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THE DOG TEMPLE AT PEKING

BY D. BOURKE-BORROWES

THE Chinese have always been dog-lovers and dog-fanciers, and dog-breeding in China goes back to remote antiquity. It is known that there were special breeds of hunting dogs in China as far back as 1760 B.C., and, with the progress of time, many different breeds were evolved. In recent years, certain breeds of Chinese dogs have gained a world-wide popularity, especially the Chow dogs, which are used as a kind of general utility dogs in their own country, and the little Pekingese breed. The origin of the Pekingese dogs seems to coincide with the establishment of the Manchu dynasty in Peking, in the seventeenth century, but the modern types of Pekingese were evolved and stabilized in the nineteenth century, mainly owing to the care and interest bestowed on them by the Imperial family. With the passing of the Manchu dynasty, the breed in Peking nowadays seems to have declined both in quality and quantity, and certain varieties seem to be extinct or nearly so—as, for instance, the white variety, which is said to have been extinct for some considerable time past, and the black variety, which is now almost unprocurable in Peking and the surrounding districts.

Amongst the multitude of temples and shrines of many kinds which the traveller may visit in Peking city, I found none more curious and interesting than the little dog temple.

This temple, which was formerly an Imperial one and said to have been larger than it is at present, is situated in Hata Men Street within the walls of the Tartar city. It is one of the oldest temples in Peking, and its origin is credibly assigned to the seventh century A.D. The building was erected in honour of the god Erh Lang, a powerful Chinese deity who is the nephew of the heavenly King or supreme God. Erh Lang has many exploits to his credit as a dragon-slayer and, besides these, after a great chase he captured the heavenly monkey who had stolen the fruit off the peach trees of eternal life—in all these achievements he was assisted by his faithful dog.

This dog has the unpleasant habit of periodically eating the Sun and the Moon, thereby causing eclipses. On such occasions, it was formerly the practice for the local people to assemble in great numbers round the dog temple and there to make a hideous din to scare the dog away and to make him drop his prey, but this practice has now fallen into disuse.

Many centuries ago it was discovered by chance that Erh Lang, who is not only a dog-owner, but the patron and protector of the entire canine race, had the miraculous power of curing sick dogs and so, from

this time onwards, the temple, which had been erected in his honour, became in consequence very famous.

At the present day the temple is divided by a partition into two small rooms. In the front room stands an altar covered with hanging draperies, under which stands a large uncouth earthenware image of a dog, about the size of an ordinary hound. This is the god's dog who is sometimes capable of doing so much damage!

On a side-table are brass lamps and a brass stand holding many burning "joss-sticks," together with a most remarkable collection of small artificial dogs made of skin, fur, and clay. These are the votive offerings brought by owners of sick dogs and laid on the altar with many prayers for the recovery of the invalids—the idea being that, through the presence of a substitute, the god may avert the danger and thus cause recovery. In some cases, the offerings consist of life-like clay models of bitches with litters of puppies, and it is to be inferred that, in such cases, both the mother and the puppies were afflicted with some disease. Hanging up beside the table is a collection of all sorts of paper spectacles and motor-goggles, which are offerings presented by dog-owners whose pets were suffering from sore eyes. The walls of the room are hung with many long yellow silken panels bearing testimonials in large Chinese characters from grateful owners, testifying to the efficacy of the cures wrought in the temple.

An aged Chinese woman officiates as priestess, her chief duties being to take money, prescribe various forms of prayers and, at frequent intervals, to bang violently on a gong. It is said that the sick dogs have a better chance of recovery if their owners, instead of making a new offering, can manage to steal and offer up on the altar one of the little artificial dogs already in the temple, while the old priestess is engaged in beating the gong or performing other ceremonial duties, although, as far as I know, there is no explanation as to why the god should prefer a stolen to a genuine offering.

It appears that sick persons, as well as sick dogs, can be cured in this temple, and when I was visiting it I saw the old priestess listening attentively to the symptoms described by a young Chinese woman who was badly afflicted with goitre.

In the small back room appears the representation of the god himself, consisting of an imposing figure of a black man larger than life, clad in a handsome robe of yellow silk. On either side stand huge hideous guardian demons, such as are to be found in practically every Chinese temple, whether in or out of China.

A JOURNEY THROUGH THE OASES ON THE FRINGE
OF THE TAKLAMAKAN DESERT.

THIS short note of Mr. Ridley's arduous journey through the oases surrounding the Taklamakan is of special interest, as he is probably the first European to make the journey right round the desert. He has not been able to correct the proofs and distances himself, and they are only roughly given. One Chinese li=one-third of a mile; the measurement varies in different provinces. Langar=inn; wattle hut.

KURLA TO YARKAND VIA CHARKHLIQ, CHARCHAN, KERIA, 1929-1930.

1st Day.—120 li to Karakum (black sand), a very long stage in winter time. If with donkeys, better to camp half-way. Bash-in-iz 40 li, Shin-ar-ra 10 li. Karakum 70 li.

2nd Day.—65 li to Agi-kek on the bank of the Konche River. At 25 li see the Konche River again. Last 40 li much jungle. Langar (*i.e.*, inn).

3rd Day.—20 li. Crossed the river at Agi-kek on five canoes lashed together. 20 li brought us to Chong-Kul (big lake), a small village of twenty houses.

4th Day.—60 li. Camped by side of a small lake.

5th Day.—80 li. Much marshy ground all round. A new road built through the marsh for carts. District called Tiz Kul and Chara. Probably 100 farmsteads dotted here and there. After going 20 li saw the Tarim River (called by my donkeyman the Yarkand River). Some years ago he said there were two water wheels on the part of the river which we saw.

In the evening camped on the bank of a river, probably the Inchike River.

6th Day.—80 li. Camped 15 li beyond Urtang-oi Lake.

7th Day.—60 li. After first 10 li we passed Tarisu-kholan; 10 li beyond passed Kalmak-iz-kun River; 10 li further the village of Kalmak-iz-kun, with Ing Kul to the west; 5 li more passed the village of Ulugh Kul, and 15 li beyond camped on the bank of a river.

8th Day.—60 li. Kulslagh Camp. First 35 li much jungle, then very heavy roads. Village of Kulslagh at 45 li. Many sand dunes. Camp at river side again (probably Inchike River).

9th Day.—100 li. Tikenlik. First 50 li very heavy sand, then jungle and prairie grass. 150 families, mostly farmers from Turfan. Stayed in inn, 450 soldiers billeted here as a check against the Kansu Dungans.

10th Day.—90 li. Ching-er-sz. 45 li beyond Tikkenlik is the deserted town of Dural, built to accommodate the Kansu Mahommedans who fled here during the rebellion in Kansu 1895-1896. Water too salt.

11th Day.—90 li. Kara-bais. 70 families. Much grass and jungle. Walked alongside the Tarim River for 30 li, then it turned westward again. Below Durak we lost sight of the other river.

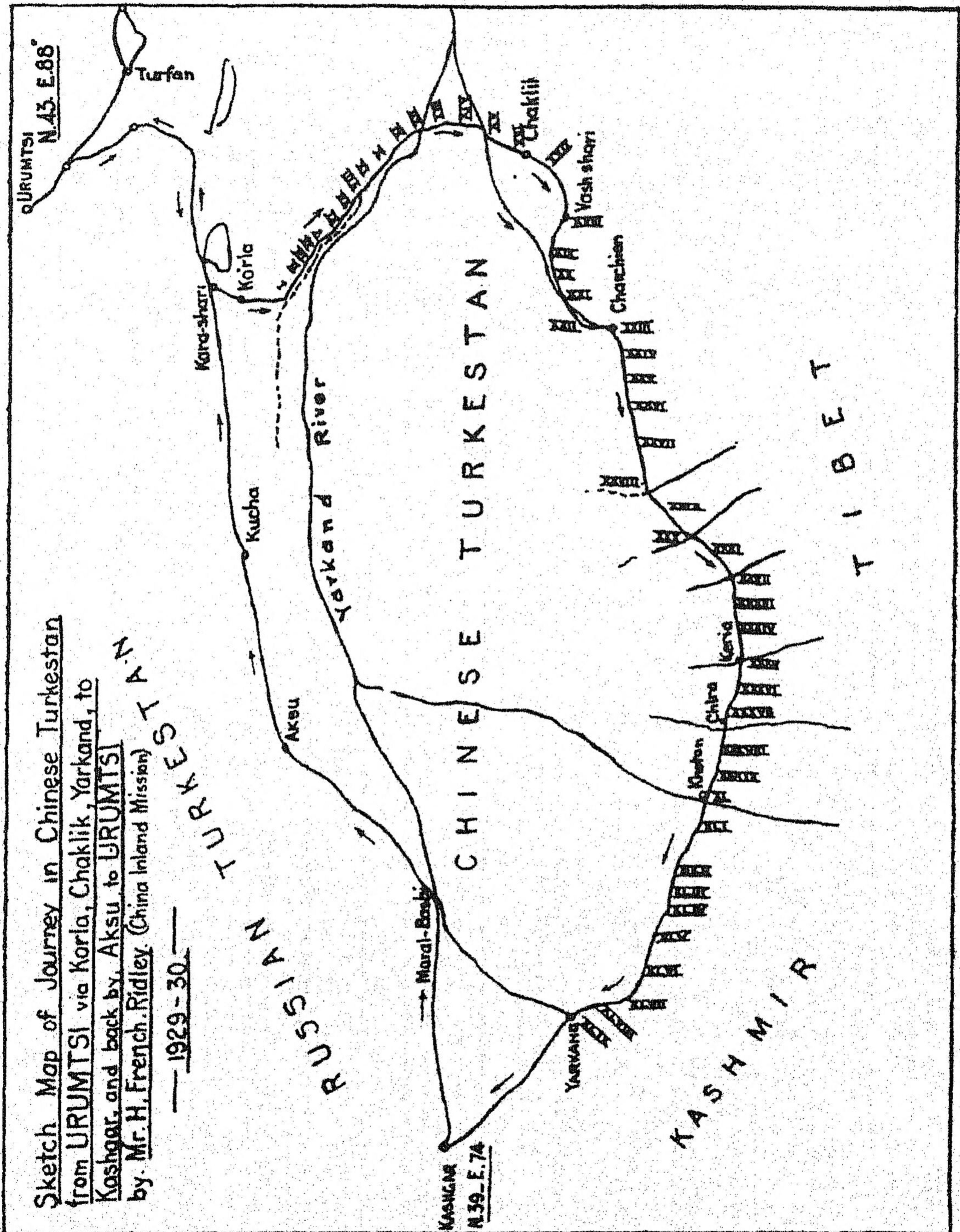
12th Day.—90 li. Arghan. 5 families. Crossed the Tarim River on a ferry. The river had not been so low for many years. Heavy sandy road. Camped 6 li beyond the ferry on the river side.

13th Day.—65 li. Tokmat. Much jungle; many sand dunes; heavy road. Near to the Taklamakan sand dunes.

14th Day.—75 li. Fort Kuron or Chigalik. Many sand dunes; much jungle. 15 li further on is the langar. We camped in the jungle at the river side. Terrific wind storm (buran), then snow fell.

15th Day.—90 li. Lob. Desert route. Carried fuel from Fort Kuron. Camped on the bank of the Charchan River after crossing two bridges.

16th Day.—120 li. Charkhliq. Long, dreary desert route till 15 li from Charkhliq, when there was brushwood. 140 families. District, 400 families. 700 soldiers billeted. Everywhere white with snow.



17th Day.—120 li. Gillig. Desert all the way. Rested in cave by river side. No one in charge; no food for man or beast; no fuel; must be carried from Chaklik.

18th Day.—90 li, called 120 li. Vash-shahri. 120 families. Official Rest House. A spring just off the road on right side about half-way.

19th Day.—90 li. Chingelik. Langar. Just one family; no fodder; wells on the way. Gradual ascent. Much sand.

20th Day.—100 li, called 120 li. A very heavy day over sand dunes several hundred feet high called the Bugoluk sand dunes, and camped 26 li short of the stage at Oktas-dung by the side of the Charchan River. 70 li is a well. According to maps the road runs round the foot of the dunes. We cut across them.

21st Day.—100 li. Chong Kul (big lake). 20 li we passed the langar which we ought to have reached the night before. A pleasant day's journey through miles and miles of tall reeds. Lake covered with reeds. Langar.

22nd Day.—90 li. Tatran. Lovely prairie land; much now being brought under cultivation. Abundance of water. Crossed the Charchan River on an ice bridge. Plenty of wild deer and hares. Many farms and much grazing ground. Official Rest House. Small village.

23rd Day.—80 li. Charchan. Road by river nearly all the way. Half barren and half prairie land. Horses, cattle, and sheep herded. Here is a magistrate. About 250 families.

24th Day.—80 li. Ketmas. Entered the sand dunes of Aqbai-kalrasi. Road very heavy. Well at Kalasti. Langar.

25th Day.—80 li. Aqbai. First 5 li fairly good road; next 25 li very heavy; last 10 li easy. Wells 45 li and 60 li. Langar.

26th Day.—100 li. Yak-toghrak. Bitter water; desert route. Well at Kirga-aragi.

(26th Day.)—100 li. Chingelik. First 15 li heavy road; next 30 li easier; then heavy sand dunes all the way. Wells at 30 and 45 li. Langar.)

27th Day.—80 li. Shudan. One family. Heavy sandy road along the foot of the Akbai-kalrasi sand dunes. Langar.

28th Day.—90 li. Endere. 60 li very sandy road. Jungle nearly all the way. Well at 60 li place. Langar.

29th Day.—110 li. Yak-toghrak. Bitter water. Desert road. Well at Kirga-aragi.

30th Day.—60 li. Yer-tungus (place of wild pigs). Heavy sandy road; many dunes. Langar on bank of the river.

31st Day.—60 li. Ying-darya. First view of Chekil Peak on the Kuen-lun Range just after leaving the langar. Clear morning. Well at Billiq. Snow all the way.

32nd Day.—70 li. Niya. First 10 li jungle, then many sand dunes. See the oasis long ere we get to it. Oasis 60 to 70 li long. 1,000 families.

33rd Day.—80 li. Awras. 40 li is a langar. In summer water has to be carried 15 li. We had snow water.

34th Day.—105 li. Oy-toghrak (white poplar house). Oasis about the same size as Niya. Over 1,200 families.

35th Day.—90 li. Keria. Probably 5,000 to 6,000 families.

36th Day.—120 li. Yar-langar. Much sand.

37th Day.—100 li. Chira. 2,000 families. Very heavy road. Domoko langar 40 li, Gulakma langar 30 li.

38th Day.—80 li. Besh-toghrak (five poplars). Four inns. Yakin langar 40 li, Aisma langar 20 li.

39th Day.—80 li. Lob. First 40 li over very heavy sand dunes, then a good flat road. A vast plain extending to the foot of the Kuen-lun Mountains.

40th Day.—60 li. Khotan. Lovely road all the way. Probably 30,000 inhabitants. Carpets and jade.

41st Day.—90 li. Dawa. Farms nearly all the way. Passed through two bazaars.

42nd Day.—120 li. Pialma. First 40 li very good road, then heavy sand dunes. Passed pigeon sanctuary 40 li, Ak langar at 60 li.

43rd Day.—90 li. Tsan-kuei. 1,000 families in oasis. Heavy sand all the way.

44th Day.—60 li. Mudjii. Less sand, more shrubbery.

45th Day.—90 li. Goma. First 30 li gravel, then much sand.

46th Day.—90 li. Chulak langar. Much sand all the way. Ajip langar 35 li, Hsi-lak langar 15 li.

47th Day.—135 li. Karghalik. Kosh langar 60 li, Erka langar 15 li. A very long, tiring day.

48th Day.—90 li. Posgam. Trees all the way. 30 li and 60 li are bazaars.

49th Day.—90 li. Yarkand.

Left Kurla November 16, arrived Charkhliq December 4.

Left Charkhliq December 2, arrived Charchan December 16.

Left Charchan December 19, arrived Keria January 1.

Left Keria January 12, arrived Khotan January 16.

Left Khotan January 22, arrived Yarkand January 30.

I had donkeys as far as Keria and one riding horse. Sold donkeys at Keria and bought two horses, as it was no longer necessary to carry grain more than two days. A good season to travel; starting a little earlier would probably be better. Snow on the ground all the way from Fort Kuron to Kashgar. Travelling at this season meat and vegetables do not go bad. 3 lbs. of mutton fat to every 10 lbs. of flour helps to keep the bread soft. Took in supplies at Kurla, Charkhliq, and Charchan.

Left Urumtsi on October 22 and arrived back on April 24, 1929-1930 (102 stages, 3,300 miles [9,900 li]), returning via Kashgar, Aksu, Kucha, Qara-shari.

DR. PH. VISSER'S RECENT EXPEDITION TO THE KARAKORAM AND TURKISTAN.

*Being short notes on a lecture given to the Royal Geographical Society
on February 23, 1931.*

THE President and Viscountess Allenby received at an At Home given on February 23 for Mr. Philip Visser on his return from his recent expedition to the Karakoram and Turkistan, where for eighteen months he has worked at exploring and mapping out a large and unknown glacier region.

Unfortunately, Mr. Visser was in England only for twenty-four hours, and so was not able to lecture to the Society. The President and Council of the Royal Geographical Society, to whom he was lecturing in the evening of February 23, invited members of the Central Asian Society to hear him at their hall, and most generously have permitted the publication in this Journal of notes giving an outline of their lecture. Mr. Visser's paper will be published in full in the *Geographical Journal*.

Mr. Visser said it was impossible to give more than a very brief outline in one hour's lecture of the expedition which had lasted one and a half years

and had covered 3,000 miles. The members of the expedition were, first, Mrs. Visser, who went again as botanist, Mr. Sillem as zoologist, and Dr. Wyss, a Swiss geologist, who rendered great assistance. Once again Mr. Visser took his Alpine guide, Franz Lochmatter, and the expedition was accompanied by Afraz Gul Khan, lent by the Survey of India.

Starting from Srinagar, the tremendous wall of the Himalayan mountains had first to be crossed, the wall which divides two absolutely distinct districts, differing in flora, fauna, people, and religion. It was very early in the season, and as soon as the expedition got above the tree line they entered the snow. It was somewhat difficult to cross the snow with a big expedition; indeed, they were told it was impossible to get across the Zoji La with ponies. They managed it, however, by crossing during the night when the snow was frozen. In the early morning when the sun rose they were on the other side.

At Leh, the capital of Ladakh, with its beautiful old castle, food was bought for the coolies. When all necessaries were brought together it was estimated that 445 coolies would be needed for the transport of food and equipment over the Khardong pass. They had been able to get together only 120 coolies, and therefore they were obliged to go back three times to bring up the equipment to the camp.

From Leh they went on to Nubra over the Khardong pass, from there across the Shyok river and then on to Panamik, one of the last villages in the Nubra valley, from which they entered the side valleys of the Kailas mountains.

They were fortunate in finding at their first crossing that the water in the Shyok river was very low, and they had no difficulty in reaching Panamik. Incidentally it was in Panamik that they first made use of the wireless, and it is needless to say what a delight and a strange experience it was to hear the Dutch National Anthem in the valley of the Karakoram.

The Nubra valley is an unknown and previously unmapped valley in the Kailas region, with magnificent mountains of great beauty. Some time was spent in exploring and mapping this and adjacent valleys before returning to the dust of the Shyok valley, but they were fortunate in finding in the Shyok valley a small oasis, where some beautiful flowers, more especially roses of all colours, bloomed profusely.

Next the expedition turned north, and then there occurred a somewhat unpleasant occurrence. The expedition divided, Mrs. Visser with half the caravan and the food on the eastern side of the river, while Mr. Visser and other members of the expedition went on the western side of the river, without food, but with the other half of the caravan. Whilst they were working their way north during a march of ten hours the water rose so rapidly that when they arrived at the foot of the glacier it was impossible to cross. It so happened that it was Mrs. Visser's birthday, she on one side of the river and her husband on the other. With great difficulty they managed to reach each other the next day after some stiff rock climbing.

The Siachen glacier was explored by Dr. Longstaff in 1909 and afterwards by the Bullock Workmans, but there was one part of the region that was absolutely unexplored—namely, the region between the Siachen glacier and the main range of the Karakoram—and it was to this region that the expedition devoted itself. It is remarkable that the Siachen glacier has two snouts, one in the side valley and the other in the Nubra valley, also the water does not come from the snout in the valley, but runs from the valley under the snout because it is the river from the glacier region further to the east.

The expedition entered this glacier region with great difficulty and sepa-

rated in order to cover more ground. Slides were shown of the magnificent mountains and glaciers, and a description was given of the difficulties and of the way in which they were surmounted and the coolies safely brought over.

The expedition then returned, and after a week reached the Nubra valley. Here they found that the river had risen, and it took three hours to cross. Ultimately they got back to Panamik, and there found their pony caravan waiting, on which they crossed the Saser pass on the way to the Shyok river. In the Shyok valley the Kumdan glacier was advancing again. This glacier advances regularly every thirty or forty or fifty years, and dams off the water of the Shyok river. This dam broke in 1926, but the glacier has again advanced and another big lake has formed. For a time it was feared that there would be a flood in the Shyok river, but the dam held, and the expedition were able to explore that region. They took three days to go down the valley, coming back on their tracks, the journey fraught with danger because there was no escape from the mountainous walls should the dam burst. Some little time afterwards a tremendous explosion was heard, the dam burst, and the water came pouring down the Shyok river.

They then entered the unknown region in the direction of the highest summit of the Zaghil group. Slides were shown of the curious glacial valleys peculiar to that region, where the height of the rock walls is so tremendous that a second valley is left between the ice and the rock side. A slide was also shown of a curious phenomenon seen here—two glaciers distinguished by their texture and colour, the one flowing over the other at different speeds. In this case the glacier showing black from the gravel it carried was moving faster than the white glacier which it had broken up.

West of the Shyok valley the party had great difficulty in crossing the mountain streams; the region was now reached which Mr. Visser had approached from the other side in 1922.

The expedition then entered the quite unknown region east of the Karakoram pass, a plateau 17,000 to 18,000 feet high, which they found to be absolutely dry. They could not find any water, snow or ice; they discovered about twenty small glaciers, no more because the water sank down immediately into the gravel and sand. The main difficulty was that they had to travel for four and a half weeks continuously at a height of more than 17,000 feet, and there was no firewood except the root of the burtsa plant. It was extremely cold; every day about one o'clock there was a terrific storm.

Valuable work was done in mapping and exploring this region, which was absolutely barren, but geologically of very great interest.

Some idea of the difficulty in judging distances is given by the following instance. They came to a very beautiful spot, a mountain lake with a snow-covered mountain range in the background. When they saw the lake they thought it was about four minutes' walk distant and the boy was told to go to the lake to fetch some water because Mrs. Visser was very thirsty. The boy disappeared behind a rock; they waited, and as he did not return decided to go for the water themselves. What they thought was a four minutes' walk proved to be a walk of $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours, so difficult was it to calculate distances accurately in that remarkably clear atmosphere with, of course, nothing in the nature of houses or trees with which to compare them.

After four and a half weeks they found traces of an old camp. And then they found a very small track, probably the old trade route between Tibet and Chinese Turkistan, and taking it they reached a pass with a wonderful view of the Kun Lun Mountains. Looking down into the valley they saw a small stream and the first green bushes they had seen for seventy-six days.

They had approached nearer and nearer to Chinese territory, and it became a question whether they would be allowed to enter. To their delight they were kindly received. They were detained a short while on the frontier post, and while there the Amban fell ill and asked for their assistance. With some trepidation they did what they could to help him. Luckily he recovered and put down his recovery to their doctoring. He afterwards did all he could to help them.

From the frontier they made their way over the Kun Lun to Yarkand and Kashgar, doing the journey of 120 miles in five days, skirting the Taklamakan. At Kashgar the British Consul did everything he could to help and assist them. It was exceedingly cold, forty degrees below zero; only part of the river was open. After three weeks' stay they returned to Yarkand, the temperature falling to fifty-four degrees below freezing point, too cold for comfortable travelling.

A terrible sandstorm held them up for three weeks and separated them from their food caravan. Having nothing to eat for two days they were obliged to retrace their steps, and this wearisome journey proved the most tiresome part of the expedition. The coolies were useless and could not do anything. Animals sank in the soft snow and had to be pulled out. The animals were so worn out that they had to be sent back to a grazing ground, and it was five weeks later, at Leh, before they saw them again. They returned with a new caravan and crossed the Karakoram pass in a snowstorm, losing three of their animals. The journey was continued towards the Shyok valley, and they were all very much impressed by a beautiful glacier which had never been seen before. Colonel Hood went through the valley with De Filippi in 1914, but he did not mention this glacier, which, coming from the side valley, advances extraordinarily far. Again there was the same danger, in that the river is dammed off here also, and that it becomes a lake on the side of the glacier. They had to enter this unknown region by going over this glacier. Some idea of the difficulties may be inferred from the fact that it took them forty-eight hours to get to the other side of that small side valley; it was the most difficult glacier traverse that Mr. Visser had ever made. Coming back they climbed with all their coolies to the height of 21,000 feet, and so to the other side of the valley, which looked easier with the exception of the very steep rock wall on the east. They returned to the base camp and explored the region thoroughly. They had some difficulty on their return journey to Leh as the water was so high in the river that they had to go nearly seventy miles out of their way until they got to a possible ford. They still had a great deal of difficulty in crossing, and it took them two days to bring all the coolies and luggage over. Eventually after a difficult crossing of the Khardong pass, where there was a great deal of snow, they reached Leh, from whence they came back over the Zoji La and so down into India.

Little idea was given in the lecture of the immense amount of valuable data collected, and Mr. Visser's paper will be read with deep interest.