

large measure, is due the success of our three months' journey in a country where travel is not only difficult, but sometimes dangerous. His presence was especially acceptable because of his unfailing good humor under trying circumstances and his kindness in conforming his plans to the whims of a geographer. Leaving Serakhs December 4, we crossed into Persia and spent the next month, till January 1, in traveling as nearly as possible straight southward along the Afghan-Persian boundary, past the playa of Khaf to the oasis and swamp of Sistan. At the latter place we remained till February 5, much of the time as the guests of Dr. A. J. Miller, the Russian consul, to whom my heartiest thanks are due. Not only did he entertain us most hospitably, but through his help it was possible to see in a short time the most important parts of the interesting region of Sistan. From the Russian consulate as a center, trips of from four to eleven days' length were made in all directions. During a part of our stay in Sistan I was the guest of the British officers connected with the Sistan Arbitration Commission, and the time so spent was as valuable scientifically as it was pleasant socially. In spite of his pressing political and military duties, Col. G. H. McMahon, the British commissioner who is settling the disputed boundary between Persia and Afghanistan, finds time for an enthusiastic study of the physiography of the new region to which his work brings him. To him and to his assistants, Mr. G. P. Tate, topographer, and Mr. T. R. J. Ward, irrigation officer, I am indebted for information and suggestions of the greatest value, to which I shall have occasion to refer later. Our return journey from Sistan to Transcaspia lasted from February 5 to March 13. It was made in a northwesterly direction, by way of Birjand, Tun, Turbat-i-Haideri, and Meshed, to Askhabad. Everywhere we received the most hearty hospitality and ready help from both British and Russian consular officials, to all of whom thanks are due.

LITERATURE.

Few travelers have penetrated eastern Persia, partly because of its remoteness and partly because it offers few attractions in the way of scenery, historic cities, game for the hunter, or people with picturesque dress and manners. Most of the foreigners who traverse the country are bound on business, usually official, and follow the easiest and most frequented route through the mountains, where villages are numerous. This route, which leads from Meshed, by way of Birjand or Khaf, to Sistan, is, indeed, the only important road that leads far south in Eastern Persia. Other routes have been followed chiefly by British officers who were studying the country from a military point of view either as surveyors or consuls, or as members of the various boundary commissions whose thankless task has been the demarcation of the boundaries of Persia, Afghanistan, and Baluchistan. These officers and a few venturesome travelers have written almost the only accounts of Eastern Persia which we possess. The majority of the accounts are geographic in the sense that they describe the country and people with great accuracy of detail, but all of them fall short of the modern geographic ideal in that they contain little save empirical accounts of isolated facts encountered along the line of the author's route without reference to any underlying scheme of geographic classification. The best of these