

the latter we also had a hard clay desert, swept perfectly clean, without dune-formations; but on the other hand we found that the storms were always heavily charged with disintegrated dust and drift-sand, which is transported towards the west-southwest to be deposited in the Desert of Tschertschen. In both regions the wind blows too hard to allow of the origination of dunes.

The storm stopped at 7 p.m., but only for 1 1/2 hours, after which it began again, although less steadily, and it continued to blow all night. But the atmosphere remained so clear that stars of the fifth magnitude, low down close to the horizon, burned like distant fires; while those of the first magnitude in the zenith sparkled like electric lights, so that under such conditions the night in Tibet is never perfectly dark. At Harschu we again heard the wild geese screaming at night; during the day we never saw them. It is possible that they only travel by night in order to escape the violent wind, for as a rule the nights were almost always tranquil.

Our new chieftain told me, that in his province it was usual to count six months of winter, and during that time the west wind blows practically without a break. About 40 days after that, that is in the middle of December, snow was to be expected, but it might come a little earlier than that, and he advised us therefore to try and reach Ladak in twenty-five days, for in that case we should entirely escape it. As it turned out, we reached very nearly the end of December without any snow; but I quote these statements of the natives, all the more because they are mutually in agreement.

To Tok-dschalung, a place which later on we left to the south, the distance from our present camp was said to be five days. At these gold mines, which are said to be the highest place on the earth that is permanently inhabited, there remain during the winter only about a score of people. In the summer the population increases to between 200 and 300, who dwell in 60 to 70 black tents set up in a circle all round the gold-field, with its shallow mines or rather pits, out of which the precious metal is extracted in a very primitive fashion. There are neither temples nor stone huts at the place. The gold-miners come from several different directions, some of them even from Lhasa. The grazing round Tok-dschalung is wretched in the extreme, and after bringing up their belongings the miners drive their yaks down again to regions where the pasture is better, and there too they leave their sheep in the custody of shepherds.

Both Nain Singh and Littledale travelled, as I did, to the north of Tok-dschalung, Littledale's route running the nearest to it. The lake which Nain Singh calls Nimchochaka is possibly identical with my Perutse-tso, in that case Nim-cho would equate with Jim-tso. East of the Luma-ring-tso he places a small lake, to which he gives no name. This may possibly be the Harschu, a name that is also applied to the adjacent country. The Luma-ring-tso, which, properly speaking, is only a part of the depression that I have called after the lake of Tsolla-ring-tso, measures according to Nain Singh's map, 33 English miles in length; though it is difficult to see how he could map it accurately, seeing that he travelled at a considerable distance to the north of it and can evidently only have seen the lake at a single point, namely in the extreme east. Between his route and the lake there intervenes a big mountain-range. I suppose his information was obtained as the result of questioning the