

THROUGH THE GREAT RIVER TRENCHES OF ASIA

National Geographic Society Explorer Follows the Yangtze,
Mekong, and Salwin Through Mighty Gorges, Some
of Whose Canyon Walls Tower to a Height
of More Than Two Miles

BY JOSEPH F. ROCK

LEADER OF THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY'S YÜNNAN PROVINCE EXPEDITION, AUTHOR OF
"THE LAND OF THE YELLOW LAMA," "BANISHING THE DEVIL OF DISEASE AMONG THE
NASHI," "EXPERIENCES OF A LONE GEOGRAPHER," "HUNTING THE CHAULMOOGRA
TREE," ETC., IN THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE

With Illustrations from Photographs by the Author

WHERE in all the world is to be found scenery comparable to that which awaits the explorer and photographer in northwestern Yünnan Province, China, and in the mountain fastnesses of Tsarüing, in southeastern Tibet?

Few have been privileged to climb the towering ranges separating the mightiest streams of China, if not of Asia. The whole region, so geologists tell us, was once one vast, high plateau, now intersected and eroded by some of the longest rivers in the world.

These rivers changed this high plateau not merely into a land of lofty mountains, but of deep valleys with gloomy shadows and forbidding gorges never trodden by human foot.

In these trenches the Salwin, Mekong, and Yangtze, cutting through mountain ranges 20,000 feet in height, make their way to the oceans. These three rivers, flowing parallel, north to south, for some

distance in western China and southeastern Tibet, at one place come within 48 miles of each other, as the crow flies, and yet their mouths are separated by thousands of miles (see map, page 134).

It was this region which I wanted to bring home to America in pictures when I led the National Geographic Society's Yünnan Province Expedition.*

THE FIRST PHOTOGRAPHS EVER MADE OF
MANY SCENES

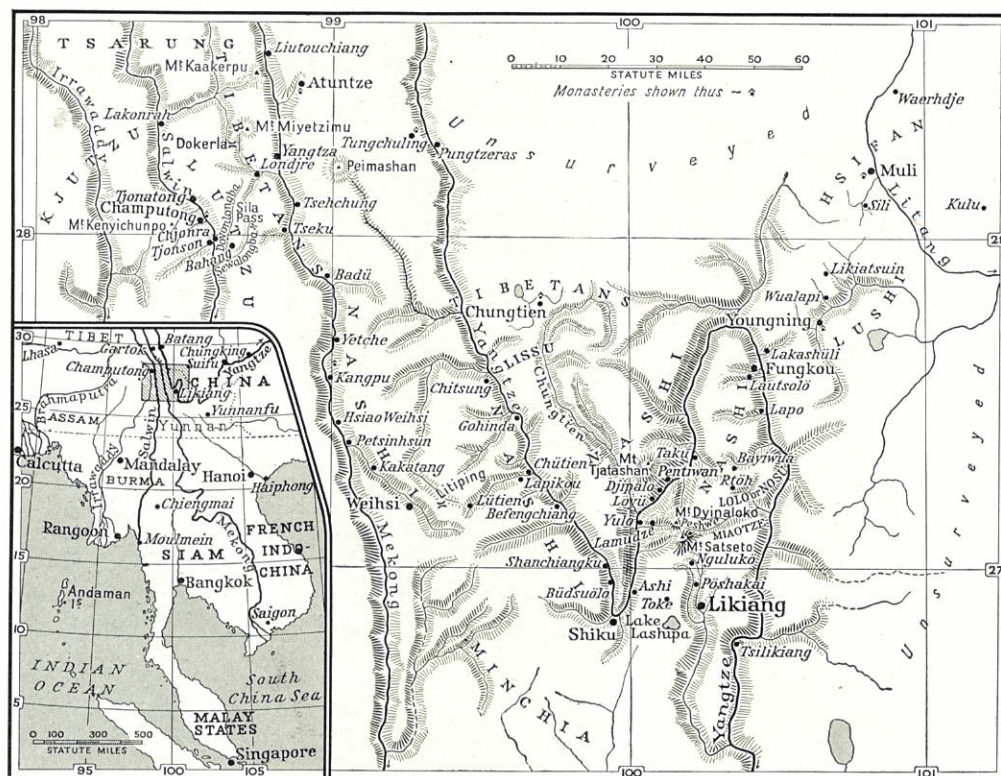
No white man had previously had a glimpse of many of the scenes here photographed, for the few explorers who have penetrated these terrifying fastnesses have done so when the snow-crowned peaks were hidden from view by the enveloping monsoon clouds of summer.

All three of these rivers have their

* See "The National Geographic Society's Yünnan Province Expedition," by Gilbert Grosvenor, LL. D., in the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE for April, 1925.



Explorer satisfies at
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a group of travel-
andy to his taste.



Drawn by C. E. Riddiford

WHERE THE GREAT RIVER TRENCHES OF ASIA RUN PARALLEL

In Yunnan Province, China, the Yangtze, the Mekong, the Salwin, and the eastern branch of the Irrawaddy flow south for a considerable distance; then each takes its separate way, the Yangtze to enter the Pacific near Shanghai; the Mekong to enter the South China Sea, and the Salwin and Irrawaddy the Indian Ocean (see pages 133-136).

origin in the high plateau land of Tibet, but their ultimate sources are still unknown.

The Salwin, which flows for a long distance through Tibet proper, enters Yunnan south of Tibet. In its southward course it becomes part of the Burmo-Siamese border and finally enters the Indian Ocean at Moulmein, made famous by one of Kipling's poems.

The Mekong parallels the Salwin to about the 20th degree of latitude; then turns westward, forming the border of three countries—Burma, Siam, and Indo-China—and finally enters the tropical South China Sea near Saigon.

The Yangtze, the mightiest and longest of them all, is also the least consistent. It flows parallel to the Mekong to a point near Shiku, and thence makes a sharp curve, turning directly north; describes a huge loop which adds hundreds of miles

to the length of the river; returns to the south, then turns to the east, becoming in part a boundary for the provinces of Yunnan and Szechwan, and at length bends to the northeast and enters the Pacific Ocean near Shanghai.

Of these rivers, the Salwin is the least known; it is navigable for only a short distance above its mouth. The Yangtze, on the other hand, is navigable for a distance of some 1,500 miles, to Chungking, and thence by small boats as far as Suifu. Beyond that rowboats ply as far as Machang, in eastern Yunnan. In the north, near Batang, it is navigable by skin boats or coracles, but only for short distances.

Extensive stretches of this river, which is more than 3,000 miles long, are unknown and parts of its course appear on accurate maps as dotted lines.

Much has been written about the Yangtze gorges in the vicinity of Ichang, so



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DEATH HAS PASSED THIS WAY

The large paper pagoda hanging from the willow tree signifies that a death has occurred in this house near Shiku. The pagoda is burnt at the place of burial, and the soul of the departed is believed to rise with the smoke into heaven (see text, page 144).

well known to tourists, but very little has been said about the much grander gorges north of Likiang. Few have penetrated even part way into this most terrific of all canyons, among the first being J. Bacot and Dr. Handel-Mazetti, who ventured as far as the hamlet of Djipalo, while I continued my journey to near Taku.
That long stretch of the easternmost arm of the great loop, from Fungkou to Tsilikiang, has also been unexplored, especially south of Lapo. This I followed nearly all the way, bringing back

the first photographs of that part of the Yangtze which flows through arid gorges, the walls of which are partly covered with a cactus, a species of opuntia native to America, but now widely distributed in Yunnan by birds, which feed on the succulent fruits, disseminating the unharmed, undigested seeds.
The grandeur of the deeply entrenched rivers is enhanced by the mighty ranges with snowclad peaks which separate them. One of the finest is undoubtedly the Kakerpu range, separating the Salwin from



RELICS OF TRIBAL WARFARE IN YETCHE VILLAGE

These mud watchtowers were erected about 500 years ago by the Moso kings, who tried to subdue the Mantzu. Similar remains are found all through the arid region of the Mekong Valley. As it seldom rains here, some towers are still in good condition. In Yetche reigns the last surviving king of the Nashi, whose territory extends as far west as the Irrawaddy (see text, page 167).

the Mekong, and which must reach an elevation of 24,000 feet, the highest peak of that range being Mount Miyetzimu (see page 177).

The Mekong-Yangtze divide reaches its highest points, some 20,000 feet, in Mount Peimashan, while the Salwin-Irrawaddy divide culminates in Mount Kenyichunpo, nearly 20,000 feet in height, the eastern branch of the Irrawaddy flowing parallel to the three greater streams for some distance, especially in the Chinese part of its course.

Lured by the magnificence of the mountain ranges and the weird and little-known chasms in which these mighty rivers flow, as well as by the strange tribes living on

the slopes of their gorges and in their valleys, early one October I left my headquarters in the little Nashi hamlet of Ngu-lukö,* on the Likang snow range, to explore and to photograph.

LARGE CARAVAN SETS OUT FOR THREE MONTHS' TRIP

During the whole summer botanical explorations had been carried on in these regions; but, as photography during the rainy months is out of the question, I undertook this special fall and winter

* See, also, "Banishing the Devil of Disease Among the Nashi," by Joseph F. Rock, in the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE for November, 1924.



TUNGCH

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TUNGCHULING'S GILDED TEMPLE ROOF IS VISIBLE FROM AFAR

The lamasery crowns a sugarloaf hill above this village on the Yangtze, and in the valley back of it is a lama nunnery. The nuns, however, are few and are considered inferior, except when the abbess is a reincarnation of an Indian goddess. At Tungchuling lived the first Christian missionary pioneer along the Tibetan border, a Frenchman who disguised himself as a Chinese trader and compiled a Tibetan vocabulary.



THE ROPE TOBOGGAN HAS NO TERRORS FOR THIS TIBETAN

In crossing, the traveler sits in a sling, with his hands placed over the wooden slider, or grasping the leather thongs to which it is attached. If his hands touched the rope, the friction would burn and lacerate them. Both slider and rope are greased with yak butter to facilitate the crossing.

journey for the purpose of bringing back photographic records.

The monsoon rains were not yet over when I set out with my retinue of 15 men and a large caravan, which carried supplies for more than three months. Our trail took us down the Likiang plain to the hamlet of Pöshakai; thence over a small spur, on the top of which we partook of our noonday meal at a Nashi wayside kitchen.

Men were playing a sort of domino

game on the floor, while the women were cooking in shallow iron caldrons, dishing out vegetable soup to a few dirty children who were running about.

As the first day of a journey is always a short one, the caravan never getting started before 10.00 or 11.00 a. m., we decided to stop at the Nashi hamlet of Toke, on the slopes of a spur which we were to cross the next day.

The paved road was execrable and the rain made the much-worn rocks so slip-



THE ROPE BRIDGE

If the ropes are crossed the river, the bridge is a part of the Expedition's equipment.

perity that whenever possible a narrow track beside the roads in this part of the country is entirely abandoned and the constant trot of passengers.

The night spent in the Toke was far from restful. The able made sleep next to the men who slept on the ground, although their hands have been injured to such an extent.

The following day we started on a spur, reaching an elevated plateau and passed through numerous sinkholes filled with water. The forded excellent hiding places for brigands.

YANGTZE FLOWS PARALLEL TO THE DISTANCE OF 100 MILES

A well-graded rock road led down into the Yangtze valley, following along the left bank. It reached the hamlet of Drum (see map, page 1).



THIS TIBETAN

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THE ROPE BRIDGE OVER THE MEKONG AT LOTA IS WELL ANCHORED

If the ropes are crossed, or if a braided bamboo ring is tied to the rope in the center, above the river, the bridge is unsafe. The Chinese soldier and the two Nashi men, who formed part of the Expedition's escort, were never anxious to make these perilous rope journeys.

pery that whenever possible we used a narrow track beside the pavement. Thus, roads in this part of the world are often entirely abandoned and new ones made by the constant trot of passing caravans.

The night spent in the little temple at Toke was far from restful; fleas innumerable made sleep next to impossible. My men who slept on the ground suffered most, although their Nashi hides must have been injured to such little annoyances.

The following day we climbed a high spur, reaching an elevation of 10,000 feet, and passed through country where enormous sinkholes filled with shrubbery afforded excellent hiding places for roving brigands.

YANGTZE FLOWS PARALLEL TO ITSELF AT
DISTANCE OF 15 MILES

A well-graded rock trail brought us down into the Yangtze Valley, and following along the left bank upstream, we reached the hamlet of Shiku, or Rock Drum (see map, page 134).

The Yangtze, coming directly from the north, makes a very sharp curve at this village and returns north again, flowing parallel to itself, not more than 15 miles separating opposite channels. The river is here very wide and in the winter the course is full of islets and sand bars, the breeding ground of ducks, cranes, and other waterfowl.

It was market day in Shiku and its single street was crowded with men, women, mules, pigs, dogs, children, and what not. The crowd was composed mainly of Nashi, Lissu, and Lolo tribespeople, who brought vegetables, pigs, etc., to the market (see page 147).

In the central part of the town, built out into the main street, is an open-air theater. Since there are no steps to the stage, I climbed over a memorial stone giving the names of the donors and the amount of money donated toward the building of the theater, and took pictures to my heart's content, while the crowd at the foot of the stage looked on.



THE YÜNNAN GORGES OF THE YANGTZE RIVAL IN GRANDEUR THOSE OF THE BRAHMAPUTRA

Though the Yangtze's gorges in the vicinity of Ichang are well known, little has been written about those which pierce the mighty Likiang snow range. After leaving Yulo the hitherto-placid river turns into a mad torrent which rushes in cascades and rapids through a terrific canyon. Below



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THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY EXPEDITION CROSSES THE SALWIN IN THE DUGOUT CANOES OF THE LUTZU
Only two canoes were serviceable, but even these, rowed by drunken Lutzus, were preferable to a much-used rope bridge for crossing this broad, swift-flowing stream (see text, page 179).



THE RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR HEAD OF TUNGCHULING

The Grand Lama and Living Buddha has just finished a long religious service and stands on the steps of the main shrine. The lamas of this region are not dissimilar to those of the yellow sect of the reformed Tibetan Church, the



A TUNGCHULING LAMA IN CEREMONIAL ROBES

He belongs to the yellow sect of the reformed Tibetan Church, the distinguishing mark of which is the yellow ceremonial hat. The cloak

THE RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR HEAD OF TUNGCHULING

The Grand Lama and Living Buddha has just finished a long religious service and stands on the steps of the main shrine. The lamas of this region are not hospitable to strangers.

A TUNGCHULING LAMA IN CEREMONIAL ROBES

He belongs to the yellow sect of the reformed Tibetan Church, the distinguishing mark of which is the yellow ceremonial hat. The cloak is red.



THE LAST OUTPOST OF A CHRISTIAN MISSION: BAHANG

This Lutz village (the Peharlo of the Chinese) has been twice burned by the Tibetan lamas of Champutong (see page 179), who forced its intrepid missionary to flee. From November to May, when the passes are filled with snow, the occupant of the mission station and those of the 18 huts are isolated from the rest of the world. Above Bahang rises the Alolaka Range, with the Salwin-Irrawaddy divide in the distance.

The most disagreeable part of traveling in Yunnan is the necessity for spending an occasional night in a town. This usually means dirt, flies, opium smoke, noise, and general discomfort, as there are no chimneys to the houses, and the smoke must find its own way out, which is usually through the badly joined floor of the loft, where I always took refuge to avoid a curious mob.

THE "COMFORTS" OF TRAVEL IN YÜNNAN

In Shiku I occupied a large, barnlike house containing huge stables and granaries, belonging to a rich Likiang Buddhist priest addicted to opium smoking. The only decent place, if that word can be employed—but everything is relative—was the chapel of our lama host, and there, in front of a gilded Buddha, I made myself comfortable—another relative term.

I quote from my diary:

"I am sitting on a balcony while the rain descends heavily. Before me there stretches a long stable full of mules and horses; a noisy little parrot, which I bought for three cents, sits on his stick, while cats and dogs and dirty children create pandemonium and add to the confusion caused by my belated caravan.

"The lead-mule, with his large bell, steps into the muddy courtyard, followed by his hungry cosufferers. Without waiting to have their loads removed, they fight their way to the troughs and try to eat through the baskets tied over their mouths.

"Dogs are stepped upon, pigs squeal, the mules bray, while long-dead ancestors are conjured in unprintable language by the exasperated muleteers. Everywhere mud, dung, cornstalks, and odors which it would be difficult to analyze! Poor cook! In such surroundings he has to produce a palatable meal."

The next morning we started with as much noise as when we arrived. How glorious to get out of such a foul place into the pure, fresh air!

Our trail led us up the Yangtze for several days. The country was quiet and peaceful; clouds hung heavily about the mountains inclosing the river—the last of a monsoon summer.

To the left, on a high, conical hill, was a temple. Of all the places in the world!

One pities the caretaker, for his shopping must take some effort, as the sides of the hill are as steep as the walls of a house.

PAPER EFFIGIES BURNED AT A NASHI FUNERAL

At Büdsuölo, a Nashi village, someone had given up his mortal toil; mourners were parading around in grayish-white garments and headdresses, while leaning against the wall of the deceased's house was a long row of almost life-size human effigies made of bamboo framework covered with paper. There were also huge paper horses, sedan chairs, castles, and towers of paper, all to be burned at the grave. These imaginary servants, horses, etc., were to minister unto and comfort the departed in the shadow world (p. 135).

Many lateral ravines open out into the main Yangtze Valley, while the trail passes through dense growths of spiræa, bauhinia, and rhamnus. These bushes and shrubs line the narrow trail, at times almost closing over it. Myriads of spider webs were interlaced and entwined among these shrubs, forming globose masses in which thousands of large yellow spiders with outstretched legs watched for their prey. Unless one held up a stick to separate the yellow threads and make a passageway through this labyrinth, one's head would soon have resembled a yellow ball of twine or fuzzy silk.

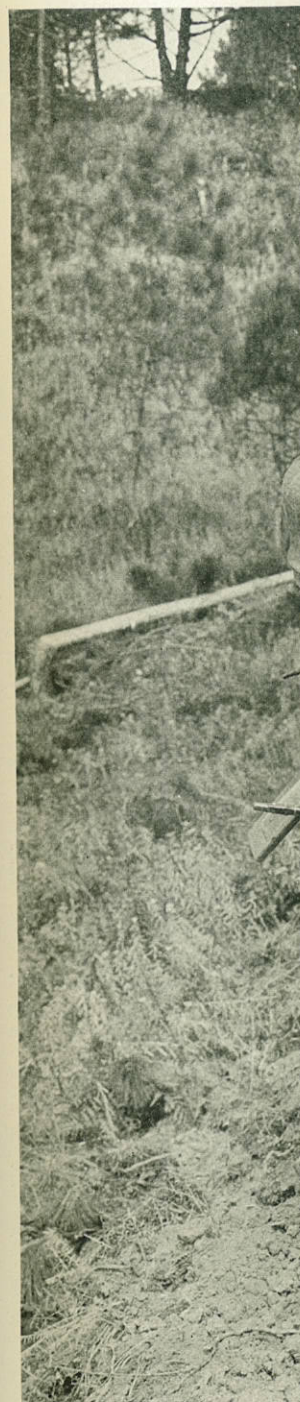
"A ROAD IS GOOD FOR TEN YEARS; BAD FOR TEN THOUSAND"

The trail skirts a sandstone wall, built up artificially from the river bed, which showed signs of having been submerged by the last high water. The rocks were loose and near the edge the path had sagged considerably and in many places was washed out.

But roads in this part of the world are rarely, if ever, repaired. A Chinese proverb says, "A road is good for ten years and bad for ten thousand."

The mountains are here bleak and dreary, only grass covering the slopes.

Immediately under the sandstone wall I found a newly erected temple. It was open, but the only attendant was a child, who had lighted incense sticks before the gods—three boyish figures about two and a half feet high, leaning against the wall of the altar as if inebriated. My soldiers



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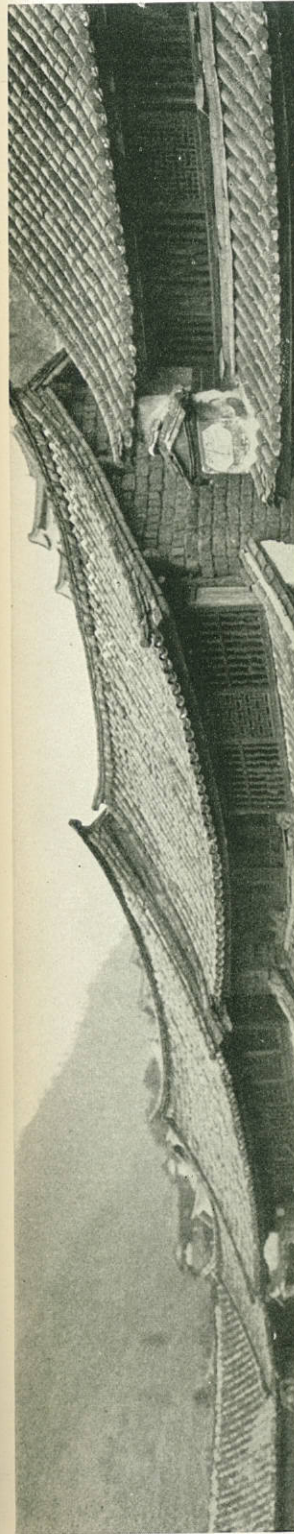


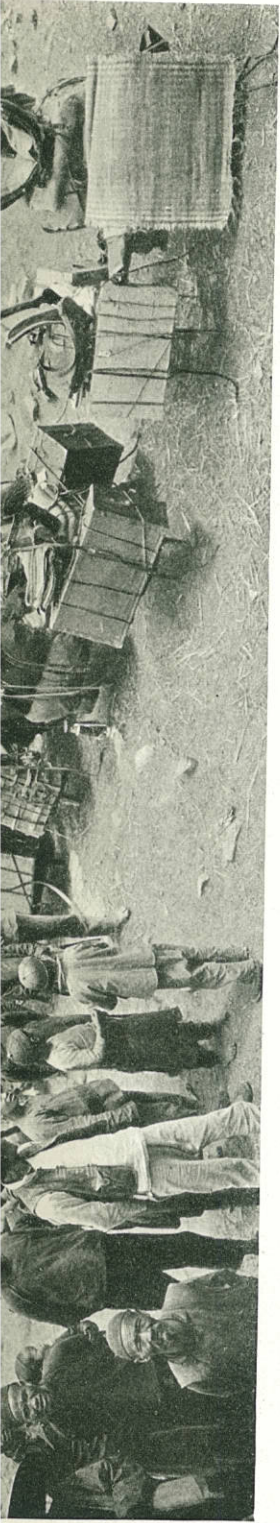
A LUTZÜ WITH HIS CROSSBOW

He belongs to a small tribe inhabiting a section of the Salwin Valley just south of Tibet proper. The Lutzü are a peaceful people, small of stature. Even the children of the tribe are expert marksmen with this primitive weapon (see text, page 181).

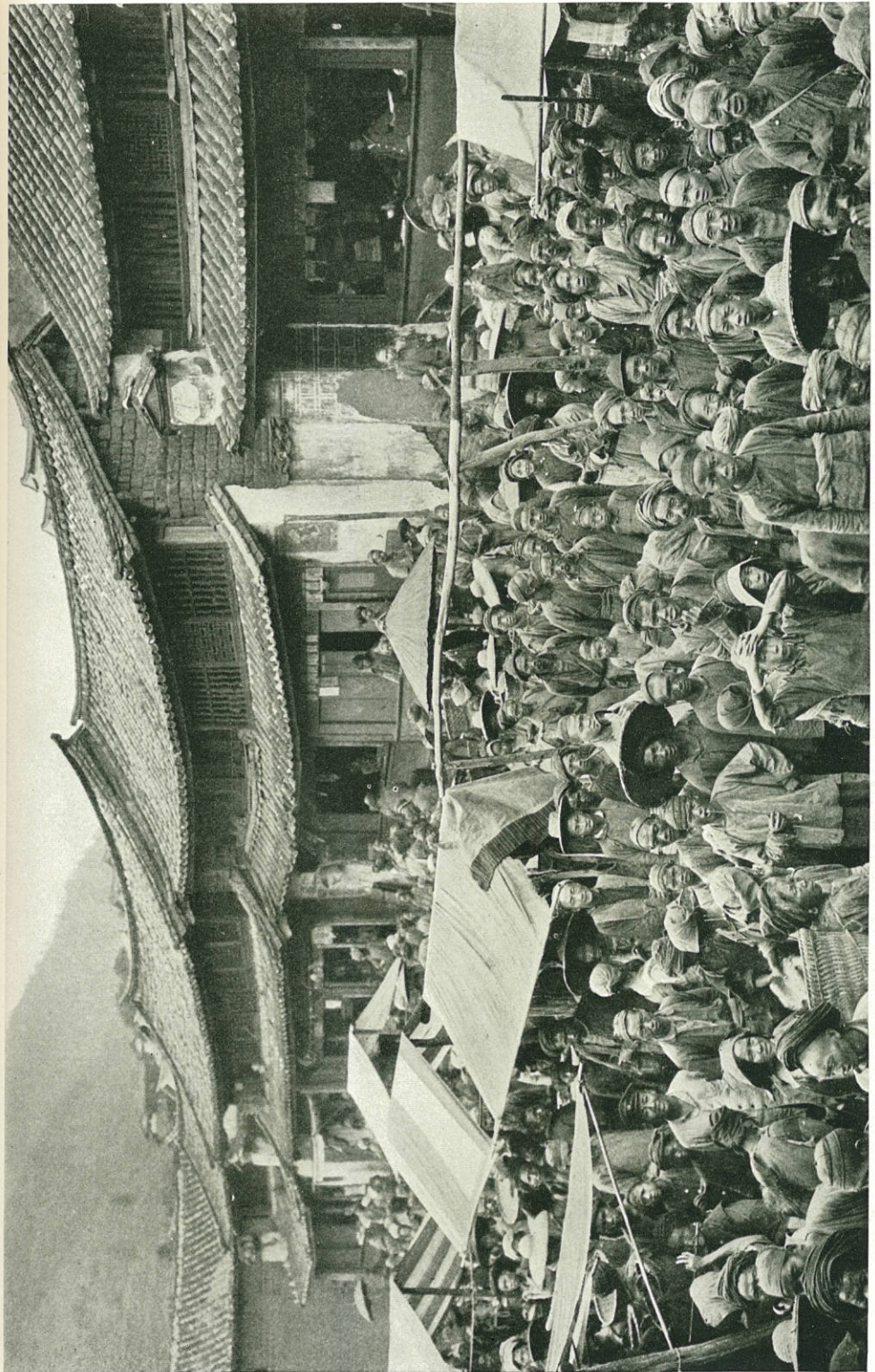


THE CARAVAN OF THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC EXPEDITION STOPS AT A YÜNNAN VILLAGE FOR LUNCH





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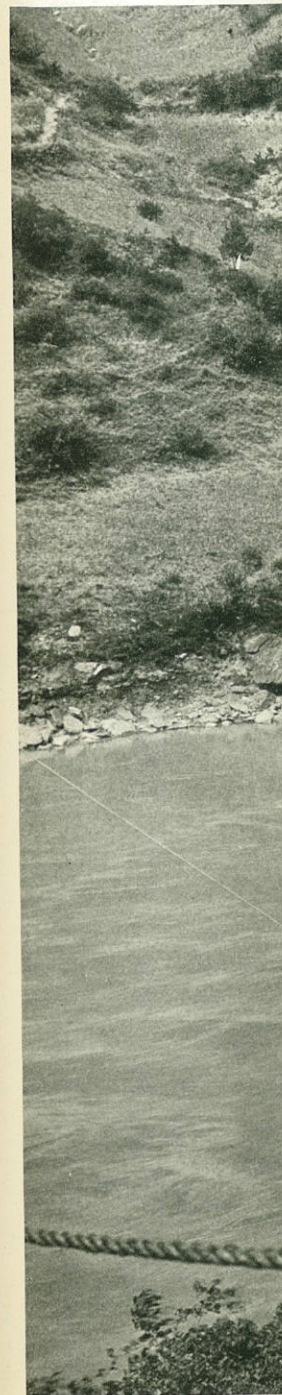


THE MARKET OF SHIKU

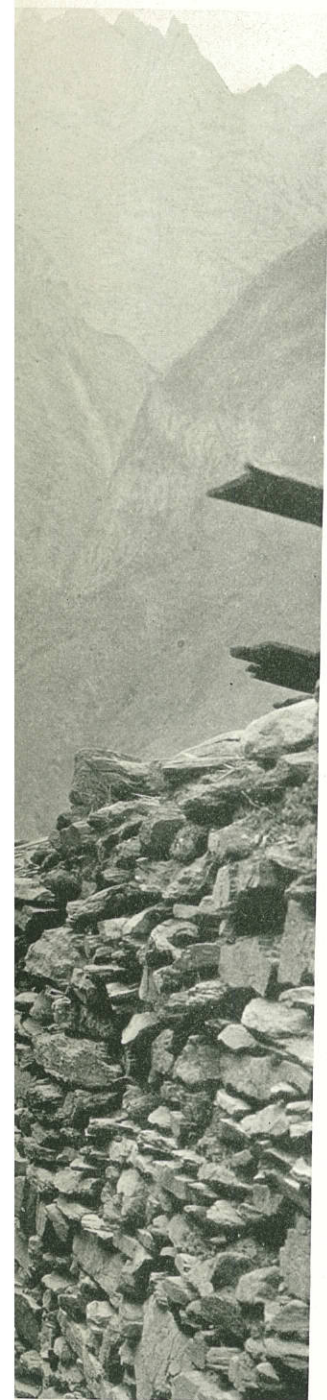
The single street of the village is crowded with men, women, mules, pigs, dogs, and children (see text, page 139).



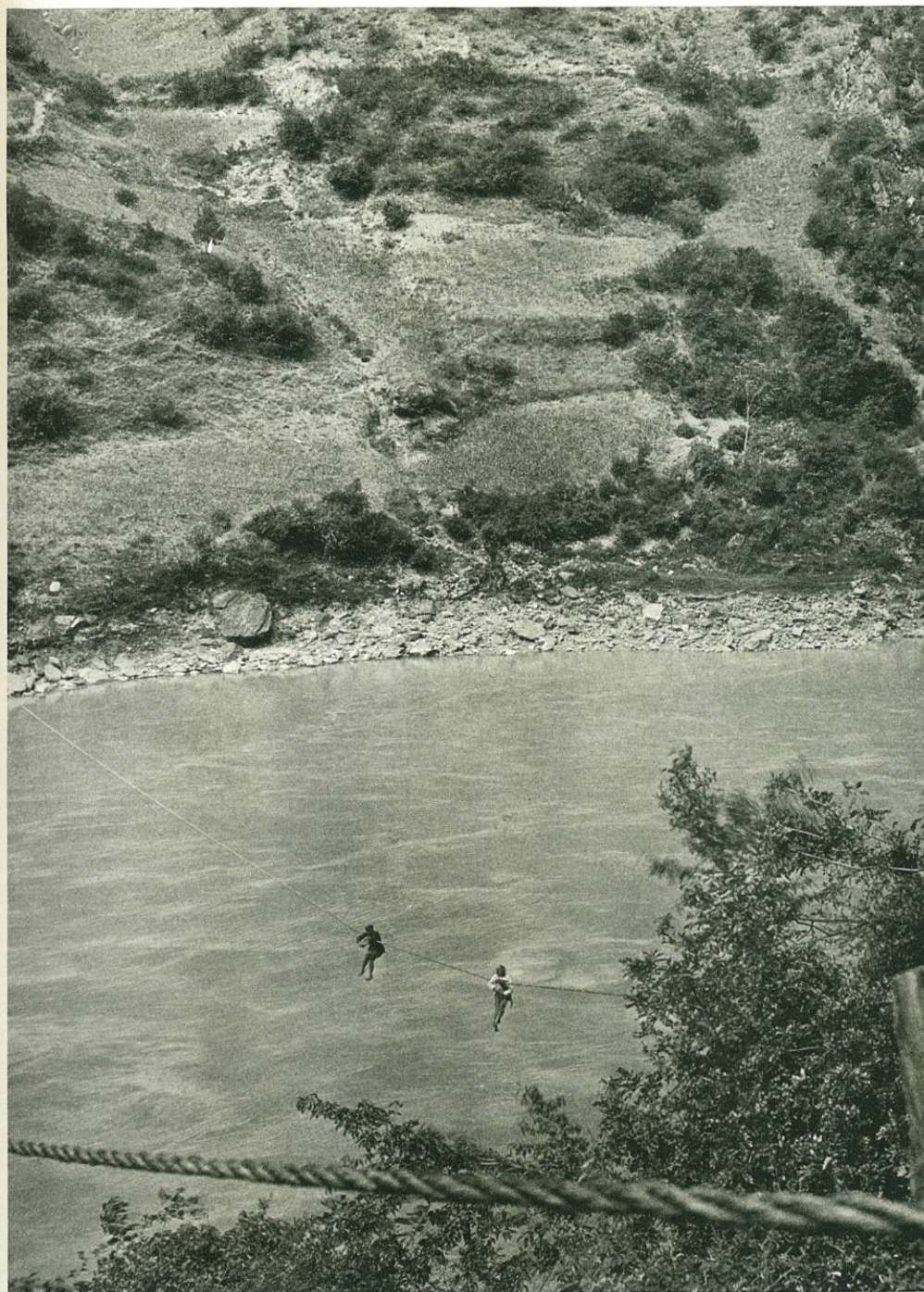
HUTS COMPRISING THE VILLAGE OF DJIPALO, IN THE YANGTZE GORGE
The inhabitants, seven families in all, are natives of Szechwan, who settled in this canyon
about 60 years ago.



Two of the author's Na
used for c



THE YANGTZE GORGE
who settled in this canyon



THE ROPE BRIDGE AT TSEKU

Two of the author's Nashi men are seen crossing the Mekong (see text, page 171). The rope used for crossing the other way is seen at the bottom of the picture.



ONE OF THE HORSES OF THE EXPEDITION BEING SENT ACROSS THE ROPE BRIDGE AT TSEKU

The rope consists of twisted strands of canebrake. Two ropes are necessary to cross in both directions, as the passenger must slide from a higher to a lower level. The second rope (to the right) is used in crossing to the side of the river from which this photograph was made (see text, page 162).



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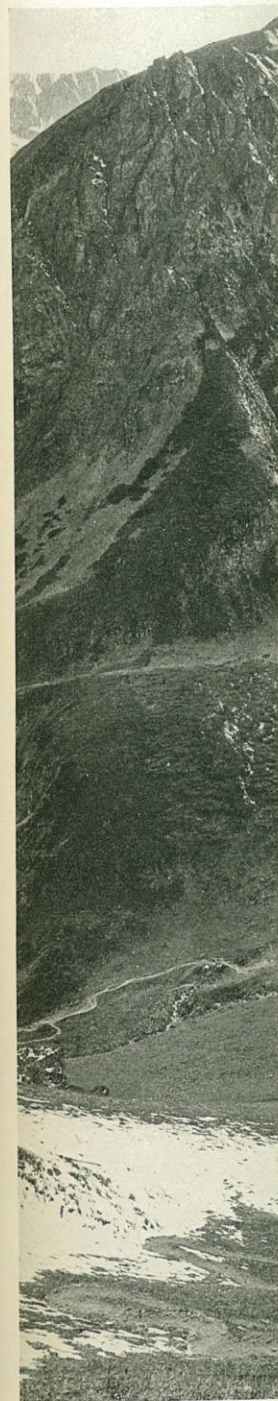
THE HAMLET OF LONDU ON THE MEKONG

This village, which is shown as Nantao on some detailed maps, is picturesquely situated on a small alluvial fan between Weihsu and Atuntze. Beyond this point to the northward the scenery increases in grandeur.



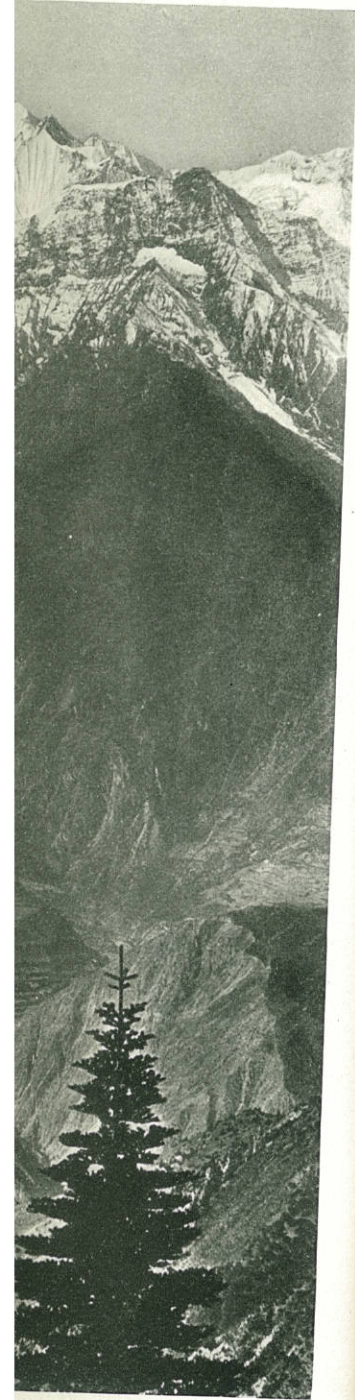
MOUNT KAAKERPU, WITH A HUGE GLACIER DESCENDING TO THE MEKONG

The river flows deep down in its rocky trench at the foot of the mountain. The photograph was made from an elevation of 13,500 feet above sea level.



THE EXPEDI

The photograph was taken

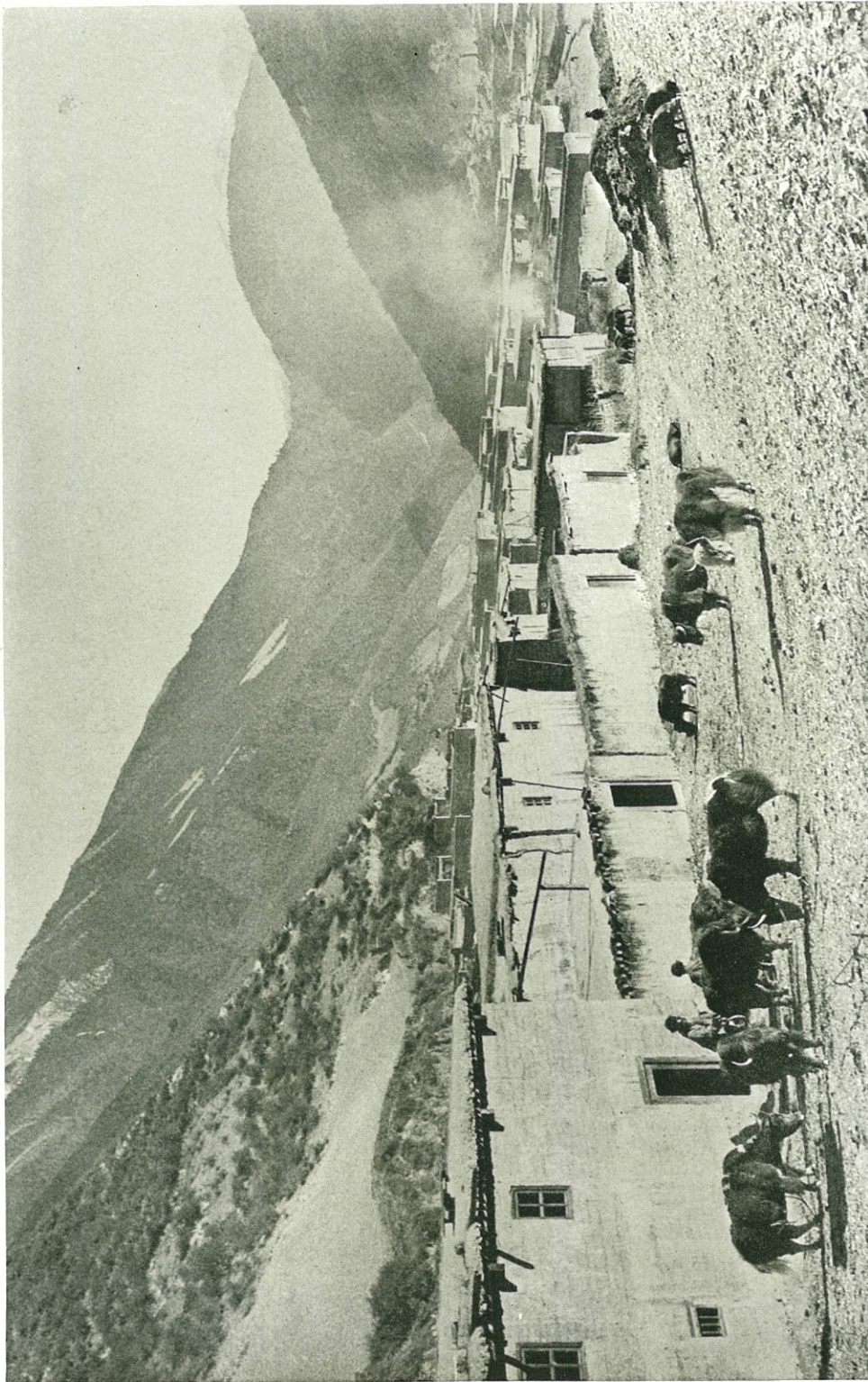


NG TO THE MEKONG
mountain. The photograph
sea level.



THE EXPEDITION CLIMBING THE DOKERLA ON THE TIBETAN SIDE

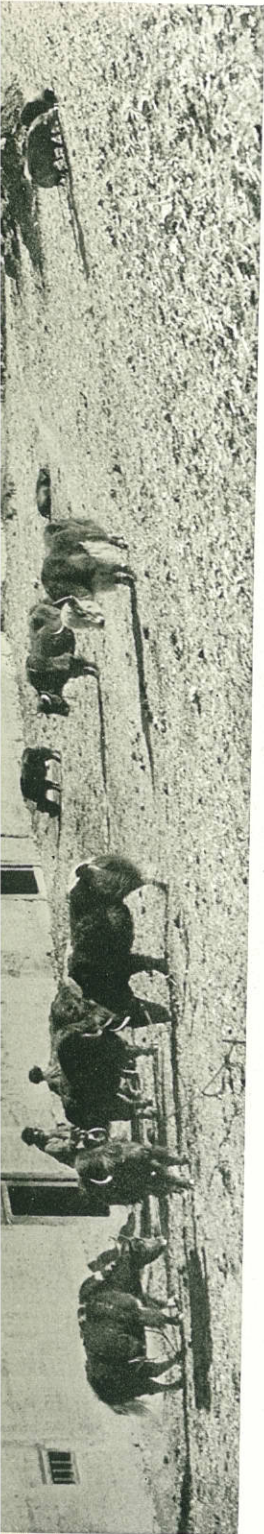
The photograph was taken on the return journey from Tjonatong, halfway up the Dokerla-Tsarüng side (see text, page 186).



YAKS IN THE TIBETAN VILLAGE OF ATUNTZE; ELEVATION, 11,500 FEET

In 1905 Tibetan lamas killed all of the French missionaries in the Mekong Valley, and the head of Father Dubernard was exposed to view on the gate of the monastery of this village. (see text, page 162)





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LOOKING UP THE YANGTZE GORGE AT TSILIKIANG

The bridge (see text, page 186) and village can be seen at the bottom of the valley. The actual village of Tsilikiang is not at the bridge, but a short distance on the other side, on the canyon slopes.



A SMILE FROM A CITIZEN OF THE FORBIDDEN LAND

This bright Tibetan boy, who uses his hair as a quiver for his arrows, was photographed on the bank of the Mekong, on the author's trip to the Dockerla.



A ROCKY ROAD

This trail hanging above the heights



EN LAND
rows, was photographed on
the Dockerla.

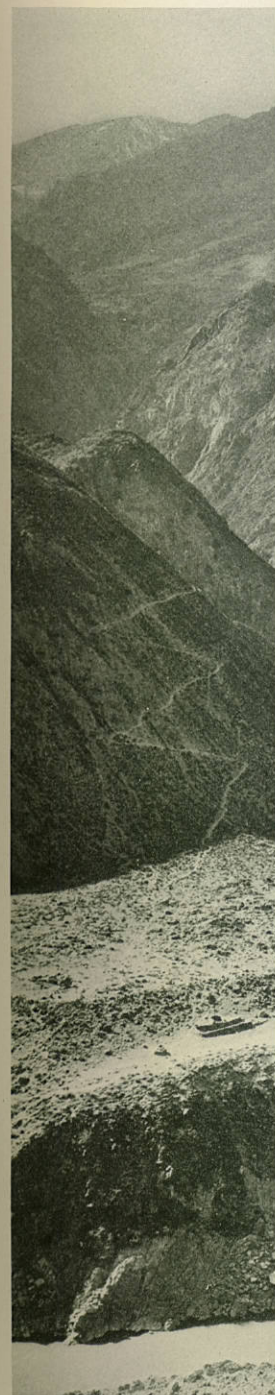


A ROCKY ROAD ALONG THE BANKS OF THE YANGTZE ABOVE SHIKU

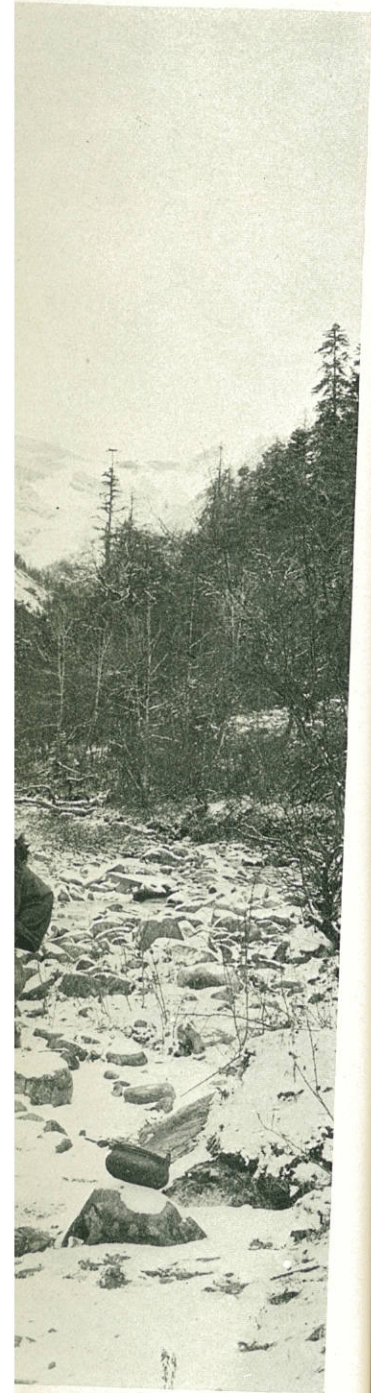
This trail hanging above the river was almost impassable. Note the temple crowning the conical height at the top of the picture (see text, page 144).



TIBETAN PORTERS IN A SNOW-COVERED STREAM BED AT THE FOOT OF THE DOKERLA



THE MEK



THE FOOT OF THE DOKERLA



THE MEKONG ENTERING A NARROW GORGE NEAR YANGTZA



THREE NASHI LAMAS OF THE KANGPU LAMASERY IN FRONT OF A SHRINE

"At Kangpu there was a square lama shrine with Buddhas painted on the whitewashed walls, while next to it stood a small incense stove of brick, wherein prayers and cedar or pine branch offerings were burnt" (see text, page 164).

and horse-boy bowed hands in prayer before

Along a weary trail, and through deep and glorious forests, we found fengchiang, where we spent the night in an old farmstead, stairs in a black hole of earth with corncocks. An old man and the ever-present monk surprised the sole furnishing of a long day's march or more, about surroundings as simple as our own bed, table, chair and necessary adjuncts brought from the civilized world beyond the mountains, and plains.

ONE PUPIL OCCUPIES

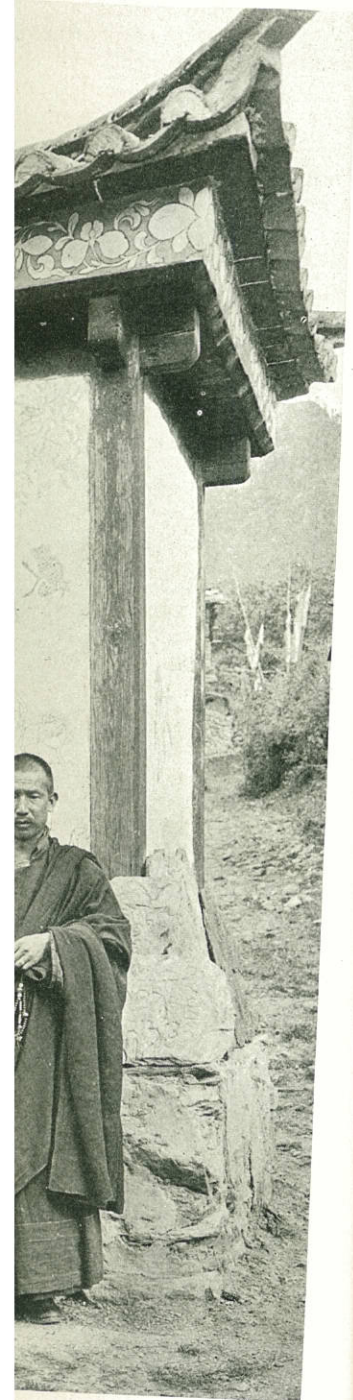
The fifth day from Chütien, on the bank of the Yangtze, along with the others we followed a mountain trail through valleys and upon the plain of I-chang, to a scattered village of tents, lying on the slopes of the divide.

Below us lay a beautiful view to the right an imposing hillside, a lamasery, the Tibetan Church, where we found a place of rest.

On account of the steep pitch our tents, but even lying near the bank, proved to be the difficulty of Lütién. A lonely desk copying Chinese ceiling had once been hung down and so which almost touched the ground.

We went on in search of quarters, which we found in the place. Opium was stored from the loft, and the place cleaned I took the surroundings.

Air was plentiful, we could see the stars, and the snow, but through the air hung bunches of beads pulled up from the floor of the room was occasional cakes, a sort of yeast, and a kind of wine. A pile of kets, and the ever-



FRONT OF A SHRINE
painted on the whitewashed
prayers and cedar or pine

and horse-boy bowed and folded their hands in prayer before them.

Along a weary trail, over mighty passes and through deep and gloomy canyons and glorious forests, we proceeded to Befengchiang, where we stopped for the night in an old farmhouse. I slept upstairs in a black hole of an attic festooned with corncocks. An old table and a barrel and the ever-present family shrine comprised the sole furniture. But, after a long day's march or ride, one cares little about surroundings as long as one has his own bed, table, chairs, and other necessary adjuncts brought with him from the civilized world beyond the ranges, valleys, and plains.

ONE PUPIL OCCUPIES LÜTIEN'S SCHOOL

The fifth day from Likiang we reached Chütien, on the banks of a tributary of the Yangtze, along which our trail now followed a mountain range, up and down through valleys and villages, till we came upon the plain of Lütien and a much-scattered village of the same name, nestling on the slopes of the Mekong-Yangtze divide.

Below us lay a beautiful amphitheater; to the right an imposing building on the hillside, a lamasery, the first outpost of the Tibetan Church. It was difficult to find a place of rest.

On account of the rain, I decided not to pitch our tents, but entered the first building near the bank of a stream. This proved to be the dilapidated schoolhouse of Lütien. A lonely Nashi boy sat at a desk copying Chinese characters. The ceiling had once been papered; sheets of it hung down and supported spider webs which almost touched the boy's head.

We went on in search of better quarters, which we found in the best house of the place. Opium smokers were evicted from the loft, and after I had had the place cleaned I took stock of my surroundings.

Air was plentiful. From my bed I could see the stars, not through the window, but through the ceiling, from which hung bunches of beans as they had been pulled up from the fields to dry. A third of the room was occupied by white circular cakes, a sort of yeast used in the making of wine. A pile of straw, huge baskets, and the ever-present altar of red

perforated paper with Chinese characters cut out of gilded paper completed the furniture.

The evening air was wonderful at this elevation (9,000 feet); the rain had ceased and a cloudless, starry sky made us forget the hardships of the road.

A verbal fight between the two families who occupied the house ensued the next morning over the division of the money I was to give them, for one supplied water, the other firewood. Giving each what was deserved, I left them quarreling to their heart's content.

We now ascended through pine and spruce forests to the summit of the Yangtze-Mekong watershed. Litiping, as the divide is known, is one broad, undulating range of alpine meadows, some 11,000 feet in elevation, bordered by a dense forest of the loveliest hemlocks.

The undergrowth consists mainly of a canebrake (*Arundinaria*), while a thick carpet of moss covers the ground. The meadows were one sea of blue and white, for the gentians as well as the edelweiss were all in bloom. Rhododendron bushes, tall anemones, and irises formed a border on the outskirts of the hemlock forests.

The air was bracing, the sunshine glorious; birds were singing and all seemed glad for life.

The view toward the Yangtze in the east was wonderful, the long ranges stretching from north to south as far as the eye could see, while at our very feet lay the scattered hamlet of Lütien, still enshrouded in morning mist.

AUTHOR'S MAIL EXHAUSTS WEIHSI'S STAMP SUPPLY

Late that afternoon we arrived at the prefectural town of Weihsi, a forlorn place of about 400 houses situated on a small tributary of the Mekong River.

The town boasts a wall of mud with a few dilapidated gates. The west gate is an oval hole in the wall, perhaps merely the result of a kicking, obstreperous Yünnan mule.

Here we stopped for two days to develop our pictures, pack seeds, and write notes and letters, for Weihsi has a post office, not as we would understand the word, however. The postal clerk was unable to figure out the postage due on my letter package, as he had never con-



THE SNAKY TRENCH OF THE SALWIN RIVER NEAR THE LUTZU HAMLET OF CHJONRA
(SEE TEXT, PAGE 178)

verted grams into fractions of Chinese catties; besides, he had not stamps sufficient to cover postage. So we came to the conclusion that he had better send on the mail to Likang and I would pay him a certain sum of money which ought to be sufficient. The best of it was that the mail really reached Washington, D. C.

A great part of my time at Weihsi was taken up with ministering to the sick, and the temple grounds where I camped resembled a clinic throughout my stay. All wished some sort of medicine and hoped one dose of the foreign drug would cure instantaneously even the most advanced case of pulmonary tuberculosis; but I could only treat wounds, infected cuts, and bruises. The local remedy for stopping the flow of blood is to put cow dung on the wound.

After leaving Weihsi our goal was Kakatang, only about ten miles distant. It is situated in a narrow part of the valley of the Weihsi stream and consists of log-and mud-houses, alternating with pigsties,

all in a single row. We went from place to place, looking for some sort of space which could be cleaned and converted into quarters for the night.

WHERE THE DEAD MUST WAIT FOR LUCKY BURIAL DATE

I spied a dismal temple on the hillside and decided to look it over. The single dirty room, with cobwebbed, smoky gods, contained a coffin which in turn contained a man who had died of old age a year ago and was still awaiting a lucky day for burial.

Not wishing company of that sort, we inspected a fairly decent-looking house and found in it another dead occupant, reposing in a lacquered coffin, awaiting burial at a time when moon and stars should be in the right position in the heavens.

We finally put up in the first house of the village, in a room level with the road. When all were cooking, one might well have used it to cure ham or bacon, for it acted as the chimney of the household.

What sights one can behold in such a place as Kakatang! Nowhere have I seen goiter so prevalent as here. The people carried regular pouches in their throats, like certain monkeys when they fill up with peanuts. One man, half blind, was loaded down with a goiter so huge that the weight of it dragged down his lower jaw, making it difficult for him to keep his mouth closed. He resembled an orang-outang, as he smilingly posed for his picture, leaning on his lengthy pipe.

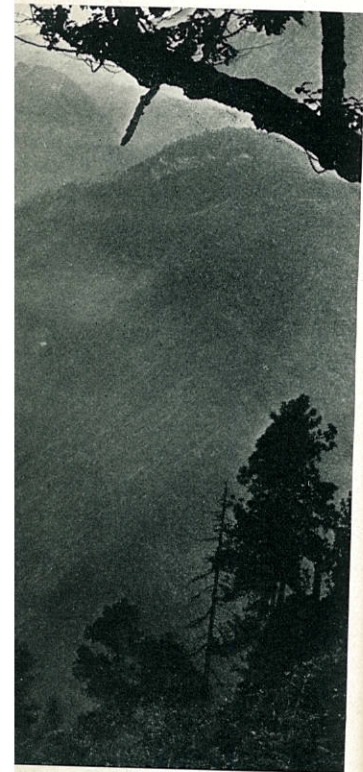
INDIAN CORN IN MEKONG VALLEY RAISES PUZZLING QUESTION

From Kakatang we continued our journey through narrow defiles, always following the stream until we reached the Mekong River. The trail was appalling, and often the loads had to be removed from the packs and carried one at a time by the mulemen over the treacherously narrow spots high above the stream.

We followed the M Petsinhsün, where we at the home of the headman. When he spied my camera he gave orders in a voice to his various vassals to bring out silk garments, while he showed off his filthy clothes, and then he was emperor of China.

Our trail led up the east bank of the chung, on the east bank seven days distant.

Strange as it may seem, the most important crop grown by



UTZU HAMLET OF CHJONRA

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We followed the Mekong upstream to Petsinhsün, where we stopped for lunch at the home of the headman of the village. When he spied my camera he wished to have his picture taken, and when I agreed he gave orders in a loud, commanding voice to his various wives, who brought out silk garments, which he put on over his filthy clothes, and then sat down as if he were emperor of China.

Our trail led up the Mekong to Tseh-chung, on the east bank of the river, some seven days distant.

Strange as it may seem, the most important crop grown by the natives of the



THE CHIEF LAMA OF CHAMPUTONG LAMASERY

Only one dilapidated temple, tended by four poor lamas, remains of the imposing Buddhist monastery which formerly ministered to this village of 40 slate-roofed houses. After the massacre of French missionaries in 1905, the Chinese burned this and other monasteries to the north (see text, page 179).

Mekong Valley is Indian corn. It is the staple food of the Miaotze tribes, both in Yunnan and Kweichow, and also of the black Miaos in northern Siam. Is it possible that corn was known in Asia before America was discovered? As the aborigines have no written records it is difficult to decide this puzzling question.

NO REST FOR THE EXPEDITION LEADER

When traveling with a large caravan, there are always casualties, especially on such execrable roads or footpaths as one encounters in this part of the world. There is no rest for the leader of an

expedition. After the evening meal, there is much work to be done. A careful diary must be written, exposed photographic plates packed and new ones loaded in the dark, with hands tied into a small changing bag. Plants must be labeled, and when one finally relaxes on a camp cot, the "casuals" arrive. Here is the case of a horse-boy on whose bare foot a mule has stepped; another has a boil, a third fever or a headache.

The number of patients is often augmented by village people, who come with all sorts of ailments till one has to call a halt and, dead tired, refuses to see more visitors. If sent away, the supplicants are sure to come in the early morning, before breakfast.

ROCK-PRAYER PYRAMIDS BESPEAK TIBETAN INFLUENCE

We were still in the land of the Nashi, although one encounters other tribes, such as Lissu and Tibetans.

At Kangpu we stopped at the house of the Nashi chief who rules over this and other villages farther south.

Shortly after our arrival we heard chantings, the blowing of trumpets, beating of gongs, and the ringing of bells, all emanating from a window on the top floor opposite my room. Soon the faces and red cloaks of Nashi lamas appeared in the window frame. They stopped their worship to satisfy their curiosity. Having taken a good look at me, they returned to their prayers with occasional poundings of the drum and monotonous blares from trumpets.

Guided by a lama, I went upstairs to a chapel and found priests sitting before Tibetan books. They were a friendly lot, and later I took their pictures, after presenting them with copies of a photograph of the Dalai Lama of Lhasa, whom some of their number had seen in person and immediately recognized.

The religion of the Nashi in this region is pure Tibetan Buddhism, to which they were converted by their Tibetan neighbors. Tombas, or sorcerers, are rare, if not unknown.

It was here that I encountered the first real Nashi lamas. They spoke Tibetan, besides their mother tongue, and some of them had even been to Lhasa, where they had studied.

Following up the Mekong north of Weihsu, one becomes more and more aware of the fact that one is nearing the Tibetan border. Chinese are very scarce and the tribal people, such as the Nashi, have adopted the religion of the lamas. Beyond Yetche (Yeichih), Tibetans outnumber other tribes. Other signs of Tibetan lama overlordship are the many *mani* shrines, pyramids of rock slabs on which are deftly carved the everlasting formula, "*Om Mani Padme Hum*" (O, the Jewel in the Lotus, Amen).

The pyramid has usually a square base, against the sides of which are slabs of rocks, usually of slate or sandstone, on which, often in minute letters, the prayer is engraved. Hundreds of such slabs of rock compose a pyramid which is crowned by a long, carved pole surmounted by a crescent (see pages 180 and 181).

Seldom does one find a single pyramid. Usually there are long rows of them, composed of thousands of laboriously carved rocks always bearing the same prayer. Occasionally Buddhist emblems, even Buddhas, are carved into the rocks and beautifully painted.

At Kangpu there was a square lama shrine with Buddhas painted on the white-washed walls, while next to it stood a small incense stove of brick, wherein prayers and cedar- or pine-branch offerings were burnt (see page 169).

In the courtyard of our Nashi chief forgathered many people who later joined my men in the huge kitchen, where fires burned lustily. The sparks were flying, and all at once the black, smoky roof caught fire. Had it not been for the big caldron of boiling water, there would have been no house.

It is remarkable that fires do not occur daily, for the people are absolutely careless. Candles and oil lamps are unknown and the natives walk about with lighted pine torches, some of which are even stuck into cracks between posts, as one would hang up a lantern. If one house burns, it usually means that nothing can save the village.

THE LAST OF THE NASHI KINGS BEFRIENDS STRANGERS

Our trail descended from Kangpu to the stream bed, only to lead zigzag over a rocky bluff. Big boulders projected



Here seen from an elevation, the stream rises vertically on both sides and is churned into furious floods of pink, violet, white, and

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THE MARBLE GORGE OF THE SALWIN

Here seen from an elevation of 9,000 feet, this magnificent gorge is about a mile long and rises vertically on both sides, overhanging the stream in many places. In summer the river is churned into furious floods, which jam the gorge and fling about great slabs of marble against the pink, violet, white, and grayish walls (see, also, text, page 179).



THE DIZZY TRAIL, THROUGH THE SALWIN'S MARBLE GORGE

The path follows the base of the cliff at the left and is a bare hand's breadth. At one place it consists only of a few sticks, on which the traveler must balance himself above the roaring stream and progress sideways. The Lutzus, however, not only brave the river's current in dugout canoes, but negotiate this perilous trail with heavy loads on their backs (see text, page 180).

in all directions, the crevice with large clumps of orchid

A few miles more and we where reigns a Nashi king is Lee. He is exceedingly foreigners, and all strange through Yetche stop with h

It was he who in 1905 re life of Mr. George Forrest, explorer. For days Forrest by Tibetan lamas, who had priests in the Mekong Valle caught him, his head, too, graced the gate of Atuntze did that of Father Duberna

King Lee is very bashful fied; he is the last surviving Nashi as well as of the othe in his territory, which exte the west as the Irrawadd. Kjutzu pay him tribute, not in kind.

We spent a day in the kir ous establishment, occupying den and veranda next to the chapel, for he, too, is of Church.

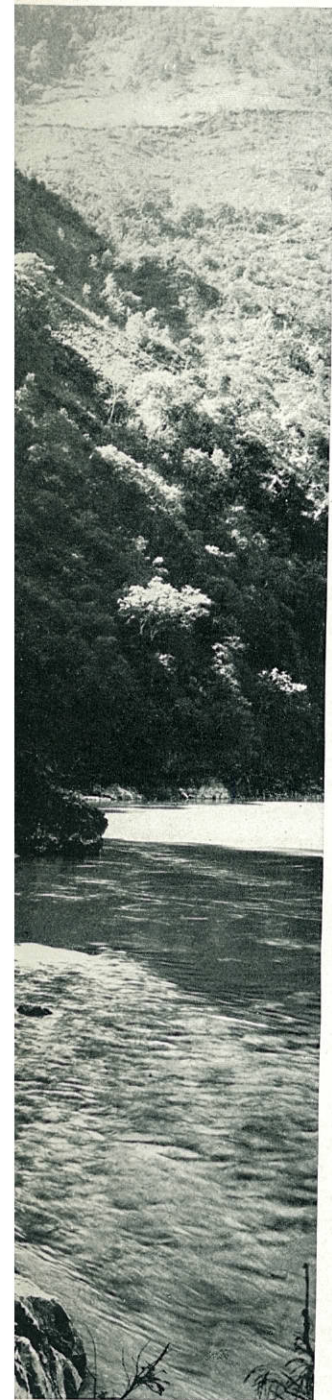
All day long a lama recite companied by the constant, the drum, which was inte sionally by the jingling of chapel is closed by massive bling those of a mausoleum tails attached to brass ring the center of each wing.

FRENCH PRIEST SENDS WARNING

The Mekong became mo and the scenery much grand ceeded northward.

A contingent of Nashi m quarters at Tsehchung, had ing seeds for me on the gre arating the Mekong, the Ya Salwin, and I now sent a me form them and Father Ouve priest, who took the place. Father Dubernard, of my a

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MARBLE GORGE

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in all directions, the crevices being filled with large clumps of orchids.

A few miles more and we reach Yetche, where reigns a Nashi king, whose name is Lee. He is exceedingly friendly to foreigners, and all strangers who pass through Yetche stop with him.

It was he who in 1905 really saved the life of Mr. George Forrest, the botanical explorer. For days Forrest was hunted by Tibetan lamas, who had killed all the priests in the Mekong Valley. Had they caught him, his head, too, would have graced the gate of Atuntze lamasery, as did that of Father Dubernard.

King Lee is very bashful and yet dignified; he is the last surviving ruler of the Nashi as well as of the other tribes living in his territory, which extends as far to the west as the Irrawaddy. Even the Kjutzu pay him tribute, not in money, but in kind.

We spent a day in the king's commodious establishment, occupying a small garden and veranda next to the private lama chapel, for he, too, is of the Tibetan Church.

All day long a lama recited prayers, accompanied by the constant, quick beat of the drum, which was interrupted occasionally by the jingling of a bell. The chapel is closed by massive doors resembling those of a mausoleum, with leopard tails attached to brass rings fastened to the center of each wing.

FRENCH PRIEST SENDS A KINDLY WARNING

The Mekong became more interesting and the scenery much grander, as we proceeded northward.

A contingent of Nashi men, with headquarters at Tsehchung, had been collecting seeds for me on the great divides separating the Mekong, the Yangtze, and the Salwin, and I now sent a messenger to inform them and Father Ouvrard, a French priest, who took the place of massacred Father Dubernard, of my approach.

I was contemplating the unpleasant prospect of crossing the Mekong by a rope bridge at Tsehchung when I was hailed by my Nashi men from the other side of the river at the rope bridge of Tseku. I shouted that we would go on to Tsehchung and there cross the rope, as it was said to be much shorter. I was soon

persuaded, however, that it was here I had to cross, as the Tsehchung bridge was three months old and therefore dangerous. The kind Father Ouvrard had sent the men to urge me to use this Tseku rope bridge.

ROPE BRIDGES ARE MADE OF TWISTED BAMBOO

These bridges are an ingenious invention; they can be employed only across rivers flowing in trenchlike valleys, such as the Mekong and the Salwin. Along most of the Yangtze course they are impossible, as the river is much broader and flows in wider valleys, and in regions where they could be used they are unknown to the natives.

The rope bridge, now a purely Tibetan affair, may have been adapted by the Tibetans from the Lutzus, Lissus, or other jungle people of the river valleys near Tibet.

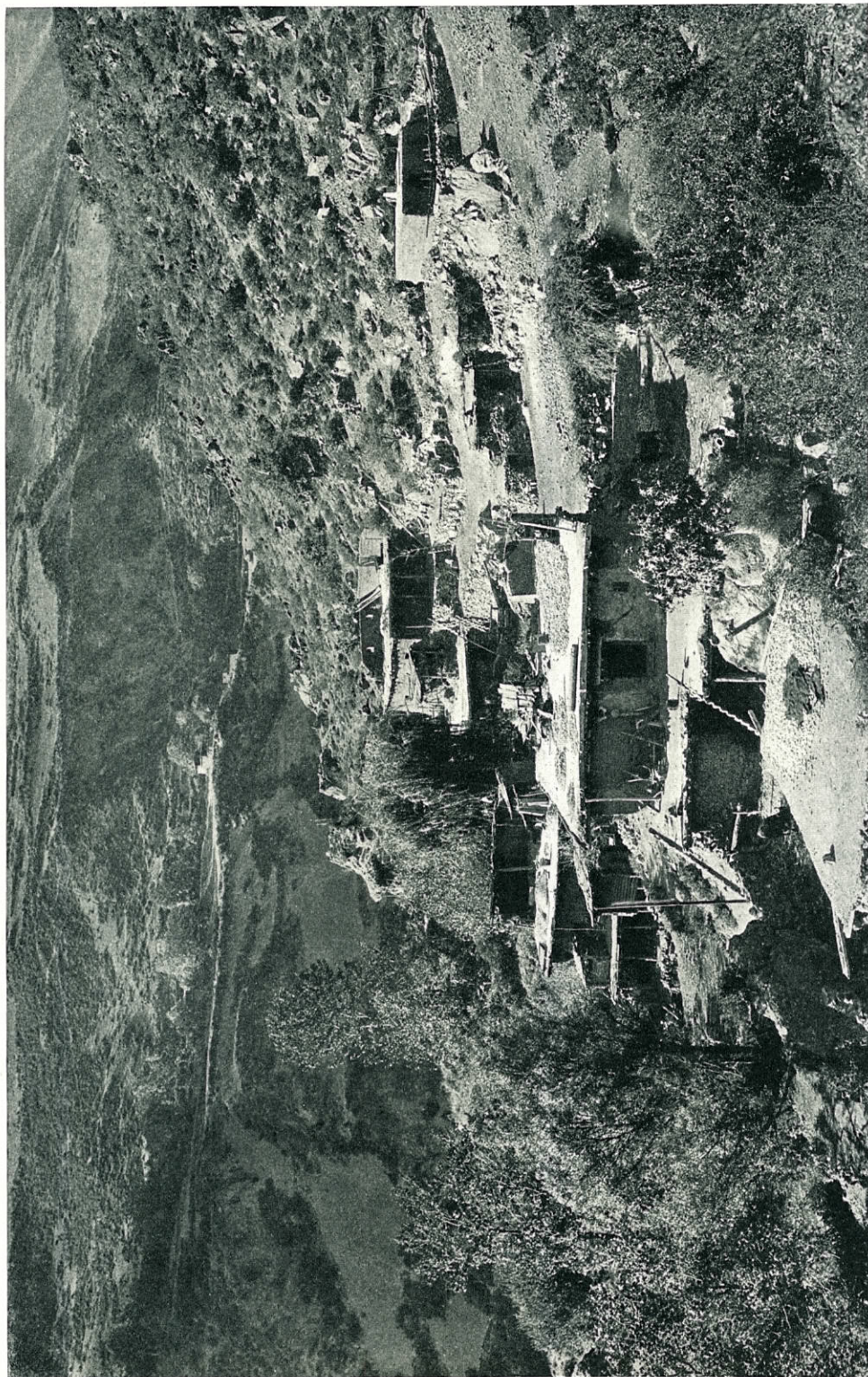
The first prerequisite for a rope bridge is a built-up platform on the hillside near the trail. In this is buried for half its length a large post of cypress in which notches are cut to hold the rope in place after it has been wound round the post (see illustrations, pages 138 and 139).

The starting platform is usually from 100 to 250 feet above the river, while the landing platform, on the opposite side, is from 25 to 50 feet above the river, thus providing a fairly steep decline. There are two rope units for each crossing place, one affording an incline to the right bank and one to the left. The ropes are made of twisted strands of canebrake, a small bamboo (see pages 149 and 150).

A necessary implement is the slider, a semicylinder made of strong oak wood. This slider fits over the rope. The traveler is tied into a rawhide yak strap or sling, in which he sits as in a swing, and this is fastened to the slider through a wooden slot. Care must be taken to keep the slider straight, back up, on the rope.

THE FIRST ROPE-BRIDGE CROSSING CAUSES GREAT ANXIETY

I had not anticipated crossing here and hoped to have one more hour's grace. It was a bit difficult to make up one's mind. My Siamese boy was even more fearful than I; in fact, he had worried about the prospect from the day we started on this memorable trip.



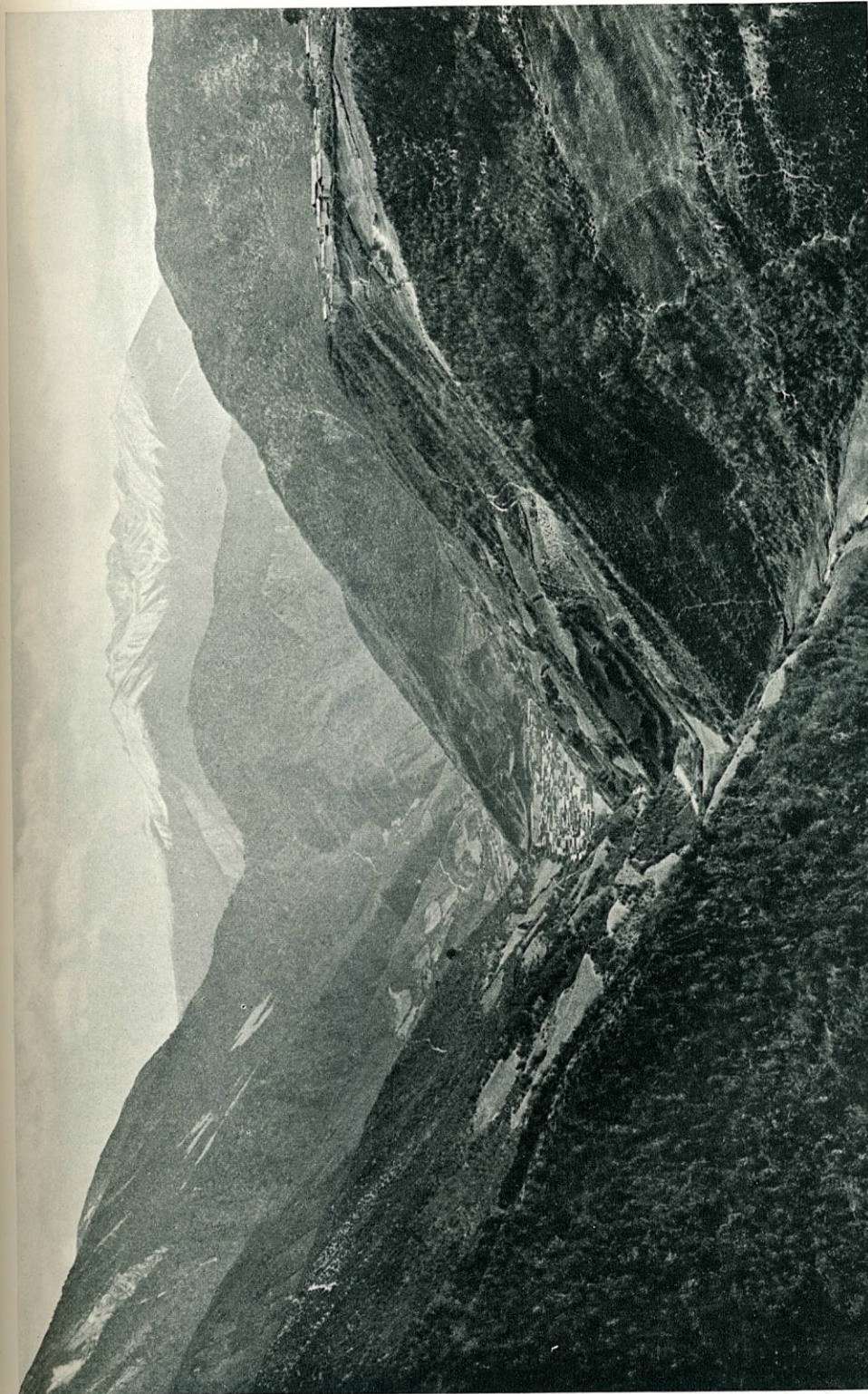
TIBETANS OF THE MĒKONG DRY THEIR CORN ON FLAT ROOFS

"The villages here reminded me much of those of Hopi Indians of the American Southwest, with their flat roofs on which yellow Indian corn is



TIBETANS OF THE MEKONG DRY THEIR CORN ON FLAT ROOFS

"The villages here reminded me much of those of Hopi Indians of the American Southwest, with their flat roofs on which yellow Indian corn is dried" (see text, page 185). It is possible that corn was known in Asia before the discovery of America, since it is the staple crop in the Mekong



ATUNTZE NESTLES IN THE SHADOW OF SNOW-CAPPED PEIMASHAN

Though conquered by the Chinese in 1703 and annexed to Yunnan, Atuntze remains essentially a Tibetan town and was formerly a trading center, where the people from the northern steppes bartered merchandise with the Chinese. Its name signifies "Beacon Hill," since the mountain beside it made an excellent lookout station. The lamasery occupies the elevation to the right (see, also, page 170). "The White Horse Mountain," the mighty range in the distance, separates the Mekong from the Yangtze.



COURTYARD OF THE ATUNTZE LAMASERY

A lama is posing before the yak-hair curtain of the temple, which forms one side of a small paved court. Formerly one of the most important lamaseries in Tibetan frontier lands, this establishment now contains only 200 monks.

Some of my Nashi men had never been across a rope bridge, and although they did not utter a word of protest, I could see that they would have preferred to stay where they were. As I had, however, decided to cross the ranges to the Salwin and climb the Salwin-Irrawaddy divide, there was no way of escape, and swing across we must.

In order to be able to take photographs of the actual crossing, I asked two men to go first; then I proposed to send over my two horses, after which I would follow.

The starting platform was about 200 feet above the river, in which were terrific rapids only 100 feet beyond the bridge, and the rope sagged heavily from its own weight. The prospect of being suspended from that rope above a roaring river was enough to set me thinking!

We had no slider, nor the necessary sling which every resident of this valley carries over his shoulder, so that he or she can cross at any place desired.

The headman of the village of Tschung, who had come with pack-mules to take our trunks and boxes on to the village, now left his mules grazing on the opposite hillside and came across, sliding in great shape, with all the spare slings at his command tied to his waist.

I had the rope tightened, as I feared to land in the middle of it, suspended over the river, as happens to many of slight build and weight. When such a misfortune occurs, the traveler must perforce pull himself hand over hand up the incline on the other side.

Before the trip is attempted the slider must be greased with yak butter, and, as

there was none on our side, we had to send the headman back for a supply.

YAK BUTTER IS USED
TO GREASE THE
BRIDGE

He tied himself in the lengthy sling and slid across without ado, and soon returned with butter and a bamboo tube filled with a greasy liquid, which he poured on the rope in front of his face while crossing.

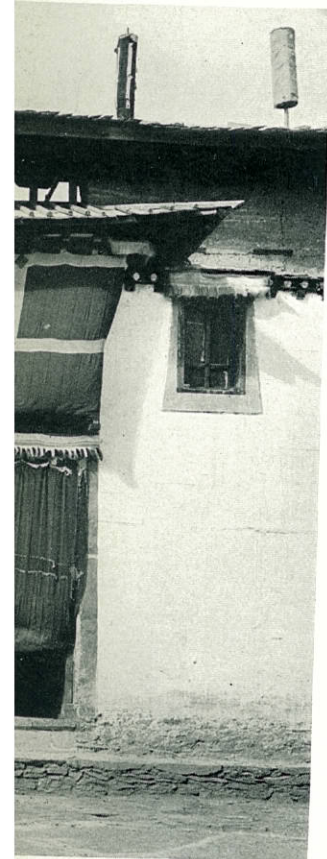
It came my turn to go. The only unpleasantness I now recall is the preliminary of being tied on. I would compare this experience as the administering of the anesthetic before an operation.

As soon as I was tied to the slider, over which I folded my hands, the headman took me by my coat-tails and gently slid me to the edge of the platform. I was then suspended for a moment over the tops of the trees which grew on the steep bank.

With a last word of advice to hold my head away from the rope, to "Let go!" and off I slid at the rate of 20 miles.

A glimpse of the road below me, a smell as caused by the friction of the rope, and I landed, like the rocky west bank of

My horses were then turned, and when they came in the air above the river all their might, mouth (see page 150). When



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With a last word of advice to hold my head away from the rope, there was a yell of "Let go!" and off I shot, far into space, at the rate of 20 miles an hour.

A glimpse of the roaring river far below me, a smell as of burning wood, caused by the friction of the slider, which raced over the unevenly braided, bumpy rope, and I landed, like a heavy mule, on the rocky west bank of the river.

My horses were terrified when their turn came, and when dangling helplessly in the air above the river they kicked with all their might, mouth open and tail up (see page 150). When they arrived on



THE TIBETANS OF THE ATUNTZE VALLEY ARE FRIENDLY FOLK

The Mekong Tibetans, especially those living in the arid region beyond Atuntze, are stalwart and hard-working. They dress lightly, even in winter time, for it is always warm in that dry trench. False hair or cotton thread is braided into their long queues, which are then threaded through a ring of elephant ivory and wound around the head. The lowering of the queue is a sign of greeting.

the other side they lay down on the rocks, too frightened to stand.

After about three hours all my men, as well as my baggage, were safely landed. It was a great relief to be across and have it over with, but thereafter I must confess I actually enjoyed sliding over rope bridges whenever I was assured they had not seen too long service.

A rope bridge is a community affair and in this region costs the equivalent of about \$3, the village paying for it. Its period of usefulness at an ordinary crossing, not subjected to heavy traffic, is about



A MOMENT'S REST FOR THE WEARY

These pilgrims to the Dokerla have come from Kham, the easternmost province of Tibet, whose people are said to be the most robust of all Tibetans. Some will obtain emancipation and deliverance from rebirth by throwing themselves down the sacred mountain (see text, page 186).

three months, while at Yangtza, a village two days to the north, the bridges—of which there are three, two for coming, one for going—are changed every three or four days, as they are used by hundreds daily during the last three months of the year, when thousands of pilgrims come from Tibet, only to return again by the sacred Dokerla (see, also, text, page 185).

Father Ouvrard told me an amusing story of a Tibetan woman who had quarreled with her husbands and wished to leave them, but could not find a slider, as her men had hidden it. Not to be outwitted, she obtained a curved cane, like a walking-stick, hung the crook over the rope while she clung to the other end and sailed forth across the bridge, much to the chagrin of her husbands.

At Tsehchung I was hospitably given a room at the mission.

I now made preparations for my journey to the Salwin. With the kind help of Father Ouvrard, who had been some 14 years at Tsehchung, I hired 13 porters, Nashi, Lutz, and Tibetans, and off we started one cool morning. We left our

caravan behind and took with us only riding horses, beds, provisions, plenty of warm clothing and blankets, and all necessary photographic equipment.

ON THE TRAIL TO THE SALWIN

The trail led back toward Tseku, but before reaching that village it ascended steeply the enormous mountain slope at a terrific angle. It was exceedingly narrow and zigzagged through scrub oak and pine forest over rocks and boulders.

A glorious view unfolded. Far below us roared the Mekong, with the rope bridge of Tseku faintly visible in the distance; to the east, rose the massive Peimashan range, which separates the Mekong from the Yangtze (see page 169).

As we ascended we emerged from pine forests into a deciduous growth of wild cherries, maples, and rhododendrons, with here and there a sumach.

Narrower and narrower became the trail, almost invisible on the steep mountain side, leading finally to the top of the first preliminary ridge, some 10,500 feet above sea level.



Many pilgrims to the Dokerla pack animals to carry them after they have been accursed by a natural death. Affixing them into their ears.

Magnificent scenery below, the mysterious shaped trench; to the (Si Pass), the actual vide, now with little deep, circular valley dashing madly toward a ravine.

We were as in another forest of fir trees with mighty trunks; feet in height. Great their crowns among lovely canopy of foliage ground.

It was the finest rainbow seen. A mossy carpet and yellow, bearded like the giant trees, while rhododendron trees form

All was in autumn golden yellow, others bronze-colored, glossy rolled up in wads on glistened in the morning



SHEEP PILGRIMS TO THE DOKERLA

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Many pilgrims to the Dokerla take with them their mountain sheep, which are used as pack animals to carry meager provisions of barley flour in woolen saddlebags. They are sacred after they have been across the Dokerla and are never slaughtered for meat, but are allowed to die a natural death. After their pilgrimage they are identified by means of red tassels threaded into their ears.

Magnificent scenery surrounded us: far below, the mysterious Mekong in its V-shaped trench; to the west cloudless Sila (Si Pass), the actual Mekong-Salwin divide, now with little snow; in front a deep, circular valley dissected by a torrent rushing madly toward the Mekong through a ravine.

We were as in another world, overlooking a forest of fir trees (*Cunninghamia*) with mighty trunks and more than 150 feet in height. Great birch trees reared their crowns among the firs, forming a lovely canopy of foliage 90 feet above the ground.

It was the finest rain forest I had ever seen. A mossy carpet covered the ground and yellow, beardlike lichens festooned the giant trees, while silvery-leaved rhododendron trees formed the undergrowth.

All was in autumn tints, the maples golden yellow, others crimson, while the bronze-colored, glossy bark of the birches, rolled up in wads on the massive trunks, glistened in the morning sunlight, all the

foliage becoming translucent and contrasting beautifully against the somber firs.

CAMPING AT AN ELEVATION OF 10,500 FEET

Through this hallowed shrine of trees we descended, across crystal brooks bordered by red-flowered balsams, ferns, and orchids, over an alpine meadow surrounded by tall conifers, with peaks rising thousands of feet above us.

On we wandered through a more open forest of rhododendrons and birches, following a glacial stream to our camping place for the night.

I had hardly sat down on a boulder to write my notes on the vegetation when two tiny birds paid me a visit and calmly sat down on my hand holding the pencil, chirping a line of greeting in utter fearlessness; then off they flew again into the woods.

A brilliant sunset over the snowclad peaks closed our happy day. The sky



THE TIBETAN PRAYS BY WATER POWER

The mechanical repetition of the sacred formula, "O, the Jewel in the Lotus, Amen," is believed by devout Tibetans to lay up comfort in this life, to assure happiness after death, and to prevent them from being reborn in a lower scale. Accordingly, the prayer is written on yards of paper and placed in prayer wheels, or cylinders, which are frequently turned by water power. Each revolution repeats the prayer as many times as it is written on the paper.

was cloudless and the near-full moon shed a silvery light over the landscape. Our camp was at an elevation of 10,500 feet, and starry nights at such a height are icy cold.

CAUGHT IN A BLIZZARD AT 14,500 FEET ELEVATION

A steady climb brought us to the foot of the Sila, a regular paradise of rhododendron; one could gather more than a hundred species on this range alone. To the right of us was a snowclad overhanging pyramid some 16,000 feet in height; to the left a circular wall of gray limestone with pinnacles and turrets.

The sky now blackened and a snow-

storm raged among the peaks. The trail, mere hookmarks over the boulders, became very indistinct and could be located only with the greatest difficulty, although not sufficient snow had fallen to obliterate it. But by the time we reached the actual pass, at 14,500 feet above the sea, the gentle snowfall had become a furious blizzard. An icy wind howled across the divide, blowing from the west.

Glad to turn our backs on this bleak, inhospitable spot, we descended over a steep, well-constructed trail which extends all the way to Bahang, two days distant. It had been made by missionaries, who employed Lutz tribal people over a period of five years, each laborer



THE AUTHOR

This celebrated treads the narrow trail, have been left to a additional offerings.

receiving three cents for his own food.

At the foot of flows the Sewalong Salwin, and on its substantial one-room shelter on a night than the previous up.

The Salwin in the

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THE AUTHOR AT THE SUMMIT OF THE SACRED DOKERLA, MECCA OF TIBETAN
PILGRIM THROGS

This celebrated pass attains an elevation of 15,000 feet. A constant stream of pilgrims treads the narrow trail with the Buddhist prayer on their lips. Prayer flags strung on poles have been left to attest piety. Many devotees also hang their queues on tree branches as additional offerings.

receiving three cents per day and supplying his own food.

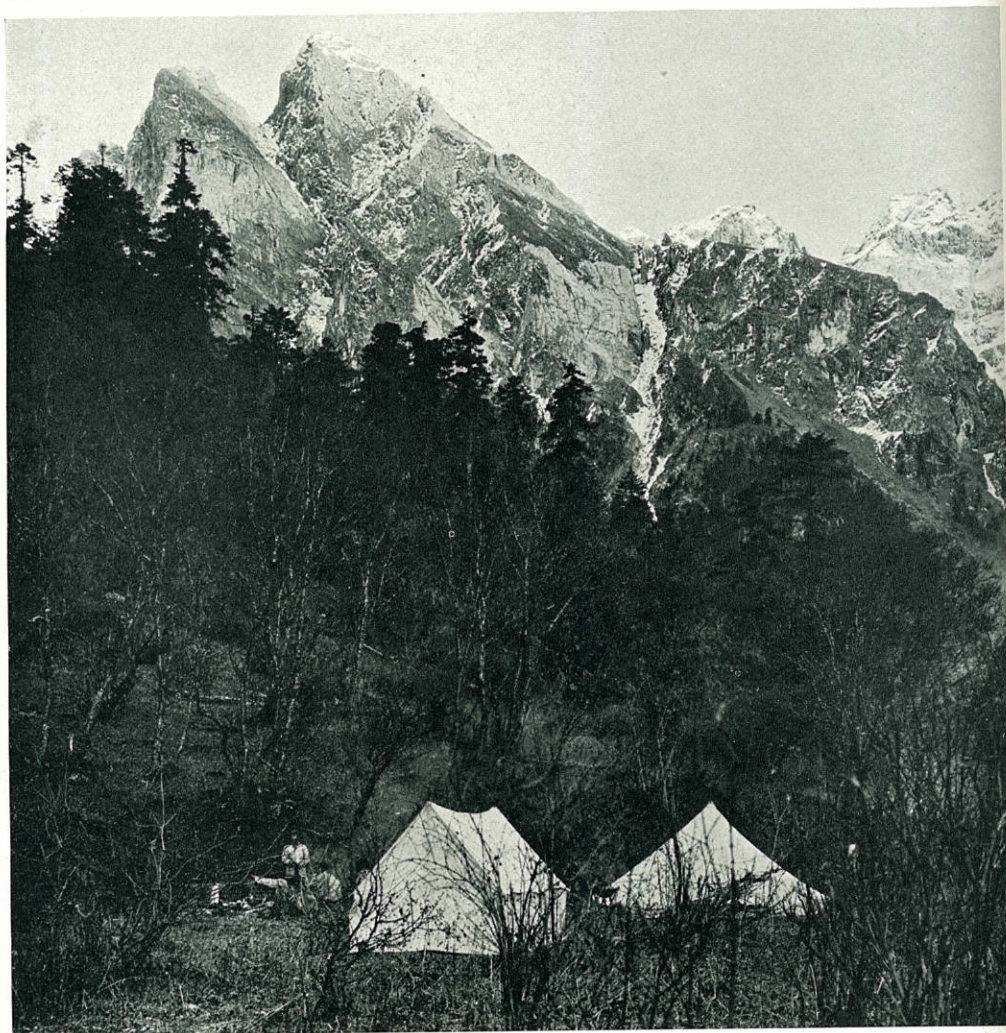
At the foot of this enormous range flows the Sewalongba, a tributary of the Salwin, and on its bank we camped in a substantial one-room stone house erected by the missionaries. It afforded us grateful shelter on a night as cold, if not colder, than the previous one, 4,500 feet higher up.

The Salwin in the rainy region has two

parallel tributaries flowing in deep, V-shaped trenches; these must be crossed before the main stream can be reached. We had crossed the first of these, the Sewalongba, but there still remained the Doyonlongba to be negotiated, and the following morning found us on our way, climbing to the summit of another pass. Snowfields of a faint pink were illuminated by the rising sun, while the deep ravine lay buried in purplish black

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THE EXPEDITION'S CAMP BENEATH TSARÜNG'S PEAKS

It took eleven days to cross the sacred Dokerla in order to photograph the glorious Kaakerpu Range from the fastnesses of the Tibetan State of Tsarüng, whose forests consist of magnificent fir, birch, maple, and rhododendron, with tropical species in the Salwin Valley.

shadow, with here and there faint, misty rays passing diagonally across the projecting spurs, reflections from the snow peaks.

A flood of light permeated the forest as the sun appeared over the great divide, the frost and icicles glistening like diamonds.

We reached the pass at 13,000 feet elevation, where a matchless panorama spread before us. We could overlook the Salwin Valley, while beyond rose a mighty range separating the Salwin from an eastern branch of the Irrawaddy.

Tantalizing, fleecy clouds kept hovering over the snow peaks and glaciers, permitting only occasional glimpses through the rifts. To the east lay the great Salwin-Mekong divide, and, looking up to the snow-covered crest, it seemed incredible that one could descend such steep mountain walls.

THE LAST OUTPOST OF CHRISTIANITY

Once more we descended through beautiful fir and spruce forests, deep down into the valley of Doyonlongba, where, on a bluff at 8,200 feet, is situated the



MIYETZIMU'S PEAK

These gorgeous peaks have an elevation of 24,000 feet, west of the village of At



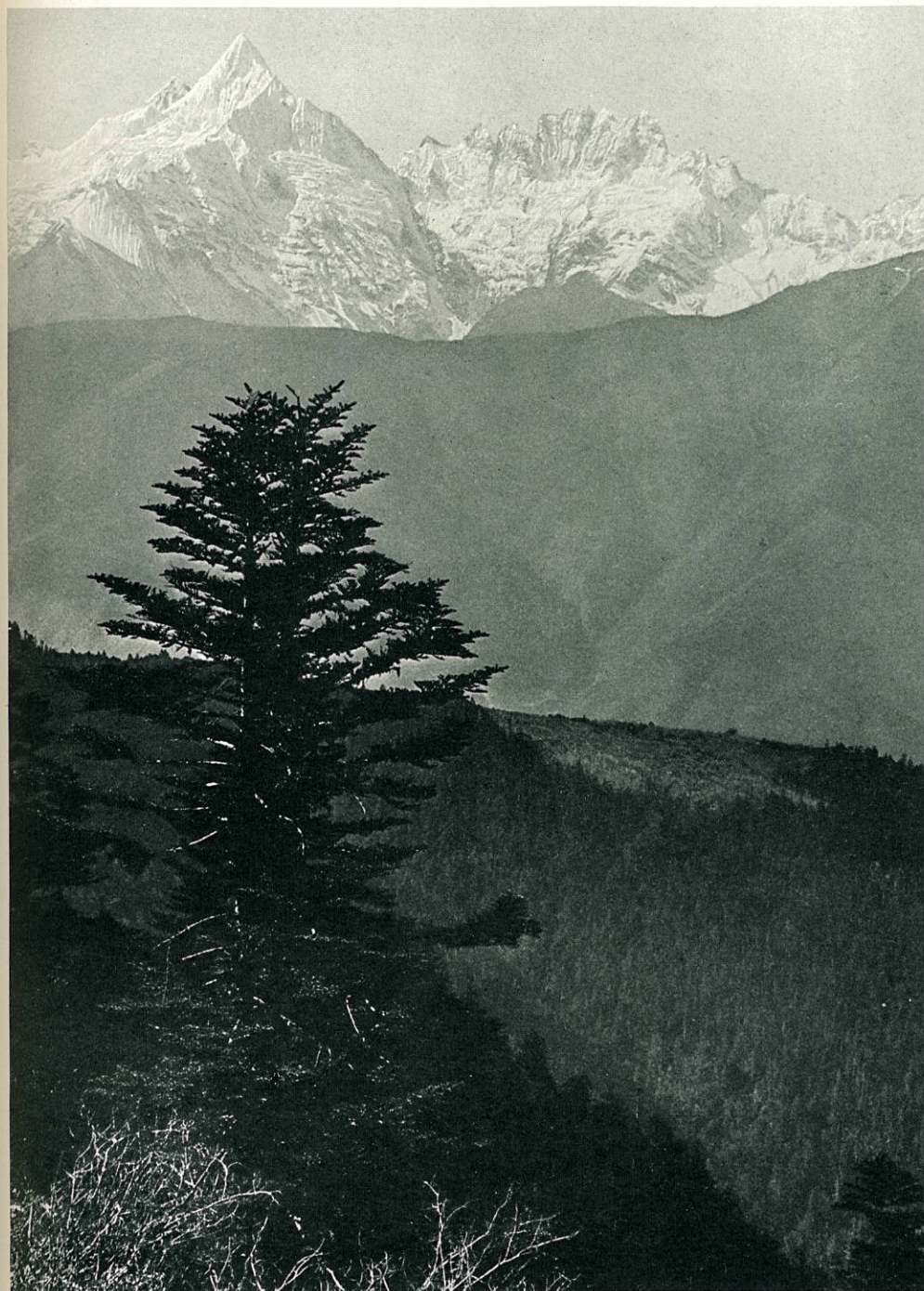
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MIYETZIMU'S PEERLESS CREST IS THE GLORY OF THE KAAKERPU RANGE

These gorgeous peaks of the Salwin-Mekong divide have never been surveyed nor their heights accurately determined, but Miyetzimu, monarch of the Kaakerpu Range, is thought to have an elevation of 24,000 feet (see text, page 185). It is best seen from Mount Drungu, west of the village of Atuntze. The trees in the foreground are a species of fir.



HE LEADS THE PILGRIMS TO THE SACRED DOKERLA

In a small leather bag inside his sheepskin coat he carries a meager ration of roasted barley flour.

last outpost of a Christian mission, the Tibetan Bahang or Pehanlo of the Chinese.

To me this is the loveliest mission station of which I know. Here lives, all alone, a young priest, Father André, who fought through the World War, from the very beginning to the bitter end. Now, in this remote spot, he has time to reflect on the futility of it all. From November until May, when the passes are filled with snow, he is completely isolated from the rest of the world. No letters reach him during that time. Two days north of him is the forbidden land, Tibet, and two days to the south the treacherous Black Lissu land.

There are 18 huts at Bahang, situated

around the hill, on top of which the church and mission stand. Twice it has been burned by the Tibetan lamas of Champutong, and twice intrepid Father Genestier, who still lives in the Salwin Valley, at Tjonatong, had to flee for his life and find shelter among the Lissu farther south. He is the only survivor of the massacre of 1905.

The Lutzus who inhabit this stretch of the Salwin, and whose spiritual adviser Father André is, are a poor lot. They live solely on corn, their staple food, which they use for making a liquor of which they drink a great deal.

TIPSY FEASTERS ACT AS FERRYMEN

We enjoyed the hospitality of Father André, who freely shared his vegetable garden and his larder with us. It was hard to say good-by and leave him to wrestle with the coming winter,

surrounded by primitive Lutzus.

We descended to the Doyonlongba and climbed the next divide, a broad, bracken-covered ridge bordered by forests of magnolia, oak, and birch, and finally reached Chjonra, a scattered Lutzus hamlet on the Salwin. Not a soul was visible, but a moaning sound and speech as if from a hundred mouths issued from the last house nearest the river. The whole village had assembled here to celebrate a sale. A woman had been bought to become one of the many wives of a Lutzus man.

All were gloriously drunk; but, notwithstanding their condition and the feast, they offered at once to ferry us across the

broad, swift-flowing Salwin.

There were several dugout canoes on the sandy beach, but only two were serviceable and these were almost as tipsy as the 14 men who comprised the crews.

A rope bridge spans the river here, but we preferred the drunk Lutzus to the old road (see page 141).

Our oarsmen went rowing upstream in the center of the current, then pounded the sides of their canoes with their long, narrow paddles, giving a few yells, and allowing their craft to drift swiftly downstream and then paddle out to the other bank.

All our belongings were taken safely across, but our horses had to swim the waters.

Following the narrow trail through buckwheat, we reached Champutong, with sight of the mighty glaciers of the high peak of the Salwin. Irrawaddy divides. Here the scenery is really tropical, and is a different world along the Mekong, as tant as the crow flies.

BUDDHIST MONASTERY AVENGING

For months we have all these ranges, from floors to the highest to 18,000 feet and the particular divide, ripening, and we those of economic plants, such as rhododendrons, in this botanically rich

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Following the narrow trail through buckwheat, we reached Champutong, within sight of the mighty glaciers of the highest peak of the Salwin-Irrawaddy divide. Here the scenery is really tropical, and it is a different world entirely from that along the Mekong, only a few miles distant as the crow flies.

BUDDHIST MONASTERY DESTROYED BY AVENGING CHINESE

For months we had collected plants on all these ranges, from the tropical valley floors to the highest alpine meadows up to 18,000 feet and higher, depending on the particular divide. Now the seeds were ripening, and we were busy collecting those of economic as well as ornamental plants, such as rhododendrons, to be found in this botanically rich area.

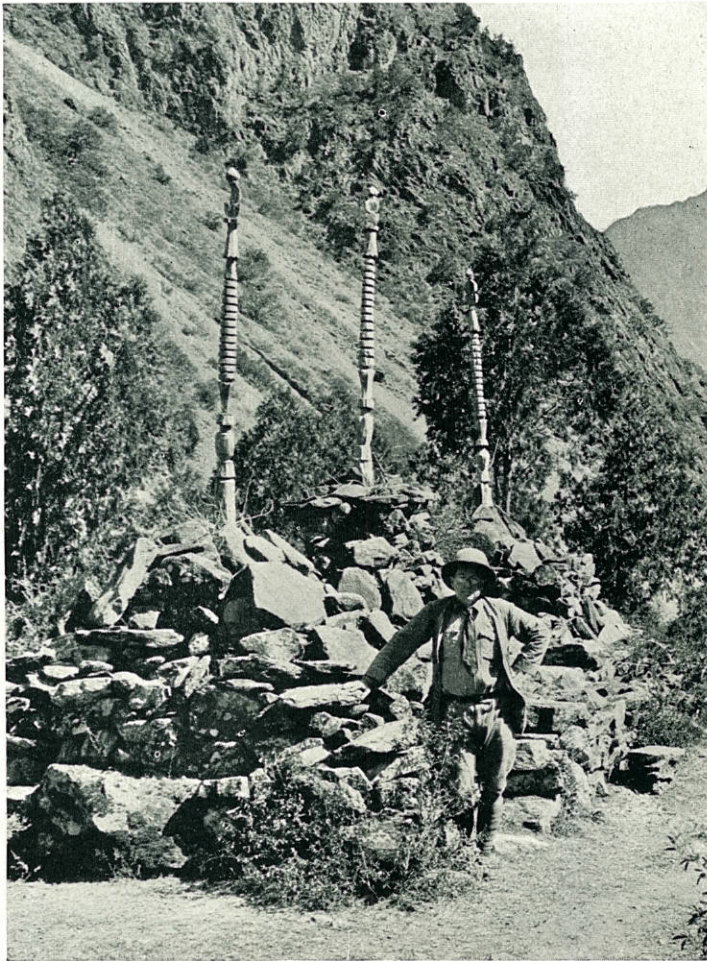


A LAND OF MECHANICAL PRAYER

In the Tibetan villages of Yunnan, as in Tibet itself, sacred Mani pyramids line the roads in great piles. Some of the stones are many feet high and represent years of labor spent by lamas in carving and placing them (see text, page 164).

Champutong is a village of forty scattered mud houses, roofed with huge slabs of slate. It is situated on a high alluvial fan or plain deeply cut by two streams which flow into the Salwin. Before 1905 an imposing Buddhist monastery stood in a grove of oak trees, but after the massacre of the French priests in that year the Chinese retaliated and burned down this as well as the Atuntze and other monasteries to the north. The Champutong temple alone remains, in a more or less dilapidated state, tended by four poor lamas (see page 163).

From the temple we made our way to



MANI PYRAMIDS AT LONDJRE

On his return from the Salwin the author found this canyon-cradled Tibetan hamlet deserted. In this region, Tibetan influence was apparent in the numerous Mani shrines, or pyramids of rock slabs on which the Buddhist prayer is carved. Carved poles surmounted by crescents crown the pyramids.

the magnificent marble gorge through which the Salwin has cut its way, the walls rising vertically hundreds of feet on both sides and in many places overhanging. Here and there on the face of the marble cliff a fan palm rears its small crown of leaves on a slender stem.

Well within the gorge the trail is a bare hand's breadth and in one place consists of a couple of sticks, on which one has to balance oneself with toes pointing to the wall and hands against the cliff, going sideways like a crustacean, while the river roars below. And yet the Lutzus negotiate this trail carrying heavy loads (p. 166).

The next day we climbed the Salwin-Irrawaddy divide to get a photograph of the highest peak, Mount Kenyichunpo (about 20,000 feet). One might climb the ridges opposite the mountain every day for many weary weeks and always find the peak shrouded in clouds. October and November are the only months when there is a chance to see it cloudless, and even then only at rare intervals.

The gods favored us. It was a crystal-clear morning, and we hastened higher and higher, ever watching the peerless peak, which that day remained sharply outlined against an azure sky (see illustration, page 184).

THE HOME OF THE BLACK RHODODENDRON

The glaciers lay crescent-shaped before us and a deep, narrow, forested valley, with precipitous cliffs, opened out into the Salwin beyond the marble gorge.

Up this valley leads a perilous trail for three or four days' march over snow-clad passes to the Nmaihska, an eastern branch of the Irrawaddy. The region is as yet an unexplored, virgin field for botanist, geographer, and geologist.

The Lissu, wildest of the tribes to be found in Yunnan, have settled in this vicinity. Like the Lutzus, they are dexterous in the use of the crossbow and are skillful hunters. Every little boy carries his bow and arrow and every living creature, from the smallest bird to the bear or traveler, serves as target. Their arrows are very strong and the points are poi-

soned with the root of aconite. This undoubtedly accounts for the few birds on finds in this romantic region, which should swarm with feathered songsters.

It is here that the black rhododendron flourishes on lonely alpine meadows, among lovely primroses of indescribable colors.

Across the divide is the home of the Kjutzu, a primitive harmless jungle people who, the Chinese say, live in trees like monkeys.

HURRYING AHEAD OF WINTER SNOWS

Enriched with large collections, we returned to Champuton down a perilous grass-covered ridge, where we climbed by hand and foot, for the grass made our shoes so slippery that it was impossible to walk erect. A misstep would have landed the unfortunate traveler thousands of feet below, into a rocky river bed.

We had to hasten now, for winter was approaching. We had glorious moonlight, October 28. Throat we picked our way rocky trail, high above bed, which was filled with clouds. We reached Chjonra in the day, going to our Lutzus for shots, for they were camped that evening of the Doyonlongba.

In clearest weather stream through virgin some of the trees being ground was literally

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We had to hasten now, for winter was approaching. We left Champutong by glorious moonlight, long before dawn of October 28. Through the deep ravine we picked our way along the narrow, rocky trail, high above the Salwin River bed, which was filled with snow-white clouds. We reached Tjonson and crossed to Chjonra in the dugouts, after signaling to our Lutzu friends with revolver shots, for they were sound asleep. We camped that evening deep in the forests of the Doyonlongba.

In clearest weather we followed the stream through virgin walnut forests, some of the trees being 80 feet tall. The ground was literally covered with the



HE ESCORTED THE AUTHOR TO THE DOKERLA

The breast of his coat serves as a pocket for carrying food and a variety of miscellaneous articles. His felt boots are soled with leather.

large, round walnuts, but the shells were so thick that an anvil and sledge-hammer were needed to open them.

After a wonderful night in a glorious forest of rhododendron, maples, firs, and spruces, we left our camp in bright moonlight and climbed higher and higher, until about noon we reached the pass which leads to the Mekong Valley. To the right stood a fantastic peak 15,000 feet in height. Far in the distance loomed the high peaks of the Hungpo Mountains, a part of the Mekong-Yangtze watershed. To the north a deep valley opened, and we followed this through a magnificent forest of rhododendron trees.



THE LIKIANG GORGE OF THE YANGTZE SEEN FROM THE LOYÜ TRAIL

"The cliffs rise steeply on both sides, culminating in jagged crags and pinnacles, and above these tower the ice-crowned peaks of the Likiang snow range" (see text, page 186). The main peak of the Dyinaloko Range, the mountain mass in the background, is not visible.



ROMANCE BUILDING

This swaying footpath, seen from the Loyü trail, (see text, page 186).

We spent one night in a small village on the stream in rhododendron country. Our Tibetan guide found us, as he was afraid to go on, and we went to Londjre, a Tibetan hamlet in a canyon, where it was said that the plague had raged and the people had fled into the hills.

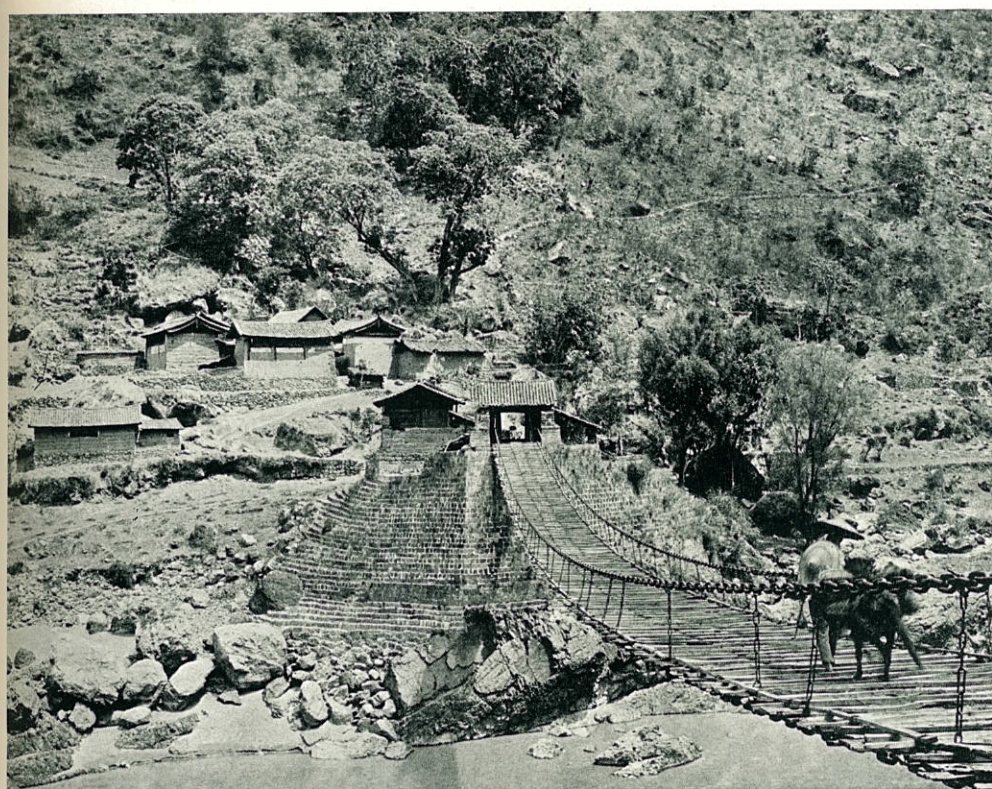
When we arrived at Londjre we found that it was deserted, not of plague, but of a disease carried by lice, the constant companions of the Chinese. Once the disease gets into a village it seems to go on forever, and the people, a Tibetan who does not leave these small boarders.

We now followed the trail of the Mekong. The morning sky was cold, gray, and Mount Miyetzimu looked rich pink when the sun reflected from its steep slopes.

We reached Yangtze



LOYÜ TRAIL,
and pinnacles, and above
(page 186). The main
not visible.



ROMANCE BUILT THIS BRIDGE OVER THE YANGTZE AT TSILIKIANG

This swaying footpath, supported by 16 massive chains, is the result of a lover's predicament (see text, page 186), who, contrary to Chinese custom, eloped.

We spent one night along a glacier stream in rhododendron woods. Here our Tibetan guide from the Salwin left us, as he was afraid to venture down to Londjre, a Tibetan hamlet deep in the canyon, where it was said a pneumonic plague had raged and all the survivors had fled into the hills.

When we arrived at the village we found that it was deserted, many having died, not of plague, but of relapsing fever, a disease carried by lice, which are the constant companions of the Tibetans. Once the disease gets well established, it seems to go on forever, as there is hardly a Tibetan who does not harbor some of these small boarders.

We now followed the arid, rocky gorge of the Mekong. The snowy dome of Mount Miyetzimu looked deathlike in the cold, gray morning sky, but turned to a rich pink when the sun's rays were reflected from its steep snowfields.

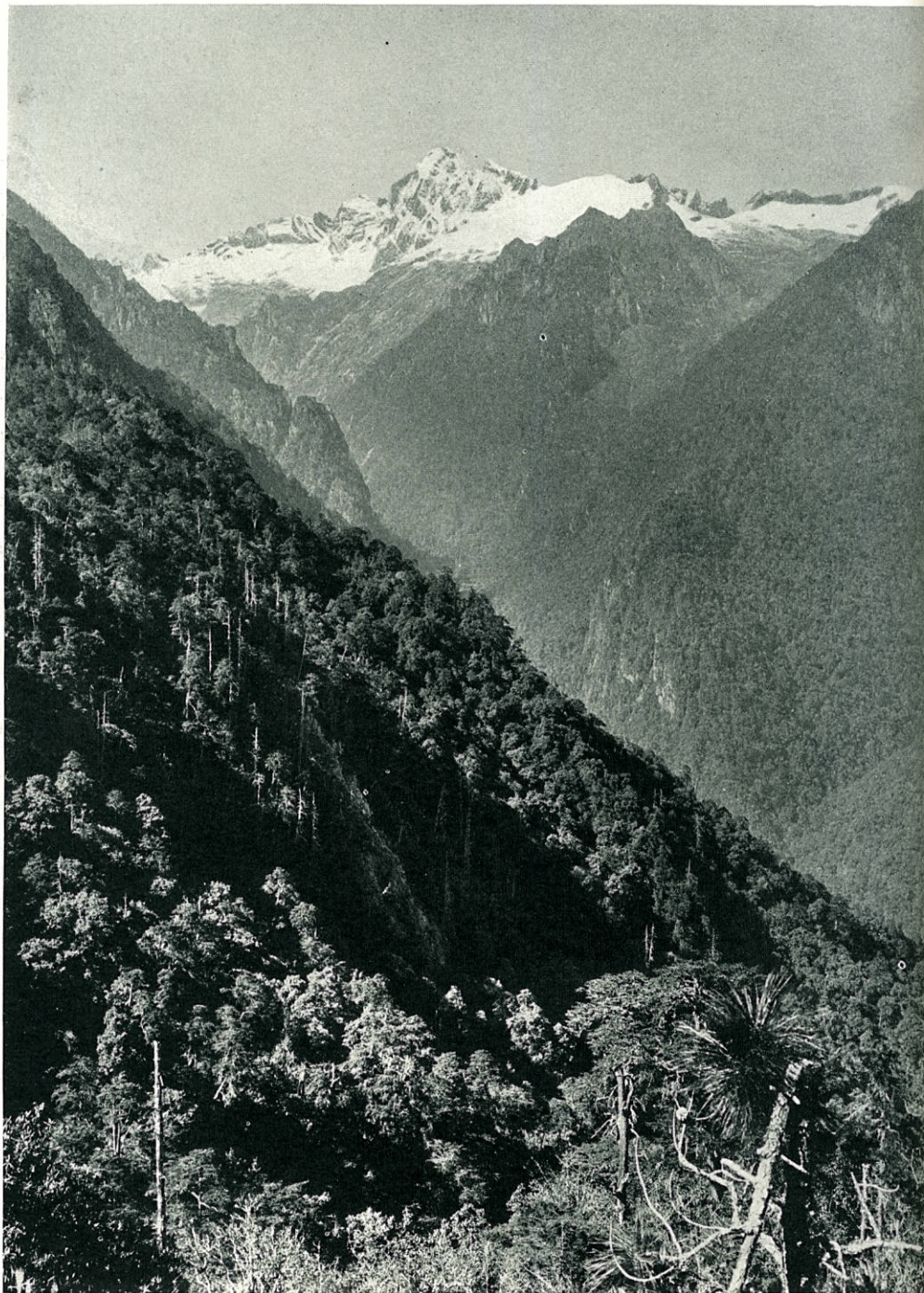
We reached Yangtza, a busy place at

this time of year, for thousands of pilgrims cross here to visit sacred Dockerla. As we approached, Tibetans kept sliding on rope bridges to our side, while another caravan, mostly composed of women, went the other way. There was a constant sliding back and forth from bank to bank, just as people of the Occident cross streets.

The terrific gorge of the Mekong engulfed us and our caravan looked like mere dots on the narrow trail, against the huge cliffs.

It is best to negotiate the narrowest parts of the trail before 10 a. m., as later in the day terrific gusts of wind howl through the arid canyon, making traveling unsafe. One man was killed recently by falling rocks dislodged by the force of the wind, and he still lies buried under the boulders where the accident occurred.

So dry and arid is the gorge and so hot the wind, that traveling is a real hardship for both man and beast.



MOUNT KENYICHUNPO, ON THE YÜNNAN-TIBET BORDER

This is the loftiest peak of the Salwin-Irrawaddy divide, as seen from an elevation of 10,000 feet above Champutong. It reaches a height of approximately 20,000 feet (see text, page 180).

People in this part prefer tea and salt to exchange. Money has towns are far removed be bought.

The Tibetans were greeting me with uplift that they concealed no one wanted to be very out his tongue and, with upward, smiled.

Along this stretch sees many mud watchtowers 500 years ago by a L. The villages here resemble those of Hopi Indian Southwest, with their yellow Indian corn is a notched log suffices.

Of all the trails already passed thus far, none that which leads from into the Mekong. It screw up a weird bottom of which roars from sacred Dockerla. against a rocky wall of steep zigzags, a most of tree-trunks suspended narrow, yawning black hanging cliffs. A ga addition, which meant one had to brace oneself holding on tightly to the

Through a narrow emerged once more in ley, with the river far

Our trip to the Sal twelve days. We went deeper and more terribly barren, through wound in long loops, a snake that wishes to firm hold.

PEERLESS MOUNT

High above the gorge almost as if contiguous black wall, rose the Mount Miyetzim, so the azure sky (see page 180).

Miyetzim is the my eyes were ever puzzled wonder the Tibetans worship it. It is like an ice palace of a famous mausoleum with



TIBET BORDER
as seen from an elevation of
approximately 20,000 feet (see text,

People in this part of the world much prefer tea and salt to cash as a means of exchange. Money has no real value, for towns are far removed and nothing can be bought.

The Tibetans we met were all friendly, greeting me with uplifted hands to show that they concealed no weapons, and when one wanted to be very humble he stuck out his tongue and, with thumbs pointed upward, smiled.

Along this stretch of the Mekong one sees many mud watchtowers, erected some 500 years ago by a Likiang Nashi king. The villages here reminded me much of those of Hopi Indians of the American Southwest, with their flat roofs on which yellow Indian corn is dried. For ladders a notched log suffices (see page 168).

Of all the trails along which we had passed thus far, none could compare with that which leads from Londjre gorge out into the Mekong. It is a veritable corkscrew up a weird black chasm, at the bottom of which roars the stream coming from sacred Dokerla. The trail is built against a rocky wall of sandstone in short, steep zigzags, a most appalling structure of tree-trunks suspended over the deep, narrow, yawning black canyon with overhanging cliffs. A gale was blowing in addition, which meant that at every turn one had to brace oneself against the wind, holding on tightly to the cliff.

Through a narrow gap we eventually emerged once more into the Mekong Valley, with the river far below.

Our trip to the Salwin had taken just twelve days. We now entered a still deeper and more terrifying canyon, absolutely barren, through which the river wound in long loops, as if in agony, like a snake that wishes to free itself from a firm hold.

PEERLESS MOUNT MIYETZIMU

High above the gorge to the west, and almost as if contiguous with the sheer black wall, rose the peerless peak of Mount Miyetzipu, some 24,000 feet into the azure sky (see page 177).

Miyetzipu is the most glorious peak my eyes were ever privileged to see; no wonder the Tibetans stand in awe and worship it. It is like a castle of a dream, an ice palace of a fairy tale, or an enormous mausoleum with gigantic steps and

buttresses all crowned by a majestic dome of ice tapering into an ethereal spire merging into a pale-blue sky.

Next to it is a huge crest of ice resembling a giant cockscomb; then comes Kaakerpu (page 152), from which the range derives its name, a vast pyramid of ice with glaciers radiating in many directions. One of these descends from the finely ridged vertical peak into the valley of the Mekong, the river flowing some 15,000 feet below the summit.

Leaving the Mekong, we entered a narrow, rocky ravine to the right, at the end of which lay the frontier town of Atuntze, a conglomeration of flat-roofed huts.

IN A STREAM OF PILGRIMS BOUND FOR SACRED DOKERLA

I now decided to cross to the sacred Dokerla, to the south of Mount Miyetzipu, and photograph this glorious range from Tsarung, in Tibet, following the trail trodden by 20,000 pilgrims every year.

The journey took eleven days.

To reach the Doker Pass, at an elevation of 15,000 feet, one must first cross the rope bridge at Yangtza, and camp several days on the way.

We were in a stream of pilgrims and a host of Tibetan coolies carried our luggage.

Dokerla is on the actual border between Tibet and China (see page 175). On the Tibetan side the mountain is very steep, the trail descending in 118 zigzags to the bottom of the ravine.

A constant stream of pilgrims treads the narrow trail with the sacred prayer *Om Mani Padme Hum* ever on their lips, as they whirl prayer wheels in their right hands. Thus they acquire merit. Many commit suicide by throwing themselves down the Dokerla, for to die on that sacred spot means emancipation and deliverance from rebirth.

Some there are, especially nuns and monks, who do nothing all the year long but cross the Dokerla in penance. It seems that the Tibetans alone of all the religious people of the world heed St. Paul's admonition, "Pray without ceasing." Some go so far as to measure with their own bodies the whole distance up and down the rocky path across the pass, over ice and snow. They lie flat upon

the ground, then rise, and where their outstretched hands have touched they lie down again, thus consuming months to make the weary journey.

We started on our return journey to Likiang on November 30 by a different route, crossing the mighty Peimashan range, which separates the Mekong from the Yangtze.

This range is much less eroded than the Salwin-Mekong divide, which acts as a rain screen, precipitating the monsoon clouds. Long after the passes to the Salwin are closed and all the flowers have died, the gentians are still blooming on snowless Peimashan.

THE FINEST OF THE YANGTZE GORGES

By far the finest of all the gorges in Yunnan are those through which the Yangtze flows north of Likiang, as it slashes through the mighty snow range (see illustration, page 140).

In grandeur these gorges may be compared with that of the Brahmaputra before it leaves Tibet for the Assam plain.

From Shiku, where the Yangtze turns north, flowing parallel to itself, the waters are broad and placid, the current gentle, and near Yulo, where a ferry plies, one would never dream that only a few miles farther on the river becomes a mad torrent flowing through a terrifying gorge.

The Yangtze flows at 6,000 feet elevation where it enters the gorge, and as the peaks of the range which it pierces as with a giant's sword are more than 19,000 feet in height, the gorge is approximately 13,000 feet in depth.

In many places the river is only 20 yards in width and is one continuous series of cascades and rapids. The actual depth of the water must be enormous, for the vast placid stream is here compressed into a narrow ribbon of white foam.

The cliffs rise steeply on both sides, culminating in jagged crags and pinnacles, and above these tower the ice-crowned peaks of the Likiang snow range (p. 182).

We entered the gorge after having crossed the Chungtien River, which flows into the Yangtze. A narrow trail for mules with Tibetan saddles permits ingress to Loyü, a hamlet within the gorge.

From here on the path can be used only by porters and leads at times 2,500 feet

above the river. On the right cliff, perched in a small hollow, is a Lissu village, accessible only with great difficulty, while on the left are three small hamlets, veritable castles on the rocky bluffs. Beyond Djipalo it is possible to go down to the river bank and watch the rapids.

For three days the journey lasts, until Taku is reached. Beyond Pentiwan, the third hamlet in the gorge, the trail is exceedingly dangerous, as rock slides occur continuously.

As the ferry at Taku was smashed by the Tibetan hordes in April, 1923, and the owner placed in jail for possessing such a convenience for travelers, we were forced to return to Yulo, where we found another ferry.

From Taku the Yangtze flows north, only to return again above Funkou, by Lapo, where it flows in rocky gorges worked by Nashi gold-diggers, who sell their precious metal to jewelers in Likiang.

THE YANGTZE'S ONLY BRIDGE BUILT BY A ROMANTIC HERO

Mr. Eric Teichman, a British consular officer, who traveled far and wide in China and Tibet, states in one of his books that in the whole length of the Yangtze course not a single bridge spans the river. He overlooked the imposing structure at Tsilikiang, one and a half day's journey southeast of Likiang (see page 183). This bridge is the result of a romance which may be told here.

Once, not so very long ago, lived a man in Hoking, south of Likiang. He fell in love, as most men do, but in China such things are prearranged by parents shortly after birth, and the individual has little to say about the plans. But this man had an independent spirit and he eloped. When he arrived with his self-chosen bride at Tsilikiang, the ferryman, who had already learned of the escapade, for news travels fast in China, refused to take the couple across the river.

The prospective bridegroom then swore an oath, that should he ever be blessed with riches he would build a bridge across the Yangtze, and thus facilitate matters for others in a like predicament.

The gods were good to our hero and he in turn to others; hence the bridge.

THE J

AUTHOR OF " "

With Ill

MY FIRST sight of the history (Aurelia) at chance. It was a late tober. At the thwart was studying with cu population that cove framework of an ol merged wreck.

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For a while I ren the eerie splendor of to be sailing over a throbbled with flame Pale, pulsating patch swirled by, losing the vaporous blue. Scintil ple, coming close, w then as suddenly fade

Diffused flashes o appeared on every sid past — mysterious, seemed as if I we cosmic space, throug of illusion.

A LIVING DRAPERY O

The mist then clea its dissolving the ske ancient hull above th black and indistinct i night. Below the w vested with a living fire — of azure and flashes of mauve, ar ruby and rose.