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the boat is rolling and pitching, every roll and pitch moves these steel fins, and they are constantly returning to their original position by their own elasticity. The consequence is that as long as the rolling and pitching of the boat continues, they act like the fins and tail of a fish, and push and pull the boat along. I shall be glad to hear some scientific explanation of these phenomena.

The PRESIDENT: With reference to the ripples on the sand caused by the wind, I cannot help hoping that Captain Egerton will consent to describe to the meeting the phenomenon of sastrugi, of which he has had great experience in the arctic regions, as it has some analogy to this movement of the sand.

Captain EGERTON: I really don't know what I have to do with sand; I didn't realize that the sastrugi of the snow was the same thing. I have no doubt it is due to the wind. I can't say much about it, except that I know it curves the snow up very much like the photographs we have seen of sand, and at certain times in the spring it becomes very uncomfortable stuff to travel over; it makes a hard crusty surface partially hollow underneath, and as you are tramping along with the sledge you put your foot on it, the other follows, and down you come and bite your tongue. I really don't know anything else about it.

The PRESIDENT: It only remains to thank Mr. Vaughan Cornish. It has struck me that this paper is essentially an educational paper; it reminds us of how much there is of scientific interest in phenomena which are quite of everyday familiarity. We cannot go out of our own doors without seeing objects of interest if we choose to think; even the worn-out flagstones before our areas give food for reflection, thought, and study. I should not be in the least surprised, when I go to study duck waves to-morrow in St. James's Park, to find many of my friends here this evening studying them also. I shall be still less surprised if, when Mr. Vaughan Cornish proceeds, on the same scientific basis, to give us an account of his study of deep-sea waves at one of our afternoon meetings, he has a very large audience amongst those who have heard the interesting and suggestive paper this evening. I will now propose to you a very cordial vote of thanks to Mr. Vaughan Cornish for his paper.

EXPLORATION IN SARIKOL.*

By Captain H. H. P. DEASY.

LEAVING Yarkand on November 3, 1898, I went *via* Kosharab, the Arpatalak Dawan, and Khandar Dawan to the upper part of the valley called Wacha by Kirghiz, and Uchi by its inhabitants. Here several days were spent in obtaining the correct longitude of my starting-point by means of triangulation. As soon as the sub-surveyor, whom the Survey of India had most kindly lent me, had finished the topographical work, a start was made for the country erroneously called Mariom Pamir. The real name of this narrow valley, inhabited by Tajiks, is Mariong, and it extends in latitude from 37° 23' N. to 37° 19' N., at the junction with the Yarkand river, in long. 75° 55' E. From Nosh Tans, the largest village in Mariong, I tried to find a route to the west end of Raskam along the valley of the Yarkand river, but its tortuous course,

* Dated "Kashgar, March 7, 1899."

its great depth, and its precipitous banks, several thousand feet high, rendered progress difficult, if not impossible. It was during this period that a very striking loop of the Yarkand river was discovered, about 10 miles in length, with only about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile separating the upper stretch from the lower.

Owing to the inhabitants of Mariong having refused to show me the direct route to the west end of Raskam, I was compelled to make a long *détour* *viâ* the Pichanyart Dawan and Sanglash. During this nine days' march five passes, one over 17,000 feet, were crossed in mid-winter, and camp was pitched on the right bank of the Yarkand river, only 11 miles distant from the most southerly part reached from Mariong. Once more unnecessary trouble was experienced, as the Tajiks who acted as guides, although professing to be anxious to render every assistance, brought me over a very bad and high pass and along a vile track, which was fortunately avoided on the return journey, at the expense indeed of an extra day's march and the crossing of four other passes, one being nearly 17,000 feet in height.

In order to give some idea of the difficult nature of the country, it may be mentioned that eleven passes, averaging about 14,700 feet, were crossed in fourteen days. The intervening valleys were very deep and narrow, and were in many places choked with dense jungle; and the track was sometimes so steep and difficult that even unladen animals could only, when assisted by men, pass along with any degree of safety.

Having carried on topographical work up to the point where it was brought in the previous winter, I checked the longitude of the west end of Raskam, and then went to the Kulan Urgi valley to check the longitude of the place where I had taken a series of lunar observations in January, 1898. Thence I descended that valley to Tir, a small village about 5 miles from the junction of the Kulan Urgi and Yarkand rivers, in lat. $37^{\circ} 21' N.$ and long. $76^{\circ} 16' E.$ From Tir short excursions were made up the Yarkand river to near Sanglash, to the Kuramut Dawan, and lastly to the Sandal Dawan, both of which are very high, steep, and exceedingly stony, especially the former. As soon as the Yarkand river was sufficiently frozen, I left Tir and followed that river down to the mouth of the Danga-bash, or Tashkurghan river, as it is called in the lower part of its course, in lat. $37^{\circ} 50' N.$ I had hoped to be able to follow this river down to Kosarab, but that was found to be impossible owing to the absence of ice and the precipitous banks, quite impracticable for animals at the two places where the river was not frozen, so a *détour* had to be made, partially along the Danga-bash river, to Kosarab. From Kosarab I ascended the Yarkand river with a small caravan as far as animals could go, and thence went on foot to the mouth of the Danga-bash river. I was by no means loth to return to Kosarab (having completed the exploration and survey of the Yarkand river from Raskam northwards), with easier routes in prospect, as well

as the probability of having houses in which to pass the nights. Since leaving the Wacha valley on November 28, eleven nights had been spent in the open, the average minimum temperature being $+5^{\circ}$ Fahr.

Owing to illness during the previous winter, the surveyor was not able to survey the country between Chumdi and the Sandal Dawan, so a short excursion was made from the former place to fill in this gap, and survey the Asgan-sal river up to its sources close to the Sandal and Kuramut passes. After returning to Chundi to get observations for rates, I continued along the right bank of the Yarkand river to where the Khotan road crosses it, and reached Yarkand on February 2. Throughout this journey the weather was exceptionally fine, but cold, and at only two places did it prevent me from taking observations. Frequent good rates were obtained for the chronometer watches, which maintained such satisfactory rates that the error in longitude on arrival at Yarkand was only 0.7 second. The longitude of my observing-station, close to the old town of Yarkand, was carefully determined in March, 1898, permission to observe in the Yangi-Shabr, where Trotter observed, having been obtained through the kind help of Mr. G. Macartney. This value was checked by an occultation observed in October, 1898, and found to be correct.

After a brief but much needed halt in Yarkand, I took a circuitous route, best known as the Khan Arik route, to Kashgar; and was fortunately enabled to fix astronomically the positions of four places not shown on any map, and check that of Khanarik, which is in lat. $39^{\circ} 16' N.$, long. $76^{\circ} 37' E.$, or about $2' S.$ and $17' E.$ of the position previously ascribed to it.

During my journey to Sarikol and adjacent country, about 4000 square miles of country were surveyed, on the scale of 8 miles to one inch, by the hard-working and competent topographer whom the survey of India kindly lent me. Frequently it was necessary to send two men with the surveyor to hold up numnahs to partially protect him from the biting winds on the high passes, when the temperature was often below zero; and no small amount of praise is due to this man for carrying on work under such very trying circumstances. The positions of thirty-three places were determined astronomically by me, and the longitudes of twenty-eight other places, where I had observed in the previous winter, checked.

A POPULAR TREATISE ON THE TIDES.*

“A MATHEMATICAL argument is, after all, only organized common sense, and it is well that men of science should not always expound their work to the few behind a veil of technical language, but should from time to

* ‘The Tides and Kindred Phenomena in the Solar System.’ By Prof. G. H. Darwin. London: John Murray.