

## CHAPTER VI.

### KLAPROTH.

With d'Anvilles *Nouveau Atlas de la Chine*, published 1737, and containing amongst the maps of China the one of Tibet (1733) discussed in the preceding chapter, begins the history of European knowledge of the Transhimalaya. All other maps of Tibet, printed in Europe, are, until the first quarter of the last century, simply copies of d'Anville's Tibet.<sup>1</sup> But a still more important epoch in this history is marked by the information from Chinese sources translated and published by J. KLAPROTH. He was the first to direct, in a more positive way, the attention of geographers to the existence of a mountain system north of the Tsangpo. Klaproth was the great conqueror in the Chinese literature; he collected the material, which afterwards, from a purely geographical point of view, was sifted and arranged by RITTER and HUMBOLDT. But Klaproth himself also laid down his conquests on a map, which for a long time was regarded as gospel concerning these regions, until fresh exploration brought new material and broke down the Chinese orographical system.

In a preceding part of this work I have already quoted some extracts from Klaproth touching the Chinese description of the Kailas.<sup>2</sup> He calls it Gangdis ri, or the mountain of snow colour.<sup>3</sup> It is at 310 li N.E. of the town Taklakar dsong in Purang, the province of Ari (Ngari), and at 5,590 li direct east from Si-ning-fu in Kansu. Mount Kailas raises its peak 550 Chinese fathoms above the range to which it belongs,<sup>4</sup> and it has a circumference of 140 li. It is surrounded by other very high peaks, but surpasses these by more than 100 fathoms. For those who travel from China to the S.W. the ground rises the whole way until they reach mount Kailas, »which is the highest point of the whole range, the direction of which one is following.»<sup>5</sup> This range subdivides itself into several branches, which traverse the country in winding directions. To the N.W. of the Gangdis ri, is the snowy

<sup>1</sup> Compare also G. Wegener in: Festschrift Ferdinand Freiherrn von Richthofen . . . dargebracht von seinen Schülern, Berlin 1893, p. 402.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. I, p. 110.

<sup>3</sup> Quoting the Polyglot geographical Dictionary published in Peking, Klaproth informs us that *gang* is snow, and *ri* mountain in Tibetan, whereas *dis*, colour, is Sanscrit.

<sup>4</sup> I. e. the Transhimalaya.

<sup>5</sup> Magasin Asiatique, Tome II, N:o IV, Paris 1828, p. 233.