

A German and a Frenchman, KLAPROTH and RÉMUSAT, were the first pioneers to open up new perspectives on Asiatic geography by way of using the Chinese sources. One has a feeling of standing upon solid ground when studying their translations and discussions of the Chinese geographers.¹ At a time when European explorations had not yet penetrated into the interior of High Asia, the classical Chinese information was of a still greater value and importance than in our days.

Amongst explorers of the epoch who have contributed, in a very modest degree it is true, to the knowledge of the region in question, was JAMES B. FRASER.² Speaking of the breadth of the mountainous tract that overlooks Hindustan, he says:³ »In all the routes of which we have accounts that proceed in various directions towards the Trans-Himālāyan countries, hills covered with snow are occasionally mentioned as occurring, even after the great deserts are passed and the grazing country entered. The breadth, then, of this crest of snow-clad rock itself cannot fairly be estimated at less than from seventy to eighty miles.»

And further, of the general orographical morphology of the country: »The only European travellers who are known to have entered on this new ground are Messrs. Moorcroft and Hearsay, who penetrated by the Nitee-Mama pass, and reached the lake of Mantulloe, Mansrowar, or Mepāng. All these sources lead us to presume a pretty extensive detail of hills beyond the loftiest belt, that by no means terminate even at Gara or Gartope, though they do not reach the height of those to the westward and southward. A branch of the Cailas range, undoubtedly a ramification of the Himālā, stretches out beyond the lake Mansrowar, a considerable way towards Gartope. Beyond this point there seem at present to exist no grounds on which even a conjecture may be formed concerning the nature of the country.»

Fraser is aware of the fact that the mountains near Gartok are exceeded in height both by the mountains to the south and those to the west, *i. e.* the Himalaya and the Kara-korum. The Kailas is in his opinion a ramification of the Himalaya.

At another place, talking of the source of Bhagirath, Fraser returns to the question of the breadth of the »Snowy Range» and makes it increase to a hundred miles, which still would not even reach to the course of the Tsangpo:

The breadth of the mountainous region may probably occupy a space of from eighty to one hundred miles: The grounds for supposing this to be the extent of that space, are not only our own observation, but the information we have received from different and intelligent persons, relative to routes through the passes. Thus reasoning from probabilities, observation and information, Rudra Himāla is at least removed to the center

¹ v. Richthofen: *China*, I, p. 722. Comparing the two scholars Richthofen says: Obgleich an Universalität der Kenntnisse und kritischer Schärfe nachstehend, reiht sich doch Rémusat durch die hohe Gediegenheit seiner Arbeiten seinem Zeitgenossen würdig an.

² *Cp.* Vol. II, p. 40 *et seq.*

³ *Journal of a Tour through part of the Snowy Range of the Himālā Mountains and to the sources of the Rivers Jumna and Ganges.* London 1820, p. 282.