

of the snowy range; and it is fair to conclude that the land, mountainous and elevated as it is, rather falls than rises to the north and north-east of this mountain. This is confirmed by the pundit, and those zemindars who have been accustomed to view the country from lofty situations on either side of the glen of the Bhagirathi. So far as the people of the place — pundit, brahmins, and zemindars — were questioned, merely about their own district and the places contiguous, their answers were distinct and prompt, with every appearance of being correct to the best of their apprehension. But when any attempt was made to carry them further abroad, or to collect anything of the topography of the country beyond this great range, they failed altogether: either at once saying they knew nothing about the matter, or giving improbable inconsistent accounts. Some of them asserted, that there was a plain and well cultivated country at no greater distance than 12 cos (horizontal distance) from the other side of Rudok Himála, but, from the nature of the country it was not possible to reach it, except by a very circuitous route. But whether they alluded to the great plains of Tartary, or to some intervening valley, it was impossible to discover. They however asserted, that it might be seen from some of the high peaks in the neighbourhood, which I must believe to be false, or at best very doubtful: as I think there cannot be any means of ascending a point high enough to afford such a view from any place near this spot.<sup>1</sup>

His opinion that the country falls to the north and N. E. from the Himalaya, may, if only the peaks are considered, indeed be said to be in accordance with fact. But Fraser probably believed that this fall was definite and continued the whole way to Great Tartary: In a note he adds, though the passage is not quite easy to follow:

»If such a plain do exist, it cannot well, I think, be near the great plains on the N. E. and E. of the Himálaya, as the routes we have obtained from more creditable authorities, imply the existence of a far greater extent of hills stretching even to the southward of Komaon . . . .» Every explorer of these regions will agree with Fraser in his complaints regarding the difficulty of getting reliable information from the natives.

In the *Journal Asiatique* I found a short narrative of a journey of a Persian merchant, written in Moscow in 1820, and translated by Mr. WOLKOW at St. Petersburg.<sup>2</sup> It is a pity that the description of the journey, which had been undertaken several times by the merchant, is so short that no conclusions can be drawn from it. However, he passes through Aksu and Yarkand and after some preparations he starts for Tibet (Ladak). On both sides of the route are great mountains. After having crossed a river he comes to a great mountain called Caracouroun-padichah, »where in old times a town existed». »Après sept journées de marche, on vient à un endroit où les vapeurs qui s'élèvent de la terre font enfler le corps des hommes

<sup>1</sup> *Account of a Journey to the Sources of the Jumna and Bhagirathi Rivers.* By James B. Fraser (without a year), p. 227, 230.

<sup>2</sup> *Route depuis Sémipalatnoy jusqu'à Cachemir.* *Journal Asiatique.* Tome IV. Paris 1824, p. 226. *Férrussac's Bulletin de sciences géographiques*, sixième section. Tome III, Paris 1825, p. 106.