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TURKEY GIVES SHELTER TO A HOMELESS RACE

Long trek of the Kazaks through Asia

THE remnants of the Kazak people who were driven by Communists from Sinkiang, China's westernmost province, have at last found a home in Turkey. Some 106 of them recently reached Istanbul, and altogether 1850 of them will in due course settle in Turkey.

The Kazaks are a Moslem people belonging to Turkestan, the former name of a region which is partly in Soviet Russia and partly in Sinkiang, north of Tibet. When all Russia became Communist many thousands of them left their homes in Russian Turkestan (now Kazakhstan) to cross the mountain frontier and dwell in safety in Sinkiang until 1936, when this province was also taken over by Communists.

Long famous for their wild, independent life and noted as cavalymen, the Kazaks date back in history to the great Genghis Khan, the Mongol conqueror of Asia. It was he who led them out of Asia Minor into the mountain stronghold of Asia proper.

NOMAD PEOPLE

Wandering in vast herds with thousands of sheep and cattle, and with the two-humped camel as their favourite beast of burden, the Kazaks moved with the seasons, always seeking the greenest grass for their stock.

Strong in physique, with narrow eyes, red faces, and well-made bodies, the Kazaks have always been reckoned among the toughest peoples of central Asia.

Most of their games are played on the small, sturdy horses they ride; one of these games, which they call oghlak, requires a group of horsemen one of whom carries the carcass of a sheep. The aim of this man is to cross a certain line with his burden, while his opponents do everything to prevent him, and strive to seize the carcass in their turn.

The recent troubles of the Kazaks started in 1936 when Russia and Nationalist China began to struggle for supremacy on the roof of Asia. Not liking the Communist puppet-government of Sinkiang, the Kazaks

drove their sheep and cattle and camels before them, and took refuge in Tibet. There they set up their light tents stretched on a framework of trellis wood, or dug deep holes with a great mound of dried cow-dung to protect them.

Over 18,000 Kazaks took part in this trek, but there was worse to come. The peril of Russian Communists was succeeded by the peril of Chinese Communists, who eventually became masters of western Tibet.

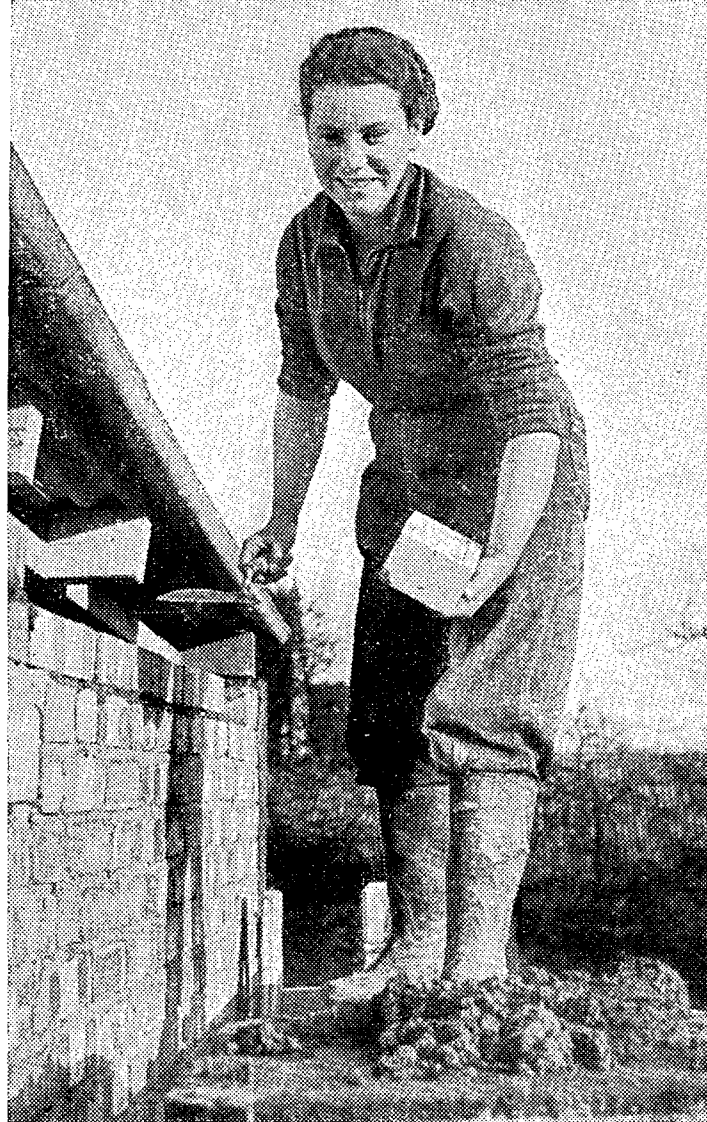
With all the Kazak determination to be free and independent, the Kazaks again started to trek, this time to Indian and Pakistan.

HELP AT LAST

Many of them wandered as far as Egypt and Saudi Arabia, losing their cattle as they struggled on. Some of their best men perished, including their leader, Chelikpan. The plight of the Kazaks then became known throughout the Moslem world. Relief was sent to them and Turkey offered a home to the survivors.

So after 1000 years of wandering the Kazaks, whose distinguishing trait is loyalty to their religious and age-old customs, have come home to the ancestral land in Asia Minor from which their forefathers set out.

There, we may hope, these picturesque folk will be allowed to live out their lives in peace.



On top of her job

Rita Stoneham is only 16, but she can do a man's work for her father, who has a building and decorating business. She is building an extension to a bungalow at Laindon, Essex.

FINDING WORK FOR THE SUN

In order to test the behaviour of materials at extremely high temperatures, a solar furnace, the biggest of its kind, has been installed at Meudon Observatory, near Paris.

Acting on the same principle as a burning-glass, it is a curved mirror, nearly seven feet in diameter, which catches the Sun's rays and focuses them into a quarter-inch spot just 50 inches in front of the mirror. The temperature of this spot is 9000 degrees Fahrenheit, or only about 1000 degrees less than the surface temperature of the Sun itself.

Queer things happen to materials exposed to this extreme heat. A piece of iron melts at once—boils and steams off as a vapour.

If the present series of experiments are successful, scientists plan to erect "solar stations" in areas where constant sunlight is available, with the possibility of adapting the concentrated Sun's heat for manufacturing processes.

TIMBER TROUBLE DOWN UNDER

New Zealand's native forests, which formerly covered much of a country the size of Great Britain, will provide timber for only another 12 years at the present rate of tree-felling.

Experts advise the planting of quick-growing imported pines instead of the slow-growing native trees in order to serve the best interests of the Dominion's two million people.

IT'S COSY UP THERE

Commander Simpson, leader of the British North Greenland Expedition, who was recently in touch by radio with the battleship H.M.S. Vanguard, said that his Arctic hut was much warmer than his office at the Admiralty!

ALARMING

Sleeping pills introduced in Los Angeles recently were claimed not only to induce sleep but to rouse the sleeper as well after eight hours!

By Flying Boat to East African Game Reserve

A new-style air safari just introduced in East Africa uses a specially-equipped Catalina flying-boat to take Uganda tourists to the Murchison Falls. They then travel by launch through a teeming game reserve, and are back in their hotels within nine hours.

Brought from Sweden for this fascinating equatorial service, the plane is piloted by a wartime R.A.F. flier. It takes off from Entebbe's fine airport with a tricycle undercarriage; this retracts into a recess, and 90 minutes later the Catalina comes gliding down on the gleaming Victoria Nile.

GREAT SIGHTS

During that short time the tourists have enjoyed sights as breathtaking as Africa can offer. To the north, massive escarpments sink into smoky plains, with the silver ribbon of the Nile winding away to the southern Sudan. Westward, on the far side of Lake Albert, loom the majestic barriers on the Belgian Congo frontier.

The Victoria Nile joins Lake Albert only a few miles from the safari plane's landing-point. Beforehand, a speedy motor-boat ensures that this stretch of the tropical river is free of inquisitive hippos or malevolent crocodiles. A green Verrey light signals "all clear" to the circling aircraft.

Stepping into a modern launch, the passengers are whisked off between sun-drenched but luxuriant banks to the Murchison Falls, that awe-inspiring spot where a gorge forces the Nile to cascade in spray and thunder to a lower level.

ABOUNDING WILD LIFE

From the safety of the launch, tourists can see and photograph some of the Dark Continent's finest wild life. Elephant, buffalo, and the buck family abound; monkeys shriek and grimace from riverside trees.

The Queen Elizabeth National Park has only just been officially declared in this region, and if the air safari prospers, a permanent camp may be built.

Recently the busy Catalina landed for the first time on Lake Bunyoni, 6500 feet above sea level. Gaunt hills surround this lonely eyrie. The local inhabitants, stirred by the news of the plane's arrival, thronged to the scene, and dozens of canoes swept over the water to see this strange newcomer from the skies.



Buglers on parade

Five W.R.A.F. buglers of the Royal Air Force station band at Innsworth, Gloucestershire, march out smartly onto the parade ground.

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