

regarding South Khokand and Ferghana, M. Mushketov has recorded some important opinions regarding the supposed meridional chain of Bolor, the existence of which he considers there is strong ground for doubting, and which he is inclined to think in reality consists of a mere mass of unconnected peaks belonging to different systems. He protests, in conclusion, against the practice so much in vogue among geographers of laying down arbitrary ranges without mastering or caring to inquire into the geological structure thereof.

Explorations north of Assam.—Captain R. G. Woodthorpe, R.E., and Lieutenant Harman have recently submitted an interesting report on their explorations to the north and north-east of Assam. In the Miri Hills across the frontier north of Lakhimpur, 1500 square miles of country were accurately defined on the scale of two miles to the inch, and about 400 square miles were reconnoitred on a smaller scale. The ranges of hills run more or less parallel to each other, east and west of the Subansiri, the outer range being generally low, rising to about 3000 or 4000 feet at some points, while immediately behind, the hills rise at once and very abruptly to 6000 to 8000 feet, and are densely clad with large forest trees and other growth. The rivers abound in fish, which attain a large size in the Kamla and Subansiri, and game is plentiful, especially deer. The last-named river is described as a noble stream in the hills, and the gorges through which it emerges into the plains are singularly fine, the banks formed of precipitous masses of rock enclosing pools 70 and 80 feet deep; the river itself is about 70 yards broad at Ganditula, and flows with great velocity. It is only navigable for a few miles beyond Sidang Mukh, but Lieutenant Harman calculates that at least 9000 cubic feet per second of its volume are derived from the country lying north of the twenty-eighth parallel of latitude. The Miris, the natives, are a hardy race of middle height and very wiry. From Captain Woodthorpe's description it would appear that their features are of a Tartar type. The same officer remarks that the influence and power of these frontier tribes have been designedly exaggerated by themselves with the object of securing larger allowances from the British Government. Those east of the Subansiri, called Abors, are supposed to be formidable, but without much apparent reason. The Miris, to the west of the same river, are great trappers of fish and animals, but are miserably poor. Captain Woodthorpe also explored a tract in the Mishmi Hills, in the course of which he obtained a fairly accurate knowledge of the sources of the Dihong River and the course of its main stream in the hills, an accurate knowledge of its course in the plains and of about 1000 square miles of the hills bordering it, and an approximate knowledge of an additional 1100 square miles in the hills. The Dikrang, Diphu and Digru rivers are also now well known. Government might well complete the work by deputing some surveyor to ascend the course of the Dihong as far as would enable him to solve the extremely interesting question of its connection with the Sanpu.

The result of these explorations is to prove that the volume of the Subansiri is only one-fourth that of the Dihong, which thus tends more than ever to identify the latter with the great river of Tibet.

Morrison's Visit to the New Course of the Yellow River of China.—After having made a journey from Hankow to Canton overland, an account of which will shortly be published by the Society, Mr. G. J. Morrison, the engineer of the Shanghai-Woosung railway, undertook an examination of the country between Chinkiang, on the Yangtze-kiang, and Tientsin, in the north of China. The region traversed is tolerably well known to foreigners, but some of Mr. Morrison's notes with regard to the present condition of the Yellow River are of interest. The new course of the river below Lungmên-kau, where it commences, presents a scene of the utmost desolation; in some places it is more than 2 miles wide, and further down only about 250 yards. In the wider portions there are numerous banks, with channels between them, which are constantly altering. The Chinese authorities have built embankments for more than 100 miles on each side of the river, but, being apparently intended only to protect the surrounding country from inundation, they are built too far from the river to be of use in regulating the stream. The portion of the river from Lungmên-kau to the crossing of the Grand Canal, or indeed to Yüshan, 17 miles further on, according to Mr. Morrison, has entirely altered since it was visited by Mr. Ney Elias in 1868, and is still changing, but, on the whole, improving. This stretch of the river may be divided into four portions of about 30 miles each, the first of which is very bad, the second tolerably good, with 6 to 8 feet of water, the third rather bad, with occasional good reaches, and the fourth fairly good. For a few miles on each side of the crossing of the Grand Canal there are two courses through which the river flows, one of which has only 3 feet of water. The portion of the Grand Canal going north-west from the Yellow River is now quite dry, but the section of the river from Yüshan to Lo-kau (the port of Tsinan-fu) is in much the same state as it was ten years ago, and Mr. Morrison says that Mr. Ney Elias' plan* of this portion is still sufficiently accurate for all practical purposes.

Shanghai to Bhamô.—The China Inland Mission have lately made public an account of a remarkable journey performed, principally on foot, by Mr. McCarthy, who left Shanghai in December, 1876, and reached Bhamô on August 26th, 1877, having travelled a distance, including detours, of about 3000 miles. Mr. McCarthy took a somewhat different course from those followed by the late Mr. Margary, and the subsequent Yün-nan Mission, and he claims to have been "the first non-official traveller who has thus traversed the entire width of the empire and crossed the Kah-cheu hills to Bhamô." He followed the line of the Yangtze-kiang as far as Wan-hsien in Sze-chuen, about half-way between Ichang and Chungking. Here he sent his boat on, and walked across country some 260 miles west to Shunking-fu. On the way

* 'Journal R. G. S.,' vol. xl. p. 27.