese members of the party distinguished themselves by their unfailing good humour and readiness to do whatever was wanted of them. They were always cheery and full of jokes and laughter, and throughout the journey it was very rarely that I had occasion to find fault with any of them. I have already spoken of the kindness and civility of the villagers amongst whom we sojourned from time to time, and on the whole my experience during this autumn holiday gave me a strong impression of the good nature which is undoubtedly one of the leading characteristics of the Northern Chinese.

THE VOYAGE OF THE "NEPTUNE" IN NORTHERN CANADIAN WATERS.

WE have received the report of the Department of Marine and Fisheries for 1904, containing the account by Mr. A. P. Low of the voyage of the Government steamer *Neptune* in 1903-4 to Hudson bay and the archipelago to the north of it, to which reference has already been made in the *Journal*. The account is only a preliminary one, and will be followed by a full report embodying all the results of the voyage, but enough is said to show the importance of the latter for a better knowledge of the lands and seas touched upon. The surveys, which were carried out wherever practicable, and extended in all to over 2000 miles of coast, have permitted many rectifications of the charts to be made, while Mr. Low's qualifications as a geologist render his observations on the nature of the formations met with of