

The height values ascertained for them are subject to minor adjustment consequent upon the corrections which the geodetic work effected by the Survey of India in 1912-13 on the Tāghdum-bāsh Pāmīr has involved for the triangulated points of the Pāmīr Boundary Commission. But the results of Rai Sāhib Rām Singh's triangulation leave no doubt that the Kongur (or Shiwakte) portion of the range rises in at least one peak (Kongur-debe I, height 25,146 feet) considerably above the great snowy dome of Muz-tāgh-atā (24,321 feet). The photo-theodolite panoramas taken by me around Little Kara-kul served for the preparation of a detailed map of the ground between that range and the Russian Pāmīrs, by Lieut. F. B. Tillard, R. E., on the scale of 4 miles to 1 inch.⁵ A recent computation of heights, by Major E. O. Wheeler, M. C., R. E., based upon the same panoramas, has fully confirmed the greater elevation of Peak Kongur-debe I, which hence may now be accepted as the culminating height north of the Hindukush and Himālaya, not merely in the Pāmīr region, but also in Asia generally.⁶

The narrow valley of the Gez or Yamān-yār river draining the western and northern slopes of the Kongur range, and the route followed in the plain north-eastwards as far as Kāshgar could be checked by triangulation.⁷ Several high peaks previously fixed from the Little Kara-kul side could be observed by theodolite both at Tāshmalik, near the Gez river's debouchure from the mountains, and at Kāshgar where a prolonged halt necessitated by my preparations for the winter's work fortunately gave a chance of favourable atmospheric conditions towards the close of August. As evidence of the very careful work done by R. S. Rām Singh both on the plane-table and in triangulation, I may mention that the longitude of Kāshgar as shown by the former ($76^{\circ} 1' 0''$) differed by less than two minutes from the value which wireless observation on Sir F. De Filippi's expedition in 1914 determined ($75^{\circ} 59' 5.64''$), while the triangulation result ($75^{\circ} 59' 15''$) as computed from our Kongur-debe Peak I approaches this final determination still more closely.⁸

At the beginning of September we left Kāshgar first for the examination of some ruined sites north-eastwards near the outermost foothills of the T'ien-shan, and then for the journey which was to take us to Khotan in the south-east, the main base for my intended explorations.⁹ For the first portion of this journey I was able to avoid the well-known high road by rejoining Rām Singh in the large and fertile tract of Khān-arik and thence by making our way to the south *via* Ordam-pādshāh.¹⁰ By the visit to this famous pilgrimage place we gained acquaintance with the westernmost part of that great belt of absolutely barren drift-sand desert known as the Taklamakān which extends throughout the whole length of the Tārīm basin as far east as the Lop-nōr depression. From Kizil we were obliged to follow the caravan route to Khotan which, except where it passes through the rich district of Yārkan and the adjoining oasis of Karghalik, keeps close to the southern edge of the dune-covered Taklamakān.¹¹ Apart from rapid excursions in the last named oasis and visits to ruined sites near this ancient highway survey work had to be confined to the vicinity of the actual route line.¹²

Within a few days of our arrival at Khotan, October 13th, however, we set out for a month's interesting geographical work in the mountains to the south, a portion of the K'un-lun range hitherto practically unsurveyed. Five long marches from the debouchure of the Yurung-kāsh river led over a succession of high spurs furnishing excellent plane-table stations. Then the deep-cut valley

⁵ See *Map of Muztāgh-atā and Lake Little Kara-kul prepared by Lieut. F. B. Tillard, R. E., from photo-theodolite survey of M. A. Stein, Ph. D., Survey of India Offices, Calcutta, 1903.*

⁶ For details on this peak and on other points of orographic interest, cf. Notes on Sheet No. 2.

⁷ For a description of the route, cf. *Ruins of Khotan*, pp. 99 sqq.

⁸ The position ascertained for Kāshgar refers in each case to the ground of the British Consulate

General (Chīnībāgh) which served as 'camp' for both our expeditions as well as for that of Captain Deasy. The latter's longitude determination for the same point was $76^{\circ} 1' 2''$. De Filippi's station is situated in the old Muhammadan cemetery between the British and (former) Russian Consulates.

⁹ See *Ruins of Khotan*, pp. 130 sqq.

¹⁰ See *ibid.* pp. 142 sqq.; Sheet No. 5.

¹¹ See *ibid.* pp. 148 sqq.

¹² Cf. *ibid.* pp. 167 sqq.; Sheets Nos. 6, 9.