

between Najibabad and Khotan, and this even might be considerably shortened by taking the direct road from Polu to Khotan.

[The ancient Royal road probably followed the above to the suspension bridge at Totling, and thence to Rudokh and Noh, whence a road now exists which passes *viâ* the head of the Changchenmo valley and Nischo into the Ling-zi-thung plains, down the Kárákásh river and over the Sánjú Pass to Sánjú (or Sarikia)\* which is half way between Yárkand and Khotan.]

Summarizing our knowledge of the lengths of the various physically practicable routes from Hindustan to Turkestan we find that the distances are:—

	Miles.
From Amritsir to Leh <i>viâ</i> Rawul Pindi and Srinagar ... ..	635
„ „ to „ <i>viâ</i> Kangra ... ..	522
„ „ to „ <i>viâ</i> Sealkote and Cashmere ... ..	575
From Leh to Yarkand <i>viâ</i> Ling-zi-thung and Karakash River ... ..	584
„ „ „ <i>viâ</i> Changchenmo and Karatagh ... ..	527
„ „ „ <i>viâ</i> Karakorum Pass and Sanju (summer route) ... ..	445
„ „ „ <i>viâ</i> Karakorum and Kugiar (winter route) ... ..	472½
„ „ „ <i>viâ</i> Noh, Polu, and Khotan ... ..	839
„ „ Khotan <i>viâ</i> Karakorum and Sanju ... ..	415
„ „ „ <i>viâ</i> Ling-zi-thung and Elchi Pass (Mr. Johnson's route) ... ..	437
„ „ „ <i>viâ</i> Noh, Polu, and Kiria ... ..	637
„ Amritsar to Yarkand by the road followed by the Mission, <i>i.e.</i> , <i>viâ</i> Rawul Pindi, Srinagar, Leh and the summer Karakorum route ... ..	1,080
„ Najibabad to Khotan <i>viâ</i> the Niti Pass and Western Thibet ... ..	931

At some distant day it is not impossible that the last named road may form the highway to Turkestan, but as long as Europeans are rigorously excluded from Western Thibet we cannot hope that this consummation will be realized.

### *Excursions in the neighbourhood of Káshghar.*

During the winter at Káshghar I was permitted to make two excursions in the neighbourhood, both of which have enabled me to add something to our geographical knowledge. The second trip was over ground, which, as far as I am aware, has never hitherto been explored, and is very incorrectly represented on existing maps.

During the first of these trips, which occupied us from the 31st December to 10th January, Dr. Stoliczka and myself, under the orders of Colonel Gordon, visited the Russian frontier at Lake Chadyr Kúl, about 110 miles north-west by north of Káshghar. We had hoped, from the extreme point reached by us, to have struck off to the Terekty Pass on the east, and to have returned by the Terekty Forts to Káshghar. Unfortunately difficulties were placed in the way of our doing this, and we had to return to Káshghar by the same road that we went.

Prior to starting, permission was given by the Ámír for me to use my instruments on the road, and I may here mention that from this time forward during the whole of my stay in Káshghar territory I was at liberty to use openly what instruments I chose. Of course a certain amount of caution was necessary. Many of the officials with whom I came in contact were doubtless very suspicious as to what it all meant, yet in no case did any one attempt to hinder my taking observations or notes, although in many cases they endeavoured to neutralize the value of my work by giving me false information on geographical subjects. I allude to this

\* The three points that have indicated this as the line of Royal Road are:—

1st.—Moorcroft's statement that the road started from Najibabad and emerged in the Turkestan plains at Sarikia (which I identify with Sanju) half way between Yárkand and Khotan.

2nd.—The existence of an iron suspension bridge at Totling said to have been constructed by Alexander the Great (*vide* Major Montgomerie's Report on Trans-Himalayan explorations made during 1867).

3rd.—The statement made by Muhammed Amin, "Punjab Trade Report, Appendix IVA." that—"the old route taken by Moghul conquerors from Tashkend towards China passed through the Aksai Chin. Traces of it are still seen."