

In Vol. III, p. 223 *et seq.* I have discussed the part of Count DE LESDAIN'S journey from July 1904 to November 1905 that deals with his crossing of the Trans-himalaya.¹ Here we have only to remember his crossing of the Tang-la.

On August 18th, 1905, he camped at Ulang-miris a very swollen tributary to the Yang-tse-kiang. August 23rd, the day after he reached the main river which he followed for four days, he says:

Nous pouvions apercevoir en face de nous les sommets tout blancs des monts Dang-la. Ils semblaient former au sud une barrière difficile à franchir, et dont nous devons cependant nous rendre maîtres si nous voulions suivre le Yang-tze jusqu'à sa source.²

The Yang-tse had cut its way through narrow gorges. In this region he came across the first Tibetan yak hunters. His description of these regions is interesting, and therefore it is a pity that his little map is quite insufficient, and it is impossible to follow the details of his itinerary. However, travelling up the valley he found no possibility to cross the river, and therefore tried another valley taking him to the west. Here he had a very trying journey of three days. The soil consisted of soft muddy swamps. He is right in saying:

Au Thibet la boue produite par le dégel, dans des cuvettes ou vallées sans écoulement, s'étend pendant des dizaines de kilomètres sur une épaisseur parfois si considérable qu'on ne la peut mesurer. Des animaux peuvent disparaître dans la boue comme dans du sable mouvant; . . . dans toute une journée de marche, on ne rencontre pas un seul pied carré de terrain capable de porter le poids du corps sans s'effondrer . . .

In this valley the caravan was nearly lost. Out of 50 mules only six came through, and almost all provisions, except for four days, were lost, together with collections and other things. Finally a valley was found leading up to one of the snowy passes to the S. E. »du grand demi-cercle que forment les monts Dang-la vers le nord«. Nearly everything went down into the mud. L'une après l'autre, nos pauvres mules avaient dû être abandonnées au sort horrible d'un engloutissement dans les flots de boue. Seeing that one mule after another was sinking in the mud it would perhaps have been better to try another passage. But it may be that the whole crest of the range consisted of soft mud, as I experienced at a place not far from this, in 1901.

Le 27 août, nous commençâmes l'escalade des monts Dang-la que nous entreprîmes par le côté est et non par les passes de l'ouest, afin d'être plus sûrs de retrouver le Yang-tse après avoir franchi leur grande barrière de glaciers.

Now the passage was easier as the rocky ground supported the weight of the caravan. At the top of the valley the glacier was reached that crowned the summit of the pass. Between the snout and a moraine a passage was found. At the top of the pass Lesdain says:

¹ *Voyage au Thibet, par la Mongolie, de Pékin aux Indes.* Paris 1908.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 304.