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Exploration in the Mustagh Mountains: Discussion

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now been explored. There are few flat areas of any great extent that remain to attract the adventurous. The abodes of snow, polar and mountainous, alone stand forth to challenge exploration. It is not in the nature of man to decline that challenge. Nor is it likely that you will refuse to listen to the reports of the travellers who accept it. Your destiny is, I think, assured. The world's great mountain ranges are the workshops where continents are formed and renewed. There nature's forces are beheld in grandest activity. Few indeed of these workshops have been investigated by man with any approach to completeness. Most mountain ranges are not even mapped. The Alps, indeed, are now well known. Mr. Freshfield and his successors have done much towards the investigation of the Caucasus. In the Andes of Ecuador Mr. Whymper showed how to organise and carry out with completeness of success a journey of exploration in a distant and (Humboldt and others notwithstanding) practically uninvestigated mountain range. My desire and attempt was to follow Mr. Whymper's example and to work on the lines he had laid down. Future travellers will be able to do much more in the same length of time than was accomplished by our party.

The question of equipment is all-important for mountain travel, where everything carried must be the lightest possible. Our equipment was good as far as it went, but it can be much improved; and with improved equipment greater efficiency can be and will be attained. In due season the ranges of Central Asia will receive the attention they demand. They will be mapped—which at present none of them are from a mountain student's point of view, just as an ocean is not mapped when you have fixed its shores, but only when you have sounded its depths. Their glaciers will be explored, their peaks will be climbed—peaks far loftier than any whose summits we were able to reach; and when this has been done, and a knowledge of the nature of the foldings and wrinklings of the Earth's crust has been attained, it will be found that the work was, from a scientific and geographical standpoint, just as well worth doing as the work of exploring any region of the world suited to be the home of man.

Before the reading of the paper, the President, the Right Hon. Sir M. E. GRANT DUFF, made the following remarks: Many of you have become well acquainted with the recent journeys of Mr. Conway through the very interesting papers which have appeared in our *Proceedings* and in our *Journal*, but before Mr. Conway went to India, he had made a very considerable reputation amongst mountaineers by his travels in the Alps, and by the works he has written upon them. He has also travelled in many other parts of the world, especially in Egypt, studying the artistic side of archæology, and was for some time Professor of Art in the Liverpool branch of the Victoria University. You will perceive accordingly that Mr. Conway is a person who has had a very varied training and is acquainted with many different subjects, and you will expect, what I am perfectly sure you will obtain, a very interesting paper from him.

After the reading of the paper the following discussion ensued:—

Colonel GODWIN-AUSTEN: I have listened with extreme interest to the lecture. Mr. Conway has brought vividly to my mind scenes of many years ago. I must first thank him for so kindly alluding to my services at that time. I think, however, he has rather given me credit for more than I did. I was not really the discoverer of these glaciers. Previous to my visiting that part of the Himalayas, the great glacier at Arundu had been seen by Mr. Vigne, at the time before we had taken the Punjab (1835). Then Dr. Falconer (1841), and Dr. Thompson also (1847–48), saw the ends of two of the glaciers, and they were followed again in 1856 by one of the Schlagintweits—Adolf, I think—who was afterwards murdered in Yarkand. When I went there in 1860 my first season's work was to survey up to the Masherbrum Ridge and the glaciers descending towards the Shyokh River. In 1861 from Askole I crossed the end of the Biafo Glacier, and went on to the Mustagh Pass and surveyed the Punmar Glacier, which came down from that direction, and I then had on my plane-table a large gap between the Masherbrum Ridge and the Punmar Glacier, of which I knew nothing. I did not at that time know that a glacier so large existed there, and my surprise was therefore extreme when proceeding up the Biafo Valley I came suddenly on the great breadth of ice, which stretched in front of me, marking the end of the Baltoro Glacier. I then saw the valley was much longer than I imagined, and continued on that glacier for about five days; but did not get anywhere near the point Mr. Conway was able to reach. I only reached on that occasion the long glacier which came down from Masherbrum on the south, but from other points I had fixed by plane-table surveying I was able to get a rough sketch of the upper portion. It is most satisfactory to me and everyone in this room to think that these glaciers have now been visited by such a good mountaineer as Mr. Conway; he went to this part of the Himalayas with the great advantage of knowing and having ascended a great many peaks in the Alps, and I hope we shall hereafter hear from Mr. Conway a fuller account of what he has seen, his impressions of this portion of the Himalayas, and the differences between it and the Alps of Europe. The vastness of the country there, and its desolate appearance, cannot be described in words, and we have been most fortunate this evening in seeing the photographs which he was able to take, because it has given you some sort of idea of the country. It is the most striking country that anyone can possibly visit, but I cannot say it is all pleasure to travel through it, because the extremes of heat and cold are very great, and Mr. Conway describes very well the dreadful march up the Hispar Valley towards the great glacier. He was very fortunate in seeing one of the great rushes of mud and rock, which he described, for this reason, that although they occur almost daily, yet although you may arrive on the brink of any one of these nullahs where they occur, and see that one has gone by, it is not often one is there at the time to actually observe the phenomenon. I had the good fortune myself to see one which passed my camp under the Skoro La; had I not seen the way in which the enormous blocks were transported and thrown up on to the sides of the ravine I should have attributed it to glacial action in the winter months. Mr. Conway is of opinion that the accumulations of detritus in the valley of the Indus River have been brought about by this action. I think it has been a means to an end, but I do not think it has been the sole cause in that part of the world. You find every sort of action has gone on, as witness the lakes which have been formed along the course of the Indus very far back in time. The accumulation round Skardo is very interesting, because you have beds with enormous blocks which may have been brought down by these "Swa," as the natives call them, with great thicknesses of extremely fine silt formed in still water. The extreme cold of the period is indicated

in these finer silts by pieces of a similar silt being imbedded in it, which have retained their form and must have been in a frozen state when carried along by the stream and deposited. The whole region has passed through a long period of glacial action. I was also interested in what Mr. Conway said about the movement of these glaciers since the time when I was there, and I rather think in reference to the Baltoro and the remarkable rock which I noticed in my journal at the time, that the glacier has advanced, it is somewhat nearer to the terminal cliff than when I saw it. The glacier at Arundu, which is on the south of the Nushik La, was advancing rapidly when I was there, and the rocks from the ice were rolling into the fields of ripe corn, which was being torn up by the ice. I will not detain you by further remarks; the ground traversed by Mr. Conway is so extensive that it is difficult to seize upon, and treat all points that might be of interest. On one point, the nomenclature of the ranges of the Mustagh and Karakoram, both names are those of passes as known by the natives, and I should call that portion of the range to the west of K2 the Mustagh, as far as the Hunza Nagyr Valley, while the portion to the eastward I should call the Karakoram up to the Chang Chenmo plain. The Hindu Kush could be retained for that portion north of Gilgit, and further to the westward. I thank Mr. Conway for giving us so interesting an account; both he and his companions deserve the highest praise for what they have done.

Sir MICHAEL BIDDULPH: I am sorry I have nothing ready prepared to tell you, and I cannot emulate my friend Mr. Conway in his description. I can only say a few words about those parts which I have visited and which are accessible to anyone. From my earliest youth I felt the greatest passion for mountain scenery, and fortunately, in every part of my life, I had the opportunity of visiting hills which have gradually grown greater and greater until I got to the Himalayas. In 1865, after four years' heat in the plains, which was shared by my wife and family, I found myself on the confines of Kashmir; and, having a little spare time from my duties, I thought I should like to see something really big in the way of mountains, and consulted my friend Major Strutt, and asked him what in the neighbourhood of Kashmir was really worth seeing. He pointed out a circle on the map with the figures 26,629. I said I think that will do. So having comfortably placed my family in Kashmir, I took leave and got on the trail. I had had the good fortune to read Vigne's Travels. He had described in most vivid terms his impressions of Nunga Parbat as he saw it from the first elevation north of the valley of Kashmir. When I crossed the same ridge it was hazy to the north-westward, and I saw nothing but a blank beyond the range which bounded the valley of the Kanchanjanga. So I contented myself with the flowers growing breast-high on the slopes around, and then I passed into the deep valley at my feet. Having stayed two days by the Kanchanjanga I ascended the western slopes and slept at an elevation of 16,000 feet, on the top of a pass, with a keen north wind blowing. On the following morning I thought I would console myself by trying to shoot ibex, and the Shikaris soon put me on their tracks; but while looking north-westward for what I was really in quest of, I suddenly thought I saw a glimpse of something glittering through a cloud. It is impossible to describe to you what the sensation was of seeing that glitter in the cloud far above any land. By-and-by the shining increased, and what proved to be a snowy mountain came out of the heavens; and this magnificent mountain was laid bare against the blue sky. After feasting my eyes upon this surpassing spectacle I thought no more of following ibex, but proceeded to sketch Nunga Parbat, and secured one of the views, now exhibited in the tea-room. I afterwards passed some delightful days exploring the base of the mountain. I must now describe to you what may be seen from the

plains. You will understand that plains extend from the Indian Ocean, at Karachi, right round to the Bay of Bengal, always bounded by the vast ranges of the Himalaya and its offshoots. The mountains are only visible in certain states of the atmosphere; one may be close under the hills without even a glimpse of them; and again one may be 150 miles distant and yet see them floating in the haze of the horizon.

It was my good fortune to be travelling with Lord Napier, of Magdala, on a tour of inspection to Darjiling in the month of December. I had had frequent opportunity of enjoying views of many portions of the main range, but as yet had not seen Kanchanjanga, reputed to be the second highest of the whole chain, and said to be a magnificent spectacle as seen from Darjiling. Journeying over those vast plains, diversified by groups of trees and watered by winding rivers, we at first looked in vain over fold after fold of park-like scenery to a horizon melted into the sky. It was early morning and we were 100 miles from the outer hills. By-and-by we see the loom of the range, a huge formless mass fading into space. Again a little further on our way, and there seems to be a shining in the warm mists which join plain to sky, but far above the loom of the hills. Again further on our way and the undefined assumes form, and we saw the head of Kanchanjanga floating in the sky. No words can describe the fascinating beauty of a mountain thus coming into view, where before nothing was visible. The circumstances of the transformation, the aerial character of the horizon, the situation and want of form of the low hills, all combine to give a supernatural appearance, which must be seen to be appreciated.

Having done my best to convey to you impressions of these scenes, let me hope that some of you may be able to tear yourselves away from this busy town and go to India, and for yourselves judge what the Himalaya Range is like. We all are, I am sure, exceedingly obliged to Mr. Conway for the admirable account he has given of his most interesting and arduous journey, and only hope he may have further adventures to tell us of at some future day.

MR. DOUGLAS FRESHFIELD: I will say only two words. I am sure you will be much better occupied in going to see the beautiful exhibition of sketches and photographs which Mr. McCormick and Mr. Conway have to show in the next room. I will only say that in the mass of topographical details which only imperfectly represent one side of a story that I hope will take two volumes to tell—which I hope also we shall not have to wait nine years for, as in the case of Mr. Whymper's book—we have perhaps lost sight of two main facts. First, Mr. Conway has been the first person to cross the greatest glacier pass that exists in the temperate regions of the world. Next, Mr. Conway has, with only one exception (Mr. Graham), and that not absolutely certain, reached the greatest height of anyone on this globe. He has certainly beaten the Schlagintweits and Johnson. Moreover, Mr. Conway has measured his height, taken photographs and observations of several kinds at the top. To that I attach most importance of all. Somebody—a member of the Council—said to me the other day: "But I thought Conway was going up K2?" Mr. Conway was sent to that region not to attempt any desperate feat, but to give such a picture of the mountains as a man familiar with the European Alps could give—cross the great pass, attempt the easiest peak, and get as near the top as he could—and I think he did his work most admirably, and I am quite sure the Geographical Society have sent out few travellers who have brought back more fruitful results. I say fruitful because I think that his travels, when fully published, will interest Anglo-Indians in mountaineering, and that Mr. Bruce's Ghurkhas will solve the mountaineering problem. If you can teach these soldiers to act as good mountain guides, then you have solved the problem of the exploration of the snowy

Himalayas. These Ghurkhas, I am glad to say, are going to receive from the Alpine Club special rewards, which will mark them in the estimation of their comrades and in their own, and will encourage others to undertake, with the assent of their officers, similar work.

The PRESIDENT: We have had a great many pleasant evenings and excellent papers this year—better than any year since I have occupied this Chair—but none better than the one we have listened to this evening. You will instruct me, I am certain, to give your very warmest thanks to Mr. Conway, and unite with Mr. Conway all those gentlemen who have addressed us.

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### LIEUTENANT PEARY'S ARCTIC WORK.\*

By CYRUS C. ADAMS.

CIVIL ENGINEER R. E. PEARY, lieutenant in the United States Navy, was compelled to return to his field of Arctic work, in July last, without publishing a detailed record of his labours in the region of Inglefield Gulf, North-west Greenland, and of his journey on the inland ice to Independence Bay on the north-east coast ( $81^{\circ} 37' 5''$  N. lat.), all of which occupied him from July 27th, 1891, to August 6th, 1892. The reason can be briefly told.

He arrived home in September 1892. He had only nine months in which to raise funds and make preparations for his next expedition. He desired, if possible, to earn, by his own efforts, the money he needed. The lecture platform seemed to offer the best opportunity. For six months he addressed audiences nearly every week-day and often twice a day. He augmented his receipts by well-paid articles for the periodical press and in other ways. In nine months he accumulated about £6000, and he had asked no man for a shilling.

Meanwhile he had devoted all the time he could spare to the preparation of his book. The manuscript was about four-fifths completed when, on July 2nd last, his vessel, the steam sealer *Falcon*, started north from New York with the second expedition. He had some thought of leaving the completion and publication of the book in competent hands, but he finally decided to defer the work until his return. He was also unable to visit England and address the Royal Geographical Society in compliance with their invitation, an opportunity he had hoped to improve, until two months before his departure.

Soon after he returned home he addressed the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, on the geographical and scientific results of his work. This address has not been published. He prepared a fuller

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\* Map, p. 384.