

CHAPTER XVI.

THE EXPLORATION OF THE PUNDITS FROM 1867 TO 1873.

Montgomerie's Pundits of 1867 crossed the western Transhimalaya on their way to the eastern and principal branch of the Indus and to Tok-jalung.¹ They crossed the Mana pass into Tibet, passed Totling and »on the 9th August they crossed the watershed between the Sutlej and the Indus by the Bogola Pass, 19 220 feet above the sea, and reached Gugti Camp, close to Gartok, on the 11th instant, avoiding the latter place, lest its officials should in any way, interfere with their onward progress. Continuing their journey they ascended the mountains east of Gartok, and, after crossing the Gugti-la Pass, 19,500 feet above the sea, they found themselves on the 14th August on a vast desolate plateau, the lowest points of which they ascertained to be 15 280 feet above the sea». The plateau was called Chojothol or Antelope Plain. Gugti-la is obviously identical with Jukti-la. Another pass they crossed is Pabha-la, 17 650 feet. Then follow Giachuruff camp and the Chomorang-la 18 760 feet, and Tok-jalung.

From what the Pundit heard during this expedition and during his journey to Lhasa in 1865 there appeared to be a whole string of gold-fields all the way from Lhasa to Rudok »along the route which must run close to the northern watershed of the Brahmaputra, probably in the depression to the north of it». There is really a road from Lhasa to Tok-jalung in the depression of lakes north of the Transhimalaya, north of the watershed.

Then the Pundit who had proceeded so far returned to Giachuruff where the whole party was re-collected. They followed the Indus down to the junction with the Gartang-chu, thus crossing this part or branch of the Transhimalayan system in the transverse valley.

Of the Aling-gangri which Montgomerie estimates at 23 or 24 000 feet he says: »The Aling-Gangri group had never, as far as I am aware, been heard of before. They appear to be a continuation of the range between the Indus and the Pangkong Lake. The Pundit could see no farther continuation of the range to the east of Thok-Jalung. Another high group was seen to the east of the Medok-la,

¹ Reports of the Trans-Himalayan Explorations during 1867. Journal Royal Geographical Society, Vol. 39, 1869, p. 146 et seq.