

FIRST OVER THE ROOF OF THE WORLD BY MOTOR

The Trans-Asiatic Expedition Sets New Records for Wheeled Transport in Scaling Passes of the Himalayas

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With Illustrations from Photographs by the Author

In the October, 1931, issue of the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE, Dr. Williams described the experiences of the Citroën-Haardt Expedition from Beyrouth through Syria, Iraq, Persia, and Afghanistan to Srinagar, capital of Kashmir—a distance of 3,445 miles. The journey from Srinagar to Kashgar, in Sinkiang (Chinese Turkestan), described in the following pages, presented greater hardships and perils than any other portion of the scientific Expedition's route. The resourceful leader of the party, M. Georges-Marie Haardt, succeeded in piloting two of his tractor motor cars over snow-blocked passes and across trails which had been obliterated by avalanches to regions never before reached on wheels. Dr. Williams's narrative, brought back by courier because wireless communication has been interrupted by political conditions in China, concludes with the arrival of the Expedition at Aksu (see map, page 324). Subsequently M. Haardt and his associates of the Western Group joined at Urumchi the scientists of the China Group, who had left Peiping for Sinkiang in tractor motors April 6, 1931. On November 25 the united party left Urumchi for Peiping, where it arrived early in February. Thence the Expedition will proceed to Saïgon, in French Indo-China. An account of the journey through China will appear in an early issue of THE GEOGRAPHIC.—EDITOR.

IN URUMCHI, with winter setting in and the cold desert route to Peiping lying ahead, both groups of the Citroën-Haardt Trans-Asiatic Expedition were happily united.

With the Jhelum on a rampage and the Kashmir Valley a lake, the cars which had blazed an unbroken trail eastward from Beyrouth were stranded in Srinagar. The relief cars from Peiping, which were to meet us in Kashgar, were immobilized in the Turfan Depression, a thousand miles away by an air line which no crow could follow and live.

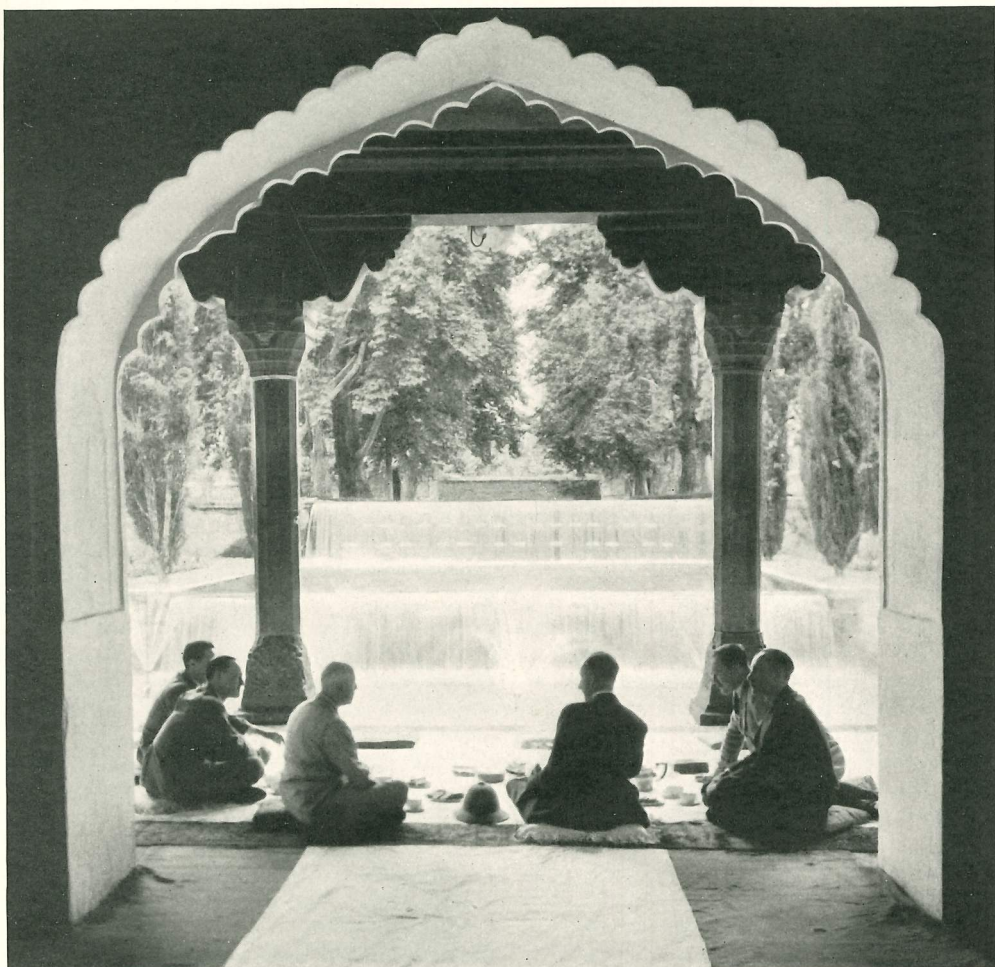
BRITISH OFFICIALS COÖPERATE FULLY

The probable impossibility of crossing the "Roof of the World" by motor was the reason for having two sets of tractors, driving toward the heart of Asia from both sides at once. In Srinagar all expert opinion was that we would not go far toward Gilgit. But M. Haardt, the leader, decided to push on with two of his seven cars until some definite barrier or lack of time should stop the adventure.

The Gilgit trail is reserved for the favored few. But never were any more favored than we. British officials of the Government of India did all in their power to assist us, and their personal hospitality was one of our chief delights. Never had the scanty population helped so unwieldy a caravan on its way. Never had the synopated rhythm of pioneering motors been yoked with the slow but familiar progress of horse and coolie along this daring path.

Travelers as far as Gilgit may have wondered why motor traffic is not common; for, on the whole, the route is surprisingly good. But interrupting the general excellence are grades too steep, hairpin turns too sharp, trails too narrow, underpinning and side walls too infirm.

Nor is this condition subject to facile, or final, amelioration. The engineers who see their erratic highway start its hibernation under the winter's snow have no idea where they will find it when summer comes. Theirs is the never-ending toil of Sisyphus. Just before our passage, the worst landslides in many years had buried,



MEMBERS OF THE EXPEDITION ENJOY THE BEAUTY OF A SRINAGAR GARDEN

M. Haardt is seated at the center of the group, with M. Audouin-Dubreuil, second in command, at his left and Dr. Williams, the National Geographic Society's representative, at the extreme left.

abducted, or ruined essential stretches of the road. Villainous floods had done the rest.

Impromptu paths already linked the unharmed portions; but a crumbling track, to which the pony men must anchor their animals by stretching them upgrade between bridle and tail, is no fit place for a three-ton motor car.

For a brave rider on a sure-footed horse, the Gilgit route to Kashgar* is the ride of

* See, also, in the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE, "By Coolie and Caravan Across Central Asia," by William J. Morden, October, 1927; "The Desert Road to Turkestan," by Owen Latimore, June, 1929, and "On the World's Highest Plateaus," by Hellmut de Terra, March, 1931.

rides; but invading this region by motor was declared insanity. The fact that the "Golden Scarab," the name given one of the cars, covered 207 miles of virgin trail between some of the world's highest mountains, and waded over the 13,775-foot Burzil Pass in belly-deep snow under a blazing summer sun is noteworthy, not only for the mechanical achievement but also for its psychological effect on the minds of those who had regarded the mountain wall as an impassable barrier.

The first wheeled vehicles of any type to reach Gilgit were airplanes, but the first to arrive *on* wheels were the "Golden Scarab" and the "Silver Crescent." And



there the latter still remains, its own monument to their joint triumph (see p. 341).

THE START FROM SRINAGAR

On the 12th of July we start from Srinagar. Messrs. Hackin, Jacovleff, Vassoigne, and Sivel, forming a scouting and road-repair party, are already ten days ahead, in the mountains. Our joint leader, Audouin-Dubreuil, with Le Fèvre, Sauvage, and Laplanche, will leave eight days behind us, carrying a portable wireless and thus prolonging our contact with the world.

The Chief of the Expedition, M. Haardt, Col. Vivian Gabriel, Pecqueur, Jourdan, Morizet, Ferracci, Gaufreteau, Cecillien, Normand, Corset, Leroux, and I form the main party, accompanied by the two cars. By dividing into three groups, coolies and ponies can be used by each in turn in the worst spots.

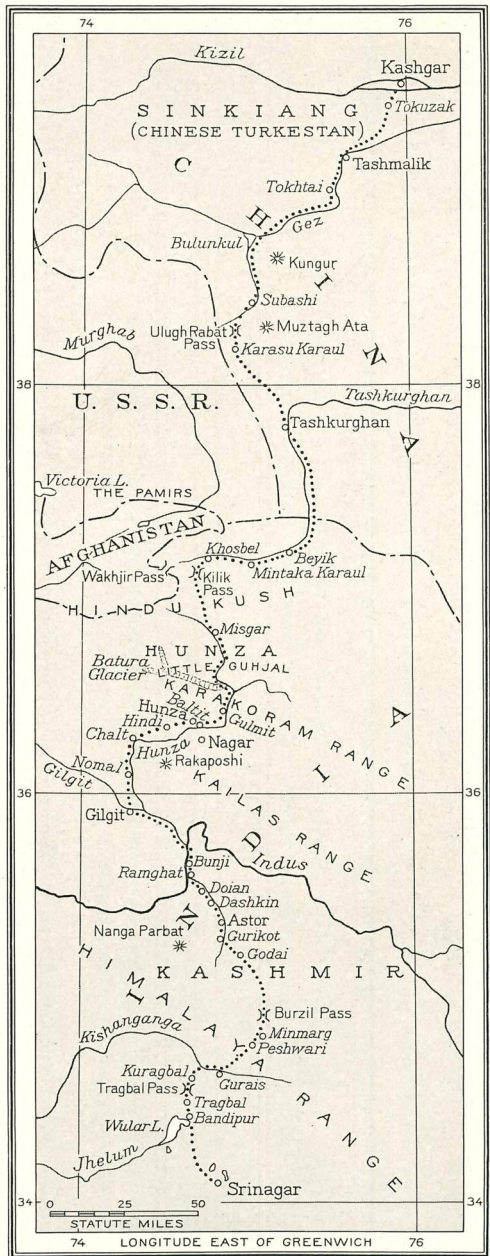
From windows of nut-brown wood, black-haired Kashmiri girls in vivid gowns smile upon us as we start. An abandoned fort, now haunted by countless spirits; misty mountains far away; tall poplars with their feet in the darkening flood; then night.

In the morning, at Bandipur, to the north of Srinagar, the usual chaos of departure, but with the oddest baggage ever seen. Leather-covered *yakdans* (wooden chests), familiar to all Central Asian travelers; small coils of cable on which the porters pounce, only to slink away when they have felt their weight; spare wheels with doughnut tires slung sandwichwise astride half-hidden ponies; axles and gear boxes awkwardly swung between four protesting coolies; cinema tripod, carried upright like a young tree; cameras, sleeping sacks, tool boxes, cases of food, green tents, and boxlike beds—150 pony loads for our group alone.

Wisps of gossamer float above the wading willows in Wular Lake. What a setting for an impressive departure! But the cars are already around the hill. One porter after another disappears and the baggage animals straggle away in unimposing groups. Servants mount the best ponies and escape before they are detected.

ADVANCING ON FOOT

I am told that the zigzag ascent from Bandipur Bridge to Tragbal, 9 miles in 4½ hours, was a triumph for the cars.

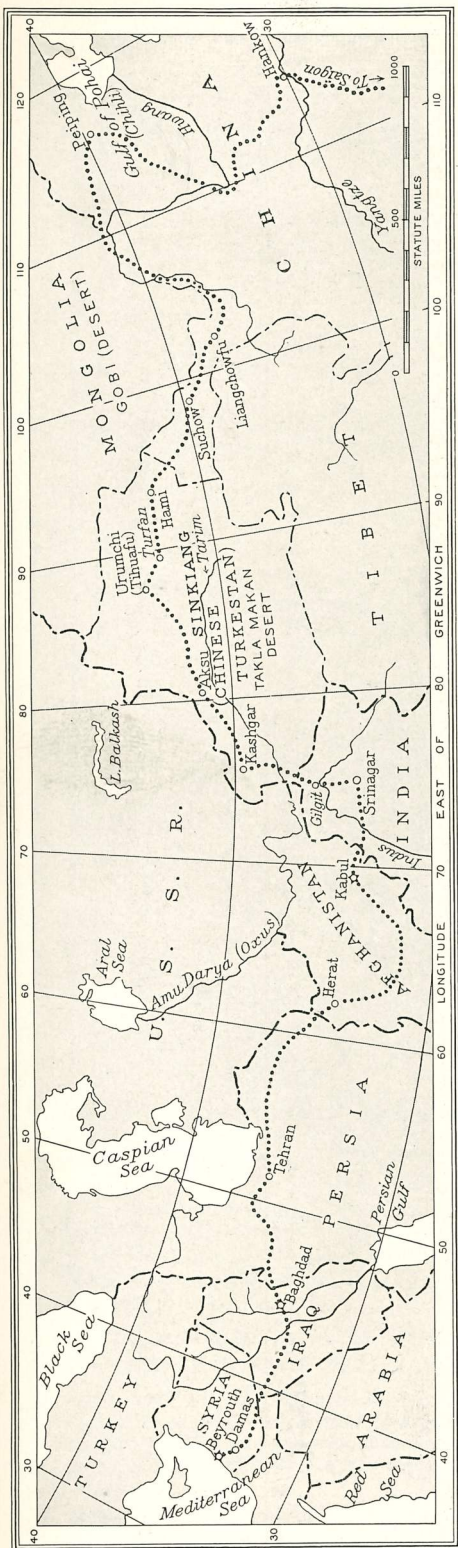


Drawn by James M. Darley

THE ROUTE BETWEEN SRINAGAR AND KASHGAR (SEE, ALSO, PAGE 324)

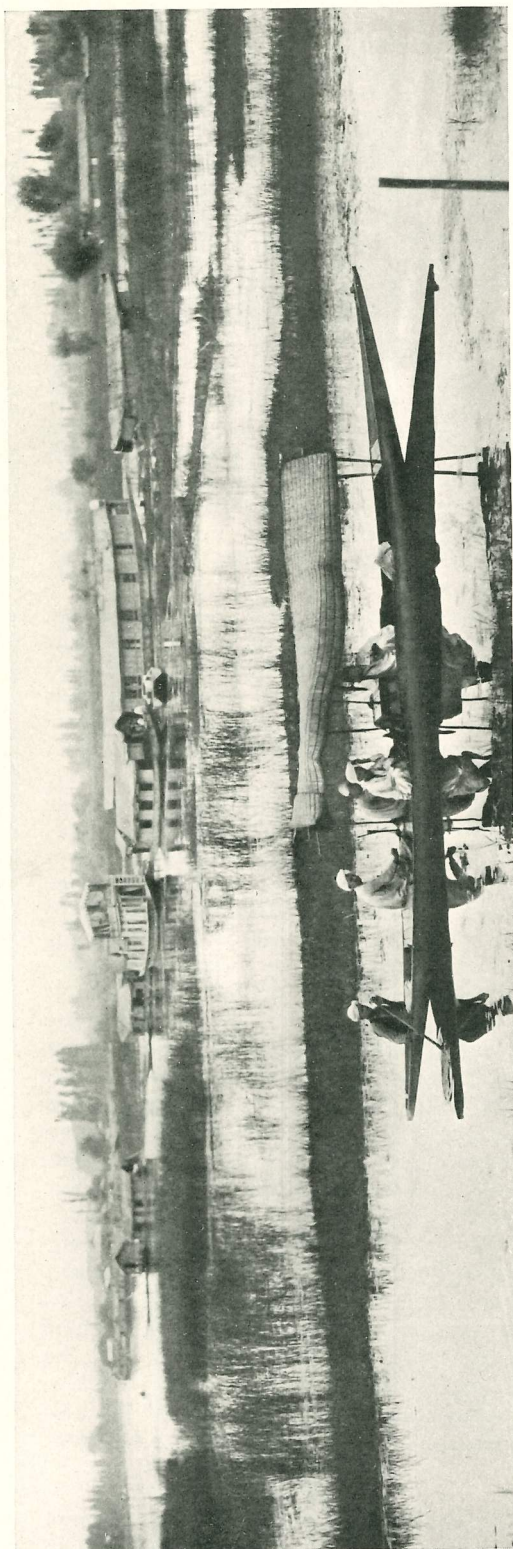
Through a land of mighty rivers, over snow-filled passes and over lofty plateaus, the Expedition's caravans pushed forward to overcome every obstacle and reach their goal in Sinkiang.

Certainly they were at the resthouse, nicely arranged in a verdant alpine pasture, amid tall pines, when I arrived. At 9,340 feet



Drawn by A. H. Bunstead

THE ROUTE ACROSS ASIA, FROM BEYROUTH TO PEIPING, OVER THE "ROOF OF THE WORLD" (SEE, ALSO, MAP, PAGE 323)





GOING IS COMPARATIVELY EASY ON THE ROAD TO BUNJI IF OVERHANGING ROCKS STAY PUT

Avalanches such as that which delayed the caravan at Doian (see, also, illustration, page 326) may wipe out miles of the trail at any moment.



HAULING A CAR OVER SUCH GOING WOULD GIVE ANY ONE A HEADACHE

Unconscious of the camera, the coolie at the extreme left registers complete exhaustion as he rests for a moment on the trail between Burzil and Astor.



REPAIRING A ROAD OBLITERATED BY A MILE-SQUARE LANDSLIDE

Near Doian a mountain side had slipped, leaving confusion in its wake. To drive a path through it cost the men two days and nights of bitter toil (see text, pages 336 and 340).



THE FIRST CAR NEARS THE SUMMIT OF BURZIL PASS

Despite the 13,775-foot altitude, the machines forged forward under their own power. An army of coolies tugging on ropes provided insurance against disastrous side slips (see text, page 332).

the air was delightful, a wood fire an added charm.

This was the life!

No magic wand had turned into a horse the mouse suggested to me as a riding animal, so on Bastille Day I went ahead on foot. All around were heavily wooded slopes bathed in morning mist. Behind me an ominous rumble, and for the first time this majestic silence was torn by the roar of a motor. Led by the apelike but mighty Ramana, a gang of coolies strained the cars around a narrow bend, and on they came, impressive in their slow relentlessness, beneath the overhanging boughs of mighty evergreens.

For hours I stumbled upward with my large camera, while a Hunza lad puffed along behind with my films. The hairpins retarded the tractors, and by cutting corners or climbing ridges I was able to keep ahead, expose my day's supply of films, and then stroll along the broad back of the Tragbal Pass, expecting to be overtaken. When a car moves, a pedestrian is left behind. When it stops, he forges ahead. So with coolie and pack animal for 200 miles.

Tramping along the 11,000-foot ridge came an Englishman and his wife.

"The Burzil is deep in snow. Our ponies floundered about so badly that we had to come back. You'll never get the cars across."

Here was frank opinion from one who knew conditions.

Although the trail is open only for five months, the post goes through the year around. Two mail-runners overtook me, bent low under their heavy sacks. To them, carrying a camera was not "sahib's" work. In vain they urged me to add it to their burdens. But I did accompany them down a breakneck short cut to the hut where their relief was waiting to go on with the mails.

A light rain began to fall. The sky was too dark for photography; so I kept on down among the pines to Kuragbal, past a broken bridge and a rocky stream bed which would surely bother the cars. The morning's hurried climb had winded me. After only 15 miles afoot, in spite of the bracing climate and the joy of the open trail, I was thirsty and tired.



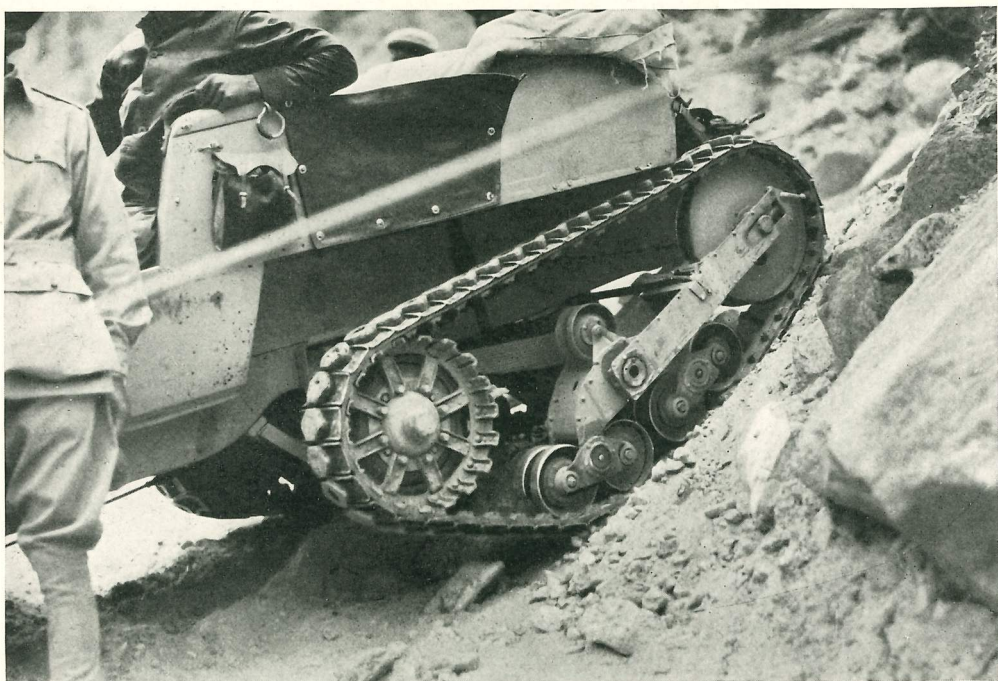
BURZIL PASS MEANT 10 HOURS' WADING IN SNOW UNDER A BURNING SUN

In midwinter the Burzil is not extremely difficult, provided there is no blizzard at the time of the attempt; but in midsummer the crossing must be made early in the morning, before the sun melts the snow (see text, page 331).



NOTHING CAN BE MORE WELCOME TO BURZIL TRAVELERS THAN THE HUT AT THE TOP

The way over the roof of the Himalayas claimed heavy toll of human life before the British took over the Srinagar-Gilgit route and established rest-houses along it and a substantial stone shelter at the summit of the pass.



NOT A SHELL HOLE, BUT A BIT OF ROAD NEAR ASTOR

Landslides have a disconcerting habit of carving across the trail gullies that present obstacles even to a tractor (see text, page 335).

The next morning we crossed the Kishanganga on the first of many bridges. The technique varied only slightly, according to the length and strength of each. The cars were more or less unloaded or dismantled and hauled across with two light ropes on the steering wheel to keep them to the straight and narrow way. Thus the collapse of a bridge would involve no risk of life.

Once the cars took the easy road to Gura, there was no hope of catching up on foot. It was a keen pleasure to wander along in the quiet shade, with the foaming river at one side and thick forest on the other. A shot broke the silence and our Kashmiri game-bird *shikari* showed me a limp mass of gray-blue and yellow which only a moment before had been a bird.

After lunch time it rained, but M. Haardt and I mounted ponies and rode on to where the cars were stopped by an even weaker bridge. Spread about in the mud, they looked like giant meccano sets that had fallen off a shelf.

On the steep slopes, women in pancake hats with triangular amulets dangling from the rims were gathering the soft gray

artemisia which grows in Kashmir and Russia and is used for making santonin.

Along the road to Peshwari, wild flowers color the valley. Orchidlike snapdragons, wild thyme, and columbine stood out among unknown varieties, and on a peculiar kind of evergreen the cones were royal blue.

BAD NEWS FROM THE EAST

For us, Peshwari was a mere halting place; but to the third group, nine days later, it was the scene of romance. For weeks we had been without news from the East. Night after night Laplanche had combed the ether with no result more thrilling than a concert in Java or time-signals from Moscow. Then, without warning, across the Takla Makan Desert and the Himalayas came the bad news: the China Group definitely stopped in Urumchi; Captain Point a prisoner!

Then a hurried appeal: "Passez notre trafic. On nous esgourde."

"What does that mean?" asked Audouin-Dubreuil.

"On nous esgourde?" repeated Sauvage. "They're listening in; they're spy-



ing on us!' One must know his slang."

Far into the night these four cronies, led by Audouin-Dubreuil, discussed the meaning of all this. Years of patient planning set at naught. The Central Asian rendezvous broken up. Perhaps real danger for our comrades beyond mountain and desert. Certainly a new weight of anxiety for our chief.

It was not till our own arrival in Urumchi, three months later, that we heard how pick-up and phonograph had been used to mask this secret message. When it was relayed to M. Haardt, on July 26, he was knee-deep among the parts of his two cars, completely dismantled because of a mile-long destruction of the route between Astor and Dashkin. Things were none too encouraging.

But when the cars passed Peshwari everything was going well. We left to our right the little postal station of Minmarg, 9,300 feet above sea level but buried in wild flowers, and turned up the side valley toward the dread Burzil. A bridge across an ice chasm seeming too weak, the cars plunged up to their chins in the icy flood and climbed steeply to the resthouse, more than two miles above sea level. They must lift themselves another half mile before crossing the pass.

After lunch I climbed to the snow fields. Breathing was heavy and progress slow. We discovered that, for us, breathing was hardest, not at the highest points along our route, but at about 12,000 feet, and during the night. Even after we had been considerably higher and become accus-



ONLY A FEW LOOSE STONES BETWEEN LIFE AND DESTRUCTION

The "Golden Scarab" clings to a cliff on the Gilgit Road. When a portion of the footing dropped away beneath it, the tractor was left on a precarious perch 40 feet above a mountain torrent (see text, page 333).

tomed to the rarefied air, breathing again became harder on descending to the 12,000-foot level.

TEN-HOUR FIGHT TO CROSS THE PASS

The best way to cross the Burzil is to do it before the sun comes up and melts the snow. If there is no blizzard, it is not too difficult, even in midwinter, and a tiny shelter, perched on a 40-foot tower, shows over what depths of snow the dak-runners carry the mail (see page 329). But in late July the snow does not freeze deep, and we needed daylight for our pioneering efforts.

Before the three-mile snow field there are several smaller ones, tip-tilted side-



HUNZA IS A MAN'S COUNTRY

When asked how many children he has, the Baltit father is prone to enumerate only his sons, with a degree of pride in proportion to the number. The comely little chap in occidental attire is obviously the apple of his sire's eye.

ways at a dangerous angle. By nightfall two of these had been passed, after digging deep trenches for the uphill tractor bands. The mechanics slept in their bags on the snow, ready to start the long wallow to the top at dawn.

The big day was one of rare beauty, with fine clouds and a blazing sun. The snow was melting rapidly and rivulets of water filled every possible path. Our friend Major Irwin accompanied us with his picked mules, and their helpless flounderings gave a hint of the difficulties overcome by our heavy tractors.

The motors, even in this rarefied atmosphere, performed splendidly. So did the gangs of coolies who hauled at long ropes to keep the machines from side slip. Heavy iron teeth were added to the tractor treads and the cars moved steadily ahead; but the front wheels wallowed deep and the whole machine had a tendency to slip sideways toward the river. The fight to cross the pass lasted for ten strenuous hours (see, also, pages 327-329).

My pony was brave but useless, sinking to his belly at almost every step. Once

on foot, I was soon soaked with sweat and my expensive snow goggles, so carefully ground to my lens prescription, but lacking adequate ventilation, clouded over so that I could not see.

COOLIES CHEER WILDLY

Our transport animals, badly blown, reached the top soon after noon and were halted in the circle of dry ground cleared by sun and wind between the small hut and the eight-foot snow banks. If the cars could not make the grade before dark, food and sleeping sacks must be held. But the pony men had not bargained for any such delay. They protested that they must go on. Having neither food nor shelter for themselves or their animals, their case was a good one, but Colonel Gabriel, who could talk to them in their own language, induced them to wait.

Unless they're trying to sell you something, the Kashmiris are not a demonstrative race; but when the second car reached the pass, the coolies cheered wildly. Some insisted that they had had enough—and no wonder; but others volunteered to see the



cars off the snow fields.

Ferracci was all for camping there; but Colonel Gabriel and I had walked on around the ridge and found only a mile or so of snow beyond. He suggested going on. After a late-afternoon lunch the cars continued rooting their way through the snow and were soon on the excellent road leading toward Gilgit. Neither blizzard nor avalanche had marred our passage.

The Great Himalayas lay behind!

The next day the "Scarab" nearly came to grief. When I caught up, it was perched 40 feet above a mountain torrent, shouldering a precipice and with most of its left tractor poised in mid-air (see page 331). Getting it around that rocky corner involved enough pulleys, cables, and "fixed points" to give an engineer headache. A new wall was constructed by two brawny Hunza men, to whom heavy stones were lifelong playthings. It took the place of the wall that had nearly brought disaster when it collapsed.

As soon as the cars were past the danger zone, Colonel Gabriel and I rode through magic beauty down the valley to Godai. The setting sun still lighted the green slopes to the east, and all around us were such flowers as few gardens can boast. Clusters of spiraea and lupine were grouped about wild rosebushes, heavy with blossoms and higher than our horses' heads.

We passed two miserable mountain villages, the women wearing sunbonnet hats with metal plaques sewed to the droopy brims, the men sitting silent and glum.



INTRICATE CARVING GRACES A BALITIT DOORWAY

Though the palace of the Mir of Hunza has little architectural distinction, it presents some charming features (see, also, illustration, page 334, and text, page 342).

The children, perched at the very edge of the flat roofs, were torn between curiosity and fear. They were like poor little animals—and some of them as naked.

Before night settled down we passed a mirrorlike overflow glowing at the foot of tall pines. After dark we could hardly distinguish the path, which often overhung the torrent, but the thunder of huge boulders, grinding down the river bed, was ever in our ears. Like all Gilgit travelers, we now noticed a nerve-tingling tendency on the part of our ponies to hug the outer edge of the trail.

In the morning, at a turn of the valley, we had a fine view of one shoulder of Nanga Parbat, beyond a tumble-down village set



THE PALACE OF THE MIR OVERLOOKS THE GROUP OF VILLAGES KNOWN AS HUNZA

Though a rambling, commodious Eastern building with no architectural pretense, it is the show place of Baltit (see text, page 342). From its grounds can be seen the roofs of the capital city, many of them splashed with the color of drying red corn and golden apricots.



in fields of gold-ripe grain. At 7,500 feet the sun was warm. Crossing high above great whirlpools on two bridges, just far enough apart to necessitate considerable manual labor, was hot work.

Toward night a gusty storm sprang up, and as I rode across in the high wind the Gurikot suspension bridge danced and swayed in a way that frightened my pony.

There is a fine bungalow at Gurikot, but tents, cook, and bedding had gone on to Astor, where Major Irwin kindly invited me to share his room. M. Haardt and the cars arrived the following noon, all the men having slept in their clothes. The unequal rhythm of horse and motor had begun to impose its penalties.

A MUD-FLOW BALKS THE MOTORS

Halfway between Astor and Dashkin a mud-flow had burst from the cliffs on the opposite bank, raising the water level, covering several hundred yards of the trail, and eating away the hillside to the west, so that only a sheer wall of earth remained. At one place ponies had to be unloaded before they could pass, and the trail continued over the debris of a former landslide. This time the cars were definitely stopped (see page 330).

While M. Haardt and Ferracci explored the route, Dr. Jourdan and I climbed to Ramah, a green paradise, from which there are fine views of Nanga Parbat. The path rises 2,700 feet in three miles, and the surprise at finding a level polo field and a flock of rosy-cheeked young Englishmen at the top lessened the disappointment of having the five-mile-high mountain hidden by clouds.

This delightful retreat from the heat and sand-flies of Gilgit is well worth knowing, and our hosts made ours a delightful excursion. When they arrived, Sauvage and Le Fèvre made a real ascent, reaching a height of more than 16,000 feet, obtaining extraordinary photographs, and sliding down a snow slope at the speed of an express train. But Dr. Jourdan and I returned to the resthouse to find our chief deep in thought.

A lesser leader would have quit right there, for "Mile Seven" was a nightmare for weeks afterward. The cars, stripped even of headlights and windshields, went through acrobatics which would break an ordinary auto's back; but finally there was

nothing to it but carry them past the break in the trail.

COLONEL GABRIEL SETS AN EXAMPLE

Food and bedding had gone on to Dashkin. The ponies had gone high up in the mountains to graze. The coolies lacked food and a place to sleep. Even those at Dashkin would have mutinied had it not been for the rare ability of Colonel Gabriel, who also helped greatly in getting the pieces moved.

"What these poor devils need is a good example," he said. So this confidant of kings and ministers shouldered a load and started up the trail.

I joined a gang, and together we carried one of the two motors for a mile in less than an hour. Struggling along with these fellow toilers, with the rough pine trunk to which the motor was wired scarring my shoulder, I conceived a hearty sympathy for the native carriers. My shoes were better than their rawhide foot-wrappings. I was better nourished and larger, but I soon had to depend more on my grin and manner than on my strength to encourage them.

In one day that small band of half-starving coolies, who pleaded for food instead of money, carried two motor cars past the break. Having seen a basket-load of small parts scattered among the bushes and delicate bearings covered with sand, the fact that the "Scarab" did 88 miles more and the "Crescent" 71 was to me proof positive of coolie loyalty and mechanics' skill.

Reassembling the cars on a narrow path but little more promising than that over which they had been carried constituted a tacit pledge to make all this trouble and delay worth while. But progress was slow. Inches of rock were broken away to enable the cars to squeeze past; small metal gang-planks were laid down endlessly, one after the other, where the crumbly outer edge of the path overhung the distant river; the inner edge of one hairpin after another was broken down so that the sturdy machines could turn in their tracks and mount a new incline; cables strained the cars inward on rocks where a slip meant a crash. There was not a bit of breathing space until the men reached Dashkin.

This miserable hamlet of goitered men, slovenly women, and rumors of leprosy occupies a site of unusual beauty, thou-



DANCING BOYS ENTERTAIN GUESTS AT THE MIR'S GARDEN PARTY

Memories of the stage of Shakespeare's day are recalled by these graceful but effeminate performers at the royal palace in Baltit (see text, page 343).

sands of feet above the bed of the gorge. When we first reached there the light of the moon peering through the clouds touched the opposite slope with spirit glow. It was as if some Titan's children, caught playing with phosphorous matches (a slight anachronism), had hurriedly wiped their hands across miles of mountain side.

Twelve thousand feet was the level of hard breathing (see page 331), eight thousand of hard eating. Flies with electricity in their feet, as Sauvage said, were the reason. It was thought that there would be none in the mountains; so the fly-spray was left in Srinagar. But the flies of Astor, Dashkin, and Doian are champions, and not till we fought a two weeks' losing

battle with those of Misgar did we meet their equal.

VAST SLIDE OF EARTH BLOCKS THE WAY

Beyond Dashkin there is a shady forest, with clear springs and the song of birds. Then one rounds a ridge and descends on Doian. There the scene was enough to break a man's heart. Again, determination in the face of seemingly insuperable obstacles was the prime requisite of success.

For nearly four miles the trail zigzags down toward where a mountain shoulder narrows the valley, losing half a mile of altitude in the process.



IN THE HIMALAYAS FIREWOOD IS SOMETIMES MORE VALUABLE THAN GOLD

Fuel is hard to obtain in parts of Central Asia, and when firewood is to be had for sale at all it is weighed out carefully. The scales used at this village on the Gilgit-Kashgar Road are crude, but they serve their purpose.



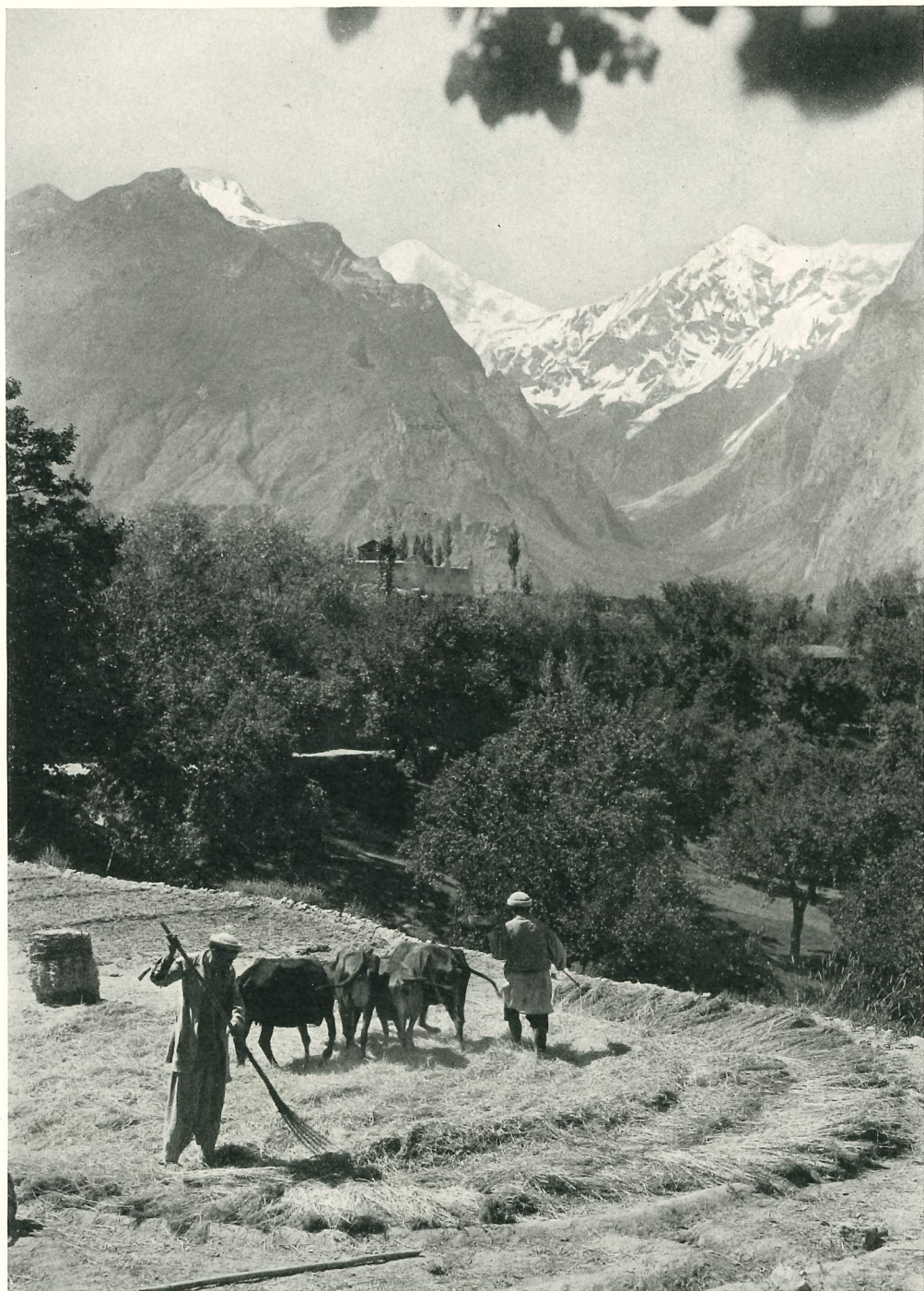
LEADER HAARDT ENJOYS A CHAT WITH THE MIR OF HUNZA

The ruler of the miniature mountain kingdom was a delightful host (see text, page 342). He is here assisted by his youngest son.



PART OF THE BALTIT-TO-GULMIT TRAIL, HANGS IN MID-AIR

No one subject to vertigo on high places should attempt this stretch of road, but the lover of mountain grandeur finds it magnificent (see text, page 342).



CATTLE HELP THE HUNZA FARMERS TO THRESH THEIR GRAIN

Tiers upon tiers of fertile fields support agriculture around the village of Baltit. The region glows with rich color and the fruit orchards yield abundantly (see text, page 342).



AMONG THE KIRGHIZ, YAK TAILS ASSUME BOTH SECULAR
AND RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE

They are frequently hung over temples or other holy places to keep away evil spirits and are used for the same purpose at funerals. They also are used to brush the flies away. Yaks are docile enough with their owners, but sometimes take violent dislike to a European and will assume the offensive.

Shortly before our arrival, a square mile of mountain side had slipped, leaving enormous crevasses and pressure ridges, with outstanding rocks as big as a house, barring the way. The movement of this earth glacier had occurred within a few hours (see page 326).

Ponies seeking a new track had zig-zagged back and forth amid the disorder in a way that no motor car could copy unless its chassis were made of soft rubber. Four miles of steep pony track must be replaced by a two-mile descent, more direct but steep.

In spite of the daring of our mechanics and the extraordinary qualities of our cars, the credit for the Doian achievement belongs to a small group of peasants who, in two days and nights, drove a rough and rugged but possible path through that infernal chaos.

Each series of zig-zags was traversed by a direct line, bypaths avoided the largest boulders, and the cars tobogganed downward without considering the possibility of return.

The dreaded switch-back up the mountain proved easy, but on the descent, near Ramghat, were scores of hairpins wedged in between solid rock in such a way that they could not be avoided. Tired out with back-breaking labor, a mechanic could sit down on a rock mass past which he had squeezed his car an hour before.

Captain Greenwood, of Bunji, is a bit of a wag. His hospitable home is called "Ye Olde Pigge and Whistle" and at his garden

gate, 150 miles from the nearest automobile, was a sign, "Park your cars here." On August 1, M. Haardt took him at his word, and most of the population came to admire. At opposite ends of Devil's Valley, Nanga Parbat and Rakaposhi, totaling ten miles of altitude, looked down on the sweltering town (see map, page 323).

At 9 in the evening, Colonel Gabriel and I started for Gilgit, now only 34 miles away. As we rode over the soft sands, the road inspector told of men beaten to death or dead of thirst on this section. The Indus, seething like a snake pit be-



neath the big suspension bridge, was touched with moon glow and deep gloom. Along the cornice path in the western cliffs we rode through a world of marble and ebony.

I had dozed off for the steenth time, telling myself that a rock-hung bridle path is no place to sleep, and that here was an experience to be savored to the full, when my pony suddenly stopped. I woke to see the inspector peering forward at two forms crouched or lying in our path.

"What a target we make against the sky!" I thought. But it was only the mail-runners taking an unauthorized but pardonable rest.

THE LIMIT OF MOTOR ADVANCE

In Gilgit we invaded the charming home of Captain Berkeley, who was absent, and, what with a splendid library and delicate chinaware, felt almost civilized.

On August 4 the cars came into well-earned glory. Hundreds of lads and grown men ran along in the dust behind. Ramana, perched high on the "Silver Crescent," was little short of heaven. The bazaar emptied itself into the streets. Ferracci and his men tried to look unconcerned. And everybody cheered. It was a great show.

M. Haardt now had to wish farewell to Colonel Gabriel, who, having conducted the diplomatic relations and seen us through, now set out alone on the return trip, which I learn hung up a record in trail endurance and nerve. Captain Clark, the only Englishman in sandfly-bitten Gilgit, lavished hospitality and unstinted praise on us; and



HE EXCELS IN HANDLING COOLIES

With flashing smile he cheered the weary toilers to amazing efforts in the rough going beyond Gulmit.

the "Silver Crescent," having served its purpose, was presented to the town.

The "Scarab" crossed the Gilgit River, cut the corner inside the splendid aviation field, and headed toward the Hunza Gorges. The first day's run—and what a day!—ended at Nomal, 207 miles from Bandipur Bridge.

There were moist eyes, fervent farewells, champagne (1904), and the inevitable separation. Having planned and executed this record-breaking achievement together, M. Haardt and Ferracci could now quit with honor. With the time at their disposal exhausted, the limit of their motor advance had been reached. As we rode out of Nomal that August afternoon,



SUMMER CARAVAN TRAVEL IS DELIGHTFUL IN THE PAMIR

This region is the home of the *Ovis poli*, Golden Fleece sought by sportsmen Jasons from all over the world (see in the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE, "By Coolie and Caravan Across Central Asia," by William J. Morden, October, 1927).

five dismal figures standing on a high bluff were silhouetted against the sky.

Five Frenchmen forced to bow to the Verdun challenge, "They shall not pass!" when spoken by the eternal hills that bar the mountain route to Chinese Turkestan.

It is impossible here to describe at length that tightrope-walker's route from Chalt to Misgar—a man-built track between giant peaks. Exact description would seem insincere to those who, having made the trip, have become anesthetized to beauty and danger (see, also, pages 338 and 343).

Photographs alone can suggest those massive walls of everlasting ice; those precarious paths now hung in mid-air, now lost in the turbid torrent; those peaceful Hunza villages with orange splashes of drying apricots on flat mud roofs amid the green; those friendly folk offering fruits

at every turn; those Gothic Karakoram peaks bathed in tints which change with every shifting of cloud and sun.

From our matchless camping site at Hindi, we saw a mile-long avalanche burst into clouds of snow dust and settle to rest on the amazing flank of Rakaposhi, king of the Kailas Range, its summit more than three vertical miles above our heads. At Gulmit, beyond the green and gold of field beans and ripened grain, the Karakoram peaks in the Little Guhjal wore a Joseph's coat of ever-changing hues.

HOSPITALITY IN BALTIT'S CASTLE

Until 1891, the men of Hunza and Nagar levied tribute on all who passed by. Their welcome is as enthusiastic as ever, but a more delightful host than Mir Mohammed Nazim Khan would be hard to find. We



HANGING TO THE CLIFF BY AN EYELASH

From the edges of high precipices the trail between Baltit and Gulmit (see, also, illustration, page 338) swoops suddenly to the depth of a river canyon.

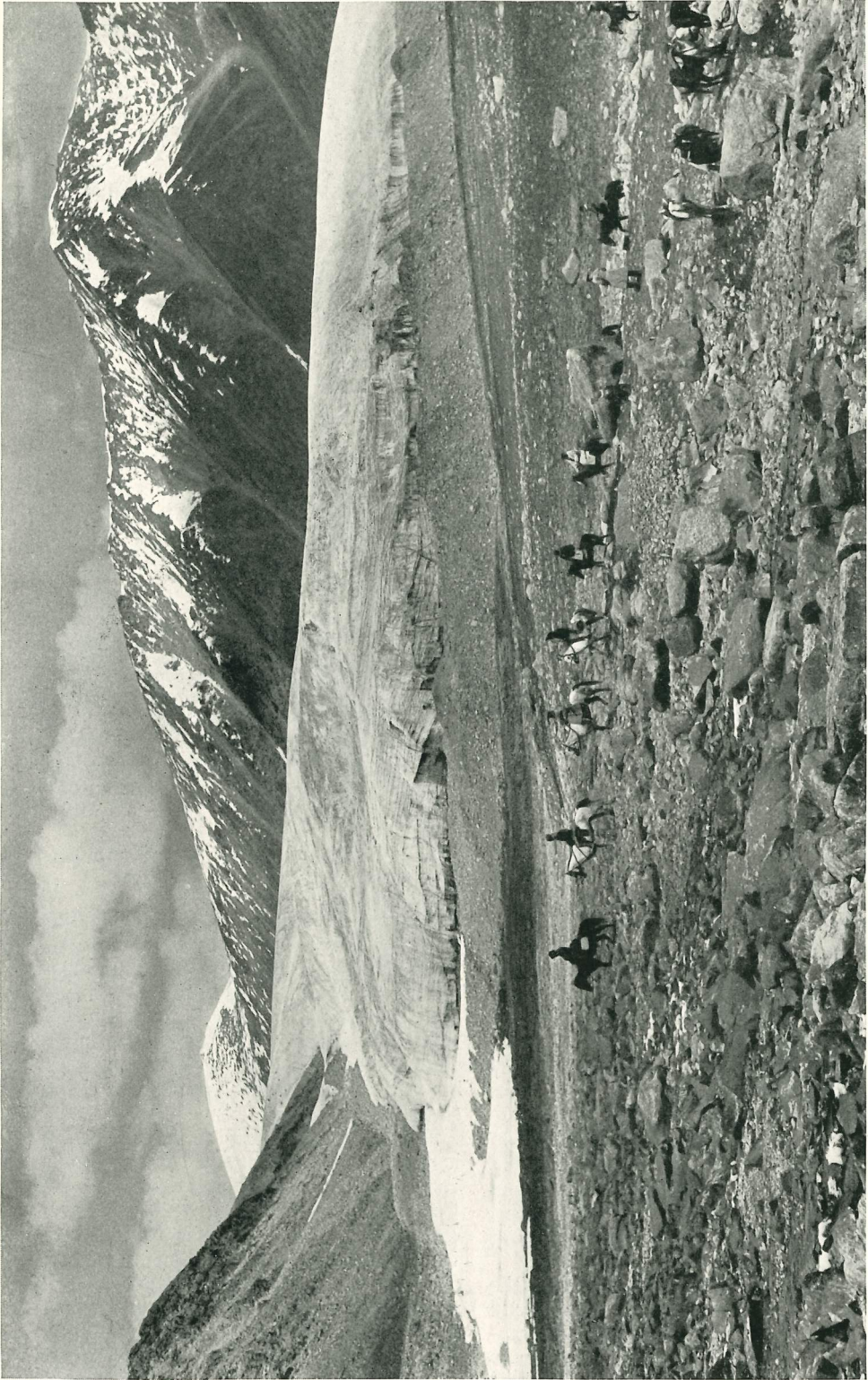
climbed to his hill-crest castle at Baltit (see page 334), dwarfed by an overhanging mountain, and found the walls covered with the photographs of his distinguished friends. Most prominent of all is the beloved Queen Victoria, whose large colored portrait had been graciously provided by the makers of Mellin's Food (see, also, pages 333 and 337).

The aggressive virtue of the European was evidenced by the gift of many alarm clocks, which our genial friend had had the sense to regard as mere mementoes, without the daily necessity of strangling each in turn.

Our dinner in the quiet garden of the Mir's "White House," built in 1925 and decorated with *Ovis poli* heads, was a memorable occasion. Our jovial host, who swears that his barbed beard is dyed and that he's not the gallant he once was, is the

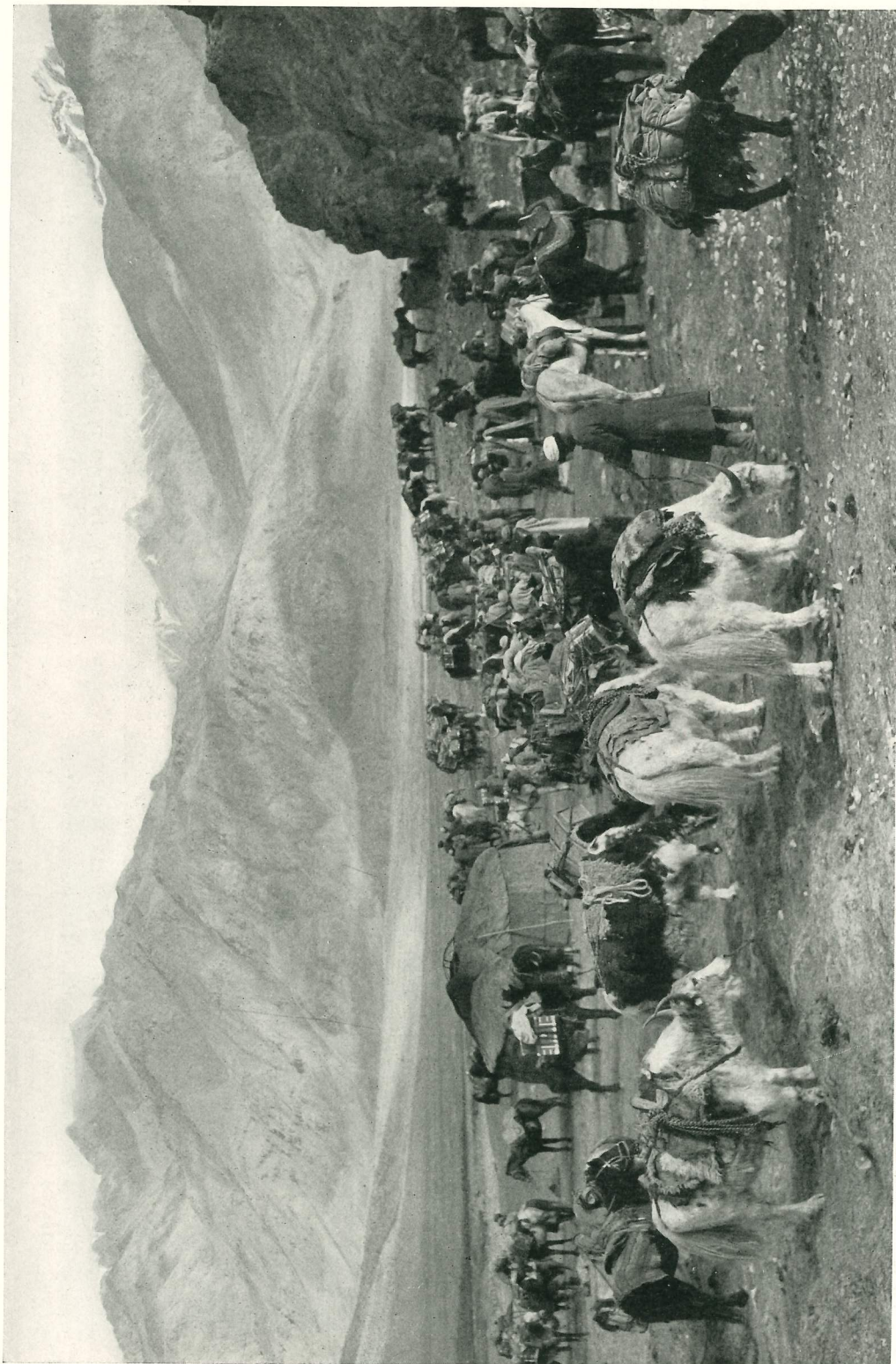
very embodiment of Old King Cole, and pipe, bowl, and fiddlers are all there. A proud Maulai, follower of the Aga Khan, the Mir of Hunza regards his "dry" neighbor, the Mir of Nagar, as an inhibited Sunni, and my failure to join in the drinking made me a "mullah" at once—a dishonor which two of the Mir's sons courteously shared.

After the splendidly served meal, during which two orchestras, one of strings and the other of reeds and drums, played, four shadowy dancing "girls," clad in polychrome Khotan silks and long braids of hair from Kashgar, performed several graceful dances which, since the artists were really young boys, seemed highly effeminate (see page 336). The story is that an Afghan fugitive from Kabul, now Hunza's chief musician, planted this tiny patch of melody in the heart of the Karakoram.



WATERS FROM THIS MIGHTY RIVER OF ICE FLOW IN TWO DIRECTIONS

The glacier lies near the point where China, India, Russia, and Afghanistan impinge upon each other. On one side its waters flow to the Amu Darya (Oxus) basin and on the other to that of the Tarim. Members of the Expedition camped near here (see text, page 349).



A LOFTY KIRGHIZ CAMP BEYOND KILIK PASS

The tribesmen wander about seeking pasture for their flocks and herds. Felt tents, or yurts, which are easily transported and which serve to keep out cold and wet, provide them shelter. These are a friendly, hospitable people and, although they have little to offer, are generous with what they have.



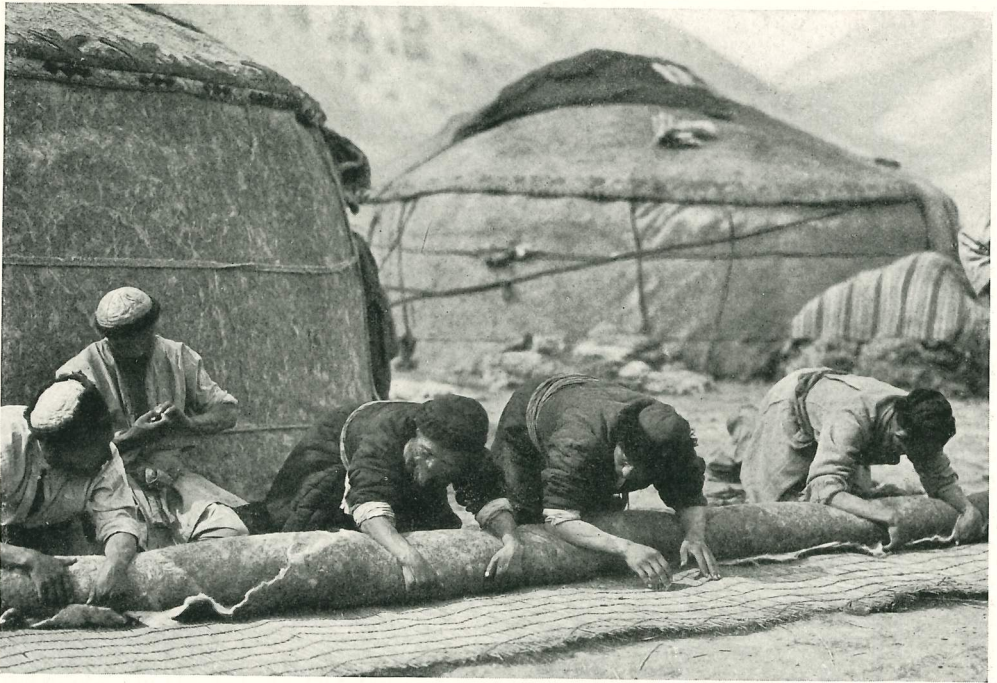
THE UBIQUITOUS YAK TAKES HIS PART IN AN IMPORTANT HOME INDUSTRY

In felt-making, after the wool has been placed within a roll of matting (see below) the whole is hitched to a yak and dragged up and down the valley for miles. The photographs on this page and at the top of the opposite page were made at Khosbel (see text, page 349).



KIRGHIZ FELT-MAKERS AT WORK

Clean fluffed wool is spread evenly on a strip of matting, moistened, and rolled into a cylinder (see above). Felt is an extremely important item in the domestic economy of these nomads.



HUMAN ROLLERS PUT THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON HOMEMADE FELT

After being dragged about by yaks (see opposite page), the cylinders are opened, the wool and matting separated, and the former is again rolled, this time under the forearms of workers who operate with machinelike precision.



A YAK DAIRY BEYOND KILIK

These quadruple-purpose mountain animals are hardier than cows and yield a rich, nourishing milk. Some of the tribes sprinkle it on the foreheads of men and animals, as they are about to set off on a journey, to insure good fortune.



SCENES OF TITANIC UPHEAVAL, BORDER THE GILGIT-KASHGAR ROAD

On such a trail the smallest pack is a burden, but the coolies struggled on under enormous loads. The footing is nowhere secure, loose rocks slipping about at every step. At any moment half a mountain side may slide away and, if it does no worse damage, block progress for hours.



THOUGH NEARLY 2,000 FEET HIGHER THAN THE BURZIL, KILIK PASS PROVED EASY

Some of the members of the Expedition made the ascent with such little difficulty that they also climbed to the 16,100-foot Wakhjir (see text, page 349). At the left are the yurts of the nomads who are guarding their yak herd in the foreground.



The Mir is a perfect cinema actor, and his running comment as he smiled and gesticulated before the camera made us regret that sound-recording apparatus is not yet adapted to the juggling of pack animals, for Burushaski is an orphan language without living relations. M. Hackin, at Misgar, tried for weeks to discover some family language connections, but without success.

By the time one has reached the 37-mile Batura Glacier, superlatives have lost their punch, but even the Himalaya's best ice river is less than half as long. As everyone knows, the snout of a glacier, however dignified, is much dirtier than that of a pig, and we touched little ice on our way across. But stones, dislodged down seemingly innocuous cracks, sent ominous warnings from an unsuspected underworld, and it was a relief to rescue our last pony and climb the clifflike lateral moraine up which our sturdy Kanjutis bravely struggled under their 60-pound loads.

AN 800-MILE HORSEBACK RIDE BEGINS

At Misgar, between Karakoram and Hindu Kush, we were at the terminus of the telegraph, the center around which our life revolved. We others little knew through what nightmares our chief passed during those anxious days. One day our entry into Sinkiang was definitely refused. Within a few hours there came premature word that permission was on the way. Then the glad news that we could press on toward our comrades in China.

While waiting we were joined by our colleagues of the third group—a joyful reunion after 48 days. From beyond the Kilik, Jacovleff sent incomparable sketches of the life he, Pecqueur, and Sivel were leading in a Kirghiz camp, with yaks for companions and marmots as spectators. On September 1 our party of nine started the delightful 800-mile horseback ride which ended October 8 at Aksu (see map, page 324).

In preparation for crossing the Kilik, 15,600 feet high, we tested our oxygen tubes, submitted to blood-pressure tests, and filled our pockets with dried fruits and sugar. This pass proved so easy and unimpressive that the following day we added the Wakhjir, 500 feet higher, to our achievements, discovering an unmapped lake on the way and lunching in

Afghanistan opposite a glacier whose waters are divided between the Amu Darya and Tarim basins, later to die in the thirsty hearts of Russian and Chinese Turkestan (see, also, page 344).

We had left India, entered China, paralleled at close hand the Russian frontier, and crossed into Afghanistan, all within 30 hours. The boundary between India and Sinkiang is not yet fixed, but the natural boundary is the Hindu Kush.

At Khosbel we touched the life of the Kirghiz (see pages 346 and 347).

I translate from Le Fèvre's unedited notes the impression which this tiny Kirghiz camp made on him: "Before these men in quilted gowns, in boots and fur-brimmed caps, we find something of that for which we were willing to forsake for 18 months all that was dear to us in France—a humanity which, on our first contact with it, has an ancient dignity.

"Our sudden arrival in this majestic setting, this quick communion with humans still strange to us, this hospitable camp soaking in the sun, the table set by our Hindu servants, the turbans, the Kirghiz bonnets, the *chalaps* (rolled brimmed caps) of Hunza, the come-and-go of countless coolies, the riding horses freed from their saddles, the donkeys from their burdens, and the faint blue smoke of the first campfires rising toward heaven's all-inclusive dome—all this should leave in us a vivid souvenir of this, the most satisfying day of our pilgrimage toward the East."

At Beyik we were met by Jacovleff, Sivel, and our caravan of fine-looking camels and ponies from Kashgar. Commandant Pecqueur had gone on to Tashkurghan to expedite our entry into China.

SLOW CAMEL TRANSPORT CAUSES HARDSHIP

Unhappy is the lot of the travel writer among his fellow vagabonds, all too ready to believe and denounce him. He fixes the site of an encampment with mathematical precision, but when his critics arrive the nomads have moved. He praises some outlandish dainty only to have his successor fall into the hands of a poorer cook. He feasts on melons or gorges himself on grapes, and if those who follow him arrive out of season his reputation is ruined. He sees one charming woman, thus crediting her whole tribe with pulchritude,



A KIRGHIZ TODDLER POSES FOR EXPEDITION PHOTOGRAPHERS

Wandering about among his elders was this three-year-old of Khosbel, who proved an excellent "movie" actor.



PHOTOGRAPHING A CENTRAL ASIAN POTENTATE

The Amban of Tashkurghan is Governor of Sarikol, a long strip of country along the eastern rim of the Pamir plateau. His is one of the most unpopular posts in Eastern Turkestan, for the capital, at an altitude of more than 10,000 feet, has a climate which has been described as three months of spring and nine months of winter. The writing on the wall is an appeal to the people to exert every energy for the welfare of the State.



"BOUS-KASSHIA," OR MOUNTAIN POLO, AS PLAYED BY SARIKOLI TRIBESMEN OF SINKIANG

Mounted on yaks or ponies, the object of the players is to capture and retain the headless body of a sheep. One rider dashes among them and drops the shaggy booty when the others least expect it. Then follows a scramble of heads, horns, and hoofs from which some one emerges with the prize. This is but the signal for another mêlée. A favorite method is to tuck the trophy between leg and saddle, as has the smiling man on horseback at the left.



A MASTERPIECE OF SUBASHI MILLINERY

The most elaborate type of Kirghiz headdress has a visor of small shells and buttons, and long ear flaps decorated with pearl buttons and edged with tiny silver bells. From these flaps depend long coral and silver ornaments. A tasseled head cape reaches to the waist behind.

camels, who had already done a day's work, were walked around in circles until their rude meal was spread before them.

Our reception by the friendly Amban of Tashkurghan was all that could be desired. It was at the Amban's dinner that my companions became acquainted with the disagreeable "bottoms-up" feature of Chinese hospitality.

At least once for each of the innumerable courses and often between, one of your hosts fixes you with un pitying eye, raises his tiny metal cup of Chinese wine or brandy, and each must drain the cup at a gulp and show its bottom to his fellow-victim. Choosing to stick to tea, I was annoyed at

finding it increasingly alcoholic until I discovered that my neighbor was using my teacup as a secret substitute for his inhospitable stomach.

THE EXPEDITION ENTERS CHINA

Like stay-at-homes, the globe-trotter sometimes encounters coincidences. One of the strangest occurred while we were sipping tea in preparation for the Amban's dinner. Betrayed by a commendable generosity, we had offered to bring our phonograph to the function, but on our arrival found a much finer one, the property of the waggish Military Governor.

Phonographs are better known in Tashkurghan than are national hymns, and when the "Marseillaise" rang out from the Governor's machine, the fact that we sprang to our feet required a long explanation, filtered from French through Russian to Chinese. The playing of the French national air at this Sino-Gallic dinner had been quite by accident.

Thin paper customs labels were pasted on our yakdans, a letter was graciously added, saying that if the rain washed off the labels it was heaven's fault, not ours, and we lightheartedly entered the China toward which we had pushed on for months, often with scant hope. As we rode away, the Amban, the Military Governor, and their staffs came out to the three-walled reception or departure pavilion and offered us a *chah-jan*, which in this case consisted of tea, Chinese cakes, and Soviet candies wrapped in lessons on the use of the metric system.



APPROACHING A VILLAGE ON THE SHORES OF BULUNKUL

As members of the Expedition skirted the shore of this mountain lake they passed through flocks of grazing sheep. Most of the wealth of the nomadic inhabitants of the high Central Asian plateau is in live stock.



THE AMBAN OF TASHKURGHAN FACED THE CAMERA CHEERFULLY

This representative of Chinese governmental authority extended to members of the Expedition a most cordial welcome and entertained them at dinner (see text, page 354).

and condemns all who follow to a fruitless search for beauty.

One author accused the stately and reliable camel of being a frivolous and unreliable beast of burden. His description was so devastatingly convincing that our apparatus was sent forward on ponies.

That left the food, tents, and bedding for camel transport. The dromedaries arrived at Beyik several hours late, started later, got lost on the way, and we slept on the ground in a yurt which was far less cheerless than the drafty Pamirs. The day had begun with snow, risen to sunny warmth at lunch time, and cooled down to September chill at 11,000 feet. In spite of Jourdan's fidelity as vestal through that long, cold night, we slept little.

To cap the climax, the pony herd milled about, destroying one charge after another, and one runaway horse tossed up a wave of provisions from which a lone bottle of medicinal stimulant escaped unscathed.

Having lived under the supercilious but knowing eye of the camel for years, I saw to it that my tent and bedding traveled by the faster ponies, and that my precious plates and cameras enjoyed the security of camel transport.

The precision of our caravan, once we recovered it, was something to wonder at. Like trains stopping at parallel platforms, one string after another filed up, knelt to the light flogging of ropes on its collective neck, and stalked away, leaving its burden nicely aligned before our tents. Then the

At Karasu Karaul we were at the very foot of the "Father of Snow Mountains," Muztagh Ata, but September snow engulfed us and the view was ruined. In a snow mist so dense that one could hardly tell land from sky, we rode over the Ulugh Rabat Pass, almost as high as the Burzil, but a mere hump on our high plateau route.

A SERVANT PROBLEM ARISES

On that ride I noticed, and M. Hackin confirmed, a phenomenon which was new to both of us. There were distinct shadows of our horses in the snow on the side *toward* the morning sun, which was hidden by clouds denser than those to the northwest.

Although a light snow continued to fall and the sky was too dark for color photographs, our afternoon at Subashi was all too short. I would gladly have accepted the Beg's hearty invitation to stay a week. Even our Kashmiri servants could not break the spell of cordiality, though they tried to bar some of the tribal leaders from their own yurts during a phonograph concert and the dignified servant of Audouin-Dubreuil, so much more superior than any of us, asked our host to carry a camp bed to its proper place. Even Asia has its servant problem.

Twenty-six exceptionally fine yurts, mostly soft cream color with dull-red decorations where roof joined circular side walls, composed the encampment. Handsome old men squatted about, holding sturdy youngsters inside their padded gowns, and at my request the women put on their finest headdresses (pp. 354, 360).



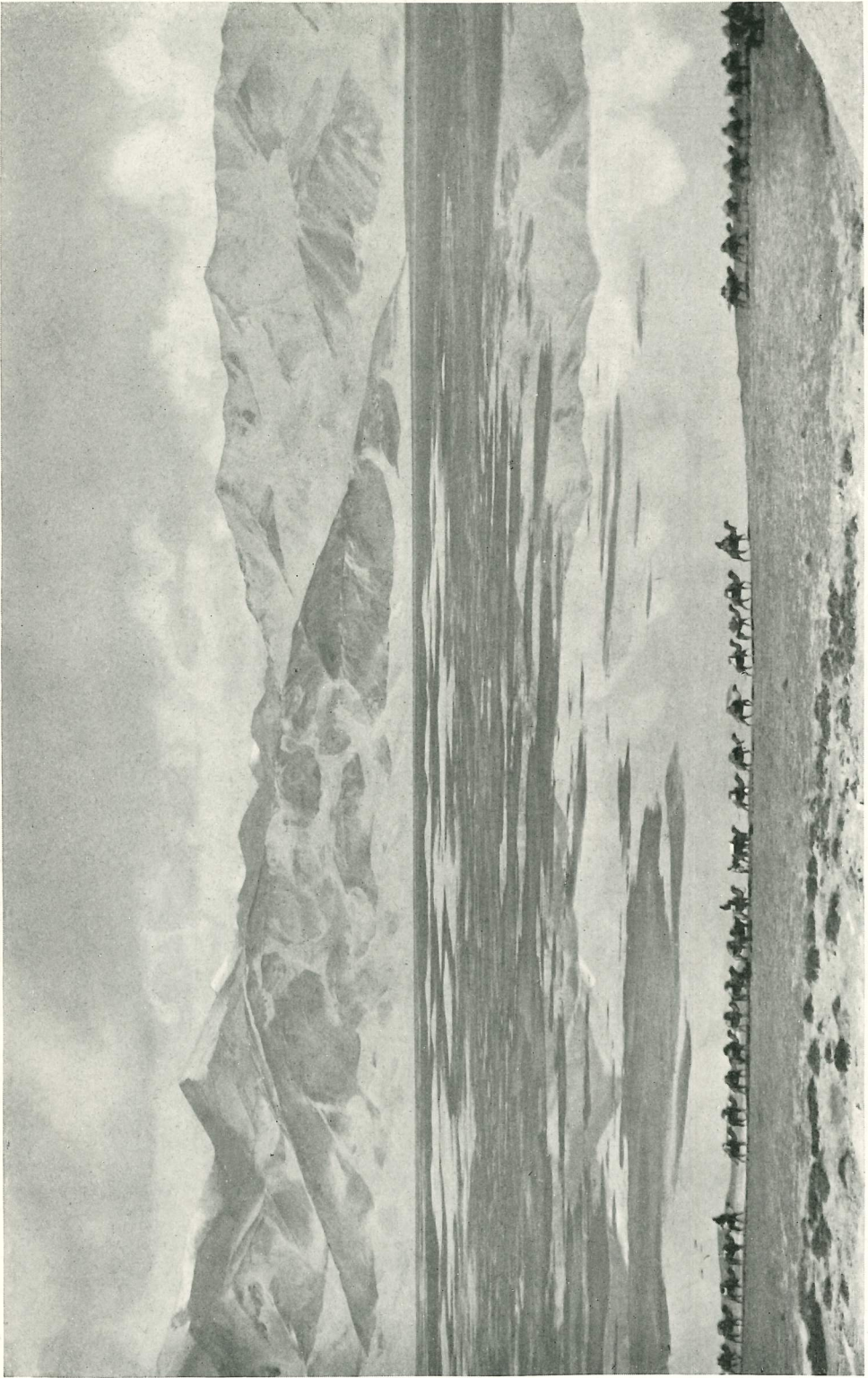
HE'S NOT SURE THAT HE LIKES BEING SHOT BY A CAMERA
Kirghiz children are shy among strangers and quiet even with their own people.

Two or three riders dash off to round up the yaks, and the cows and calves are attached to long hair ropes before the women milk the cows or allow the calves to divide the labor. The whole scene is one of idyllic charm.

To Le Fèvre the nomad is something poetic. "These people have not surrendered to civilization," he says. "One feels that they live beyond the reach of the artificial world. Free with their herds, their horses, and their vast smokeless horizons, they love the virgin earth. Formidable horsemen, they win our admiration."

So much for the Asiatic "savage" as seen by the cultured Frenchman.

After a day of accidents, with a total of five falls from horseback and one excellent



AS IN AGES PAST, CAMELS STILL PROVIDE DEPENDABLE TRANSPORT FOR INNER ASIA: SKIRTING THE WATERS OF BULUNKUL LAKE To carry the Expedition's supplies and equipment required a large number of pack animals. Camels, yaks, and ponies were used. Generally speaking, the first named, although not so fast as the ponies, proved the best carriers for fragile objects.



FLANKED BY VAST SNOW MOUNTAINS, THE EXPEDITION'S CARAVAN FOUND ITS WAY ACROSS THE HIGH PLATEAUS
OF CENTRAL ASIA

After the automobiles which had come from Beyrouth had to be abandoned (see text, page 341), pack animals took their places until four cars of the China unit were reached at Aksu (see, also, text, page 363).



LONG LEGS STAND THE CAMELS IN GOOD STEAD WHEN FORDING THE COLD RIVER GEZ

Back and forth through this swift stream the caravan's long-suffering animals had to cross during the course of their journey between Tokhtai and Tashmalik (see text, page 362).



THE YAK IS A VERITABLE DEPARTMENT STORE AMONG BEASTS

It has the head of a cow, the tail of a horse, and the grunt of a pig. Its meat and milk are food and drink and its dung a fuel. It is a beast of burden, a sometimes spirited charger, and a household companion. Le Fèvre, of the Expedition, remarked that it seemed to be able to do everything except lay eggs. Kirghiz from the region between Tashkurghan and Kashgar.



YOUNGER WOMEN OF THE STEPPES

Although their rough, outdoor life makes them hard-featured and weather-beaten by middle life, they are often rosy-cheeked and attractive in youth. They tend the flocks and herds, milk the yaks, cook, make the family's clothes, weave carpets, make felts, and rear families.



A VARIETY OF STRANGE CARTS SERVE THE RIDING PUBLIC OF KASHGAR

Brightly colored vehicles, with knobby-rimmed wheels, round roofs, and an awning over horse and driver, are frequently seen upon the streets. Sometimes long streamers of red and yellow hang from the horses' silver-studded bridles.

The driver of our fourth group of camels was a cheery lad, mostly felt boots and smile. He took all this as a matter of course. Along about 10 it was discovered that a small piece of tent bracing was lost. You and I would have consigned that wooden trifle to quick ashes. But back went that lad, alone amid the rocks. Half an hour later he rejoined us. He had the lost bit of wood in his hand, and he was singing. I mentally took off my hat to him.

The next morning we shod five horses, and our alpinist camels showed what they could do at fording. The mountains had dwindled away into marl cliffs like the buttresses of giant cathedrals; the same sort of high grass that marked the end of the Sahara crossing during the "Black Journey" * rose beside our trail, and we camped inside a mud inclosure at Tokhtai.

From there to Tashmalik our camels forded back and forth across the swift Gez River, here flowing between blood-red

cliffs. Turki traders, waist deep in the cold water, were helping their mouse-gray donkeys; docile sheep were carried or steered on their way, and another caravan, longer than ours, stalked patiently toward the plains (see page 359).

THE DUSTY PLAIN IS REACHED

My companions pushed on eagerly, but these Red Gates to the Tarim Basin entranced me and I was loath to leave the mountains. "Midnight" suddenly stepped into a hole, soaking his own muzzle and my feet. But what matter? The cliffs to the right were striped with chocolate, those to the left touched each quiet pool with blood. Ahead was the long, level line of the dusty plain.

Tashmalik is not a village in the oriental sense. Its homes, protected by high mud walls edged with bramble, are scattered widely amid fields of corn, cotton, hemp, rice, and melons. Poplar and willow trees indicate the position of paths or irrigation ditches. As far as we could see, except behind us, *trees* rose against a seemingly broader sky.

* See "Through the Deserts and Jungles of Africa by Motor," by Georges-Marie Haardt, in the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE for June, 1926.



horseman soaked to his waist in fording a stream, we came to Bulunkul. From his yurt at nightfall M. Haardt had a splendid view of Kungur. "It was like a magic-lantern show, with men in padded gowns of green and orange and blue sliding across the opening and the mighty mountain motionless beyond."

West of Bulunkul a mantle of sand hangs down the mountain side. The following day we saw the long line of dunes from which this vagabond streamer depends. We cantered across the dry bed of the vastly shrunken lake and watched the long camel caravan pass between us and the water mirror—a rare opportunity, since this is usually a windy corner near the entrance of the rugged gorge of Gez (see page 358).

Captain Sherriff, who had proved himself a warm friend, now on his way home from Kashgar, joined us at lunch near one of Kungur's glaciers, and we sat long at table before going our different ways.

CAMELS AS MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS

All must walk a considerable portion of this rock-ribbed—and skinny—route, but my Yarkand pony "Midnight" had worn through his shoes and was limping badly. Far into the night, after a long morning afoot, I tramped along that tortuous trail. Why, during the long starless march, I didn't break a leg I can't say; but just before dark I caught up with the camels and they proved excellent guides. "Midnight" did his best to cheer things up by nuzzling my back whenever, as was often the case, the long line stopped.



PASSENGERS IN A KASHGAR "TAXI"

The vehicle has no springs, but, as a compensating factor, neither has it a meter. The front seat is rather close to the "horsepower."

It was a trying tramp, but probably never since Beyrouth had I so lived. Adversity makes one feel. Never had I realized how useful is a dark spot of dung in indicating the right path. Whenever the bells on the last camel broke from a dull boom to a metallic clatter, I learned to judge the distance to that rough spot and watch my step.

The trail goes up and down, now near the water's edge, now playing pickaback on a tiny corner of the massive king of the Kashgar Range. Once, before it got too dark, I watched the long line of camels top a rise. Their legs were invisible. Their necks jerked forward ahead of their burdens. They looked like hunchbacked tortoises snapping at the sky.



Photograph by Carl J. Luther

SHOOTING THROUGH THE SLUICES OF THE ISAR IS A REGULAR SUNDAY PASTIME

The city of Munich has established a vast park area on each side of the river, and here crowds gather to get a second-hand thrill as they watch expert "faltboaters" rush by on the swift-gliding stream.



Our camping place was beside a still stream. On a square raised platform surrounded by a small canal, rugs and felts had been spread, and a row of Turkis in fur-brimmed caps, quilted gowns, and soft boots brought bowls of tea, pyramids of peaches, and great melons whose succulent pulp melted in our mouths. The camels knelt to deposit their loads, our green Whymper tents rose in neat alignment, and our Kashmiris, squatting around the fire, sucked avidly at their water pipes to still their trembling hands, which were closed tight to form a mouthpiece.

By dusty highways, sometimes sunk to a level far below that of the fields of ripening grain, we rode on to Tokuzak, a tiny town with the first bazaar we had seen in months. Small groups of gowned horsemen chatted together as they rode along, and veiled women went by on donkey back, sometimes followed by a manservant on foot.

THE KASHGAR VEIL WORKS MAGIC

In pre-war days, when stylish hats were huge affairs, I remember seeing a Syrian queen who, as she drew nearer, proved to be a laundress with her bundle of linen on her head. By such magic do oriental women achieve distinction. So with the Kashgar veil.

It is a commonplace affair, more than chin length and without charm. Held in place by a fur-brimmed cap, it is as grotesque as the horse-hair veils of Bokhara. But the Kashgar women are not fanatics. More often than not their veils are negligently draped back over the round cap, giving to the whole a tricorne effect which, by inexplicable magic, makes these Central Asian dames sisters of those mysterious Venetian damsels whose provocative millinery seems designed for the eye of Casanova himself.

At Kashgar, which we entered on September 19, I was greeted by a former student of the American University of Beyrouth. He was born in Kashgar, speaks his native Turki, Turkish, Persian, Russian, English, and French—and hardly a

word of Chinese! Although the attractive Turki youngsters often resemble Chinese, thus confusing the two races, an adult Chinese is almost as much a novelty as is a European.

Market day in Kashgar!

At the foot of a blue-and-green old mosque façade were piles of gaily-painted spinning wheels and cradles. Hanging in the breeze, long streamers of rough homespun still dripped with dye.

All through the city, new mosques being built. In the central square, great piles of Kashgar's justly famous melons, shiny piles of excellent bread, padded garments of somber tones, fur-brimmed caps with crowns of blue or gold brocade. Not far away a whole street of tiny silk or velvet skullcaps beloved by both sexes.

THE END OF THE HIMALAYAN HOLIDAY

In the heart of this mud-walled city, made colorful by its population, is the Tao Tai's yamen. Not in many years has there been so sumptuous an affair as the dinner which he gave to M. Haardt in honor of our arrival in Chinese Central Asia from far Beyrouth. Our horses pranced to the quick crash of trumpets, as the guard of honor snapped to a smart salute. The meal was admirably served and every courtesy was shown us.

It was almost with regret that we set out on our delightful ride across desert and oasis to where our comrades, with four cars, larger and finer—"Golden Scarab," "Silver Crescent," Heavy Cinema, and Popote—awaited us at Aksu. But we were forbidden to take photographs, and a travel story without pictures is too often a wordy affair.

The essential thing was that we were safely over the mountain wall before winter's blizzards set in, happy to be in Central Asia, delightfully received by the Chinese officials, and once more united with our friends. Our Himalayan holiday was over—a brilliant phase in the Citroën-Haardt Expedition's long journey to far Cathay.

