

## CHAPTER I.

### TO THE SATSCHU-TSANGPO: A PADDLE DOWN THE SAME.

In the third volume of this work I have given a detailed account of the geography of Eastern Tibet along the routes by which I crossed the country in 1896, 1900, and 1901. The same volume contains also a description of the last great meridional journey from Tscharklik to the farthest point south that I reached. Then I have further described our return to the caravan, which we found on 20th August at the camp numbered LXIV. Consequently I have carried the account of my 1899—1902 journey so far that all that now remains is the journey to Ladak, and thence by the well-known route over the Kara-korum. My immediate plan, after rejoining the headquarters caravan, was to march with the entire body as far south as I could possibly get, that is until the Tibetans put such obstacles in our way as should compel us to turn back. I hoped however that this would not happen before we reached the lakes of Selling-tso and Naktsong-tso, which Bower and Littledale discovered; though it is true that these distinguished travellers only touched the two lakes without mapping them to any extent, a thing that could however scarcely be expected considering the tremendous difficulties which they had to contend against, even as I had. When I was stopped, upon reaching the farthest point south to which I should be able to penetrate, I intended to make direct for Ladak, even though by so doing I ran the risk of coming into too intimate connection with Littledale's route; but upon looking at his map, which I carried with me, I found that it did not fulfil even the most modest requirements of a field-map, and consequently I considered myself justified in looking upon the parts of Tibet through which he and Nain Singh journeyed as almost entirely a *terra incognita*. After spending the winter in Ladak and India, I intended in the following spring to travel north over the Kara-korum and so return to my point of departure, Kaschgar.

As I did in the third volume, I will first describe step by step the country I travelled through, and then give a general account of northern and central Tibet, in so far as that country is known through my own journeys and those of other travellers; and in conjunction with this I will take a glance at the journeys of the latter, and examine more closely the results at which each of them has arrived.