

headquarters over the Kara-korum Pass. A detached party, consisting of Captain TROTTER, Captain BIDDULPH and Dr. STOLICZKA, was directed to proceed *via* Chang-chenmo by the route by which the former mission returned from Yarkand in 1870. It was hoped that this party might be able to discover »some alternative route by which that line of road might be shortened and difficulties avoided».¹

TROTTER describes the three routes, of which the eastern one, over the Chang-tang, was of special interest. It was surveyed by the PUNDIT KISHEN SING, and TROTTER is right in regarding this survey as »one of the most important geographical results secured by the mission». Shaw had obtained information about this road from the natives, which agreed remarkably well with the Pundit's map.

A traveller from Leh to Khotan might follow the route by the Panggong-tso, along which the Pundit travelled, but he would more probably take a short cut from Lukong to the Mangtza-tso, following the ordinary Chang-chenmo route to Yarkand, to the point where the road leaves the Chang-chenmo valley. At the head of this valley he would find an easy pass, which we now know as Lanek-la. This road would be 40 miles shorter than the road by Noh. From Mangtza the road lies over a series of high plateaux varying from 16,000 to 17,000 feet in height, crossed here and there by low ridges which rise somewhat irregularly from the surface of the plain which contains numerous lakes, most of them brackish. In latitude 35° 7' North the Pundit crossed at a height of but little more than 17,000 feet, the watershed of a snowy range which may perhaps be the true eastern continuation of the Kuen Luen.²

The Keriya-darya begins from the northern side of the pass. After having crossed another range the road goes down to Polu.

There was grass and fuel the whole way, except one stage, and Trotter recommends it to merchants. That the road has never been in use, Trotter thinks is due to hostilities from the Taghliks and Changpas, who make the traffic uncertain. Therefore he proposes that the relations with China should first be settled, and then, he says:

Leaving the plains of India at the ancient city of Najibabad, the starting point of the old Royal Road stated by Moorcroft to have crossed these same mountain systems, a good road about 210 miles in length, and only crossing one low pass, leads to the Niti Pass (16,676) over the main Himalayan range. Descending from the Niti Pass, due north into the Satlej valley, and crossing that river at Totling (12,200), and crossing by the Bogo La (19,210) into the Indus valley at Gartokh (14,240) the road would then follow that river to Demchok. Thence it would go over the Jara Pass due north to Rudokh and Noh, and by the newly surveyed route to Polu and Khotan.³

Trotter thinks it possible that at some distant day this road may form a highway to Turkestan.

Speaking of the Forsyth Mission, Colonel WALKER gives the following report regarding the work of the Pundits on the road between Leh and Yarkand:

¹ *Account of the Survey Operations in connection with the Mission to Yarkand and Kashgar in 1873—74* by Captain HENRY TROTTER. Calcutta 1875, p. 4.

² *Ibidem*, p. 15.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 16.