

which are western and eastern portions of the same range, as the Messrs. Schlagintweit first asserted, and as the observations of Mr. Johnson, in his journeys between Leh and Khotan, would seem to show, is of no very great geographical consequence. It is certain, at any rate, that the south-western or Kara-Koram ridge, the pass over which, forming the main road between Thibet and Yarkand, rises 18,341 feet above the level of the sea, is the true watershed between India and Central Asia, the Indus absorbing all the streams which flow from the southern slope of the range, while the northern rivers, which form the Kará-Kásh and which were followed by the Schlagintweits and by Johnson, force their way through, or round, the outer barrier of the Kuen-Luen, and went north-east-ward to the Gobi or Sandy desert.

The orography in this passage was not quite up to date in 1875! It was of a very great geographical consequence to know whether the Kwen-lun and Karakorum were one or two ranges. It is somewhat bewildering to learn that the SCHLAGINTWEITS asserted the two names were applied to the western and eastern portions of the same range, when we remember that 14 years earlier, or in 1861, the German explorers wrote: »We are fortunate enough to have been the first Europeans that ever crossed the chains of the Kara-korúm and of the Kuenlúen; Dr. Thomson had proceeded so far as to reach the Karakorum pass, but the Kuenlúen . . . had hitherto remained a perfectly unknown and unvisited territory.»¹ And how it is possible to talk of *one* range on JOHNSON'S map² is not easier to see. The latter half of Rawlinson's passage is correct and contradicts the first half.

In his opinion Leh

is much more convenient than Cashmere for communication with Northern India. If it be true, indeed, according to the information supplied to Mr. Johnson at Khotan, that by proceeding seventy or eighty miles to the south-east, the Kuen-luen mountains may be turned, and wheeled carriages can thus pass along an elevated table-land by Rodokh and Gardukh to the immediate back of the Himálaya range, we may expect in due time that the great Hindustan road will be prolonged from the Niti Pass so as to open out upon these uplands, a direct line of traffic being thus secured with Tartary, which shall be independent of the difficulties both political and geographical, that are attached to the old route by Cashmere and Ladakh.

This route of JOHNSON was known to MOORCROFT, CUNNINGHAM and H. STRACHEY. RAWLINSON says: It was known in the country as a royal made road from the Niti Pass *viâ* Gartok and Rudok to Khotan. He believes it was made by the Delhi emperors for serving trade between India and China. Curiously enough he, however, supposes that this royal road passed to the west and not to the east of the Kwen-Lun.³ The prospect was darkened by Shaw, who had received information about certain difficulties on this road.

Rawlinson seems not to have had any confidence in the SCHLAGINTWEITS, but, regarding the enormous services they made to a geographical knowledge of western

¹ *Vide supra* p. 222. And still this passage is quoted by Rawlinson in a note.

² *Vide* Pl. LIV, *supra*.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 217 note.