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Geographical Work in India for This Society: Discussion

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able to discover others. For what is quite certain is that in the forms of nature there is vastly more beauty than we now recognize. Only last month, for instance, I learnt of the beauty of rock. "Few people," says Mr. Reginald Farrer in his fascinating book 'Among the Hills,' "seem to have any adequate sense of the beauty of rock as mere rock. Without consideration of garniture or surroundings, rock itself can be one of the most beautiful things in all beautiful nature." He declares that many people have neither sight nor reverence, though gods as surely dwell in rock and cliff as in the oak or glittering water. All stone, he admits, has not the same mystery of holiness and beauty, but he thinks the noble limestone of our country the loveliest of formations that he knows. For if it has not the rosy blush of the Jurassic, nor the rich glow and glory of the Dolomite, yet its shades of colour, though gentler, are no less wonderful; and in form of individual block it surpasses either.

With this certainty that there is far more beauty to be seen than most of us—or even the best of us—see at present; and, with the assurance also that the more of this beauty we see the better we shall know and understand, I would urge that appreciation of beauty in natural forms should be recognized as part of geography.

But whether or no Geography as a science recognizes beauty as within its sphere, what is quite certain is that meetings of the Society like and expect travellers to describe the beauties of the mountains, rivers, plains, or valleys that they have been privileged to see. And this I believe to be a perfectly sound and reasonable instinct; for until we have seen the underlying beauty of natural features we have not really known and understood them—we are not therefore, as I would contend, completely scientific. Those who come and tell us of some new beauty they have discovered in a natural feature would be as welcome here as one who has discovered a new river. Wordsworth ought certainly to have had the Gold Medal of this Society, and Shelley and Byron, too, if they had lived till it was formed. I believe in future love of beauty will be as great a lure to the traveller as love of adventure. Prompted by these high motives, and joining to them a love of truth, the traveller of the future will observe with scrupulous accuracy and record with fidelity not only the outward appearance but also the inward soul and significance of the natural phenomena he meets with and their mutual relations to one another. And nowhere will he find a fuller scope for all his faculties of observation and description than in the sublime Himalaya and the far borderlands of India. I most earnestly recommend this wonderful region to the special notice of this Society, and hope that some amount of the attention it has hitherto devoted to Arctic, Antarctic, and African exploration may now be devoted to the Himalaya.

Before the paper the PRESIDENT said: No one can be better qualified to speak on the subject before us this afternoon, Geographical Work in India, than our Vice-President Sir Francis Younghusband. He knows the Himalaya

from end to end. Thirty years ago as a young man in the adventurous journey for which he received one of the Society's Gold Medals, he crossed and explored the Karakoram on his way from China to India. Since that time he has travelled on the Pamirs and has been actively employed in the frontier districts of Hunza and Chitral. In 1904 he led the memorable expedition to Lhasa. Still more recently he has represented the Indian Government in Kashmir. It is not only as a traveller that Sir Francis Younghusband is competent to address us to-day; he can also as an old frontier official speak with authority of the political difficulties there have been in the exploration of the Himalaya, and can tell us, perhaps, how far those political difficulties are likely to remain in the future. For it would be affectation in me not to admit that exploration in the Himalaya has been a good deal hampered in times past by the official attitude. I am not criticizing this attitude in any way. I simply state the fact. Nor am I forgetful of, or ungrateful for, the great services rendered to geography by the Indian Government; the surveys it has carried out and the reports and maps it has produced are of the greatest value to geographers. To individual travellers or expeditions it has rendered many kindnesses; it has helped travellers, Italian and American as well as English, in the Western Himalaya. Seventeen years ago when I was in the wilderness where three countries meet at the back of Kangchenjunga I received much friendly aid from our then Resident at Sikkim, the late Colonel le Messurier. The Government has also extended its kindness to certain parties who assuredly brought no credentials either from this Society or the Alpine Club! But these good services have not been incompatible with the existence of very serious restrictions upon independent travellers, and still more so on any officers in the Indian Service who were anxious to take part in frontier exploration, restrictions which prevented exploration being as full as it might have been, because travellers were unable to cross at any time the Indian border. The reasons for these restrictions, as I said before, I do not in the least wish to contest; but what I hope we may hear to-day is that there is a reasonable prospect that among all the great changes this world-war must effect it may so modify our political relations with our neighbours in the Farther East as to make it possible for geographers to look forward to the thorough exploration of this vast mountain region. I will now ask Sir Francis Younghusband to read his paper.

(Sir Francis Younghusband then read the paper printed above, and a discussion followed.)

Sir THOMAS HOLDICH: It is a great pleasure for once in a way to get away from the lurid atmosphere of the West into the purer air of Himalayan Asia, and it is a greater pleasure to me to hear the beauties of the Himalaya described by an old friend who is such an expert in the matter as Sir Francis Younghusband; for he knows the Himalaya from the foothills to the snow ranges and from the Brahmaputra to the bend of the Indus on the far north-west. If I say a word or two it is to endorse what he has said of the advantages that may accrue to explorers in the Himalaya from working in concert with the scientific institutions that are in India. The Indian Survey has fixed a great many points with extreme accuracy, and they did it in the hope that others would take advantage of what they had done as a basis for their own scientific work in the wilder parts of the Himalaya. It is quite impossible for that one department with its somewhat limited income to find surveyors to undertake missions in the far parts of the Himalaya, and it is always our hope that all explorers of a scientific bent who go to India will take full advantage of

what they may find ready in the Survey of India to assist them in their work. And the benefit is double: the Survey Department gains by work that is accurately done; the explorers themselves gain by the increased value of their work. But there is another class of explorers in the Himalaya, with whom I have some sympathy, not so strenuous, and who are more inclined to study the beauties of nature than to search for scientific results. Now, Sir Francis Younghusband has briefly described many of the beauties of the Himalaya, but it would take a long time to indicate all that is to be found in that vast region. We cannot here have any accurate conception of how much of the Himalaya is absolutely unknown. To the west of Nepal, for instance, and reaching to the far north of the hinterland of Kashmir, we may say that the country is fairly known; but beyond that from Nepal itself eastward, from Sikkim and Bhutan, right away to the great bend of the Brahmaputra we cannot say that we know the country. It is there that we hope in the future for opportunities for further exploration. At present that country is not altogether open to explorers. Sir Francis Younghusband has referred very briefly to the difficulties that explorers may find in India owing to the desire of the Government to avoid complications in unknown places. I hope and believe that those difficulties are very much less now than they used to be. There was a time, no doubt, when the intense desire of the Government to keep everything confidential and secret was distinctly deleterious to our success on the frontier. Officers living on the frontier within sight of the frontier hills knew nothing of what lay beyond them; they could see the outline of the hills—just a line of peaks—but of what those peaks stood for they had not the least idea. I remember well meeting Russian officers in Afghanistan who I will not say were as well acquainted with our frontier as the Germans are said to be with the coast of Scotland and Yorkshire, but who did, nevertheless, know a very great deal about the general features of our frontier and a very great deal more than our own officers knew. Now it is hoped that people will visit the Himalaya for the purpose of studying nature under new aspects and in new climes. But I would not recommend those who are looking for the beauties of nature to take that line of least resistance which leads most explorers up to the far north-west. Although there are many delights in Kashmir, yet beyond it you pass from the best beauties of the Himalaya into some most unattractive country. I cannot sympathize altogether with Sir Francis Younghusband's regard for the beauty of rocks. Rock in itself may be beautiful; but after wandering day after day through a landscape of rocks and stones it gets a little monotonous. On the contrary, there are other parts of the mountains, easily reached, which I would certainly recommend to casual travellers. From any hill station you may reach country exceedingly beautiful and highly interesting. Take, for instance, the comparatively small hill station of Masuri; from there you can drop down at once into the valley of the Jumna, and following up that valley to its head you may reach the great dominant peaks of Badrinath, by passing over an intermediate range where you travel through park-like snow-covered country full of white and lilac rhododendrons; you will have left the scarlet ones behind. You pass to the head of the Ganges, which now you can follow to Hardwar. That is a tour which is easily within the reach of anybody and which affords some of the very finest views that the Himalaya has to offer. But the best of all views are those which exhibit the tropical jungle of the Eastern frontier, combined with a panorama of magnificent snowy peaks. I know nothing finer than this extraordinary contrast. It may happen, as happened in Bhutan when I was there, that you may experience winter in the tropical jungle. I have looked down

from a height into a valley full of bamboos covered with snow; and as the snow weighed them down the effect was that of one mass of lacework spread far up the side of the hills. There are opportunities such as occur in all mountain regions, though not with such accessories as in the Himalaya, of studying nature under its most impressive aspect. Many of you have spent strenuous early morning hours climbing to see the sun rise on the snows, and will know exactly what I mean when I say that there is no call on earth, not the call of the East or the West, of the Polar regions or Tropics, that appeals so strongly to those who have once felt it, as the call of the mountains.

Sir MARTIN CONWAY: One of the points that struck me is this: Sir Francis Younghusband has spoken of the work which remains to be done by explorers in the Himalaya. I would suggest that there is a further branch which has up to the present been almost entirely neglected; it is the work of anthropological exploration. The remoter valleys of this great mountain range and of the Hindu Kush contain many communities of ancient peoples who have been driven up into the remotest fastnesses and have there survived as fossilized remnants of all sorts of civilizations. I can speak only of those I have myself seen, the peoples of Hunza and Nagar and that neighbourhood, where there were remnants of at least four races entirely distinct from one another, talking different languages, having different traditions, an extremely interesting folk. Sir George Robertson spent a year in studying the extraordinarily interesting people of Kafiristan. He described how they retained, at all events until recently—I do not know how they may be now—most interesting ancient customs. Such customs ought to be carefully studied by an expert. The habits, the traditions, the superstitions of the tribes ought to be written down, and that quickly, or it will be too late. The people of Hunza retained their ancient dances, their religious ceremonials—they were excellent pagans—at the opening of spring. The king priest still existed there, and he drove the first furrow of the plough. A number of interesting survivals could still be observed in those remote valleys, and I have no doubt that along the whole range of the Himalaya there may be found communities of corresponding interest. I believe up to the present they have hardly been studied at all. It is an important piece of research that needs to be done, and would provide a most interesting career for a properly equipped observer.

Lord BRYCE: Since you, Mr. President, have called upon me I should have been tempted, had not the hour been so late, to have addressed a few questions to Sir Francis with regard to the regions which he just briefly mentioned in passing, namely, the mountain country east of Sikkim and south of Tibet as far as the point where the Tsan river pierces the great range southward to become the Brahmaputra, and also with regard to the central part of Nepal, in both of which regions the high peaks appear to be very little known to us. I also should have liked to ask him if he thought the objections which the Indian Government formerly entertained would still apply to requests made by those explorers who might attack these regions either from the Tibetan side or from the side of India. But the hour is so late that I will be content to reinforce what has been so well said by Sir Martin Conway—that the study of the small tribes which have survived in these mountainous regions is a matter of the greatest possible interest, and as he has said, and as it is known to all who have followed the course of exploration in recent years, those small tribes with their peculiar languages, their religions, their customs and their folk lore are now very fast disappearing. Every addition that is made to our knowledge means an opening up of new and easier routes; opening up of routes brings

in new elements, and these small ancient races or peoples lose their characteristic features which are of special interest to us. You, Mr. President, better than any one else, know how true it is that the Caucasus has been the refuge of many races, many languages, many habits and customs, and the same thing exists more or less in all mountain regions. Not very long ago we had at the British Academy an interesting account from Sir William Ramsay of some small tribes who remain distinct in the mountainous recesses of Central Asia Minor. I should therefore like to urge the great importance of what Sir Martin Conway has said, that we must endeavour to preserve, before it is too late, what can be ascertained with regard to these small remnants of ancient peoples and tribes which are to be found in the mountain recesses of the Himalaya. I trust that both you and Sir Francis Younghusband, and the Society as a whole, will exert your and their influence towards this end.

Brig.-General C. G. RAWLING: It is a presumption on my part to say anything after what we have heard to-night from Sir Francis Younghusband and the gentlemen who followed. I was very pleased to hear Sir Francis refer to those officers who went with me into Tibet and with whom I worked and who are still my friends. They are all doing good work for this country now, except Captain Hargreaves, who I am sorry to say is a prisoner. Just before the war, as several gentlemen here will know, I was getting up an expedition to survey and to explore the northern slopes of the Himalaya. That was to have taken two years, and it was to have been on exactly the line Sir Francis mentions. It was to be an expedition in which every officer was to have a special job, and to be a specialist in his own line. I am sorry to say that two of those whom I chose at the time have been killed; but I hope that after the war, if I am not too old for it, we shall be allowed to go. Lord Chelmsford, now the Viceroy of India, was the chairman of my committee, and I am sure we shall again get as much, if not greater, help from him than before the war. We have to get new officers, new men to do the work, and I trust that these very young people whom Sir Francis Younghusband has mentioned to-night as being trained up for this work will be then available. I hope they are not too young, for if they are to be of use that means the war will last for several years to come. The sooner the war is over and the sooner we can get on to geographical work the more I shall be pleased.

Sir FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND: Lord Bryce wanted to know if there was any possibility of being able to explore the country at the back of Bhutan and Nepal. I do not think myself that there are any insuperable political difficulties to be overcome. The Tibetans are now in a very friendly state, and I think it really ought to be quite possible. As General Rawling has suggested, an expedition may be able to go to the back of the Himalaya and carry out this very useful piece of exploration. I hope General Rawling will lead that Expedition.

The PRESIDENT: It remains for me to wind up the debate by thanking Sir Francis Younghusband for the very suggestive paper to which we have listened, a paper which might almost be described as an Essay on Travel. Sir Francis, in most vivid and romantic language, has put before us the true place in life both of travel and of its offspring geography. In an eloquent passage he suggested that the child's impulse to get to the top of, and round to the back of, any lump of gravel or hillock in his path might in the end make him a traveller, or even a cosmographer! He reminded me of the days when as a child I used to imitate in imagination the travels of Dr. Livingstone among the morasses of Hampstead Heath, which at that time were undrained by the

County Council. His voice seemed almost an echo of the words of Conrad Gesner, a great botanist who lived in the middle of the sixteenth century and who went up Pilatus, the familiar mountain near the Lake of Lucerne. Gesner wrote an account of his climb in very sound Latin, and after forcibly rating some of his compatriots who objected to sleeping in a hayloft, he burst into the following rhapsody, "Here in the deep and, as it were, divine silence of the mountain-tops you will seem to catch the very harmony, if such there be, of the heavenly orbs." My translation conveys but a poor sense of the subtle suggestion of a sub-conscious feeling which is given by the original text. "Hic in profundo et religioso quodam silentio ex prealtis montium jugis ipsam fere celestium, si quæ est, orbium harmoniam exaudire tibi videberis!"

To-day Sir F. Younghusband has given a practical and particular as well as a general application to his remarks. He points out as a proper object for the efforts of our Society the thorough exploration in all its aspects of the great range that circles round and protects India far more efficiently than the Alps protect Italy; the range which we speak of collectively as the Himalaya. In so doing he endorsed and amplified a suggestion I made in one of my recent annual addresses. The Poles have had their day, and a very costly one it has been, not only in money but in human enterprise, endurance, and life. To complete the exploration of the great mountains that girdle Asia, to climb the highest point of the Earth's surface, may very reasonably be made our next endeavour. For this enterprise we could have no better promoter than Sir Francis Younghusband. He has, I think, rendered us a real service this afternoon by pointing out how much may be done to aid in this exploration by such parties and even by individuals, holiday rambles, officers on leave, or independent tourists. I trust such travellers will in the future be encouraged to take an intelligent interest in all the branches of knowledge which may be studied in the mountains. I am quite sure that they may rely in the future as in the past on the help of this Society. I say "as in the past" because I would recall that in the years while I was one of your Honorary Secretaries, and when Sir Mountstuart Grant-Duff, himself an old Indian Governor, was President, we addressed many, I will not say remonstrances, but representations to the Indian Government in the interests of geographical exploration. We had some unofficial support from an old friend of Sir Mountstuart's, Lord Roberts, Commander-in-Chief in India.

I would particularly emphasize this point: a great deal of very valuable and curious information touching on more than one branch of knowledge may be acquired by independent observers; information in bulk no less valuable, as Sir Francis has told us, than that of one great expedition. But as the Poles have drawn adventurers to the Arctic or Antarctic Circles, so doubtless the highest mountain in the world will draw the Alpine climber to itself. The spectacular both invites the peak-hunter, and delights the public. But shall we who have approved the quest of the Poles as the primary object of great and costly expeditions, shall we not allow the mountaineer to have his particular pole to climb? I think we shall agree that the mountain we are told to call Mount Everest ought to be climbed by an Englishman for scientific purposes and not by the delegates of some newspaper as a speculation. I have been invited more than once to say which would be the shortest way to the top. Here one may perhaps indulge in a confidence so far as to say that I have no doubt that the shortest way to get to Mount Everest would be by approaching it from Tibet. If I may use a builder's phrase, the "back-front" of Mount Everest is probably its easiest access. We have in this Society, I am glad to

say, an eminent Himalayan climber who is also a very eminent chemist and has devoted a great deal of time to studying the difficult problem of the adaptation of the human frame to the higher altitudes up to 30,000 feet. I refer to Dr. Kellas. I sincerely hope that at no very distant date, when the war is over, he may be able to put his experiments to a practical test, and that in so doing he will have the support and help not only of the Royal Geographical Society but of the Government of India. Time does not allow me to say more. I am sure the audience has fully appreciated the eloquence and versatility of Sir Francis Younghusband's discourse, and the way in which he put so many aspects of the mountains before us as well as gave us practical suggestions towards further exploration.

YUN-NAN AND THE WEST RIVER OF CHINA

E. C. Wilton

Read at the Meeting of the Society, 22 January 1917.

A GLANCE at the map of China shows that the line of long. 110° E. divides China proper into approximately two equal parts, separating at the same time the level from the mountainous. The province of Yun-nan is the south-western corner of the latter half, and is approached from the outside world along the lines of four principal routes, viz.—

1. From Hongkong *via* the West River into eastern Yun-nan.
2. From Shanghai following the Yang-tse River as far as Sui Fu, the limit of steam navigation, thence southerly into northern Yun-nan.
3. From Indo-China into southern Yun-nan.
4. From Burma into western Yun-nan.

The first of these is the least known of the four, and the travellers that have entered eastern Yun-nan from this direction are few and far between. The other three routes have been dwelt upon at length in numerous books of travel, and it is not the purpose of this paper to touch upon them, but to limit itself more particularly to the West River and East Yun-nan.

Yun-nan has of recent years attracted perhaps more geographical and political interest in this country than any other province of the Chinese Empire, as it is situated upon the frontiers of Tibet, Burma, and Indo-China; and it has been the dream of many practical men to link up Burma and Yun-nan by a railway which would reach the vast markets of the neighbouring province of Se-chuan and the Yang-tse Valley. Fascinating as this problem is, and strenuous as the attempts at its solution have been, the time at our disposal to-night will not permit of a discussion as to its practicability; nor can we examine in any detail the merits of the four above-mentioned routes as compared with one another; and we will confine ourselves more particularly to the question of railway penetration from the eastern side.

The area of Yun-nan is about 150,000 square miles, and with the