

AHMED SHAH, 1852—53, says that the Kumdan road was blocked from 1818 to 1840 by a glacier. He had to cross its snout. About 1852 the Kumdan road was still the ordinary one, and had been open from 1840 to 1852—53. But from 1840 the glacier had begun to advance and approach the river, and, finally in 1852—53 reached the very foot of the mountains. That is why Ahmed Shah had to cross over the snout. This statement does not agree with the preceding one. If it be right, the Trade Report for 1824—28 refers to material from some years earlier.

On VIGNE's map of 1842 there is the word »Glacier» written at the place where Kichik Kumdan goes down. The principal source of the Shayok comes from »Khundun Tsoh Lake» or Kumdan-tso. When the ice dam of the glacier was broken by the pressure of the water one of the disastrous floods must have occurred and the road become cleared.

On HÜGEL's map, drawn by ARROWSMITH in 1847, there is no Murgo road, only a »Khamdan» road, showing that the passage was not closed.

On his way back from the Kara-korum pass, in August 1848, THOMSON paid a visit to the glaciers and gave a good description of them, so far as he could proceed and was able to see them. He saw the Aktash and Kichik Kumdan entering the bed of the Shayok and crossing the river which flowed out from under the ice. As the Kumdan road was closed by the glaciers, Thomson travelled the Murgo-road. From Yarkand merchants he heard that 10 or 12 years earlier, 1836—38, the glaciers had blocked the road which had previously been trafficable.

In the narratives of the SCHLAGINTWEITS I cannot find the Kumdan glaciers mentioned, which seems to indicate that the road was blocked at the time of their journeys, or 1854—58. Only in their *Route-Book of the western parts of the Himálaya, Tibet, and Central Asia*, do they mention the winter route from Sasser to the Kara-korum pass, as passing »Khumdan, and Gyápshan», but as the material for this itinerary is taken from Mir Izzet Ullah, it does not help us at all.¹

If on RYALL's map of 1862 the Chong Kumdan is shown as closing the road, this seems to be in agreement with DREW, who mentions the winter road *viâ* Burtse, Kisil-unkur and Dovlet Bek-öldi, taken from *The Panjab Trade Report* 1862, a road which would hardly have been mentioned if the Kumdan road had been in use. It would also be in agreement with the report of MONTGOMERIE's MUNSHI MAHOMED-I-HAMID, who, in 1863, passed over Sasser, Murgo and Dapsang to the Kara-korum pass, a road that is never taken if the much easier Kumdan road is open.

JOHNSON travelled down the Kumdan road only two years later, or 1865, passing »some large glaciers», and following the right bank of the Shayok. He obviously did not touch the ice at all, so the retreat of the glaciers seems to have been considerable.

¹ Results of a Scientific Mission to India and High Asia, by Hermann, Adolphe and Robert de Schlagintweit, Leipzig and London 1863. Vol. III, p. 106.