

CHAPTER XXVII.

PRSCHEVALSKIJ'S FIRST AND THIRD JOURNEYS.

It is not at all my intention to discuss all the journeys that have been made in Tibet. My plan does not require any such history of Tibetan exploration, and it would indeed be superfluous, for the earlier journeys in that part of the world, and their results, have been critically dealt with by von Richthofen in the first volume of his *China*; and as for the later journeys, it will be sufficient to refer to the different travellers' own works and the accounts of them which have been printed in various geographical journals. Besides, brief comprehensive résumés are to be found in Dr. Georg Wegener's *Tibet und die englische Expedition* and in Graham Sandberg's *The Exploration of Tibet, its History, and Particulars from 1623 to 1904*, as well as in one or two of the books that have been published by members of the English Tibetan mission to Lhasa, and with regard to which I shall have something to say later. Further, in my opinion the time is not yet ripe for an exhaustive historical account of that country; for there is reason to believe that Tibet has now at last been opened up to systematic exploration, and that the time is not far distant when we shall know the broad features of its geography, and nothing will remain to be done except the diligent and painstaking study of details. To attempt, in the light of the experiences which have been gradually accumulated in the course of time, to sketch the outlines of the orographical structure of Tibet, and its hydrographical and hypsometrical relations, and so forth, would in the mean time lead to erroneous results, because several parts of the country of special importance for geography are but little known or not known at all. I need only mention the great lacustrine region in the centre, which Nain Singh hurriedly mapped, the country immediately north and south of the Tsang-po, the northern valleys of the Himalaya, the peripheral region of eastern Tibet with the transverse glens or »breaching» defiles of the great Indo-Chinese rivers, as well as, finally, immense areas of the central highlands, which have never yet been crossed even by the pioneers of exploration.

In the present chapters I shall therefore confine myself to a few remarks about the journeys that fall within those parts of high Tibet which I have myself visited. These amount to an area of very considerable extent, but are just those parts that