

this is in a geological sense a rift through the mountains. It is a valley of erosion, and the eroding force is the great Indus, whose vast chocolate-coloured flood is swollen by the melting snows and glaciers of the Hindu Kush, the Mustagh, and the Karakorum, as well as of the North-West Himalaya, draining nearly 80,000 miles of mountains.

From the village of Panimik he climbed a peak which he called Panimik Peak. He describes how he

looked at the great ice bound giants that rose so impressively sheer from the glaciers, just as some lofty, cliff-girt island stands out from the stormy ocean. We were awe-stricken as we gazed. The nearest peak was also the highest; it rises to over 25,000 feet, and is somewhat table-topped, with lofty ice cliffs at the summit overhanging the precipitous sides. The other peaks, each over 24,000 feet, were quite separate, and lay farther away, and to the east and south-east.

These great peaks may be regarded as the east continuation of the Karakorum range, which extends from here to the north-west, culminating in the lofty peak known as K<sub>2</sub>, or Mount Godwin-Austen, and beyond that blends with the Hindu Kush. — The only pass at present practicable in this range is the Saser Pass, from Nubra to the Shayok Valley.

The people of Nubra had mentioned an old tradition that Kanjutis had once raided their valley from the north-west, from some pass at the head of the glacier marked Saichar; and I thought it probable that there might be some direct route to the Oprang, and thence to Hunza, whence the raiders came.

In Skardo Dr. Neve asked a native chief about the route to Yarkand, and got the answer:

»Formerly there was a road to Yarkand for trading purposes, and even horses could go.» — »Why did the trade cease? Is it that the ice has closed the path?» — »No; it was the Kanjutis (the robber bands of Hunza) who raided the caravans at Jangal. On one occasion, forty years ago, the Nagar men raided the upper part of the Shigar Valley, but when they were returning with their plunder, they lost their way on the Biafo glacier and all perished in the snow; since then we have had peace.»

His companion on the 1907 expedition was Captain OLIVER, then British Joint-Commissioner of Ladak.

He is in charge of the trade route all the way from the Sind Valley to the crest of the Karakorum Pass, nearly 400 miles. It is a route that has been used from time immemorial. Rock inscriptions show that it was used centuries before the Christian era. Chinese armies have swept over it, and for centuries the Chinese held fortified posts along it. Indian conquerors have defied climatic difficulties and established colonies on the north side, in the basin of the Tarim.

They travelled up the Nubra Valley, arrived at Panimik, went up the Kaweit Valley. They passed the dark gorge which leads up to the Saser Pass. Gonpa was their farthest camp.

Shelma, the Crystal Peak, flashed up there in the sunlight. Mr. Collins, of the Survey, did some very excellent climbing in 1911 on Shelma and other peaks, in order to triangulate Teram Kangri. A little higher up stood »a sheer wall of syenite, thousands of feet high. They could see »the magnificent snow crest of K<sub>12</sub> to the north-west.... I had no dream then of the magnificent size of the Siachen, the greatest glacier in Asia.