

The ice in the river at Barnaul was just breaking as we arrived, and was not expected to hold for more than two days. After crossing the river, we continued on the post road from Barnaul, on the W. side, until we reached the last village before arriving at Novo-Nicholaewsk. We experienced great difficulty here, as we had to cross the Obi River twice, and in crossing at Novo-Nicholaewsk we had to take to a drosky to get over the last ten yards of broken ice.

At Kourgan, where we arrived two days later, the ice was flowing down the river, and after another two days' journey we found ourselves in summer weather buying flowers at the stations, with the temperature at 98° to 100°.

There is one thing that I remarked with regard to Siberian weather, and that was that it is most erratic, the weather in one part being no indication of what it might be like in another. The Altai summer was six weeks late and that of the West Siberian district four weeks late last season.

The fauna and flora are very varied, and their examination would repay tenfold any one who would make this trip to the mountain districts. From information I gathered I find that in summer the flora of the S. Altai is magnificent.

The greatest drawback to mountaineering is the extremely hard ice. This must be met with sharper ice axes and nails than those used on the Alps.

The district I visited should become one of the most interesting exploration grounds in the world, and I hope I have led the way to further explorers by showing that even the dreaded winter of Siberia cannot keep an enthusiastic explorer out of this little known country.

#### NOTES FROM TIBET.

BY DOUGLAS W. FRESHFIELD.

LORD CURZON has recently forwarded to the Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society a set of thirteen photographs taken by Mr. J. Hayden, the geologist attached to the Tibetan Mission, during its stay at Khamba Jong last summer. These views have a double interest. In the first place they illustrate the account given by Sir Joseph Hooker and other travellers of the rolling uplands that extend from the top of the long staircase which leads from the plains of India up into Tibet.

Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem  
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus.

These photographs should serve to persuade to an honest recognition of things as they are the ill-informed critics of the Indian Government who have imagined facts—*e.g.* 'stupendous passes'—

to fit their political feelings. We have here brought before our eyes extensive, almost level plains, treeless and clad only in parts with sparse herbage, girt and divided from one another by low ridges, off which the rough angles have been rounded by ice. In the absence of definite valleys sluggish streams meander aimlessly across the wide landscape. Dotted here and there on the vantage ground of some hillock are villages often overlooked by the high white walls—pierced with a crowd of tiny windows and crowned by fluttering prayer-flags—of monastic fortresses. It is an open country. To compare small things with great, it bears the same relation to Sikhim that the plateau of Constantine does to the coastward hills and glens of the Kabyles in Algeria, or the uplands of Armenia do to the valleys of Georgia. The horizontal prevails over the vertical in all the main lines of its landscape.

But for the mountaineer and the geographer the chief interest of these photographs lies in the fact that by combining them we can obtain a complete panorama from a novel point of view of the great groups capped by Kangchenjunga and the peak known to the Survey as XV. or 'Mount Everest,' and to Tibetans as Chomokankar. All along the southern horizon beyond the low ridges of the foreground the brown landscape has a silver edging. Kangchenjunga is conspicuous; the round tower of Jannu is just recognisable; then come the summits that encircle Lhonak. Beyond these, unnamed minor peaks stretch westwards to a broad break in the snows—the Arun valley. Further W. Chomokankar shows its unmistakable outline. Again, somewhat N.W. of Chomokankar appears a great group of peaks; one rock and one snowy summit are conspicuous. These are apparently as yet unidentified and unmeasured. They rise at no great distance behind Chomokankar and are probably S. of the Tingri Maidan. The two 'very high snowy mountains' marked on some survey maps N. of the Arun and the Tingri plain do not, I think, come into any of these photographs. They are probably included on the right in the plate opposite p. 124 of vol. ii. of Hooker's 'Himalayan Journals.' Hooker gives the bearing from Bhomtso (near the Kangra La) of their highest peak (vol. ii. p. 169) as N. 55° W.

I have with some difficulty and the help of a magnifying glass combined the different distant views. Unfortunately they were not taken from a single standpoint. It is to be hoped that the surveyors with the expedition have supplemented them by obtaining with a phototheodolite, similar to that employed with such excellent results by Mr. Stein, panoramas of the Tibetan ranges.

The series of photographs sent home includes two near views of Chomiomo (22,385 ft.) and Kangchenjau (22,550 ft.), the guardians of the Lachen valley passes, and a landscape showing what is called 'the south,' but obviously is the N.W. side of the Chortenima La. The Mission seem to have been able to make excursions to a certain distance in this direction on a track followed some years before by Major O'Connor.\*

\* See *Routes in Sikhim*.

In the 'Geographical Journal' for January last I mentioned that Captain Wood, of the Indian Survey, had received permission from the Nepal Durbar to visit Katmandu for the purpose of ascertaining whether the 29,002-ft. peak, known to the Survey as 'Mount Everest,' was visible from the heights near the capital and forms part of the range there known as Gaurisankar. I wrote, 'It will probably be found that the great peak, if visible at all, is far from conspicuous, and only recognisable—like the Finsteraarhorn from Grindelwald—to those who know where to look for it.'

Writing from Calcutta on January 18, the Viceroy has, in anticipation of a more detailed report, kindly informed me of the results of Captain Wood's mission.

Lord Curzon writes, 'Everest from Kaulia is an insignificant point, just visible in a gap in the main range.' 'The name Gaurisankar,' he adds, 'is given by the officials of Katmandu to Survey Peak XX. The name is not known to any of the Nepalese hill men.' Peak XX. is thirty-six miles from the highest peak, Peak XV., but forms part of what, according to the principle adopted by European orographers, would be considered the same group. Peak XV. is a hundred and eight, Peak XX. about seventy-eight miles distant from Katmandu. The former peak is not visible from the city of Katmandu and has no individual name on this side. It was, as I suspected,\* wrongly identified by Dr. Boeck. The peak he took for it is one of the Jibjibia peaks of H. Schlagintweit's panorama (as can easily be seen by comparing the panorama with Dr. Boeck's photograph). These peaks Hermann Schlagintweit identified with Peaks XXII. and XXIV. of the Survey. It seems, therefore, that while, according to Alpine usage and precedent, there is nothing to prevent the name Gaurisankar being applied to the loftiest peak of the group, the lower summit of which, visible from Katmandu, bears that name, the Tibetan name Chomokankar is preferable.

I shall return to this subject when the full report, which I trust will be illustrated by telephotographic views, is to hand.

Under date January 14 Babu Sarat Chandra Das, the only traveller of our generation who has reached Lhasa from the S., writes to me, 'I have read with the greatest interest your book of travels, and I am convinced of the correctness of your finding that my Chatang La is not the same with your Jonsong La. Chatang La is to the W. of the Jonsong La peak. I now remember what my guide told me then, that the Treasure of the Gods lay hidden beyond the La situated to my right-hand side while I was ascending the height of the Chatang La.' This seems to prove that the Chatang La corresponds with one of the gaps seen and photographed by my party at the extreme head of Lhonak, W.N.W. of the Jonsong peak.

The recently published Blue-book on Tibet contains many in-

\* See *Round Kangchenjunga*, p. 200.

teresting particulars as to the excursions made by Mr. White in 1902 and by members of the Mission in 1903 in Lhonak and round about Khambajong. Heights of 21,000 to over 22,000 ft. were reached, and on one occasion 20,000 ft. is reported to have been attained on horseback. Mr. White emphatically states that there was no increase of inconvenience from the air above 15,000 ft., either among the Europeans or native followers. He found, as we did, the first ascent from the valleys the most trying. He considers that Chomiomo and Kangchenjhou can be climbed with greater ease than any peaks of similar elevation. It is a pity there was no Alpine party in Sikkim last summer.\*

## IN MEMORIAM.

HENRY SIMMS.

THE Club lost through death last year, in addition to the three members mentioned in the November number of the 'Journal,' a popular member in the late Henry Simms, Joint General Manager of the National Provincial Bank of England, who died at Newcastle-on-Tyne in August last.

During the last ten or twelve years the writer has enjoyed very many happy days in Mr. Simms's company when scrambling with him over hills in North Wales, Cumberland, and Skye, and when climbing with him in Switzerland. In the Alps the Zermatt district was his favourite hunting ground; but he had also done a good deal of climbing in the Bernese Oberland and the Chamonix district.

His last climbing expedition took place in August 1902, when he paid his first and only visit to the Bernina district, and seemed to be in even better health and condition than usual. On one occasion while there he (accompanied by a friend, and guided by Joseph Marie Biner, of St. Niklaus, and another Zermatt guide whom he had taken to Pontresina) was caught in a terrible snow storm, with lightning, when attempting to ascend the Piz Bernina over the Bernina Scharte. The party were driven back when within a short distance of the summit of the peak; and even Biner subsequently admitted to the writer that their experience during the descent was 'exciting' in the extreme. In fact, the descent was only attempted at the time because it was impossible for the party, without the probability of a catastrophe, either to proceed

\* I take this opportunity to ask possessors of my recent volume to correct the following misprints:—

P. 25, line 4 from top, read '1902' for '1891.'

P. 178, in middle, for 'Thangchen Glacier' read 'Ramthang Glacier.'

P. 354, in heading read '1903' for '1893,' and in footnote for XVI. read XII.

P. 358, in foot note, for 'W.' read 'M.'

P. 360, read '1888' for '1868' as date of Sikkim expedition.