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Review: Peary's 'Northward over the Great Ice'

Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 12, No. 5 (Nov., 1898), pp. 498-500

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1774525>

Accessed: 27-06-2016 03:52 UTC

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the ice-period, and lava-currents have flowed thence through the valleys down to the low country; such a pre-glacial stream appears distinctly, *e.g.*, in Flókadalur. The valleys here prove to be of much more ancient date than the ice-period. The mountains behind the Borgarfjord consist at the bottom of basalt, but in their upper parts of tufa and breccia. Hereabouts are several interesting deep lakes, as, for example, Beydarvatn and Hvalvatn, which seem to have been formed by glaciers during the ice-period. The lake-basins seem to be tertiary; afterwards the cavities may have been filled up with tufa and breccia, and these rocky substances eroded and carried away by the glaciers.

"At the end of my journey I made several excursions to volcanoes on the Begkjanes peninsula, in order to examine various volcanic crevices and craters."

PEARY'S 'NORTHWARD OVER THE GREAT ICE.'*

LIEUT. PEARY has personally presented to the Society a concise account of his arctic work, which is published in the *Journal*, vol. xi. p. 213. There could be no better epitome than that paper of the work now published in two handsome volumes very rich in illustrations—not less than eight hundred photographs—but only poorly supplied with maps. No doubt a new map of Smith sound is being prepared, for Mr. Peary, with his opportunities of sledging and boat-journeys along the coast, has been able to make very considerable corrections on the existing charts. The book is avowedly popular; the results of the very laborious scientific observations of many kinds, which were constantly made, have still to be worked up by specialists, and will appear as separate monographs. Still, the meteorological data are published in some detail, and there is also a fair account of the ethnology of the Smith sound tribe, with a complete census of all the inhabitants by name.

The illustrative photographs are very interesting, especially those of the people, which are unique. During the long darkness of the winter night, a great deal of work was done in photographing types of the natives by flash-light, and these pictures show a surprising development of physique. Much of the interest of the book necessarily lies in the description of the people and their ways. The account of their house-building is particularly instructive. The clean-cut, symmetrical beehives of transparent ice with which one associates the

* 'Northward over the Great Ice: a narrative of life and work along the shores and upon the interior ice-cap of Northern Greenland in the years 1886 and 1891-97, with a description of the little tribe of Smith Sound Eskimos, the most northerly human beings in the world, and an account of the discovery and bringing home of the "Saviksue," or great Cape York meteorites.' By Robert E. Peary, Civil Engineer U.S.N. In two volumes. London: Methuen & Co. 1898.

Eskimo do not appear to be erected by these people, who live in *tupiks* (tents or huts of skin) in summer, and in *igloos*, partly excavated, partly stone-built dwellings, in winter. The winter igloos seem to be appropriated by any family which fancies them for the time, and are not private property. There are some interesting reproductions of native drawings, showing considerable skill, and a couple of native maps of the coast-line, drawn offhand to show the position and succession of the capes and bays.

Although Mr. Peary, in his anxiety to avoid the introduction of "padding," says very little indeed of the work of previous arctic travellers, and expressly excludes "the stock chapter on equipment," he lets drop many valuable hints on the latter subject. He is a believer in furs as the only practicable material for arctic clothing, and only tolerates woollen underclothing. With proper furs, he never felt cold even with the thermometer at -60° Fahr., and a strong wind blowing. He slept in the open air, and without a sleeping-bag latterly, contenting himself with the erection of a snow wall to keep off the wind.

The introduction contains a full account of the way in which the expenses of the various expeditions were met. It is not too much to say that the whole of the money was raised by the individual efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Peary, by their books, lectures, the conveyance of independent scientific parties in their chartered ships, and by inducing a few societies and a few individuals to contribute small sums. There was no government assistance or encouragement. Each year it was harder for Lieut. Peary to extort an extension of leave from the Navy department. For determined and persevering effort in the face of difficulties and disappointments, this series of explorations has had few equals. The story of the whole work is admirably told, with a wonderful command of language and descriptive force, but always in a modest way, making the least of trouble and danger and the most of the help rendered by companions and natives alike.

In the arrangement of the book, the excellent plan is followed of supplementing the narrative of each expedition by a note of the objects with which it was undertaken, and a summary of the results obtained; so that the essential facts are not lost in the multiplicity of details which makes up the narrative.

The introduction concludes with some words on the utility of polar exploration that are worthy of being remembered—

"Were I asked to enumerate all the possible advantages of arctic explorations, I should say frankly I cannot do so, any more than I or any one else could have said, fifteen or twenty years ago, that an insignificant grass growing on the banks of a tropical river would make our incandescent electric light a possibility. It would not be at all strange if, in a region of the strangest contrasts, where active volcanoes are found surrounded by eternal snow and ice, and where the poppy—

symbol of warmth and sleep and luxury—blossoms at the very foot of the crags of icy glaciers, some materials were found which would make possible some yet unknown necessity of our future civilization.

“But suppose we admit that arctic exploration is only a matter of sentiment, with no money return, no increase of commerce, no fruit of colonization, no harvest of great good for many men. Let it stand as a sentiment; it has good company. Love and patriotism and religion are matters of sentiment, and we ask no money return for them.”

THE RESOURCES AND MEANS OF COMMUNICATION OF CHINA.*

By GEO. G. CHISHOLM, M.A., B.Sc.

“We are on the eve,” says Mr. Colquhoun, “of an industrial development in China which will revolutionize the world.”† It is many years since such a revolution has been anticipated as destined to come about sooner or later by many of those acquainted with the resources of China, though it is only quite recently that that country has come to engage the attention of all the world. What the precise nature of the economic changes likely to ensue on the complete opening up of China may be, it is impossible to foretell. They are sure to be complex, but they are sure to be great. Looking at the future dispassionately, and laying aside all national bias, one may say that the process of evolution likely to go on within the next generation, through the application of modern methods of production and transport in China, may be expected to be as interesting as any that has taken place in history since the discovery of the seaway to India, or, at least, since the introduction of steam-driven machinery into Europe. The present time, therefore, is opportune for considering the facts, and with that view the present article and the accompanying map have been prepared.

DENSITY OF POPULATION.

That the indications on this head furnished by the map can be taken only as rough approximations hardly needs to be mentioned. The data on which such indications must be based are altogether too uncertain to make it worth while, or even reasonable, to enter into nice calculations. I will merely state, therefore, that the figures on which the indications on the map are founded are those contained in the eighth number of the *Bevölkerung der Erde* (Gotha, 1891), p. 105, where the total population of China proper, excluding Manchuria, but including at that time Formosa (to which a population of 3,000,000 is ascribed), is taken at 350,000,000 in round numbers.‡ The grounds on which this total and its distribution among the several provinces are based are set forth in the pages preceding the table referred to.

Whatever may be the truth as to the absolute numbers of the population of China, there can be little doubt that the different tints on the map at p. 552 give at least a fair indication of the differences in density of population of different

* Map and Sections, p. 552.

† ‘China in Transformation,’ p. 152.

‡ For a much lower estimate (282,000,000), and the reasons on which it is based, see a paper by Sir Richard Temple, in the *Jour. Stat. Soc.*, vol. xlviii. pp. 1–20.