

CHAPTER XXI.

MAPS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

On our wanderings through the centuries we have to proceed beyond the middle of the seventeenth before we can talk of any definite change in the right direction in the field of Central Asiatic cartography. Properly speaking it is a disappointing task to search through the maps of three hundred years without finding any reliable information about the country we are studying in this work, and still it is a task of absorbing interest, at least for those who have seen these regions with their own eyes, and therefore will understand how and why this *terra*, surrounded with its girdle of *montes inaccessibiles*, could remain *incognita* for such a long time. The maps will tell us, far better than any words, how human knowledge, slowly but surely, conquered the coasts, and, step by step, proceeded from them towards the interior; how China, India, Turkestan and Siberia little by little assumed more reasonable forms, while the nucleus of High Asia, Tibet, still remained unconquerable. In the seventeenth century we shall see how the scientific explorers at home and in the field will approach the borderland of Tibet without reaching the country itself. On some maps from this period even the name of Tibet will be missing, while other draughtsmen are very uncertain of its whereabouts. Still the journeys of Odoric and Andrade remain forgotten and have no influence at all on the maps, with only one exception, Kircher's map,¹ Pl. XI. But after the journey of Grueber and Dorville in 1661 and 1662 the cartographers could no longer ignore the mysterious country, which so far had been a *fata morgana* to them, and had, towards the eve of the next century, to assign for it a place somewhere north of India.

The first map we are going to discuss is the »*Novissima ac exactissima totius orbis terrarum descriptio magna*» by JODOCUS HONDIUS, Amsterdam 1611, Pl. XXV.¹ He conscientiously used the material existing at his time and as no new information had been won from the countries north of India, he has nothing to add beyond the

¹ Map of the World by Jodocus Hondius 1611. Edited by E. L. Stevenson and J. Fischer. New York 1907.