

close to one another as possible. Morning revealed to us a bed of snow nearly four inches in thickness. But the sun's rays soon melted the fresh snow which had fallen during the night, and we discovered, to our satisfaction, that most of the Houniahs had departed. The weather again cleared up, and in the afternoon we found ourselves in the valley of the Indus, several thousand feet above Gartok.

A hill, rising from the left side of the valley, offered us an admirable *coup-d'œil* of this vast depression, and of the mountains bordering it to the north-east. We profited by it to make a few sketches.

On the 28th, we reached the Indus, but want of provisions compelled us to return to our camp, where we passed the night.

Next morning we made the ascent of a peak of this chain, the Gouchankar, nearly 20,000 feet high, which, owing to its isolated position, afforded an excellent station for studying the orographical configuration of the country. The prospect from the summit of this mountain is truly magical : northward rise the snowy peaks which bound the classic valley of the Indus ; to the right, at our feet stretched the vast plain and the two sacred lakes of Tibet ; southward, and far away in the unfathomable distance, rolled the white billowy crests of the Himalaya.

We returned, on the 30th, to the Sotlej, and from thence to Daba. Little by little we had gained the confidence of the natives ; they showed us the interior of their temples, gave us books, and always expressed their astonishment at finding us so much better than rumour generally represented Europeans. Every day we received gifts of fresh milk, sheep, and other provisions.

We now struck more to the south, to the foot of the great glacier of Ibi-Gamin (such is the true Tibetan name of the Kamet). Viewed from Gouchankar, this peak surpasses all the summits of the Himalaya, and we had determined upon attempting its ascent. Provided with hatchets, ropes, and everything necessary for crossing the ice, we quitted our camp at the foot of the glacier on the 16th of August. We were surprised to find the ascent very protracted.

The Ibi-Gamin is a very beautiful and very regular glacier ; it reminds one of that of the Aar, but is far more sublime. The higher we ascended, the further the summit appeared to recede from us. For three days we mounted upward, making numerous halts, and sleeping on the moraines. The third day we encamped at the very base of the Ibi-Gamin peak, at an elevation of 22,150 feet, where the valley of the glacier terminates. We were accompanied by fourteen men. Instead of wood, we were now reduced to use as fuel a species of grass which we met with on the mountain at the foot of the glacier.

The night of the 18th-19th had been cold, and a strong wind had prevailed, but the morning was beautiful, and we resolved on attempting the peak itself. Eight only of our attendants consented to accompany us ; the remainder were overcome, and broke out into loud lamentations that we were going to our destruction.

We immediately began the ascent of the abrupt flank of Ibi-Gamin, traversing a bed of snow intersected by crevasses, which compelled us to make numerous détours. At the end of two hours we found it impossible to proceed ; two of our people, attacked by the *mal des montagnes*, had dropped behind, and we ourselves felt fatigued and exhausted to a degree we had never before experienced. The