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Notes and news

A. C. Yate

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NOTES AND NEWS

CAPTAIN F. M. BAILEY'S LATEST EXPLORATION

CAPTAIN F. M. BAILEY, of the Indian Army, is the elder son of the late Colonel Frederick Bailey, of the Royal Engineers, who, after prolonged service in the Forest Department of the Government of India, retired, and succeeded Mr. Silva White as Secretary of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, a post which he held till within a few years of his death, which took place at the end of 1912. Thus the son was brought up in society and surroundings calculated to nurture and develop any natural bent for exploration. The last letter which I received from Colonel Frederick Bailey is dated June 12, 1912, and was written shortly after the Gill Memorial had been awarded by the Royal Geographical Society to his son, who, to quote the terms of the Royal Geographical Society award, "in 1904 was personally attached to Captain Rawlings, the leader of the expedition from Lhasa through Tibet, and has quite recently" (April to August, 1911) "carried out an important journey from China to Assam by way of Batang and Rima on the Upper Lohit, making a careful traverse of the route." Colonel Bailey's letter naturally reflects the pride which he felt in the success of his son's enterprise, and concludes with an expression of regret that the obligatory exclusion of all political matter detracted from the interest of the paper, descriptive of his son's last journey, which appeared in the April numbers of the Royal and Royal Scottish Geographical publications for 1912.

It is a difficult matter for one who has never approached nearer to the borderland of Assam and Western China than the Kunlon Ferry over the Salween, and who has consequently been unable to follow the records of exploration along the marches of South-West Se-Chuan and South-East Tibet with that closeness which personal knowledge facilitates, to weigh with accuracy and impartiality the parts played by a succession of explorers in achieving the solution which has now been effected. Very recently Mr. F. Kingdon Ward has brought out the account of his travels along this frontier from April to December, 1911, in a volume entitled "The Land of the Blue Poppy." Had Captain Bailey been in search of a picturesque title for his monograph on this country, I conceive that he would have blossomed into "The Land of the Yellow Poppy"; for I cull the following from the early part of his article: "Below the pass I saw some magnificent yellow poppies, one of which measured $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter." After some study of Captain Bailey's own paper, of Mr. Bentinck's lecture before the Royal Geographical Society, delivered on December 2, 1912, and the discussion which followed it, and of the information afforded by Mr. Kingdon Ward, I come to the conclusion that the obstacle which stood in the way of the passage of Europeans from China into the valley of the Brahmaputra was the Lamas of South-East Tibet, and not so much the Mishmi tribe. Prince Henri d'Orléans and Mr. E. C. Young, we are informed, took more southerly routes than that followed by Captain Bailey, and did not touch Tibetan territory. M. Bacot and other French travellers are also referred to, but I have not within easy command any record of their journeys. Major

H. R. Davies, of the Oxfordshire Light Infantry, Gold Medallist of the Royal Geographical Society, who, as a very young officer, in 1887 accompanied the Northern Shan Expedition from Mandalay to the Salween, evidently did in 1900 endeavour to cross into Tibetan territory; for Captain Bailey, when speaking of his own passage of the bridge over the Mekong near Yen-ching, adds: "It was at this bridge that Major Davies and his companions were turned back in 1900; the Lamas fired on the party, and eventually cut the rope bridge." It is interesting to note that Major Davies' search for an Indo-Chinese railway route brought him to this point. Ever since the Trans-Persian Railway was mooted, the idea has suggested itself to me that the great trans-Continental railway of the future from Calais, via Constantinople or the Caucasus, and via Calcutta to the Pacific Coast at Shanghai and Canton, would have to follow the Upper Lohit Valley and the route explored by Captain Bailey. But an examination of the heights recorded on Captain Bailey's plan seems to negative altogether this idea. Between the Salween and the Mekong runs from north to south an obviously formidable range of mountains. A careful study of Stieler's map seems to show that Assam is divided from China, as France is from Italy, by mountains which tunnelling alone can render penetrable by railways. The passage of a railway, whether from the valley of the Brahmaputra or the valley of the Irrawaddy to that of the Yangtse-Kiang, is an engineering enterprise of the first magnitude, but, we may reasonably infer, is within the compass of human skill and ingenuity.

It should be noted that Captain Bailey mentions that there is a French mission-station at Yerkals, evidently near the left or east bank of the Mekong. It was obviously from the Tibetans west of the Mekong that opposition was anticipated. There is a sentence at the beginning of Mr. Bentinck's paper which is not to an outsider easy of explanation. It runs thus: "I have nothing to say on the two missions which were working simultaneously with us; the Mishmi Mission on the Upper Lohit covered little ground that had not been previously visited by Mr. Needham and Mr. Williamson, and described by them," etc. Whatever this mission may have been to which Mr. Bentinck refers, it has no bearing on the task which Captain Bailey had to accomplish—viz., that of traversing Eastern Tibet from Yen-ching on the Mekong, through Menkong on the Salween, to Rima on the Upper Lohit. As has been pointed out before, the difficulty lay in crossing the south-eastern corner of Tibet. It was evidently the opinion of one, if not more, of the experienced surveyors and explorers of India, that the concentration and proximity of the Abor Expedition in 1911 had facilitated the passage of Captain Bailey from Yen-ching to Rima. Considering the distance of Kobo and the Abor country from Yen-ching—viz., 250 to 300 miles—we may be excused if we do not attach much importance to this view. A very able explorer and orator at the 1912 anniversary dinner of the Royal Geographical Society put the idea most happily in the words, "thus luck backs pluck"; but even the happiness of the phraseology could not gild the suggestion in the eyes of some people. As a matter of fact, the expedition under General Sir Hamilton Bower turned its attention entirely to the country north and north-west of Sadiya, up the basin of the Dihong River. It must have been a deep disappointment to the survey party, which reached a point on the Dihong some sixty miles north-north-west of Kebang, that they could not push farther to the north-west and solve that problem—namely, the identity of the San-po and the Brahmaputra, the honour of the definite solution of which has been reserved

for Captain Bailey and Captain Morshead. Before embarking on this subject, let me give, for the information of those who desire to study more closely the geography of the Indo-Chinese frontier, references to the *Journals* of the Royal Geographical Society which record the achievements of the principal recent explorers prior to Captain Bailey :

1. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* for December, 1896. Account of Prince Henri d'Orléans' journey from Tonkin across Yunnan into Assam.

2. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* for December, 1900. Report of the survey of the Burma-Sechuan Railway, by Captains H. R. Davies (Oxfordshire Light Infantry) and E. C. Pottinger (R.A.), and Lieutenants Watts-Jones and Hunter (R.E.).

3. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* for October, 1901. Report of Captain Robertson on the Northern Mishmi Country and the Dibang River, supplementing Colonel Woodthorpe's exploration in 1877-78.

4. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* for October, 1902. Report on the country of the Mishmis.

5. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* for February, 1903. Paper on the "Exploration of Western China," by Captain Ryder, followed by a discussion in which Major H. R. Davies (under whom Captain Ryder served), Sir T. Holdich, and others, take part. Captain Ryder's map appeared with the August, 1903, number of the Royal Geographical Society's *Journal*.

6. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* for August, 1907. Report of the journey of Mr. E. C. Young from Yunnan-fu to Sadiya ; with map.

7. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* for August, 1908, pp. 181-183. Reports on the journeys of M. Jacques Bacot and Captain D'Ollone in South-Eastern Tibet and Western Sechuan.

8. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. xxxiv., 1909 : p. 75, (a) Review of "Yunnan, the Link between India and the Yangtse," by Major H. R. Davies ; p. 363, (b) "The Lohit-Brahmaputra, between Assam and Eastern Tibet," by Noël Williamson.

This last journey, undertaken in the winter of 1907-08 by a frontier officer who fell a victim to Abor savagery in 1911, was an important step towards opening up the route between the Mekong and the Lohit which Captain Bailey finally traversed.

Having thus passed briefly in review the performances of those who, within the last quarter of a century, have lifted the geographical veil which formerly overhung the country, mostly mountainous and permeated by rivers of proportions commensurate with the great ranges that separated them, where China, Burma, Assam, and Tibet meet, I propose to summarize with equal or greater brevity the information we possess regarding the hitherto supposed, and now proven, identity of the San-po and Brahmaputra. The address delivered by Mr. Bentinck before the Royal Geographical Society on December 2, 1912 (*vide Journal* for February, 1913), on "The Geographical Results of the Abor Expedition," followed by a discussion in which Lord Curzon, Sir Thomas Holdich, Sir H. Bower, and Captain Bethell, took part, practically enables me, aided by articles which appeared in the *Times of India* of November 19, and the *Scotsman* (Captain Bailey is an Edinburgh man) of November 21 last, to do this. It is interesting to recall that at the close of Sir F. Younghusband's Tibet Mission it was proposed (see his "India and Tibet," chap. xx.) to send Mr. Claude White and Captain Ryder, escorted by the 8th Gurkhas, to follow the course of

the San-po to Sadiya, and, as Sir F. Younghusband puts it (p. 328), "to discover how and where this mighty river cuts its way clean through the main axis of the Himalayas, and to see the falls and rapids which are involved in a drop from 11,500 to 500 feet. . . . All that was wanting was the sanction of the Government of India, and that, unfortunately, at the last moment was not forthcoming. . . . It was a pity, and a sad disappointment to many, for it will be *many a year* before we again have such an opportunity of solving what is one of the greatest remaining geographical problems." Younghusband's expedition to Lhasa took place in 1904, and his book appeared in the autumn of 1910. His "*many a year*" represents a much shorter period than anyone, even the Government of India itself, could have ventured to predict. Of Captain Bailey, the solver of the problem, Sir F. Younghusband thus writes: "Lieutenant Bailey, 82nd Pioneers, a keen and adventurous officer, who had distinguished himself with the Mounted Infantry, and in his leisure moments learnt Tibetan, was also attached to the (Captain Rawlings's) party to proceed to India." We can well understand the disappointment felt both by the Lhasa Expedition of 1904 and by the Abor Expedition of 1911, that circumstances denied to them the honour of solving the San-po-Dihong problem. The 8th Gurkhas accompanied both expeditions, and in the Abor country Lieutenant-Colonel J. A. Wilson's two trained dogs attracted much attention.

It will be noted that, after all, Sir Thomas Holdich's confidence in the accuracy of Kinthup's report is justified. Just six weeks ago an officer who has had a long and close connection with Himalayan travel wrote to me these words: "I am very interested in all (Himalayan) exploration, particularly of the San-po. How is it Kinthup was never questioned about his journey after we found his account did not agree with our experiences? He was still alive in Kalimpong." That seems to be a question for the Survey of India to answer. Mr. Bentinck's scepticism is so frankly and humorously expressed that, even though he be wrong, we readily pardon his error. Lord Curzon was pleased to compliment him on "his vein of subacid humour, which must have rendered him a most agreeable companion of journeys in those parts." He is no less agreeable to read. His testimony to the personality of Mr. Noël Williamson, and to the misunderstandings which led to his murder, move us to mutter, "Oh, the pity of it!" as we did when we heard of the murder of Lieutenant Boyd Alexander, and as I remember doing nearly forty years ago, when Lieutenant William Holcombe, an old Shrewsbury schoolfellow, met on the Assam border the fate that in 1911 befell Messrs. Williamson and Gregorson.

We may dismiss without remark Captain Bethell's theory, sceptically received as it was at the time by the President of the Royal Geographical Society and by Sir Thomas Holdich. What interests us more is the evidence of Sir Thomas Holdich, who quotes and supports Kinthup, and, furthermore, quotes Colonel Waddell, the author of a notable book on Tibet, in support of the native explorer. Waddell states that many Tibetans bore witness to the existence of the falls—falls, however, as Sir T. Holdich adds, "only 70 feet" high. Mr. Bentinck sums up the case in these words: "The river among the snows is said to be deep, narrow, and very rapid, and the banks precipitous; again, *nothing was known of any falls*. It may be remembered that, while on the Dihong the river in a course of not less than 85 miles, from Singging to Gyala, has to drop some 10,000 feet, the Teesta, not so very far west" (about 400 miles), "descends 16,000 feet in a course of 70 miles *without any falls at all*."

Of the rapidity of the Dihong current Mr. Bentinck writes: "The river narrows here"—i.e., at Riga, a little north of Kebang—"to about 120 yards, and the current was approximately $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour, the river being then at its lowest." The geologist of Mr. Bentinck's party could not get exact soundings, but estimated the depth of the river to be not less than 80 feet. "Close under the bank there was no bottom at 60 feet."

Such is the evidence with which geographers were left a year ago, when Mr. Bentinck addressed the Royal Geographical Society; and if we needed any proof of the fitness of Lord Curzon for the post of President of that Society, it would be found in the remarks with which he closed the discussion. He says: "For myself, I have always imagined that the falls do not exist in the form of any substantial cataract, but are probably a series of rapids of no very great elevation, though capable of being misrepresented as, or even of being mistaken for, falls." He then asks Captain Bethell what he proposes to do with the San-po if it is not accounted for by the Dihong. Finally, allowing himself a digression after his own heart, he says, in compliment to Mr. Bentinck: "During the time I was in India I can recall no successful expedition which was not in the main successful because of the abilities of the Political Officer." His lordship, indeed, boldly throws down the gauntlet. The experiences of the Government of India from 1838 to 1842 were such, that General Sir George Pollock was sent up, *with full military and political powers*, to relieve Jalalabad and revenge our reverses at and near Kabul. Since then a Political Officer has, as a rule, been attached to the staff of the senior military officer commanding an expedition, and his position in no sense entitles him to take the credit away from his superior. In fact, the self-assertiveness of the Political Officer has on numerous occasions been a serious embarrassment to the military officer in command of an expedition. On the other hand, the local knowledge of the Political Officer is of great service to his military superior. As a counterpoise to Lord Curzon's opinion, it is well to quote what Sir Mortimer Durand, himself an ex-Indian civilian, says in his *Life of Sir Alfred Lyall* (p. 226) on Politicals in time of war: "It has usually been thought desirable in our Eastern wars to have a staff of Political Officers with our armies. They carry on the dealings between the General in command and the natives of the country, collect intelligence and sometimes supplies, and keep the Government in touch with all that is going on. *They have often been given a position of too much independence*, and their proceedings have been much resented by military commanders; but in countries where military operations are not carried on by regular armies on both sides it has been found impracticable to dispense with them, and many commanders have known how to make good use of their services." This states the case from a different and, in my opinion, more correct point of view. I treated this subject at much greater length in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review* for July, 1900.

Captains Bailey and Morshead have, it would appear, since their arrival at Calcutta on November 17, kept their own counsel. Captain Bailey's mother received on the morning of Monday, November 17, a cablegram from her son announcing his safe arrival at Calcutta. It was not till the 19th that Reuter passed this intelligence on to the British Isles, and on the 20th the same agency falls back on "Captain Bailey's followers" for the information that "they saw no gigantic falls on the Brahmaputra, but that at the spot where the native explorer Kintchap had located the falls the river did drop about 50 feet in

80 yards. The prognostications of geographical experts hereby receive ample confirmation. The very nature of the country and peoples amid which the explorers moved precluded the possibility of communication between them and the civilized world. I gather that Mrs. Bailey heard nothing from her son between June 5 and November 17—an anxious time! Still, on November 2 a friend well qualified to judge wrote to me: “Young Bailey will turn up all right, you will see.” And so it has proved, and we rejoice at his success and safe return.

A. C. YATE.

P.S.—For a most remarkable specimen of an Abor suspension bridge, *vide Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* for August, 1912, pp. 213-215. The first glimpse suggests a spider's web. Scientific and engineering facilities considered and compared, the Forth Bridge would appear to me called upon to yield the palm to that of the Dihong. Further, I appeal to geographers to differentiate between Dihong and Dibong. In Stieler's Atlas, again, they are printed Dihang and Dibang. I feel tempted to murmur, “D—both.”—A. C. Y.

INDIAN SURVEYS: THE LINK WITH RUSSIA.

A connection with Russian surveys has always been the aspiration of Indian surveyors. Both countries; Russia and India, possess a magnificent system of geodetic triangulation. In Russia this system is based on the observatory at Pulkova, in India on the observatory at Madras. Pulkova as a part of the general European system has been linked to Madras by determinations of differential longitude through the telegraph, but the two survey systems have never been brought into the same general geodetic scheme until quite recently. During the progress of the Pamir Boundary Commission, which determined the limits of Russian territory on the extreme north-east of Afghanistan in 1895, triangulation was carried by irregular methods across the Hindu Kush from a Punjab frontier series to Lake Victoria in the Pamirs; and a junction was there effected with the Russian trans-Caspian geographical surveys in order to fix an initial point for the take-off of the boundary work which should be common to both. The agreement as to the absolute position of the pillar at the eastern end of Lake Victoria was very satisfactory, and was quite sufficient to furnish a basis for a scientific determination of the whole line of boundary pillars. Such a result could, however, only be accepted as provisional, and in no way could it answer the purposes of a strictly scientific geodetic connection. During the last five years triangulation has been run by Indian surveyors from Rawal Pindi to Chilas, and thence over the ranges west of Nanga Parbat and the Ladakh range to the Kailas range near Gilgit. From the neighbourhood of Gilgit it has been carried northward by the Hunza-Nagar line of approach over the Hindu Kush into the Tagdumbash Pamir, where, near the Chinese post of Bayik, a junction is effected with two Russian stations, Kukhtek and Sarblok. It is impossible to estimate the value of this northern extension of Indian triangulation as a unit in the general geodetic system of world measurement until we know exactly the value of Russian trans-Caspian triangulation; nor must it be overlooked that much of the Indian series has necessarily been confined within the limits of comparatively narrow mountain valleys hedged in with gigantic ranges, so that the length of the rays, or sides, involved in the figures of the series must be shorter than is usually admissible in first-class triangulation. On the other hand, the scientific value of a series such as this, carried through a mountain

region with stations of observation some of which probably reach 19,000 feet in altitude, must be of supreme value in clearing up many doubtful problems in refraction and other matters incidental to a highly rarefied atmosphere. It is a notable performance, and it will stand as a permanent record of the enterprise of Indian surveyors. Incidentally it shows us what may be accomplished by the use of comparatively small and light and perfectly graduated instruments. The work was commenced by Mr. J. de Graaf Hunter, and carried on by Lieutenant H. G. Bell, R.E., who died on the Pamirs ere it was completed. Lieutenant K. Mason, R.E., was in command of the detachment which brought it to a conclusion last year. The extreme barrenness and the inhospitable ruggedness of the country, the difficulty of finding accessible hills up which the instruments could be taken and from which good figures could be obtained, and the severe task of finding supplies, made the work a good deal more than interesting; it involved strenuous effort equalling that of any ordinary Antarctic exploration. The interests of zoology, botany, geology, and meteorology, were all well cared for by Captain R. W. G. Hingston, I.M.S., who accompanied the party.

T. H. H.

German Railway Construction in North China.—In the *Times* of December 24, 1913, appear the following details of an Agreement arrived at between the German Minister in Peking and the Chinese Minister for Foreign Affairs for the construction of two new German railways in China:

"The Agreement concerns two lines. The first is a railway from Kowmi on the existing Shantung Railway via Ichowfu to a point where the Tientsin-Pukow Railway cuts the Imperial Canal at Hanchwang or at some other terminus on the Tientsin-Pukow Railway and the canal which may be found in the course of the negotiation of the details. Secondly, the Tientsin-Pukow and the Peking-Hankow Railways are to be joined together by a line running approximately from Tsinanfu to Shuntufu, the details in this case also being left for further negotiation. Both railways are to be built as Chinese State railways with German capital, German materials, and a German head-engineer, who will remain in the Chinese service for as long a period as the loan agreement runs. The details regarding the routes and regarding finance are to be settled by German and Chinese special Commissioners, if possible in the course of the next three months, so that the work could be begun next year. If both railways cannot be built simultaneously, the Kowmi-Ichowfu line would be begun first. The German Shantung Railway and the two new Chinese State Railways will co-ordinate their tariffs by 'friendly' agreement, so that 'co-operation of all the railways in the opening up of the provinces that come in question will be assured.' The capital requirements for both railways are estimated at from £3,500,000 to £4,000,000."

Railway in Manchuria.—An agreement for the construction of a railway from Taonan to Chinchow in Southern Manchuria has been signed by the Japanese Minister in Peking.

Julfa-Tabriz Railway.—The Julfa-Tabriz line was started in November last from both termini of the line simultaneously. The engineering difficulties are few, and there is, apparently, no reason why the line should not be completed by the spring of 1915.

The Orient Railway.—At a meeting in Vienna on December 15, Count Vitali, President of the Régie Générale des Chemins de Fer, and Dr. von Adler,

the Austro-Hungarian representative on the Financial Commission, discussed, with the representatives of the Austrian and Hungarian banks which hold the majority of the Orient Railway Company shares, the affairs of the company. Four points were raised :

1. The foundation of Servian and Greek companies for the exploitation of the lines which already exist or will eventually be constructed in the new Greek and Servian territories.

2. The capital and management of these companies to be in French, Austro-Hungarian, Servian (or Greek) hands in a proportion which has yet to be fixed.

3. The foundation of a French Railway Trust Company in which the Austro-Hungarian and French shares of the capital of the "national" companies would be deposited.

4. Complete equality between the French and Austro-Hungarian elements in the share capital and management of the Trust Company.

For the time being the Austro-Hungarian Government is believed to insist on the application of the provisions of the *Convention à quatre* to all railways in the new Servian territory.

Asia Minor Railways.—It is reported from St. Petersburg that the agreement arrived at in 1901 between Russia and Turkey with regard to railway construction in Asia Minor has been revised. By this revision Russia retains control over all railways constructed in Armenia in the zone adjacent to the Caucasus. Such railways may be constructed by others than Russians, but only with the consent of Russia.

Baghdad-Teheran Route.—News comes that the great caravan route of the Baghdad-Teheran road between Khanikin on the Turkish frontier and Hamadan is in a troublous and disturbed condition. The unruly tribes have stopped their old methods of plundering the caravans, and have since the autumn taken to levying tribute for safe-conduct. These extortions, though quite variable and capricious, represent something like a 10 per cent. toll on the value of the goods, and the winter trade has in consequence been stopped. The Khanikin-Hamadan road is in the Russian sphere, but it is not the route by which the Russian trade goes. That route is well guarded, and Russian trade is increasing while that of Great Britain is decreasing. Lancashire's interest in the Persian trade and the Baghdad-Teheran route is enormous, the Manchester trade alone amounting in a normal year to some £2,000,000, and the demand of the Manchester merchants is that the British trade route through Kermanshah to Hamadan should be made safe and be protected by the Swedish Gendarmerie rather than by Farman Pasha's police.

Journey across Arabia.—The exploration of the Ruba el Khali Desert, a region of over 600,000 square miles, is the object of an expedition by the Countess Molitor. Although no definite plan can be made before departure, the general plan of the Countess is to proceed by the Medina Railway to Daira, thence to strike east to Teima, a fortnight's journey across the mountains. Thence the traveller will make for Tamreh, another three weeks' mountain journey. No places are marked on the map of the desert beyond Tamreh, and there are 1,200 miles of unexplored desert to be crossed before Muscat, Countess Molitor's objective will be reached.

Turco-Persian Frontier.—The greater part of this frontier was defined under the protocol signed in Constantinople on November 17 by the Grand Vizier, and the British, Russian, and Persian Ambassadors. The Commission

met in Mohammerah on December 10, the British representative being Mr. A. C. Wratislaw, and it is expected that the work of demarcation will take about eighteen months. In cases where the Turkish and Persian Commissioners cannot agree, the points in dispute will be decided by the British and Russian Commissioners, to whom such power has been assigned.

Russia and Mongolia.—An agreement recently concluded between Russia and China recognizes the autonomy of Outer Mongolia subject to the suzerainty of China.

New Land to the North of Siberia.—A large body of land was discovered in September last by the Russian Expedition which annually surveys the northernmost coast of Siberia with the view of rendering commercially practicable the northern sea-route to the Far East. This land, discovered by Captain Wilitsky, extends for over 200 miles about latitude 78 north, longitude 104, coming to an end in latitude 81 and longitude 96 east.

Education in China.—University Extension lines have been followed in China in organizing an educational project under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A. of China. The National Committee of the Association arrange lectures in science, art, sociology, etc., for those who have not had the benefit of University education. The scheme has achieved great popularity, and has done much to enlarge the intellectual outlook of the people.

Anglo-Chinese Friendship Bureau.—This is the name taken by an association formed to promote friendly intercourse between this country and China, particularly through the aid of Chinese students and others during their residence in England. The Chinese students now number several hundreds, and such an association will undoubtedly prove very valuable both to them and to the English people brought into contact with them thereby. The Bureau will also provide information and introduction to Englishmen going out to take up professional or business positions in China. It has opened offices at 17, Bouverie Street, E.C.

The Japanese Diet.—The Rikkendoshikai, the party of the late Prince Katsura, have elected to the leadership of the party Baron Kato, the late Ambassador in London.

Exploration in Chinese Turkestan.—The year 1913 witnessed a renewed activity in the archæological exploration of Chinese Turkestan. Germany was first in the field, Dr. von Le Coq having left Berlin at the end of March. He is expected back in May next. His operations have been chiefly in the neighbourhood of Kuchar, a region so productive previously, whence he will bring back a very large quantity of archæological, if not of literary, *trouvailles*.

From Paris, M. Gauthiot made a journey in the summer to the Pamirs, for the purpose of studying the Yaghnobe dialect. He has now returned. His Soghdian Grammar is now announced.

At the beginning of August, Sir M. A. Stein commenced his third expedition on behalf of the Government of India. He reached the Pamirs by an unexplored route from the Indus Valley via Chilas and the Darkot Pass, and arrived safely at Kashgar. His caravan was organized in due course, and he is now in the desert (see the *Geographical Journal*, December, 1913, pp. 540-599).

Exploration in Western Turkestan.—On May 1 of last year (1913) a party of eight left Munich, under the auspices of the Deutsch-Oesterreichischer Alpenverein, to explore the mountain regions of Eastern Bokhara.

The expedition, which was led by W. R. Rickmers, and included the geologist

Dr. von Klebelsberg, the topographer Dr. Deimler, and the meteorologist Professor von Ficker of Graz, started from Samarkand, and made its way eastwards by Sharshauz, Karatagh, and Garm, to the Range of Peter the Great. Leaving the Surkhob River, they proceeded southwards to the great plateau of Tupchek, whence various minor expeditions were organized for the ascent and study of the mountains and glaciers of this region.

An interesting feature of the journey was the exploration of the Garmo Glacier, the source of the Khingob River, until now unpenetrated by any European. The topographical work done here and elsewhere by the expedition will help to fill up many blank spaces in the map, while the observations on the geology and glaciation of the regions visited are of the highest value.

The Khingob Glacier was the most easterly, the Panj River the most southerly, point touched by the expedition, a part of which made its way back by Kuliab, Kabadian, Baisun, and Karshi, to Bokhara, while the other returned by a more direct route to Samarkand. The journey occupied about six months. In addition to scientific observations, about thirty different peaks were climbed by various members of the party.—C. M. R.

The Island of Rhodes.—We must seek probably in the general ignorance of the past history of Rhodes the solution of the fact that even the most classical of our British journals fail to grasp the idea that the history of the past may possibly, under fostering influences, have some bearing upon the future destiny of this island. Personally, ever since Italy occupied it, I have been allowing my mind to ruminate, academically, upon the possibility of restoring it to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. At a time when an ungrateful Europe, headed by Philippe IV. of France (*Le Bel*—Heaven save the mark!) and his creature, Clement V., were diabolically suppressing the Templars, and doing nothing themselves either to check the Turk or protect the Holy Land, the Hospitallers (*alias* Knights of St. John) were quietly occupying and fortifying Rhodes. The Byzantine Emperor of the moment, *Græculus esuriens*, could not protect Rhodes himself, and refused the Hospitallers' offer to hold it for him, acknowledging his suzerainty. The refusal decided the Grand Master to hold it without permission; and so well did they hold it that it was not until sixty-nine years after the Grand Signor had taken Constantinople that the Turks succeeded in driving them out. To tell the story of the sieges which they underwent, and of the incessant naval warfare which they waged against Turk and corsair, is beyond the scope of this short note. Their defence of Rhodes was magnificent; the history of the sieges must be read. For a time they held Smyrna, but Taimur (Tamerlane) the Lame drove them from it, and also, I think, took their fortified slave-refuge at Budrum, built of the masonry of the ancient Halicarnassus. Budrum for a century was the haven of refuge of the escaped Christian slave. If anyone would read of Rhodes, of the Knights, and of Budrum, I must refer him to the fine library at St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell, the principal remnant of the old Grand Priory of England. If any would know what slavery in the hands of the Turk, or Moor, or Barbary corsair meant, let me refer him to Sir Lambert Playfair's "*The Scourge of Christendom*." The successful defence of Rhodes by the Knights in 1480 won for them the devotion of all Christendom. Their evacuation of it on January 1, 1523, *with all the honours of war*, after a six months' siege, drew from the lips of Charles V. the words, "Never was a place more nobly lost." Then he gave them Malta. This suffices to justify my contention that, theoretically, no one has a better right to Rhodes

than the Knights of St. John. Since 1523 many are the vicissitudes through which they have passed, viz.: The secession of the bailiwick of Brandenburg at the time of Luther's reformation; the suppression of the Order in England and Ireland by Henry VIII. in 1539, and in Scotland in 1563; and finally the revolution in France (1792) and Napoleon's seizure of Malta (1798). The Order has survived those vicissitudes, and holds a high position throughout Christendom, firstly by the distinction of many of those who are numbered among its members, and secondly by the eminence to which it has attained as a promoter of "first aid" and ambulance work. There exists first and foremost the Catholic Order, with its headquarters and Grand Master at Rome, and its grand priories in Austria, Italy, and Bohemia, and its "associations" in France, Spain, England, and Germany; secondly, the Johanniter Order at Berlin; and last, but not least in distinction and power, the Grand Priory of England. Independent as these three actually are of each other at this moment, there seems no reason why a closer union should not be formed. After two centuries of estrangement, the Brandenburg bailiwick returned, some time in the first half of the eighteenth century, into the fold of the Order. The Grand Priory of England has its Ophthalmic Hospital at Jerusalem on a site granted by the Sultan. The Johanniter Order holds the Muristan of Jerusalem, the old site of the Order's *chef-lieu*, presented, I believe, by the Sultan to the Crown Prince Frederick forty-five years ago. The French Republic has just shown that, though its earliest aspirations after "*liberté, égalité, fraternité*" took the form of unfettered madness, the reverence for the great traditions of the past has returned. France, with the consent of Italy and Turkey, has secured possession of the finest of the three old *auberges* (inns or hostels) which belonged to the French Knights of Provence, Auvergne, and France in the fifteenth century. Everyone knows that they stand to-day much as they were left, with the arms of their countries, Grand Masters, Grand Crosses, and Knights carved upon them.

Amid the obvious uncertainty which, owing to the susceptibilities of the Great Powers and the ambitions of Italy, Turkey, and Greece, encircles the destiny of the Ægean Islands, one possible solution of a difficult situation which might satisfy all suggests itself. It is understood that the Ægean Islands, when allotted, are not to be fortified or used as naval bases. Rhodes, administered by the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem—and in making this suggestion I presume the united action of the *chef-lieux* of Rome, London and Berlin—under the guarantee of the Great Powers, would surely be, by the very cosmopolitanism of its administrators, exempt from such temptations as might be calculated to once more sow and foster the seeds of discord. The traditions of Rhodes claim for it emancipation from Turkish rule. If Christendom wills that no one Power holds it, then let the Knights hold it in the name of all the Powers. It has had a great commercial past. It will have a greater commercial future; for, whatever others may do, the Grand Priory of England will, we trust, extend to them the privileges of the "open door."—A. C. YARRE.