

difficulties. The river was, it is true, frozen over, but the ice was not strong enough to bear our camels.

After that we penetrated into the Dung-bure. This range, which in every respect resembles its neighbours, rises above the snow-line in a few places in the east only, and on the south is connected with the rocky chain of Tsagan-obo. On the slopes of Dung-bure there exist grassy, marshy places, where wild yaks love to graze.

The Mur-usu, which we now luckily approached, flows in a north-easterly direction to the confluence of the Napschitaj-ulan-muren and then towards the south-east. When in flood it reaches a breadth of 80—126 m., but after picking up the Napschitaj-ulan-muren it is very much broader. In places the depth reaches 1.5 to 2.1 m.; its velocity is great, and its waters of a blueish colour. It is full of fish, but is frozen from November to March. Its banks are relatively rich in vegetation and for Tibet the pasture-grounds are even good. The first two tributaries, the Toktonaj-ulan-muren and the Napschitaj-ulan-muren, join the river from the left, and on the same side stand the mountain-ranges of Tsagan-obo, Dung-bure, Koko-schili, and Bajan-chara-ula.

South of the Mur-usu we reached the highest part of the Tibetan plateau. It is there undulating and reaches to the snow-capped Tang-la Mountains, which border it on the south. The pass by which we crossed, and which is also used by the Mongol caravans, has an altitude of 5000 m., but as compared with the valley of the Mur-usu a relative altitude of only 630 m. Of the eastern part of the Tang-la we could learn nothing but what was confused and uncertain; nevertheless I think I may venture to say, that the range stretches as far east as the point where the Blue River turns abruptly south, and that in that range we must seek for the sources of the most important rivers of East Asia, namely the Jang-tse-kiang on the one side and the Mekong and the Salwen on the other. The part of the range which we saw reaches an altitude of at least 5700 to 6000 m. On the north side the snow-line reaches up to 5100 m. and on the south side perhaps to 5250 m. On both north and west the range possesses broad glaciers. The mountains are steep, though seldom rocky. The climate on the Tang-la plateau is exceedingly severe. Storms rage there all the year through. According to the natives vast quantities of rain, hail, and snow fall during the summer. The winter is very harsh: in the beginning of November the thermometer registered  $-30^{\circ}$  C. and in the middle of December  $-31^{\circ}$  C. at sunrise. Vegetation is of course poor. On the southern slopes there are some mineral springs. It took us eight days to get over the Tang-la, the climb, in consequence of the hardships and privations of all kinds that we endured, costing us four pack-animals. On the summit of the pass of Tang-la (5000 m.) we found a Buddhist obo.

The country which we then traversed is very monotonous. On the right we saw the snowy mountain Munkar and through the valley by which we were travelling flows the Tan-tschu, a tributary of the Nap-tschu (Chara-usu), and on the other side of it rise the Samtijn-kansijr Mountains. The climate was however milder and the sky bright. We sometimes met Tibetan nomads.

The mountain of Bumsa, which was to be our farthest point south in Tibet, has an altitude of 5200 m. In respect of both shape and formation it deviates from