

CHAPTER V.

THE TS'UNG-LING ACCORDING TO THE T'ANG ANNALS.

1. HISTORICAL REMARKS.

After the time of the pilgrims, whose journeys have occupied our attention in the preceding chapters, the power of China in the Hsi-yü and its intercourse with the Western Countries was at certain periods interrupted by great political events. In the first half of the sixth century the Hephthalits conquered »*The Four Garrisons*» or Eastern Turkistan, and the whole region of the Ts'ung-ling mountains down to Kashmir and Gandhāra.¹ During the reign of YANG-TI of the Sui dynasty (605—617) China's influence again began to spread westwards, and in the days of T'AI-TSUNG of the T'ang dynasty (627—650) her power was fully re-established, and her frontiers were carried to beyond Bolor and to the borders of Persia. »The tributary states west of the Bolor formed 16 fu and 72 chou, over which were distributed 126 Chinese military posts.» Several of the states west of the Bolor are said to have continued for a long time to send tribute to China, notwithstanding the conquests of KUTAIBA-IBN MUSLIM, who in the reign of KHALIF WALID overran Bokhara, Samarkand, Ferghana and Khwarizm and extended his conquests across the Bolor to Kashgar.² When the Chinese in 658—659 destroyed the empire of the *Western T'u-chüeh* (Turks) their power extended beyond the Oxus to the Indus, and reached its greatest extension towards the west.³ But this enormous extension over the Western Countries, which embraced the whole of our Ts'ung-ling region, did not last long. A terrible defeat was inflicted on the Chinese by the Tibetans in 670. China was deprived of »the Four Garrisons» 四鎮, and the road to the Ts'ung-ling proper was closed. Eastern Turkistan remained in the hands of the Tibetans until 692 when the Hsi-yü was recovered by the Chinese.⁴ From 696 to 741 Baltistan sent ambassadors to the imperial court, though the power of the Chinese government, from 665 to 715, was only illusory in the countries between the Jaxartes and the Indus, partly on account of the Tibetan conquest of the Four Garrisons, and partly on account of the Arab invasion under KUTAIBA.

In 713 a new glorious period began with the accession of the Emperor HSÜAN-TSUNG. »Determined efforts were made by means of both diplomacy and arms to keep open the Pamir passes, and to check the ambition of the Arabs and Tibetans, who sometimes

¹ VINCENT A. SMITH, *The Early History of India* ... Third Edition, Oxford 1914, p. 360.

² YULE, *Cathay and the Way thither* ... Vol. I, London 1915, p. 98 et seq.

³ HENRI CORDIER in Yule's *Cathay*, p. 61.

⁴ VINCENT A. SMITH, *op. cit.*, p. 362.