

He found traces of an old lake, and a recent one in the valleys around Skardo. At the village of Kipchun he saw the terminal moraine of a great glacier from the gorge above, jutting out a full quarter of a mile into the plain.

The glacier coming from peak Mungo Gūsor was 6 miles long. Opposite the village of Askole the Braldoh was crossed on a rope-bridge: »This fine tributary to the Indus is here a roaring boiling torrent, of an ochre colour, showing that its glacier sources are not far distant.» Of his visit to Askole, Godwin-Austen says: »Save M. A. Schlagintweit, I was the only European that had ever been seen there.»

Then he reached the foot of the magnificent glacier of Biafo, which terminates at an elevation of 10,145 feet. Of the Punmah glacier he observes that it was »on the advance together with all its detritus», which indicates an accelerated glacial activity for 1861, unless it was only a local one. Godwin-Austen at once understood the importance, from physico-geographical point of view, of all these great glaciers, and when they are, in our days, in a more or less sensational way, compared with the polar ice-masses, it should be remembered that Godwin-Austen, already in 1861, wrote of them:¹

We were now fairly within an icebound region, which for bleakness and grandeur is perhaps not to be surpassed: its glaciers exceed those of any of the mountain-ranges of the world, and are equalled only by those of arctic or antarctic regions, for though the Himalayas of Nepal are quite as high as those of the Mustakh, yet being so much further south, and of less breadth, the glaciers have not a like extent.

He climbed the Punmah glacier, crossed it, went to Skeenmung where it is formed by two branches, and went northwards on the Nobundi-Sobundi glacier, which is formed by many other ice-streams. Two peaks were here found to be 23—24,000 feet. From a high station, there could be seen the great plateau of ice from which the last-mentioned glacier takes its rise. Of these regions he says: »It is a vast sheet of ice, with only a few sharp points of rock sticking out here and there. Snowy ridges stretched away towards Yarkund.»

On August 11th Godwin-Austen started early »for the direction of the Mustakh or Pass over the Karakoram Mountains into Yarkund». He did not reach the pass itself, but had to return from a height of 17,301 feet, or about 500 feet below the pass. »The only other European who had tried the Mustakh Pass was M. Schlagintweit, who was equally unsuccessful.»²

After this excursion he went to the Biaho glacier, upon the difficult surface of which he made some marches. The Mustakh ridge was on the north, the Masherbrum on the south. The lateral glaciers were separated by sharp precipitous ridges of

¹ Loc. cit., p. 30.

² Not quite equally, for he reached the pass, the height of which he gives as 19,019 feet, whilst FILIPPI, 1909, gives 19,000 feet. GODWIN-AUSTEN who travelled five years later, turned back from a point 1,700 feet lower down.