

as parts of the Himalayan System. The last-mentioned spoke of a broad mountain range between India and Tartary, Himalaya being its southern, Kwen-lun its northern crest, thus creating the gigantic monster of *one* range with *two* crests. SAUNDERS wisely pointed out that the Kwen-lun *was* a range just as well as the Himalaya, and he could not see why a mountain with peaks of 28,000 feet in altitude should not be called a range.

None of the rest had ever written such classical words as the following by Shaw:

Once across the Bara Lâcha Pass (or any other pass of the same range), you enter a region where all gorges or valleys appear to have been filled up by an encroaching sea of gravel, which has risen to within a few hundred feet of the summits of the ranges. The space between the mountains no longer plunges down into a seemingly bottomless ravine, whose sides narrow down till they barely leave room for the stream. Instead of that it is occupied by a broad high-level plain, out of which the summit ranges merely rise like undulations. We notice the prevalence of the *horizontal*, after the *vertical* lines to which the Himâlaya has accustomed us. It is like leaving a Gothic cathedral, and approaching the Parthenon. At the same time, a kind of drought seems to have fallen over the face of the country. There are no vast fields of snow to supply streams of water, and no frequent showers to maintain verdure.¹

In these few graphic and eloquent words Robert Shaw gives us the very cream of the problem, and the fundamental characteristics of the most majestic building on the earth's crust. He also proves to be an unusually intelligent observer quite familiar with the great physical changes, which since millions of years have been, and still to-day are going on between India and Eastern Turkestan. If a man of such great merits enunciates what in his opinion is a general morphological truth, one has to listen to him. And disregarding the genetic points of view, the geological stratification and the historical building up of these immense mountain systems, only devoting our attention to the goal at which the destroying and depositing forces are aiming, he *may* be said to be right. But as long as the erosion is active the goal will never be reached. And therefore we have to take the Tibetan high plateaux and their gigantic mountain systems such as they are at present.

¹ *Visits to High Tartary, etc.*, p. 62.