

CHAPTER XV.

NAIN SING'S JOURNEY, 1865-66, ALONG THE SOUTHERN FRONT OF TRANSHIMALAYA.

In the following chapters we have to consider the results of the Pundits' journeys in so far as they have enlarged our knowledge of the periferic parts of the Trans-himalayan system.¹

The first and most important journey is the one undertaken by NAIN SING during 1865 and 1866 and described by Captain T. G. MONTGOMERIE.² As Nain Sing travelled in the valley of the Tsangpo and Raga-tsangpo along the whole length of the Central Transhimalaya, he had excellent occasion to see as much of the southern front of the system as can be seen at all from the most deep-cut depression between the two mighty systems. DESIDERI and FREYRE had seen the same alpine views to the north, but in Desideri's narrative nothing is said of any mountains, except the Kailas. If Desideri's narrative had been known and published before Nain Sing's journey one would hardly have expected any mountains at all, perhaps only ridges of relatively low hills, but most of the country would have seemed to be a *Gran Diserto*, or a barren plateau-plain. Nain Sing's journey proved beyond doubt that real mountains, sometimes considerable, were situated north of the Tsangpo. This route was selected by Montgomerie because he had been informed by natives that it was »practicable as far as the road itself was concerned». A journey on this road would very likely define the whole course of the Tsangpo. The only point on the river hitherto known was the place where Turner had crossed it. »In fact the route from the Mansa rowar lake to Lhasa was alone a capital field for exploration.»

¹ A historical review of all the journeys undertaken by Pundits may be found in Markham: *A Memoir on the Indian Surveys*, chapt. X: »Route Surveys beyond the Frontier of British India by native explorers.» And in Holdich: *Tibet the Mysterious*, Gr. Sandberg: *The Exploration of Tibet* etc. I therefore regard it superfluous to follow here the Pundits step by step.

² Report of a Route-Survey made by Pundit *—, from Nepal to Lhasa, and thence through the Upper Valley of the Brahmaputra to its Source. *Journal Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. 38, 1868, p. 129 et seq. And Report on the Trans-Himalayan Explorations, in connection with the Great Trigonometrical Survey of India, during 1865-7. *Proceedings Royal Geogr. Society*, Vol. XII, 1867-68, p. 146 et seq.