

CHAPTER XXII.

E. T. ATKINSON.

In his important work on the Himalayan Districts of north-western India, E. T. ATKINSON pays attention chiefly to the Himalaya, and cannot, of course, have much to say of the mountains north of the Tsangpo. From his *résumé* of Himalayan exploration some extracts may be sufficient to give a general idea of his views.

Regarding High Asia as a unity he says: »The Himalaya itself is but the southern belt of that great girdle of mountains which encloses within them the country of which the southern half is commonly called Eastern Turkistán. From or through the southern slope of the Himálaya flow the great rivers known as the Indus, Ganges, and Brahmaputra. To the east, the continuation of the Himálaya is traced in the mountain ranges through which flow the Yangtse-chiang and the Hoang-ho, and which are prolonged to the north in the Ala-shán, Inshán and Khing-han mountains.»¹ In this view he has, no doubt, been misled by Saunders' map.

In his *Early attempts at generalization*² Atkinson begins with Herbert, and says that his idea of the country north of India was apparently derived from maps only. »He considered the upper beds of the Brahmaputra and the Satlej as forming part of the barrier zone which surrounds the central tract, and not as a part of the plateau itself.» Herbert was the first to give a systematic account of the Himalaya as a whole, but »his errors were those of his time, when the knowledge even of descriptive geography was in its infancy.»

Then Atkinson proceeds to Hodgson, who was the first to explain in a scientific way the relations between orographical and hydrographical arrangement. »Hodgson's Himálaya proper is the ghát line or watershed between Tibet and India, and the watershed between the valleys of the Indus and Sanpu and the great plateau is called by him Nyenchhen Thangla Chain.»

Richard Strachey was the first to point out distinctly »that the Himálaya was in truth the broad mountainous slope of the great Tibetan table-land descending to

¹ The Himálayan Districts of the North-Western provinces of India. Allahabad, 1882. Vol. I, p. 1 et seq.

² Op. cit. 4.