

The curious part is that on the ground where the inventors of Hota Sangpo and Tarkou tchou placed their rivers, one of the highest mountain-systems in the world is really situated, namely Transhimalaya. When Dutreuil de Rhins without hesitation accepted the representation of the Ta-ch'ing map, and when Capt. (now Colonel Sir) H. TROTTER with some hesitation, i. e. with dotted lines, accepted Nain Sing's rivers, they gave us excellent examples of the standpoint of European knowledge regarding the existence of Transhimalaya! Whilst some geographers constructed tremendous mountain ranges north of the Tsangpo, others defended the existence of large rivers at nearly the same place.

Of greater value are the following facts related in the Chinese geography: «Le mont Samtan gang tsa est à 180 li (40 milles) au nord de Poumdo; le Largan la à 140 li (30 milles), le Nian tsian tang ra à 130 li (28 milles) et le Tengri nor à 220 li (48 milles) dans le nord-ouest de la même ville . . .» All these mountains were seen by Nain Sing on his journey in 1873—74, and he calls them Sámdán Kángjáng, Dam Lhargan Pass and Ninjinthanglá.

Even on such a recent edition of *Stieler's Hand-Atlas* as 1901, the problematic road from Khotan to Lhasa is entered.¹ It goes from Khotan to Polu, crosses the Kwen-lun-mountains, passes Ilitsi, Aritau-tun, Atan-gol, Suget, Imam-Mula, south of the mountain-range Schatu-tu-daban, continues, always S.E. to Sari, follows the northern shore of Chargut-tso to Nakdzong and finally continues to the western shore of Tengri-nor. The latter part of this road is entered on the Ta-ch'ing map as given by de Rhins, and called »Route de Khotan à Lhasa«. It passes five lakes with Mongolian names and one place, Nak dzong. If this is meant to be the province of Naktsang, the journey over high, uninhabited plateaus has become considerably shorter, for, from the beginning of Naktsang to Lhasa, the travellers from Khotan should come into contact with nomads the whole way. But it is difficult to reconcile the northern part of the road with the following description as quoted by de Rhins from the *Si yu tou tché or Orography of Chinese Turkestan*:²

»Les ramifications des Tsong ling se dirigent vers le sud-est et constituent les Nan chan ou montagnes méridionales qui commencent au sud-est du territoire de Khotan. En allant vers le sud-est, on rencontre les monts Chatou tou daba dont la chaîne est enclavée dans le désert de sables. — A partir des hameaux situés sur les montagnes de la frontière orientale du Khotan, la chaîne du Chatou tou se dirige vers l'est, traverse le Yechil nor (le district du), puis le désert de sables sur l'espace de 600 li. Les pics se succèdent sans interruption jusqu'à l'extrémité septentrionale du Chatou tou.»

From such vague and uncertain information we cannot suggest the course of this road. De Rhins has tried to reconstruct the whole road between Khotan and Lhasa as given on the Chinese map, but he has not had sufficient dates at his disposal.

De Rhins' examination of the Chinese sources leads him to the general conclusion that it is preferable to omit all ranges and chains from his maps, »comme

¹ Compare Vol. I, p. 264, and Vol. III, p. 38.

² Op. cit. p. 560.