

The river, here called Sangche or Tsangpo-chimbo, »The Great River«, generally keeps to the southern side of the valley, where the mountains are higher, more massive and bulky, darker, steeper, and more rocky than along the northern side. At a place at the southern side, where the river sweeps directly along the foot of steep rocks, a dangerous road crosses the cliffs. Sometimes cairns with a pole and a flag near the bank serve as signs to the drifting hide-boats.

The ground is either hard yellow alluvial clay, gravel or sand. At the lee-side of every bush or tussock-grass, there is a small accumulation of sand, always on the east side, showing that west winds prevail. There are also well-formed wandering dunes without binding vegetation, and always with the steep lee-side to the east.

The next tributary from the south is Mi, not very great, and with a village of the same name. Cho-lamchang is a village of a few huts and corn-fields on the road; on a hill above it are the white houses of a nunnery simply called Chöding, and below it is another part of the village of Cho; the monastery is also called Cho-chöding. The road is here at some distance from the river.

Then follows a great tributary from the south. Its name is Shablung or Shabnang; Ryder who crossed it higher up calls it Shap-chu; Shab-lung is the valley, Shab-chu its river. In its mouth, west of the river-course, rises an isolated little rock with a monastery, Chöni-kera, or, as others would have it, Chuki-kera. Three days up the Shab valley, at a place called Tsalung, wild onion is common and collected for the use of Rungma's inhabitants. Other places or tributaries to the Shab are Pese, Geding, Chamo, Sandugang and Taga. The Shab road to Phari was said to take 15 days by horse and 30 by yak, the road to Sekya-gompa 10 days on foot. These distances seem to be much exaggerated. The Shab is impossible to ford in summer; at the time of my visit there was not much water in its bed. From the Shab valley are also roads to Tashi-lunpo and Ladse-dsong.

At the granite promontory of Shärtang almost the entire bottom of the valley seems to get inundated at high-water time. Now the river was divided in two or several branches; a pool of back-water still remained in a dry bed. A comparatively great tributary from the north is called Donka with a village of the same name, and a nunnery, simply known as Chöde, with only one nun.

In Rungma I got the height of 3,940 m. (12,923 feet). The village has some 25 huts and two fairly good houses; wheat, corn, peas and radishes are cultivated. Rungma is built on a gravel and shingle terrace, between the foot of which and the river there is some level ground for cultivation; there are in the village a few gardens with poplar-trees.

From Rungma the valley turns to the N.E., and the river is out of sight. For a considerable distance the road follows along fields, arranged amphitheatrically as in Ladak, to make the irrigation water run from the higher to the lower fields. Immediately below this belt of cultivation stretches the now dry summer-bed of the