CHAPTER III

PLANS AND PREPARATIONS

Only by comparison is it possible to obtain any idea of the scale of the world's greatest mountain range. Yet, even this method is unsatisfactory, for whether the mountaineer is toiling up Mont Blanc or Mount Everest, his feelings, apart from those imposed by altitude and the desire to achieve, are very similar; he is but a microcosm on the vast mountainside. Suffice to say that Mont Blanc is little more than half the height of Mount Everest, 29,002 feet; Kilimanjaro, 19,700 feet and Mount McKinley, 20,454 feet. The highest peaks of Africa and North America, would rank as minor peaks in the Sikkim Himalayas; and even Aconcagua, 23,000 feet, the monarch of the Andes, is no higher than the historic North Col on Everest.

Each group of the greater peaks has its own type of scenery, but none is finer than the magnificent massif that culminates at 28,156 feet above sea level in the summit of Kangchenjunga. The visitor to Darjeeling who climbs to the top of Observatory Hill sees it fifty miles away over range upon range of lower ridges, split with deep, gorge-like valleys, incredibly remote and icily aloof, lifting its glaciers like silver shields to the sky. There is no scale by which the observer can appreciate the size of what he sees. The apparently insignificant ridges over which his gaze passes are themselves as high as, or higher than, the Alps. The slit-like valleys and gorges are disclosed only by the

mists, born of their steamy, tropical heat, that form towards noon and writhe slowly upwards in columns of massive cumuli. There is no standard of comparison, and experience alone can teach that the heights, depths, and distances are twice or three times as great as those in the Alps.

The eye can pass at a glance over these leagues of ridges and valleys between Darjeeling and Kangchenjunga, but the foot of man cannot take them at a stride. The problems of reaching the base of the greater peaks and of carrying sufficient food and equipment are second only to the problems of scaling the peaks themselves. It is largely due to these initial difficulties, and to the expense of organising and maintaining a large bandobast[1] of native porters that so few expeditions are undertaken in the high Himalayas. Yet, in an age when mountaineering in the Alps is said to have reached technical perfection, it is indeed remarkable that not one of the greater Himalayan peaks has been climbed.

Yet, if the summits of Everest and other giants over 25,000 feet remain untrodden, man has not been idle; he has climbed thousands of minor peaks and several expeditions that have been carried out in the High Himalayas have taught valuable lessons as regards the right personnel, the best kinds of food and equipment, and the easiest and most efficient methods of porterage. The three Everest expeditions and the 1929 Kangchenjunga expedition taught invaluable lessons. It is over the graves of former mistakes, and not on the wings of new ideas that

[1] Bandobast—a common Indian term meaning organisation, arrangement, party, etc.

the climber will at length tread the highest summits in the world.

Though it may sound " a glimpse of the obvious " there is only one way of learning Himalayan mountaineering, and that is to climb among the Himalayas. Useful asset though it is, a brilliant Alpine mountaineering record is no Open Sesame to a brilliant Himalayan record, the conditions are so different. In the selection of the personnel and equipment it was unfortunate that not one of the party that left Europe had experience of Himalayan expeditions. Schneider certainly had climbed in the Pamirs, but the conditions prevailing there are not the same as those of the Eastern Himalayas. Had it been possible, it would have been the wisest move to have invited at least one or two British or German mountaineers at the outset with past Himalayan experience. Apart from this vital omission, the party selected by Professor Dyhrenfurth was an exceptionally strong one. It possessed one important advantage over most other British parties that have visited the Himalayas—all its members had experience in winter mountaineering and ski-running, as well as summer mountaineering in the Alps. This was important because snow conditions approximating to Alpine winter conditions are frequently encountered in the Himalayas.

Climbing is mental as well as physical work. Mr. G. Winthrop Young devotes a whole chapter to the mental aspects of Alpine mountaineering in *Mountain Craft*. All that he wrote applies with even greater force to Himalayan mountaineering. The climbing party must be something more than a collection of expert mountaineers, it must be a team, and like a team of Test cricketers, one that pulls

together in every department of the game; and if it is a good team, it should also be a happy family. In no other pursuit is the best or the worst in a man brought out as it is in mountaineering. An old friend of civilisation may be a useless companion on a mountain. The 1929 Munich expedition had one great advantage over our own, they were all friends before they started from Europe. We were not, and the fact that everything went so smoothly must be set down to luck. There have, in fact, been other Himalayan expeditions the members of which were acquaintances, if not friends, which did not go so smoothly as our expedition.

In Professor Dyhrenfurth, the expedition possessed a leader of wide mountaineering experience, as well as an accomplished geologist. He has ascended more than seven hundred peaks in the Alps and Hohe Tatra. He is forty-four years of age, and comes of a hardy mountaineering stock, for his father, Dr. Oskar Dyhrenfurth climbed the Jungfrau at the age of sixty-nine,[1] and at the age of seventy-four, made a solitary climb on the Dachstein, in which he fell badly, but recovered. Professor Dyhrenfurth made his first climb at the age of nine, and at the age of thirteen, ascended the Rosengartenspitze, the well known peak in the western Dolomites. He was severely injured in 1921, when he fell twenty-one feet owing to a rope breaking when ascending the Drusenfluh. During the War he commanded a corps of mountain guides on the Italian frontier, and spent summer and winter at heights of over 10,000

[1] This is by no means an unusual age for mountaineers to make ascents. Many members of the Alpine Club have made greater ascents at considerably greater ages. The late Captain J. P. Farrar at the age of seventy-one climbed many first class peaks in the last year of his life. Mountaineering begets longevity and longevity mountaineering.

feet in redoubts among the Ortler mountains, and in dug-outs cut in the solid ice of glaciers. These experiences were of more use to him from a Himalayan point of view than any ordinary Alpine mountaineering.

Frau Dyhrenfurth is perhaps best known as an international lawn tennis player. She is one of the best players in mixed doubles in Switzerland. She has accompanied her husband on many expeditions, but few women have taken part in great climbs in the Himalayas, and by accompanying the expedition, she joined that select little band of Himalayan lady mountaineers, including Mrs. Bullock Workman, Mrs. Ruttledge and Frau Visser.

The second in command of the expedition was Monsieur Marcel Kurz, who besides being a climbing member, was our cartographer. He is the greatest living Continental authority on winter mountaineering, and his record of first winter ascents and difficult climbs is unique. His climbs included the first winter ascents of the Ober Gabelhorn and Taschhorn in the Zermatt district, the last two peaks in the Alps of Valais to be unclimbed in winter. He is an expert on snowcraft and avalanches, particularly from the point of view of ski-running. When climbing with Mr. H. E. L. Porter in the Southern Alps of New Zealand in 1927, he made a new route up Mount Tasman by the East Ridge, and also ascended Mount Cook, 12,349 feet, the highest peak in the New Zealand Alps, by a long and difficult route. He revised and brought up to date the famous Kurz guide-books on Mont Blanc and the Pennine Alps written by his father, and has also written *Alpinisme Hivernal* and a guide to the Alps of Valais. He has mapped Mount Olympus for the Greek Government, and published a

monograph on the mountain from both historical and topographical aspects.

Herren Hoerlin and Schneider joined the expedition with as brilliant a record of great climbs as any young mountaineers in Europe. The number of great ascents made by them rivals that of the famous Swiss pair, Dr. W. Amstutz and Herr Schumacher. In 1929, they carried out a series of climbs on the range of Mont Blanc which included the first winter ascents of the Aiguille Noire de Pétéret and the Aiguille Blanche de Pétéret, as well as a ski traverse of Mont Blanc. They are an extraordinarily fast pair ; their time for their winter ascent of the Aiguille Blanche de Pétéret, one of the most dangerous climbs in the Alps, was actually faster than that for the summer ascent of the peak by Mr. Eustace Thomas and Josef Knubel, Mr. Winthrop Young's famous guide. They also ascended the Aiguille Verte and Les Droites in winter. Herr Schneider comes from Hall, in Tyrol, and is a geologist. In 1929 he took part in the Alai Pamir expedition led by Herr Rickmer Rickmers, in the course of which he climbed some fifteen peaks in the neighbourhood of 17,000 feet, eight 20,000 feet peaks and Mount Kaufmann (renamed Pic Lenin by the Soviet) the highest peak ascended in Central Asia. Herr Wieland, though not so experienced as his compatriots, is nevertheless one of the keenest of the younger German mountaineers.

Herr Hoerlin is a student of medicine. Though he only started to climb in 1922, he is recognised as one of the leading young German mountaineers, and is the president of the Akademischer Alpen Club, Berlin, the most exclusive mountaineering club in Northern Germany.

AT THE BASE CAMP

from left to right, DR. RITCHER ; WOOD JOHNSON ; PROFESSOR DYHRENFURTH ; DUVANEL ; FRAU DYHRENFURTH ; WIELAND ; HANNAH ; HOERLIN ; KURZ ; SCHNEIDER

Note the expedition boots

Dr. Richter was to act not only as surgeon, but as reporter to the German newspapers. He is a German army doctor, and though his experience of climbing was limited, he had had considerable experience of ski-ing, and was an excellent runner. He is a keen physiologist and hoped to obtain valuable data in connection with the effects of high altitudes on the bodily functions.

In order to ensure bringing back a first-rate film record of the expedition, Professor Dyhrenfurth engaged Monsieur C. Duvanel, who had previously made a number of aerial films for the Swiss Government, as well as instructional films of Alpine climbing and ski-ing. He is, like Kurz, a French-speaking Swiss, and comes from Lausanne.

The importance of having expert transport officers with a Himalayan expedition can hardly be over-estimated. It is one thing to climb a mountain but it is quite another thing to get to the foot of the mountain and having got there maintain an efficient line of communication. The expedition were fortunate in obtaining as chief transport officer Lieutenant-Colonel H. W. Tobin, D.S.O., O.B.E., the Darjeeling secretary of the Himalayan Club whose experience not only of Himalayan mountaineering generally but of local Darjeeling conditions made him an invaluable asset to the expedition. Upon him devolved responsibility for the enlistment of porters and the arrangement of the multifarious expedition details at Darjeeling, many of which though seemingly trivial in themselves are vital to the efficient working of a transport organisation.

In order to strengthen not only the transport organisation but the climbing party as well, Mr. G. W. Wood Johnson was invited to join the expedition. Like Colonel

Tobin he is well acquainted with local conditions. His enthusiasm for mountaineering may be gauged by the fact that he had come to India not only to learn tea-planting but to learn how to handle natives and speak Nepali in order to fit himself for a future Everest expedition. In these things he had prospered exceedingly under the able tuition of Mr. McKean his manager. Though he had then no previous Alpine experience he was a member of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club of the English Lake District and an expert rock climber. Alpine experience counts for little in the Himalayas without knowledge of travelling conditions, and an expedition undertaken by him in 1929 to peaks around Dzongri was to prove of more value to our expedition than any amount of Alpine experience.

Having chosen the personnel of a Himalayan expedition, the next thing to do is to equip it. Himalayan mountaineering falls naturally into two categories. There is the expedition that has for its object the conquest of peaks up to 23,000 feet high, and for this ordinary Alpine clothing and foot-gear are sufficient. Then there is the expedition that sets out to attempt the greater peaks of the Himalayas. This requires more specialised equipment, for owing to the effects of altitude and subsequent lowering of the vitality and bodily wastage, the winds that mercilessly sweep the upper ridges, and intense cold, it is essential to prevent frostbite.

There is only one way of efficiently clothing an expedition, and that is to study the lessons of the past, and to take heed of the lessons learnt, often at considerable cost, on expeditions such as Sir Martin Conway's in the Karakorams and the three Mount Everest expeditions. These

lessons and the recommendations derived from them are all laid down and should be studied with the utmost care. Nor should the late Sir Ernest Shackleton and the clothing which he provided for his expeditions into the Antarctic be neglected, for he was one of the first to make a scientific study of *light* wind-and-cold-resisting clothing.

Professor Dyhrenfurth was fortunate in having the advice of Brigadier-General the Hon. C. G. Bruce, C.B., M.V.O., Lieutenant-Colonel E. L. Strutt, C.B.E., D.S.O., who accompanied the 1922 Everest expedition, and others. In the light of their experiences on Everest they were unhesitating in their recommendation that light clothing and light boots should be worn of a type similar to that advocated by Shackleton. On Everest, the best clothing was found to consist of woollen underclothes, Shetland wool sweaters, and outside a light jacket of wind-proof material. Boots were similar to those used in ordinary Alpine work, only lightly nailed and sufficiently roomy to take two or three pairs of stockings and socks. It is interesting to note that the porters who went highest, about 27,000 feet, did so in Army ammunition boots brought out from England and costing 15/6 a pair. Thus, in a properly equipped expedition, frostbite is usually due to the carelessness of the climber.

Bearing these things in mind, it was unfortunate that Professor Dyhrenfurth did not follow advice founded on many years experience, of equipping his expedition with light clothing and boots. He chose rather to adopt the diametrically opposed theory that one layer of heavy material is warmer than two or more layers of lighter material.

The following is a list of clothing that was supplied. A tricot coat weighing six pounds; breeches, three pounds, six ounces; sweater, two pounds, ten ounces; outer wind-jacket, three pounds. I can only describe the boots as portmanteaux. They weighed six and a half pounds a pair, and each was nailed with sixty clinker and tricouni nails. The soles were built up of layers of felt, rubber and leather, and the uppers, which came half-way to the knee, were felt-lined. Crampons supplied with these boots were proportionately heavy and weighed four pounds a pair. Allowing an additional two pounds for an ice-axe, and five pounds for underclothing, head-gear, socks, stockings and puttees, but not including gear and equipment such as is normally carried in a rucksack or rope, we were, therefore, expected to carry a total of thirty-two and a half pounds to the summit of Kangchenjunga. This, together with other equipment, etc., would in my case be *nearly a quarter of my own normal weight.* It goes without saying that this equipment proved totally unsatisfactory. The only occasion on which I wore the expedition boots was on the Ramthang Peak, and I shall not easily forget the effort of lifting them at an altitude of 23,000 feet. What would they and the clothing be like to the climber dependent on his last dregs of energy between 27,000 and 28,000 feet near the summit of Kangchenjunga?

It was with some inkling as to what was likely to be provided that caused me to purchase some equipment in England in addition to that with which Professor Dyhrenfurth was providing me. This consisted principally of Shetland woollies and Jaeger underclothing. Of the former, I had four sweaters weighing four ounces each

purchased from W. Bill of Great Portland Street, London. I never found it necessary to wear more than three of these, and these three worn in conjunction with Jaeger combinations and a wind-proof jacket were definitely warmer than the tricot jacket, and the two pounds ten ounces single sweater. Unfortunately, the boots came as a complete surprise, and, like some of the other members of the expedition, I was forced to wear a pair of boots which I used to tramp from Darjeeling to the Base Camp, boots which would only take two pairs of stockings, and that at a squeeze, but which nevertheless proved perfectly satisfactory with a dozen or more tricouni nails knocked into each.

I know that in making such challenging statements I may arouse the wrath of my continental friends, who believe that weight and thickness alone spell warmth, but apart from my own former experiences in the Alps, during which I have made a close study of clothing and equipment, and apart from the experiences of former Himalayan and Polar expeditions, it cannot be doubted that several layers of light clothing are preferable to one layer of thick, heavy clothing, and that clothing one third of the weight of that which I have mentioned would be heavy enough, and warm enough for a man to reach without fear of frostbite the highest peaks in the world.

There is another thing that must be considered besides mere warmth—the ventilation of the body. Though the air temperature may be many degrees below freezing, the sun temperature is enormous at high altitudes. If the body is not sufficiently ventilated, perspiration cannot evaporate, and a sudden lowering of body temperature by wind, or

the withdrawal of the sun may result in a severe chill. A single layer of thick material, while being wind-proof, is also ventilation proof. It is possible to have clothing which will both ventilate the body and protect it from the wind, and in this respect there is nothing better than several layers of Shetland wool.

The head and ears must be well protected, and here again one cannot do better than to wear two or three Shetland wool Balaclava helmets, while in the event of a severe wind, a leather flying helmet can be worn outside, although this again tends to retard ventilation.

Snow blindness must be guarded against. At high altitudes the ultra-violet rays of the sun are so intense that even on rocks it is possible to suffer snow blindness. No special protection, other than the ordinary bottle-green or dark yellow snow-glasses that can be purchased in Switzerland at one franc a pair, is necessary. Personally, I found Crookes' glass more restful, as it does not distort colour, and eliminates all glare by cutting out the ultra-violet rays. The sun also shines with such power that it strips the skin off the face like paper, a process which, incidentally, is assisted by the wind only too effectually. The best kind of protective face cream is that which both lubricates the skin and absorbs the ultra-violet rays, which are principally responsible for the painful stripping process.

Excellent gloves were provided. They were of the leather fingerless variety fleece-lined. Puttees have many opponents among mountaineers, but the Kashmiri puttees as recommended by General Bruce do not impede the circulation in the least degree and are wonderfully warm. Not only do they prevent the snow getting in, but they

afford excellent protection against the inroads of leeches. Incidentally, while on this last subject, it is a useful tip to put tobacco leaves in the stockings. Although leeches enjoy one's blood, they object to having to chew tobacco first in order to get it.

Professor Dyhrenfurth did a wise thing when he decided to have separate tents for each European member of the expedition. Later on, I shall have occasion to remark on the psychological importance of this. Suffice to say that these tents made by Schuster of Munich were excellent, and stood up well to wind and rain. The only criticism that might be made is that there was not sufficient overlap in the flaps.

The best thing of all among the camping equipment was the synthetic rubber ground sheets. These were about one-third of an inch thick. Not only do they keep one dry, but they insulate one from the cold ground or snow, and are soft enough to eliminate the " inevitable stone."

Wise is the mountaineer who fusses over his sleeping bag as a cricketer fusses over his particular brand of bat. Individual taste should be satisfied, for the Himalayan mountaineer spends an appreciable portion of his life lying in his sleeping bag. Here again the lessons of the past are not to be ignored. It has been said of Everest sleeping bags that they were too narrow, and that at great altitudes, the climber had to wriggle, strain and pant in order to insinuate himself into his bag, an effort so great at 25,000 feet or more that he would lie for minutes exhausted by the effort. The warmest sleeping bag is not a tightly fitting one, but one in which there is plenty of room to change the position. Warmth also depends upon having sufficient

air space round the body. Several years experimenting in Alpine conditions have convinced me that quilted eiderdown is superior to all other forms of material for a sleeping bag. Also that an outer covering of jaconet is advantageous. A plain sleeping bag, open only at one end is better than one slit down the side, for however well the side may be laced up, and the finicky business of lacing is, incidentally a labour, the slit is sure to coincide with the middle of the back during the night, and chilliness will result.

Unwilling to be standardised on this matter, I had a sleeping bag made by Mr. R. Burns, of 5 Lever Street, Manchester, to my own design. It was seven feet long, thirty-two inches wide at the head end, tapering to seventeen inches at the feet end, and weighing eight pounds, fourteen ounces. It consisted of two quilted eiderdown bags, one inside the other. The inner one was lined with Jaeger fleece, and the two bags were enclosed in an outer covering of jaconet. Both bags and the outer covering were fitted at the head end with a string-bag arrangement. The length was so ample that I was able to snuggle up right inside it with only my nose and mouth projecting through the drawn up opening.

The advantage of having two bags was a great one. It meant that in the lower tropical forests I could utilise the outer of the two eiderdown bags only, and sleep comfortably without being too hot. Higher up, the second bag could be utilised with its fleece lining, and on the snows both bags together with or without the outer covering. Thus, it was easily possible to regulate through a wide range of temperature the degree of warmth required.

It is interesting to note that when only one bag and the jaconet cover are utilised, the latter tends to condense the vapours of the body and wet the eiderdown, but with two bags this does not occur, owing to the air space between the bags. I slept for six weeks using both bags and the cover without the bag becoming damp. I slept well too ; in fact, during the whole expedition I do not remember shivering once during the night, and that fact, coupled with the excellent sleep I was able to enjoy, was of no small importance, and was undoubtedly responsible for my keeping fit during the expedition. I can unhesitatingly recommend these bags to other expeditions, and particularly those whose route takes them through a variety of climates.

The expedition bag was about the same weight, and was enclosed in a heavy canvas cover weighing five or six times more than the jaconet cover. It was narrow and slit down the side. The slit was done up with little wooden cross-pieces which had to be fitted through string loops, an awkward and irritating business, whilst the bag was so narrow, that more than once I heard my companions groaning as they strove to get into it.

The expedition took with it one large " Debrie " cine-camera with its manifold gadgets, including various telephoto lenses, three " Kinamo " cine-cameras, which take one hundred feet of film and can be loaded in a daylight charger, and no less than 60,000 feet of standard size film. In addition, practically everyone had his own camera, the majority of which were fitted for film packs. Of the latter we took an enormous quantity made by Messrs. Agfa, Ltd., each in an air-tight tin, and I am happy to add that they gave every possible satisfaction, and admirably stood the

manifold changes of humidity and temperature they had to undergo between exposure and development. My own pet cameras were two thin pocket " Etui " cameras, one 6 × 9 centimetres, and the other 9 × 12 centimetres. Of the work done by them, I need only say that it was of the finest possible quality, and photographs taken by these little cameras appeared in newspapers all over the world. Both cameras were very light, and either could be slipped into the pocket. They were supplied by Sands, Hunter, Ltd. The disadvantage of cinematographic and photographic work on a large scale is the number of additional porters this entailed. I do not think that less than fifty porters were utilised in carrying our cinematographic and photographic apparatus and materials.

A large quantity of continental and English rope was taken, and regarding this all members of the expedition were agreed that the Alpine Club rope manufactured by Beale's was far the superior both in strength and general handiness.

There is no space here to mention the manifold items of equipment necessary for an expedition of this nature. I think a good deal of what we took might have come under the heading of luxuries rather than necessities, and had our subsequent transport difficulties been realised at the outset, it is safe to say that there would have been a drastic cutting down of individual and general equipment, and this without imperilling the party in any way. The seeker after information regarding Himalayan equipment should refer to the Alpine Club equipment report.

Turning to food, the importance of correct feeding can hardly be over-estimated. The mountaineer climbing at

high altitudes should look after his stomach with as much care as most American millionaires are forced to look after theirs. Up to the Base Camp, normal eating and foods can be indulged in. Above that the health, and therefore the success of a Himalayan expedition, depends upon eating the right kind of food. Sugar is to the mountaineer climbing over 20,000 feet as petrol is to an internal combustion engine. Thanks to the generosity of many firms the expedition was able to leave Europe with enough food and chocolate to start a grocery store and confectioner's shop. Unfortunately, however, much of this food came under the heading of luxuries, and included such substances as caviare, paté de foie gras, tinned gherkins, Christmas puddings, tinned mushrooms and so forth. If in place of these, sugary foods had been taken, the subsequent ill health and upset stomachs which afflicted the expedition members at various times might have been avoided. As a substitute for bread, which is not to be obtained in most parts of the Himalayas, we took Swedish biscuits. These proved excellent, not only as a food, but as an aid to the digestion. The effect of high altitude is to make the stomach very acid, and food tends to ferment rather than be absorbed by the normal processes of digestion. Bismuth tablets are a spendid neutraliser of this uncomfortable condition. Owing to low pressure at high altitudes water boils at lower temperatures than at sea level. In order to facilitate boiling we took with us a patent high-pressure boiler. Though there was often some doubt as to whether or not it would blow up it was on the whole a great success.

No physiological subject during recent years has provided

a greater controversy than whether oxygen is useful or not at great altitudes. In spite of the fact that Colonel E. F. Norton and Mr. T. H. Somervell reached 28,000 feet on Everest without oxygen, there are those who still declare that oxygen is of value despite the weight of the cylinders containing it, and the apparatus to distribute it. Personally, I think a compromise will be reached so that the future climbers of Everest will carry one or two small oxygen cylinders as a reserve to boost their strength up for that last terrible few hundred feet. We compromised, but in a different way, and took with us oxygen cylinders, not for inhalation on the actual climb, but for use in tents, as it was thought that this " English air," as the natives called it, would serve as an excellent " bracer " to the day's work at a high altitude, and might be of use in resuscitating an exhausted man. It was certainly found to be useful in both these departments, but whether the expense of porterage and the apparatus was worth it is doubtful. I think, however, that for Everest or Kangchenjunga oxygen should be taken as a medicine, for its effect on an exhausted man is superior to that of alcohol.

Apart from oxygen, Dr. Richter took with him a special physiological apparatus in addition to the usual implements of his profession.

The foregoing is necessarily little more than an allusion to a few among many of the details that must be considered before an expedition can so much as set sail from Europe. It is intended only to give the reader some idea of the manifold things the leader of an expedition has to consider. No one could have worked harder than Professor

and Frau Dyhrenfurth, and their work was inspired by the fact that in going to Kangchenjunga they were fulfilling a lifetime's ambition.

As regards the Press, it was arranged that I should act as Special Correspondent and Photographer to *The Times*. Messages were to be sent back by runners from the expedition and thence telegraphed to Europe through the *Statesman* newspaper in Calcutta, the Editor of which, Mr. Alfred Watson, was of great service to the expedition. So at last, on February 24, 1930, the first party consisting of Professor and Frau Dyhrenfurth, Dr. Richter, Duvanel and myself left Europe on the S.S. *Gange* of the Lloyd Triestino Navigation Company.

On our arrival at Bombay, we sent off six and a half tons of goods to Darjeeling. Our first task was to apply to His Highness the Maharajah of Nepal for permission to pass through his country. That that permission was granted was due partly to the kind offices of Mr. Howell, Foreign Secretary, and Colonel Dawkes, the British Envoy at Khatmandu, the capital of Nepal. It was considered also that an English speaking Gurkha N.C.O. would be most useful to us, and thanks to the kindness of Field-Marshal Sir William Birdwood, Bart., we were able to obtain the services of Naik Tikeram Thapa of the 2/8th Gurkha Rifles, who was specially selected by his Commanding Officer, Lieutenant-Colonel C. D. Noe.

These things being accomplished, we toured through India, visiting such show places as Delhi, Agra, and Benares. But the plains were hot and dusty, and we longed, all of us, to sense the keen air from the snows of Kangchenjunga and the High Himalayas.