

who spoke good Russian, found a small inexpensive Bolshevik hotel that was spotless. I had been told that the only two hotels in Moscow free from vermin charged eleven roubles for the night, and I paid only four.

We need not have stayed in Moscow had we not been delayed by an accident a little way beyond Manchuli, the border town between China and Russia. A tremendous storm flooded the lines. Suddenly the engine stopped and backed. We retreated slowly to a village, where we stuck for twelve hours, never knowing for certain when we should start. Thinking it might be any moment, we did not dare explore much. The only food we could buy was eggs and coarse brown bread. Just round about we found shells, hand-grenades, and numerous old bones. The village itself was in ruins, and there were large disused barracks dropping to pieces. One of the villagers told us, when we grumbled at the delay, that we might consider ourselves lucky: the last time a similar accident had happened, the engine-driver had failed to back in time, the train was derailed, and only one third of the passengers were saved.

We had started badly that day. Early in the morning we had to change trains and were closely searched at the Customs in Manchuli. It was a very tiring, lengthy process, partly owing to the officials being new at the work; and we had also to rebook, which tired everyone's patience, for every ticket had to be written out — again by someone unused to the job. Hardly had we left Manchuli when the train stopped and more customs officials inspected us once again. And so thoroughly! Especially their own compatriots. A Russian girl opposite me had a lot of their attention. They opened her powder-box and stirred the powder about, turned over everything, searched her basket, and actually broke one of her buns in two! From one lady who was traveling with eight new hats they kept back five. We all rather enjoyed that.

Except for these searches, which meant taking our luggage out and back, unpacking and repacking, the journey was very easy and pleasant — far and away more enjoyable to me than six weeks on the sea.

If ever I go back to China, I shall go the same way.

## IN UNEXPLORED KARAKORAM. IV<sup>1</sup>

BY PHILIP C. VISSER

THE third of July dawned clear and sunny in the Ghujerab Valley, and we set forth with high hopes and expectations into the unknown country ahead of us. After three hours' marching we came to a place where the river

<sup>1</sup> From *Neue Freie Presse* (Vienna Nationalist-Liberal daily), October 18

bent toward the south. The mountains were indescribably magnificent at this point, and a great glacier appeared ahead of us cutting off all view beyond. We hastened our steps, filled with burning curiosity, until we came to a point from which the stream was visible breaking out of the dark tunnel

in the glacier wall. We were at the source of the Ghujerab!

We seated ourselves at the edge of the ice in order to take a more leisurely survey of our surroundings and discuss our further plans. Khan Sahib was in a state of great exultation. 'Sir,' he shouted, 'this river is longer than the Kilik or the Khunjerab. We have accordingly discovered to-day the true source of the Hunza.'

Now you don't sit down every day at the head of a gurgling stream that forms the hitherto hidden source of a great river. Naturally, therefore, it was in a very cheerful mood that we basked in the sunshine and discussed our future movements. Our original intention had been to return to the point where the valley toward Shimshal branches off and follow it, as that was the route taken by the shepherds we had met farther down the Ghujerab. But the temptation presented by the shining, never-trodden ice-fields beyond us made us cast our former plans to the four winds. It seemed a miserable shame to go back the same way we had come when a wonderful, unknown mountain-region, never before explored and presumably affording a direct route into the Shimshal, was ahead of us.

We made this decision quite aware that if we found the pass impracticable we should have to return to the Ghujerab and get back to the Shimshal by the other route with rebellious coolies and short rations.

After a long debate we decided to send Khan Sahib back, so that he could take a map of the region out of the valley by the usual route to Shimshal, while we tried to make our way over the unknown glacier and meet him at the latter point.

Late that afternoon we pitched our camp in a little cave that we reached after a three hours' climb over the

glacier. Here we reconsidered the whole situation. We were in the midst of a wonderful mountain-panorama about fifteen thousand, six hundred feet above the sea. From our camping-place we could not see the route ahead; but the glacier did not look difficult, and it seemed probable that we could find a pass a little farther on that would not be too dangerous for our loaded coolies. So we decided that Franz should push on ahead early the next morning to hunt for such a point.

The glacier and the snowy peaks surrounding us were still veiled in darkness when we left camp the following morning. The coolies were to follow us a few hours later under the leadership of Johann, our second Swiss guide, so that they could turn around immediately if we failed to find a pass. The ascent of the glacier was slow but easy, and really a pleasure in the cool fresh air of early dawn. As we proceeded the shadows dispersed before the warm rays of the sun, until we seemed to be walking over a carpet of diamonds. Finally we came in sight of the highest point of the glacier and the pass ahead. A steep snow wall led to a dent in the comb of the ridge. As we scanned it more closely, we could see the zigzag path that Franz had already made, and since he had not returned we felt certain that he believed it possible to descend on the other side.

We worked our way through the snow, which was melting rapidly under the hot sun, and when we reached the last turn heard the encouraging yodel of our guide. We needed all our strength for the last sharp climb. It was frightfully steep, and in the thin atmosphere of an elevation of more than sixteen thousand feet we could make but slow headway. At last I reached the top of the snow wall, Franz stretched out his hands — a last pull, and I stood at the summit, gazing over a

marvelous panorama of snow and ice, of shimmering peaks and dark precipices, of threatening canyons and airy pinnacles, under the arch of a clear, cloudless blue sky. I stood gazing at the scene in rapture without uttering a word for several minutes. Then I cast my eyes down on the glacier that was beneath us.

'Franz, have we got to go down there?' I exclaimed with a startled gasp. The chasm ahead looked fearfully steep, — impossibly steep, — and dappled with thin spots of treacherous snow hiding ice underneath.

Franz scratched his head thoughtfully and studied the descent. 'Sir, it will go,' was all he said. And we prayed fervently from the bottom of our hearts that it would go.

Our rest on the summit was all too short, but as soon as the first members of our caravan came up we began the descent into the chasm, keeping as close together as possible in order to avoid being hit by the falling stones that it was impossible not to dislodge. The boulders were loose, and the slightest movement sent them hurtling into the abyss below. We also had to be extremely careful on account of slippery rock-surfaces covered by a thin ice enamel. The bottom of the chasm was filled with irregular snow-mounds, and though we found walking there most laborious we were in no danger of falling.

We halted for a moment, as soon as we reached a safe resting-place, to watch our coolies descend. It was no light task for Johann to bring them down safe and sound, but with the help of a rope, and with an immense amount of shouting and gesticulating, he landed them and their burdens on the broad surface of the glacier without accident.

The rest of the way presented no difficulties. We had to plough through

the usual soggy, soft snow of the lower glacier and clamber down the usual ugly moraine before the scanty herbage of an alpine pasture finally came in sight. Here we decided to pitch our tent.

We were in a valley that seemed to be uninhabited, but the next day we reached a summer camp of Shimshal shepherds who told us that it would be impossible to go much farther directly downstream on account of high water. Consequently we should have to make a detour over three low passes to reach the Shimshal. We asked whether there was a direct route over the mountain, for it seemed to us that such a trail would take us into the valley that Khan Sahib would follow on his way to Shimshal. They told us it was possible for us to get over, but said that it was very difficult.

We decided to venture it. Leaving the shepherd's encampment, we immediately entered a side valley where an almost imperceptible trail led along the edge of a dizzy shale precipice, overhanging a chasm. The next morning found us on the summit of the pass, enjoying a new and wonderful panorama of the Karakoram Mountains. The descent was steep, but seemed quite easy compared with that of two days earlier, and half an hour later we had reached the floor of the valley.

This time our coolies needed no encouragement. They ran ahead as if they had no burdens on their backs, delighted at the prospect of getting the trip over. Forgetting their previous fears and labors, they shouted and sang like happy children. 'Down there,' they said, 'we 'll find grass, water, wood, sheep, and milk.' We let them hurry ahead, while we remained behind to admire the wonderful beauty of the scene. It impressed us all with a certain rare charm. No dark, threatening cliffs crowded in upon us here, but

instead we gazed upon lofty, majestic mountain-sides with bold travertine-colored contours. Turbulent little brooks galloped through flower-studded mountain meadows close at hand.

In the distance the shining white peaks on the other side of the Shimshal Valley towered tall and radiant into the heavens.

At a turn in the trail we saw, to our astonishment, Khan Sahib's foreman, coming with several coolies to meet us. He said his master was waiting for us at a camp farther down, which he had reached the night before. The coolies surrounded us with radiant faces and loud shouts of 'Salaam!' Then they seized my wife, and, despite her protests, lifted her on their shoulders and carried her triumphantly back to camp. It was a real celebration. Khan Sahib welcomed us with great joy and intense eagerness to learn of our adventures.

So we had made it in spite of all difficulties. The joy of the moment was contagious, and was felt by everyone who had shared our long and perilous labors.

We spent a wonderful evening in that beautiful valley. The coolies sat around the camp fire and chatted happily. Two big sacks of mail were waiting for us. We had many letters to read from far-distant friends, and two big boxes filled with every conceivable delicacy — butter, milk, sugar, canned goods, cheese, chocolate, cigars, and biscuits.

Khan Sahib sat up until late at night working in his tent in order to enter on his map the details of the region that I had explored. All the white space left west of the watershed and north of the Shimshal had disappeared, to our topographer's unbounded pride and joy.

We were no less delighted than he was with the success of our Khun-

jerab-Ghujerab expedition. During the month since leaving Pasu we had covered over one hundred and ninety-three miles, mostly through totally unknown country. We had placed more than one thousand square miles on the map. From the geographical standpoint, perhaps the most important result was that we had determined the position of a considerable part of the Central Asiatic watershed. We had reached the source of the Khunjerab, the Ghujerab, and several of their important tributaries. We had discovered an extensive glacier district where no one suspected the presence of a high mountain region. In fact, many of these glaciers were as large as the more important glaciers in the Alps. Finally, we had discovered several peaks more than twenty thousand feet high and one twenty-two thousand feet high. My wife's botanical collection included more specimens than she had expected to find, and I was very well satisfied with our geological results. We had made regular meteorological observations, and had added new specimens to our butterfly collection.

During those peaceful evening hours I sat for a long time in front of my tent looking at the great wall of the Karakoram Range, beyond which still more mysterious and remote peaks gleamed in an ethereal, gentle light. And as I sat musing there of all sorts of things past and future, my mind kept half-consciously repeating: 'We got out of the Khunjerab rat-trap.'

The next morning we all proceeded cheerfully down the goat-path to the Shimshal. In less than two hours we caught sight of the broad valley through the end of the canyon, and a village lay on the other side of the river amid golden grainfields and green orchards.

# THE PLEASANTNESS OF EUROPEAN LIFE <sup>1</sup>

BY ROBERT BALMAIN MOWAT

[THE author, an assistant tutor at Corpus Christi, Oxford, has published several works relating to the history of European diplomacy and of mediæval Europe.]

READERS of Bryce's *American Commonwealth* will remember a chapter entitled 'The Pleasantness of American Life.' Throughout the chapter a sharp contrast is drawn between social and economic conditions in the United States on the one hand, and in Great Britain and on the Continent of Europe on the other. One phrase in particular arrests the reader's attention: 'The wretchedness of Europe is left behind.'

When this extreme statement is made by a man who was not an American, and who was a scholar, an incessant and observant traveler and man of affairs, it is not surprising that Americans themselves easily adopt the same point of view. George Washington advised his fellow countrymen to keep clear of the entanglements of Europe, presumably because he thought that there were many evil things in Europe. Ever since then, the citizens of the United States have tended to follow his advice without question, and to assume that Europe was a poor sort of place, worth visiting only because of its heritage from the past, its Old Masters, its mediæval churches, its romantic, ruined castles. To the ordinary inhabitant of

Europe, life is supposed to be a burden. *The Letters of Walter Hines Page*, even the letters written before the Great War, express the same kind sympathy: he speaks of the sorrows of Europe, melancholy, army-ridden, overtaxed.

The whole thing is a myth due partly to the self-satisfied feeling, the sense of superiority, which seems to grow naturally in all new countries; it is also due, probably, to the sight of miserable immigrants from Eastern Europe huddling into the ports of New England, as if Europe were a plague which they were leaving behind them. In South-eastern Europe there was during the nineteenth century a good deal of misery, due to the effects of Turkish maladministration. In Russia the conditions of life were badly spoken of, and the fault was imputed to the Tsarist régime. It is recognized now that the real misery of Russia has come about since the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. But putting aside the consideration of Russia and Southeastern Europe, let us concentrate on Western Europe. That life is pleasant there is proved by this: practically every inhabitant of Western Europe is proud of his particular country and likes his life there. From the new countries of the world there is a continuous back flow to Western Europe of people looking for cultured enjoyment; and most of the things that give grace and beauty to life in the New World are still drawn from the Old.

Bryce's chapter on the 'Pleasantness of American Life' is immediately fol-

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