A Journey to Tashirak in Southern Tibet, and the Eastern Approaches to Mount Everest:
Discussion

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in Lhonak, thence by the The La, 17,400 feet, and Tangchung La, 16,000 feet, to the Zemu glacier, camping at Green Lake at the foot of Kangchenjunga on September 2. That wonderful and gorgeous mountain panorama at the head of Zemu glacier has already been so well described by Mr. Freshfield and Dr. Kellas that no description of mine can add anything. After securing a most fortunate set of photographs of these unique mountains, I returned down the glacier and the forests of the Zemu glen back to Lachen, thence down through Sikkim to Darjeeling and India.

Some day the political difficulties will be overcome, and a fully equipped expedition must explore and map Mount Everest. The journey must be undertaken from the Tingri or northern side, proceeding by Kampa Dzong and the Taya Sampo Valley. While at Saar it would be most profitable to send a detached party by the Nila La to Tashirak to climb the Taringban peak, and so get a direct panorama of the eastern slopes of Everest and Makalu rising from the deep Arun Valley.

NOTE ON THE SPELLING OF NATIVE NAMES.

In this paper and in the sketch-map the spelling of names is made to conform with the Survey of India. Though I have not made a special study of the pronunciation of Bhutia and Tibetan words, still I have noticed a marked difference between certain names given by the Survey and the native pronunciation of them.

<i>Survey Name.</i>	<i>Native Pronunciation.</i>
Kinchinjunga	Kangchenzunga
Kampa Dzong	Kamba Jong
Choten Nyim	Chorten Nyim
Tingri	Dingri
Thango	Tangu
Jongsong	Jonsong
Tista (river)	Teesta

Before the paper the PRESIDENT said: A good many of you, no doubt, like myself, will be very pleased to be back again in the old happy hunting-grounds of the Himalayas. To me it will be a great pleasure to re-visit that historic country, even if it is only for one evening. It is many years since a project was formed for approaching the highest peak of the Himalayas, Mount Everest, with a scientific expedition, and it is six years since the lecturer of this evening, Major Noel, made an adventurous journey over the borders of Tibet in an attempt to reach Mount Everest from the north-east. Apropos of that scientific expedition, which we now hope to see realized, what Major Noel has to tell us ought to be of the very greatest interest. There may be divided views as to which really is the best method of approaching Mount Everest, but we shall hear all that there is to be said about one of them to-night. I will ask Major Noel to begin his address.

Major Noel then read the paper printed above, and a discussion followed.

Mr. DOUGLAS FRESHFIELD: I hoped we might have had an interesting discussion, but the hour, I am afraid, is against it. I may perhaps shorten my

remarks if I put them under heads. First, with regard to Western Himalayan exploration in general. Is it realized that Darjeeling is only a night's journey from Calcutta ; that people go up there for a week-end ; that within that very short distance of what was lately the capital and still is the greatest city in India we have a playground of unrivalled beauty? Yet in order to travel but a few miles north of Darjeeling into "independent Sikkim" a special permit is required. There were good reasons in the past for such restrictions, but there are now stronger reasons for their abolishment. I hope that the district will soon be thrown open to all travellers. But I would ask for something more positive. If a few more horse-roads were made in Sikkim, if, for instance, one was made from Jongri to Pemionchi, visitors to the snows would be able in a fortnight's round tour to approach the great peaks, camp among the native shrines at the base of Kangchenjunga, and return by the Singalela ridge, after having seen what is certainly, as far as I know, the most magnificent scenery in the world. The other path I plead for is one through the few miles of jungle from Lachen to the great Zemu Glacier and the Green Lake Plain. Here and also at Jongri stone huts or bungalows might be built, similar to those erected in the Alps for the shelter of travellers. In that way the Western Himalayas might be made a playground for India. I was personally interested in the very vivid and truthful description that we were given of Lhonak, where the Tista has its sources. The features of this upland district offer a singular contrast to that of the lower valleys and gorges of Sikkim. They exhibit in the most striking fashion the protective power of a cloak of ice as contrasted with the erosive action of water, of rain and torrents. The traveller moves among smooth hillspurs and shallow valleys, in which he can trace the relatively recent retreat of the glaciers by the remains of the moraines they have left behind them. In our days geologists may wonder how de Saussure failed to realize that erratic blocks had been carried not by floods but by glaciers. A hundred years hence physical geographers will, I believe, equally wonder at those among us who allege that glaciers have done more in erosion than in conservation. This is, however, I am well aware, for the moment a controversial forecast.

Next as to climate. I am afraid Major Noel may have led his hearers to believe that the climate of Lhonak is like that of Homer's Islands of the Blest, that it never rains or snows there. I can show you photographs taken by my companion Signor Sella that will prove that it can snow in Lhonak even more heavily than last week in Derbyshire.

With regard to the character of the scenery I venture to differ from Major Noel. I admit that when one comes up from the depressing atmosphere of Sikkim, from the heat and rain of the outer hills into this dry frosty climate, it is like going up to the Engadine from the Lake of Como. One feels so exhilarated that one is ready to admire everything. But so far as my own feelings go I cannot say I thought the Lhonak scenery either really beautiful, or fantastic, or sublime. The bare shallow valleys, the rounded slopes and moderate peaks and glaciers contrast poorly, to my mind, with the forests, the ravines, and the majestic towers, spires, and precipices of the Outer Himalayan range.

With regard to the main subject of the lecture, the eastern approaches to Mount Everest, I think we have got thus much forwarder to-night ; we realize that there are two routes to the mountain, one from the east, and one from the north-east, and that the eastern route, through Tashirak, is the more direct. The best route, however, is doubtless the more northern one from Kampa

THE CHOTEN NYI-MA LA

VALLEY BELOW TASHIRAK LEADING TO SOUTH SIDE OF
PEAK "TARINGBAN," TIBET

NORTH-EAST GLACIER FLOWING FROM MOUNT EVEREST

MOUNTAINS NORTH OF MAKALU (27,790) TO SNOUT OF NORTH-EAST MOUNT EVEREST GLACIER

From photographs lent by Dr. A. M. Kellas

Dzong through Tibet, and then south along the track which is known to exist and has been crossed by a pundit, which leads over the western spurs of Mount Everest. A party would not need to cross the frontier of Nepal, and therefore need not get leave from Katmandu. I do not know that there is anything more that I can add in the time allowed me. I must leave Dr. Kellas, who has been far on the same track as Major Noel, to supply any further details with regard to the main subject of the lecture. Dr. Kellas has photographs which I hope he will show, for they seem to represent the view Major Noel describes of two rock peaks with a spire behind. If this is so, the peaks are probably all parts of the Makalu group.

Dr. KELLAS: I have listened with very great interest to Major Noel's account of his adventurous expedition and have admired his magnificent photographs. The problem of the approaches to Mount Everest attracted me when I first visited the Himalayas about twelve years ago, and since then I have studied the matter rather closely, and come to the conclusion that the route described by Major Noel is one of the best from many points of view. The distance from Siliguri to the foot of Mount Everest is probably nearly 300 miles, about 170 miles to Kampa Dzong, and thence about 120 to Mount Everest. The best route is certainly along the Tista Valley, then to Kampa Dzong* and westwards to near the village of Saar, which is on the direct north and south route between Tinki Dzong and Nepal. From Saar this route leads to Tashirak, over the Nila La, a little to the west of the direction taken by Major Noel, who crossed the Langbu Pass. From Tashirak there is a good track to Hatia (or Hatiya) which is just within the Nepalese border, and I believe that boats can be obtained near the village to cross the Arun River. From Hatia the distance to Mount Everest is about 25 miles direct. The route leads northwards up the Arun River, and then to the west. I have been able to get one or two photographs of it not taken by myself. When I first started to study the problem I tried to keep along the side of the dividing range between Nepal and Tibet near the snow-line so as to avoid disturbing the equanimity of the Tibetans or the Nepalese, and a few slides give an idea of the nature of the problem. I tried to go as far as possible along the glacier leading westwards, but the route was not so easy as it at first appeared. There is a great gap a few miles on, the glacier being projected against another with which it has no real connection. The phenomenon is common in photographs of Himalayan scenery and a good example was shown this evening. The peak in Mr. Freshfield's last photograph, which seemed to form the northern part of Mount Everest, is really about 10 miles to the north-east of Everest. These photographs show that the scenery of the Mount Everest group is of a very high order.

There are variations of the route which might be advisable under certain conditions. For example, if one were not allowed to get into Nepal at all, one could not go by Hatia, which is within the Nepalese frontier, and I do not know of any bridge near Tashirak to the west, or any means of getting across the river, which is somewhat difficult at that part. But one could from Kampa Dzong follow a route to the north-west and pass near Tinki Dzong to the north of the Phungtu Chu, which is the name given to the west branch of the Arun River, which rises west of Tingri. The Phungtu Chu is crossed by a hide-rope bridge, and the road then proceeds south along the Arun River to Kharta, whence there are various routes to Mount Everest.

* In discussing routes with the late General Rawling, that *viâ* the Tista and Sepo La had been provisionally agreed upon as far as Kampa Dzong.

There is another variation of the route described by Major Noel which might be useful. It is more direct than that *viâ* the Phungtu Chu. One could proceed from Kampa Dzong almost due west to Saar. If one keeps straight to the west from Saar one can cross the mountains, which Major Noel found barred his way, by an easy pass called the Tok-Tok La. Proceeding west from this pass one can reach the village of Kharta previously mentioned on the west side of the river. From Kharta there is a route which leads west for about 10 miles to the Langma La, and that takes one out to the foot of the north-east glacier flowing from Mount Everest. I think that would be the shortest route of the three so far mentioned.

I might add notes of other two routes. There is a route which could be followed from Siliguri or Darjeeling* to the north-west. Instead of going due north along the Tista one could proceed north-west by various routes into the Tambar Valley. At the top of the Tambar Valley there is a good route which was followed by Sir Joseph Hooker in 1849, when he reached the Wallanchoon Pass, a few miles to the south of Tashirak, which is, so far as I can learn, 45 miles in a straight line from Mount Everest, the Wallanchoon Pass being about 50 miles.

There is a third route. One could proceed from Khanwa Ghat on the Kosi River due north along the Arun to Hatia. The direct distance from Khanwa Ghat to Mount Everest is only 110 miles, and the length of this route would be much less than that of the others, approximately 160 to 170 miles in all. It would also be possible, starting from Khanwa Ghat, to attain the south side of Mount Everest: the Hatia route takes one to the north side. About 30 miles north of Khanwa Ghat one can turn to the north-west along the Sun-Kosi River, and then about 40 miles further on, proceed northwards up the Dudh-Kosi River. Part of the eastern headwaters of the latter stream drain the south side of Everest.

Those are the chief routes as far as I have been able to work them out, but there are several other variations of these routes which are of interest, but need not be described.

Captain J. P. FARRAR (President of the Alpine Club): The Alpine Club naturally views with the keenest interest this proposal to attempt the ascent of Mount Everest. Moreover, it seems to me that this attempt now commands chances of success not previously available. The main difficulty hitherto has been transport of equipment and provisions, requiring unmanageable relays of native porters. This has led to great delay, aggravating the unavoidable discomfort and exposure to the European leaders, upon whom the final victory depends, tending to lower their enterprise and powers of work. You have in the modern airship a means of supply which ought to eliminate in a great degree the difficulties that have baulked previous travellers. I think, therefore, that the expedition has every chance of success, and the Alpine Club is prepared not only to lend such financial aid as is in its power, but also to recommend two or three young mountaineers quite capable of dealing with any purely mountaineering difficulties as are likely to be met with on Mount Everest.

Sir FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND: It is now twenty-six years ago since our

* I must venture to dissociate myself from Major Noel's remark regarding officials at Darjeeling, as I have invariably found them courteous and obliging. The coolies I have obtained there have always been satisfactory, and some, especially the Sherpa-Nepalese, have been of exceptional merit (cf. *Geog. Journ.*, September 1912, p. 257).

old friend Captain Bruce—now General Bruce—made the proposition to me that we should go up Mount Everest. It did not come to anything then, but years afterwards, in 1903, when I was in Kampa Dzong in Tibet, I had for three months a magnificent view of Mount Everest and Makalu right across the great plain of Tibet. The lecturer hoped that it would be an Englishman, or at any rate a Scotchman, who would first climb Mount Everest. I need only say I think we are all determined that it shall be a British expedition. Our own Society is interested in the project, and we have heard the President of the Alpine Club say he has magnificent young mountaineers ready to undertake it, and it must be done. I dare say there will be one or two attempts before we are successful; and the first thing we shall have to do is to get over the trouble with our own Government. When I went to Tibet in 1903 to 1904 I did get permission for travellers to go to certain places in Tibet. I also got a thing which the Government threw away, and that was the right for an officer to go to Lhasa. Our Government itself has prevented English travellers from going into Tibet and have refused to make use of the privileges which we have obtained. Not only English travellers but others as well have been prevented from going into Tibet. I know French travellers, especially, who wanted to go to a place to which we had a permit for Europeans to go. It is not the Indian Government who are to blame; it is the home Government. But after all, our Government are reasonable if they are approached properly and by societies like this and the Alpine Club. If a reasonable scheme is put before them, and it is proved to them that we mean serious business, then they are reasonable and will do what one wants. But this is a big business, and it must be undertaken in a big way. Most excellent reconnoitring work has been done by our lecturer, Major Noel. We know something of how Mount Everest may be approached from outside Tibet. I suggest that it would be a good thing if, instead of going from the outside, from the Indian side into Tibet, it would be better if we went from inside Tibet itself towards the frontier. I think it better if the head of the expedition made up his mind to go to Gyantse, where we have a permanent official, and get in touch with the big Tibetan officials, and then from the interior proceed towards Mount Everest on the frontier. There are some arguments we can easily put forward. We can point out that the Tibetans are allowed to travel about India as they like, and that this Society itself has a certain claim upon them, because it was Mr. Reeves of this Society who trained a young Tibetan sent over by the Dalai Lama to learn survey work. It would be a graceful act on the part of the Tibetans if they allowed us to make use of their country for climbing Mount Everest.

The lecturer has referred to aeroplane work. I think the Survey of India might be approached to take this up seriously and from the aeroplane get a good photographic survey of the country round Mount Everest. As I say, I am pretty certain that the Government, if they are approached properly by societies such as this, and if a reasonable scheme is put before them, would be quite ready to take it up, so I hope something really serious will come of this meeting. I should like it to be an Englishman who gets to the top of Mount Everest first.

THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid it is time to close the discussion. The interesting paper we have heard read contains a great many points for discussion, but unfortunately we cannot continue it now. I have admired more than I can say the wonderful series of photographs which Major Noel has shown us, and I have followed his most adventurous and plucky journey with

the deepest interest. But I venture to think that when any expedition succeeds in reaching Mount Everest it will not be either from the east or north. My own impression is that far the simplest and shortest way is through Nepal. I am quite well aware that if political authorities were asked as to whether it was possible to go through Nepal we should hear at once that it was frankly impossible. I believe myself that this is the way in which finally Mount Everest will be reached.

I have only to ask you now to join in a vote of thanks to Major Noel for his very interesting and attractive lecture, and I hope at some time not very remote we shall be able to hear more about the proposed expedition to Mount Everest.

THE ADMIRALTY TIDE TABLES AND NORTH SEA TIDAL PREDICTIONS

Commander H. D. Warburg, R.N.

Superintendent of Tidal Work, Hydrographic Department, Admiralty.

Read at the Afternoon Meeting of the Society, 17 February 1919.

THE Admiralty Tide Tables were first published for the year 1833, and then contained the times of high water only for the four principal ports in the United Kingdom. By the year 1912 the information had increased to predictions for 54 ports, 26 in the British Islands and 28 in foreign countries and the Colonies: times and heights of both high and low water were predicted at 28 ports, 7 of which were in the British Islands, the times and heights of high water only being given at the remaining 26 ports. The Hydrographic Department does not undertake the calculation of all predictions given in the Admiralty Tide Tables, the present general rule being that predictions for ports in the British Islands and foreign countries are calculated in the Department, those for colonial ports being supplied by the authorities concerned.

The aim of the Tide Tables is to supply, by means of tidal predictions for standard ports and tidal differences for secondary ports on the standard ports, information which will enable seamen to make use of any port in the world independently of information obtained locally.

This aim was far from adequately fulfilled in the tables for 1912, the greater portion of the world being entirely unrepresented in the standard and secondary ports.

Although there had, between the years 1833 and 1912, been a great increase in information, there had been no corresponding increase in accuracy, so far at least as the ports predicted in the Hydrographic Department were concerned, the method of calculation being the same in the latter year as in the former; predictions for colonial ports, however, supplied by the colonial authorities, were in 1912 mostly calculated by the harmonic method. The method used in the Hydrographic Department was that introduced by the late Sir John Lubbock in about the