

CHRONICLE OF CENTRAL ASIATIC EXPLORATIONS FOR 1932

DESPITE political unrest and general economic depression, the scientific exploration of Central Asia and adjacent regions continues, and several important undertakings have been planned during 1932.

The Yale North India Expedition, directed by Dr. Hellmut de Terra, and organized by the Yale University, has just returned after nine months of extensive field-work. The expedition was organized to investigate geographical, geological, and biological history of the N.W. Himālayas and the Karakorum region during the pre-glacial and post-glacial epochs. In his report to President Angell, of Yale University, Dr. de Terra writes:

'Surveys in this region indicate the geological recent origin of the southern Himālayan range. Strata which are so young as to be contemporary with formations laid down during the Ice Age in Europe and America have been folded and pushed out of their original positions by the great pressure of mountain-making in this region.' Fossil plants and marine fossils found by the Expedition in the Himālayas throw new light on the sub-recent climatic changes in that region. Dr. G. E. Hutchinson, the biologist of the Expedition, has collected valuable scientific data on the fauna and flora of the Kashmir Valley and the Karakorum uplands. The important collections gathered by the Expedition are under examination. Through the assistance of the American Geographical Society, the Expedition was able to enlist a topographer who joined through the courtesy of the Surveyor General of India.

Dr. Roy Chapman Andrews is planning a new expedition to Inner Mongolia to search for the ancestor of the 'Peking Man'. Due to great difficulties encountered in negotiations with the Nanking authorities, the American explorer has decided to transfer his headquarters to Mukden in Manchuria. The Manchukuo authorities have accepted Dr. Andrews' offer to divide the specimens found, with the government, in return for unqualified co-operation. The expedition also will have Manchukuo scientists on its staff.

In June, 1932, a brief telegram from Peking announced the return of the Sino-Swedish Expedition under the leadership of Dr. Sven Hedin. An account of this great undertaking is given elsewhere in this Journal.

The Lamb Expedition, whose object it was to explore the Koko-nōr region, has encountered difficulties on reaching Ning-hsia. The Society for the Preservation of Cultural Objects in Peking has demanded the cancellation of the Expedition's passports and immediate deportation from China. Mr. G. Lamb was accompanied by his wife and seven other members.

In August, 1932, Professor J. M. Benade, of Forman College, Lahore, conducted

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an expedition to Rupshu to carry out cosmic ray observations on high altitudes. Prof. Benade's account of this interesting expedition is given in this Journal.

Captain F. Kingdon Ward, the well-known British exploring botanist, is leaving shortly on an expedition to Po-yul in South-eastern Tibet, for which he has received permission from the Tibetan authorities. It will be remembered that in 1931 Captain Kingdon Ward and the Earl of Cranbrook conducted a fruitful expedition to Burma.

It is announced that another expedition to Mount Everest is being organized. Admiral Sir William Goodenough, Chairman of the Mount Everest Expedition Committee of the Royal Geographical Society, has announced that Mr. Hugh Rutledge has been appointed leader of the expedition.

An important epigraphical discovery was made by the Hungarian archæologist Guillaume de Hevesy, and announced at a meeting of the French Academy on the 16th September, 1932. Some sixty years ago Bishop Janssen, of Tahiti, discovered a mysterious writing found on wooden tablets and other objects sent to him by missionaries from the Easter Islands off the Chilean coast. Professor de Hevesy has now demonstrated that these signs reveal striking similarities with the unknown script discovered at Mohenjo Daro and Harappa, and that both scripts have probably originated from the same source. This interesting discovery brings again to the foreground the question of the existence of an ancient civilization with important ramifications in the basin of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific.

The first definite link between the Indus civilization and that of Mesopotamia is reported to have been found at Tell Asmar by the expedition of the Chicago Oriental Institute. According to Dr. Henry Frankfort, whose opinion is supported by Sir John Marshall, some of the objects discovered at the Tell Asmar site represent elephants, rhinoceroses and crocodiles, none of which lived in Mesopotamia at that time. These objects must have come from Mohenjo Daro in India.

In our Chronicle of Central Asiatic Exploration for 1931, we mentioned the important excavations at Tepe Hissâr in Northern Persia, conducted by Dr. Erich Schmidt on behalf of the University of Pennsylvania Museum, and the American Institute for Persian Art and Archæology. During the last year's field season, the excavators uncovered a complete town site, dating c. 2000 B.C. Particular interest is attached to the discovery of a ruined palace which must have been the centre of the town, and which had been destroyed by fire. A cemetery situated in the proximity of the town site yielded many interesting finds: Copper daggers with beautiful checker-board pattern of silver on the grip; hundreds of small gold and silver ornaments representing birds; pedestals and large disks made of alabaster; vessels of beautiful shape and ornamentation. One of the most interesting of the finds is a copper plate, representing in low relief a buffalo felled by a lion. Near a corner of the palatial building was found buried a

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dancing girl, her body covered with silver and copper ornaments. In stratum I, the excavators unearthed beautiful hand-made pottery, painted with black geometric design on a vivid red background. The decoration of the copper implements indicates that the first level was perhaps contemporaneous with the first level at Susa. Dr. Schmidt reports the important find of a treasure, which he dates c. 1500 B.C., and which includes five gold mouflon heads, beautiful diadem, necklaces, spear ornaments, copper weapons, and vessels made of alabaster. Tepe Hissār is situated in the vicinity of Dāmghān, which had been once the capital of the Parthian Empire.

In our last issue we gave an account of the Citroën Central-Asian Expedition, and its journey to Urumohi, which was reached on October 26th. After a month's stay at the capital of Hsin-chiang, the Expedition left on the 29th November for Hāmi, where another delay was experienced due to political unrest along the Hsin-chiang-Kansu border. From Hāmi, the Expedition journeyed along the Hsin-chiang-Peking caravan route through Su-chou, Kan-chou, Liang-chou, the Alashan, Ning-hsia, San-tao-ho, and reached on January 28th, 1932, Pao-t'ou. From Pao-t'ou the Expedition continued its march through Pei-ling miao, Khalgan to Peking, where it arrived on the 12th of February, 1932. The crossing through Kansu and south-eastern Mongolia was effected under extremely adverse conditions. The whole region was agitated in the turmoil of a rebellion, and the explorers showed great courage and endurance under attack. On its homeward journey the Expedition suffered the cruel loss of two of its most active members: Mr. Georges M. Haardt, the indefatigable leader of the Expedition, and Lt. V. Point, commandant of the China group of the Expedition. The large archaeological and ethnographical collections brought back by the Expedition, as well as the photographic records were exhibited at an Exhibition opened on June 18th in Paris. Of particular interest are copies of the Bāmiyān and Turfān frescoes made by A. Jacovleff in his usual masterful way. On November 30th, at a solemn occasion held in the large amphitheatre of the Sorbonne, the members of the Expedition received the golden medal of the French Geographical Society. On this occasion the Rev. Teilhard de Chardin described some of the scientific results of the Expedition. Mr. Joseph Hackin, the archaeologist of the Expedition, was able to gather new information on the frescoes of the Turfān case. Mr. Hackin who is at present in Japan, has made in the course of 1932 a series of brilliant conferences on the results of his researches in Afghanistān and Eastern Turkistān. The Rev. Teilhard de Chardin himself made during the thirteen months' journey some very interesting observations on the physiography of the traversed country. Their ethnologists brought back a rich collection, especially from China.

The forthcoming volume on the Expedition, prepared by M. Audouin-Dubreuil will be expected with intense interest.

On the occasion of the return of the Citroën Central-Asiatic Expedition, Prof. Nicholas de Roerich greeted the Expedition with the following address.

CITRÖEN CENTRAL-ASIATIC EXPEDITION

The second expedition arranged by Citröen has returned. We have received the newspapers with the first information about the results. We have seen the first photographs of the objects brought by the second expedition. We deeply regret the loss to the expedition in the premature death of its chief, Haardt. But we were delighted that the remaining participants of this expedition in the persons of Louis Audouin-Dubreuil, J. Hackin, F. Teilhard de Chardin, and others returned safely and brought new scientific reports. We were delighted to hear about the splendid new drawings of Jacovleff. From personal experience we are aware of how difficult such trails are and how necessary it is to value each success among these valorous achievements.

After this second expedition arranged by Citröen, one cannot but make a complete deduction and mark the uniqueness of these undertakings. We did not see the first exhibition, the results of the African expeditions; however, we know the reports about it and the excellent edition of the field-works of Jacovleff, who expressed the unrepeatable character of the countries through which they passed.

Both expeditions, the African as well as the Asiatic, evoked definite attention, so needed in the contemporary movements of culture. Looking over the staff of the expedition one may delight at the unusually successful and varied assembling of co-workers in all specialities. Every branch has been represented by one of its most vital and best qualified workers. And yet this does not happen often and every one knows that such a varied chord is not easy to select.

We know of many expeditions which not only failed to reach their goal, but fell apart on the way because of the inexcusable mutual human antagonisms. But in the case of Citröen's expedition we see not only the conquering of difficulties, but also a vital, convincing, multiform result.

In this case, we are reminded that the automobile, as one of the most powerful methods of communication, became unifying force in scientific, artistic, cultural researches. In this sense the introduction of an industrial factor, as a unifying and connecting link, appears to be uniquely valuable.

The tasks of Culture, about which so much is spoken of at present, also demand contemporary expressions. Culture, as such, excludes each jealous, antagonistic separation. If the heights of civilization and the highest dominions of culture, appear primarily to be a synthesis of all the conquests of human genius, then the methods for the fulfilment of these broadened tasks must also be truly contemporary. In other words, the broad horizon of Culture, as the elevation of the general trend of thought, leads us towards all contemporary discoveries and improvements.

Motors, the radio, television, all submarine and subterranean communications,

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must lead towards mutual understanding and unity. It is precisely these collective expeditionary tasks, which were expressed with especial vividness in the expeditions of Citröen and can recall to us the duties of co-operation, which are not based upon nebulous abstractions, but upon the discoveries of our present day. The visitors to the Citröen exhibitions, and the readers of the reports about these expeditions, will be thankful for their collective unity, which not only transports them vividly into other lands but, by its multiformity, actually broadens their consciousness.

Some time ago, as was remarkably defined by Anatole France, people were afraid of each synthesis, of each generalization, and through this they forced upon themselves an inevitable, insignificant and fierce dis-unity. The entire culture of our most recent times, in its industrial aspects as well as its spiritual aspirations, strives towards an expression of true co-operation. Mankind is strenuously seeking formulæ which would make it possible to come together for peaceful and creative work. All new Conferences, new Societies, Institutions, in one or another measure, have within themselves, this task of cultural unification and mutual understanding.

If it formerly seemed that cultural unification could be expressed primarily in some cultural and artistic domains, it now becomes especially clear, that such unification is much broader than individual branches. They are expressed in a generally elevated trend of mind, in the sense of universal creativeness in all parts of life.

Thus, in the name of Culture, from the League of Culture, one wishes to thank all undertakings similar to the enlightened tasks of the Citröen expedition. In other words, one wishes to thank the inspirators, builders and co-workers of all such undertakings, who, by their self-sacrificing labours, are rousing human thought, and of course, elevating it to a new step. Without these courageous discoveries mankind would again stoop to the routine of daily vulgarity. We know all the difficulties of transportation upon mountain paths and upon the sands of Taklamakan and upon the glacial ranges.

Upon the path we have met many friendly local stories about the great explorer, Sven Hedin, as well as reminiscences of Prjevalsky and many others, who brought from the depths of the desert, new considerations and new impulses for human thought.

Let us not regret that the romantic camel caravan gives way to the motor, aeroplane, railroads. Let us not regret that the 'long ear' of Asia accedes its possibilities to the telegraph and the radio. But let us believe that these improvements will live not only with civilization, but that they will enter benevolently into Culture, not lessening the worth of spiritual values.

The more jealously-guarded science will be spread, the more it will bring bliss. Folk legends and traditions thousands of years old, will, if correctly interpreted in the new light of research, give only brilliant new possibilities, and

in the true co-operation there cannot appear anything hostile, impeding, or bemoaning. Everything destructive and decomposing will remain within the limits of ignorance. But every step of co-operation and unification will mean movement towards true enlightenment.

These considerations appear when we see before us the collected works of the last expeditions. One wants to thank the directors and participants for that vigour of thinking, which they are undoubtedly bringing into the human consciousness, at present so agitated and so oppressed. Because verily the new step of progress shall comprise the condition that the latest improvements give their hand to science and art. This collective creativeness imparts that vigour of the spirit of which the new generation is so much in need.

Sincere greetings!

NICHOLAS DE ROERICH.

KEYLANG, HIMĀLAYAS, *Aug. 20th, 1932.*

To the above address, the leader of the expedition, Monsieur Audouin Dubreuil sent the following letter on behalf of the members of the Expedition :

A M. LE PROFESSEUR N. DE ROERICH,
Naggar, Indes Britanniques.

PARIS, LE
22 Octobre, 1932.

Monsieur,

Madame de Vaux-Phalipau a bien voulu me transmettre l'article que vous avez rédigé sur notre Expedition au Centre—Asie, ou plutôt le vibrant salut que vous nous avez adressé du camp de Kyelang.

Au nom de tous mes camarades, et au mien, je vous exprime les sentiments de notre reconnaissance. Un témoignage comme le votre nous est précieux, nous en sommes fiers.

En outre, dans les lignes bienveillantes et pleines d'intérêt que vous avez écrites, vous avez su admirablement expliquer les buts que nous poursuivions, les moyens que nous avions eus à notre disposition, et la foi qui nous animait.

Puisque je vous écris, je dois vous dire que mes camarades et moi, avons pour votre personne, Monsieur le Professeur, la plus haute estime et la plus vive admiration.

Votre action et votre oeuvre sont de celles qui servent d'exemple aux hommes et qui font honneur à l'humanité, en même temps qu'elles lui rendent les plus grands services.

Veillez croire, Monsieur le Professeur, à l'assurance de ma considération et de mon dévouement.

L. AUDOUIN DUBREUIL.