

and soon unites with the Obi, which, after a career of 2800 miles, flows into the Arctic Ocean in 67° N. lat.

"The bed of the Obi," says Mrs. Somerville,* "is very deep, and there are no soundings at its mouth; hence the largest vessels might ascend at least to its junction with the Irtish. Its many affluents also might admit ships, did not the climate form an insurmountable obstacle the greater part of the year. Indeed, all Siberian rivers are frozen annually for many months, and even the ocean along the Arctic coasts is rarely disencumbered from ice; therefore these vast rivers never can be important as navigable streams; but towards the mountain they afford water-communication from the Steppe of Issim to the Pacific. They abound in fish and water-fowl, for which the Siberian braves the extremest severity of the climate."

The gigantic river *Amour*, which flows in an easterly direction, separates Siberia from China. It empties itself into the Pacific Ocean, between the Sea of Okhotsk and the Sea of Japan. Its banks afford an immense extent of rich pasturage. To the Englishman this river has a peculiar interest, as its course marks the rapid advance of Russian aggression in the direction of *India*.

China is traversed by the *Hoang-Ho*, or Yellow River, a tributary of the Yellow Sea; and by the *Kiang* (or Yan-tsi-Kiang), which flows into the Sea of Corea. These two streams, so to speak, are twins, like the Euphrates and Tigris; they bound the region which the Chinese call "the Flower of the Centre"—a kind of Mesopotamia separating the north and south of China—and then blend their waters in one common embouchure. The *Ma-Kiang*, or Cambodia, empties itself into the Chinese Sea, after traversing the kingdom of Siam, and Cochin-China. It passes Saïgon, and forms a delta in conjunction with the river bearing the name of that great city.

The same quarter of the world contributes to the Indian Ocean the *Martaban*, or Salouen, and the *Irrawaddi*, whose volume is multiplied tenfold during the rainy season. Ava, the capital of the Burman empire, is situated on the river Irrawaddi.

The three great rivers of Hindustan are the *Ganges*, the *Brahmapootra* and the *Indus*, all issuing from the inexhaustible bosom of the great Himalaya range.

The *Indus*, or *Sind*,† is formed by the confluence of five rivers which traverse the picturesque valleys of the Punjaub (Penta-potamia), the extreme limit of the conquests of Alexander the Great.‡ [The junction-point is about midway between

* [Mrs. Somerville, "Physical Geography," i. 400.]

† [In Sanscrit, *Sindhu*—probably from a root signifying "to flow."]

‡ [Alexander crossed the river at Attock, or Atak, the ancient *Taxila*.]