



Scottish Geographical Magazine

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rsgj19>

The Eastern Karakorum: A review

T. S. Muir

Published online: 27 Feb 2008.

To cite this article: T. S. Muir (1917) The Eastern Karakorum: A review, Scottish Geographical Magazine, 33:12, 544-547, DOI: [10.1080/00369221708734285](https://doi.org/10.1080/00369221708734285)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00369221708734285>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form

to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

As a fourth bar to the development of trade between the States and South America Mr. Roorbach mentions the existence of social and racial prejudice, which makes intercourse between the North and South American difficult. Associated with this difficulty are the facts that North American financial and business organisations in South America are in a rudimentary stage, and that North American ways of doing business are neither understood nor appreciated in South America. The author lays great stress also upon the many ties with Europe which exist in South America, and upon the strong personal dislike which the Latin American is apt to feel for the Northerner and his methods. His general conclusion is that when the war ends the tendency will be for South American trade to revert to its old channels, and for the continent to look, as in the past, to Europe for most of its supplies.

THE EASTERN KARAKORUM¹: A REVIEW.

DR. AND MRS. WORKMAN are indeed fortunate. On several occasions during the past twenty years they have been able to combine two of the highest pleasures open to human experience—exploration and mountaineering. They have made the Karakorum region their special province; they have penetrated its wild and remote valleys, ascended many of its glaciers, and climbed some of its lofty peaks. The Society has been favoured on different occasions by lectures from Mrs. Workman, and has admired their wonderful photographs. They have already published several volumes, while Dr. Workman has contributed articles to various scientific publications. In their books, while not neglecting the adventure interest, they lay special stress on problems of topography and geology, and touch besides on many questions of purely geographical importance. Their luck, or rather skill, with the camera is extraordinary, as may be judged by the specimens reproduced in the pages of their books.

The present volume deals with the expeditions made in the summers of 1911 and 1912. Its publication was intended to take place in the autumn of 1914, but was unavoidably delayed by the war. We congratulate the publishers on their enterprise in bringing the book out now, as well as upon the sumptuous form and general excellence of their work.

While so much praise is conscientiously and freely given, it is with regret that we note one feature. A controversy, arising from differences of opinion regarding some points of topography, has taken place between the authors and Dr. Longstaff. Into the merits of that controversy we do not intend to enter, but we would deprecate the tone which Dr. and

¹ *Two Summers in the Ice-Wilds of the Eastern Karakorum: The Exploration of Nineteen Hundred Square Miles of Mountain and Glacier.* By Fanny Bullock Workman and William Hunter Workman. With 3 Maps and 141 Illustrations by the Authors. London: T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd., 1917. Price, 25s. net.

Mrs. Workman adopt in discussing the matter. We shall make no further reference to this subject except to express the opinion that a controversy of this kind should be carried on, if it is necessary to carry it on at all, by debate, or in the correspondence pages of some suitable publication, and not in a book which is presumably of permanent value.

The volume is divided into three parts. The first deals with the expedition of 1911, which explored the glacier sources of the Hushe and Korkondus rivers, and included a preliminary visit to the Siachen Glacier by way of the Bilaphond La; the third treats of the physiological features of the Bilaphond, Siachen, and Kaberi Basins and Glaciers. For these two Dr. Workman is responsible. The second part is by Mrs. Workman, and is an account of the 1912 expedition, the main result of which was the very complete exploration of the Siachen Glacier. Of this expedition Mrs. Workman had full charge. She was the leader, and undertook the whole management. With pardonable pride she places on record this achievement of a woman, "not because I wish in any way to thrust myself forward, but solely that in the accomplishments of women, now and in the future, it should be known to them and stated in print that a woman was the initiator and special leader of this expedition" (p. 284). We do not think, however, that, especially at the present time, there is any need to emphasise the fact that women have capacities for excellence in many fields of activity. Even as explorers Mrs. Bishop, Mrs. Archibald Little, and Miss Mary Kingsley are well-known names. Is it not time for people to recognise that women and men are neither superior, nor inferior, nor even equal to each other?—they are simply different. But we return to geography.

The region covered by this volume, apart from the journey to it by way of Srinagar, is that of the eastern Karakorum tributaries of the Shyok² river, itself a tributary of the Indus, and included in the country of Baltistan. Dr. Workman has something to tell of the modes of life followed by the inhabitants. In those high valleys the population tends to form isolated groups, each situated at the junction of a tributary with its main stream. "Projecting into the valley on both sides in front of gorges are irrigated and fertile fans, upon which villages are situated" (p. 48). "The Shyok valley from Kiris to Kapalu, aside from the broad, sandy flood-bed of its river and from some stretches of rough hill-country even more desert, blasted, and desolate, if possible, than the Indus valley, is carpeted with a succession of extremely fertile and thoroughly cultivated oases, which support a large population." . . . "The inhabitants utilise every foot of arable land, and get good crops from many areas that would in most countries be discarded as unprofitable and worthless. They carefully wall in and terrace their fields in such a manner that these can be irrigated to their utmost confines, for irrigation here, as in most Himalayan valleys, is the key to agricultural

¹ This name is spelled Shyok in the text and in the first map, but Shayok in the map at the end.

success, which means the maintenance of life itself. They lay out areas devoted to the cultivation of vegetables in plots of various shapes arranged with almost mathematical accuracy, an accuracy the more remarkable in view of the simplicity of their intellectual status and the rudeness of their implements. The care bestowed on the land is rewarded by abundant harvests, and the impression produced on one traversing this region in summer is that the inhabitants are, in proportion to their needs, exceedingly prosperous" (pp. 34, 35). Two crops are obtained in each season. The first consists of wheat and barley, and is harvested in June or early in July. It is followed by a second season crop consisting of millet, maize, and other grains, with buckwheat and peas. But in addition to these main crops many fruits and vegetables are grown. The former include mulberries, apricots, apples, cherries, pears, plums, melons, grapes and walnuts, the latter besides peas, beans, cabbages, egg-plant, marrows, onions, and turnips. Some further details as to these interesting settlements would be welcome. A very striking photograph of the oasis of Chino, in the Saltoro valley, illustrates the description given.

On page 69 there is a weather note: "Monsoon atmospheric conditions as well as the influence of unknown factors in unexplored districts, are likely to interfere with the complete success of undertakings in Himalaya, however carefully the details of preparations for their attainment may have been arranged." "The weather on this day, as had been the case for several days, was lowery, and the heads of the twin peaks that dominate the glacier and formed its most impressive adjunct were veiled in heavy clouds, which obstinately refused to move during three hours we waited with cameras ready for instant use. . . ." Here Dr. Workman remarks: "Not a single peak of this basin [the Sher-pi-gang] is climbable." Is not this rather a sweeping statement? It has been made in the past of several Alpine peaks which have since been frequently ascended.

The physiographical problems discussed by Dr. Workman are of much interest, but they cannot be followed in detail here. We merely refer to one, the effects of an earthquake which occurred when the party was encamped on the Kaberi Glacier (pp. 215-16 and 270-2). "It was much more severe and its effects more marked in the mountains than on the glacier. Had the latter been shaken to the same degree as were the mountains it is doubtful whether we should have lived to tell the tale. We were camped at the central line of the glacier, here fully a mile wide. The different tents were spread over a considerable area, and the vibrations appeared to be felt more severely in some than in others. In my own tent they were so slight that I should scarcely have considered them as anything more than ordinary movements of the glacier, had not my attention been called to their real cause by the rattle of débris and resounding thunder of avalanches on all sides. When I stepped out of my tent and looked down the nala, the air, as far as the eye could reach, was filled with clouds of dust, even where the nala was enclosed by bare granite-walls which, with the avalanches, indicated that the mountains had been severely handled. The dust was perceptible

in the air throughout the day, and, indeed, did not wholly subside for two days. The only reason that occurs to me for the difference in severity of the earthquake in the mountain and on the glacier might lie in the absorption or neutralisation of the oscillations by the elasticity of the ice" (p. 270).

The party was accompanied in 1911 by Dr. Calciatè as topographer, with an Italian assistant; in 1912 by Mr. C. Grant Peterkin and a native plane-tableer from the Indian Survey. The result is two excellent maps of the regions explored, and a general map on which the tracks of the numerous Workman expeditions make an impressive show. An Appendix contains notes on the rock specimens collected, and an explanation by Mr. Grant Peterkin of the Siachen Map. Details are also given of the Siachen Survey. A sufficient index concludes an admirably appointed volume.

T. S. MUIR.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ROYAL SCOTTISH GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

MEETING OF COUNCIL.

A MEETING of Council was held on the 8th of November, when the under-mentioned ladies and gentlemen were elected members of the Society:—

Ordinary Members.

Hugh J. G. Macmillan.
John K. Stothert.
Joseph Andrew Wylie.
Robert Fullarton.
Alexander Buyers Kennedy, F.S.A.,
Scotland.
William Mackay.
Henry T. Pearson.
H. W. F. Temple.
Sir James Alfred Ewing, K.C.B., LL.D.
James Y. Erskine.
Ernest Manchester.
Mrs. H. M'Alister Hall.
John Buchanan.
James Howden Hume.

Associate Members.

Miss J. S. Cook.
Miss E. D. Willes.
John W. Broome.
Richard Biddulph.
Mrs. Sivewright.

The Society's Magazine.—The Council resolved that, in view of the increasing cost of producing the *Magazine*, arising from the higher price of paper and cost of printing, it should be for one year again reduced by eight pages monthly, accordingly to forty pages each issue, and that other economies should be effected in its production. More drastic proposals were rejected in consideration of the fact that the maintenance of