

From Nain Singh's description of this region I cannot quite make out clearly where it was he travelled and what it was he really saw with his own eyes. According to Trotter's account of his itinerary, he made his headquarters from the 25th to the 29th August at Hissik Chaka; and to the south-west and west-south-west of that little salt lake we find on the map a very long (33 miles), narrow lake, extending east and west, and corresponding beyond doubt to the salt depressions in the latitudinal valley which I visited. The only guidance we find in the text is as follows: »The strangers fortunately turned out to be residents of Gargethol, the place the Pundit was aiming at reaching, and which lay about a day's march to the south-west of Hissik Chaka. On the following day (August 25th) they travelled together to Gargethol, where they found a large encampment of Khampas . . . Between Gargethol and the Champa district of Shankhor, on the south, is a place called Gegha, where a large fair is annually held in July and August. On the 29th of August the Pundit returned to Hissik Chaka. . . .»*

The name Gargethol appears on the map to the south of the long lake, between it and a big mountain-range, which continues immediately north of Thok-Jalung. Gegha is placed on the southern shore of the lake. Thus, if the Pundit visited both Gargethol and Gegha, he must, starting as he did from Hissik Chaka, have gone either round the lake or in some way across it; but his itinerary just at that spot is not shown. On the northern shore we find on the other hand the name of Luma Ring Chaka, and this must be identical with my Luma-ring-tso, as also the name of Yondon Chaka, which I did not hear mentioned. The most important thing however is that the map shows the lake in detailed outline, and it would have been gratifying to have had some account, however brief and sketchy, as to its characteristics. Nain Singh's map does not agree with what I saw. There was no doubt a time, as we have seen, when all these depressions were connected together and formed only one lake, and that would have approximately the outline of the lake shown on Nain Singh's map. But is it conceivable that the lake has shrunk and dried up to the extent suggested within the thirty years or so that have elapsed since the Pundit's visit? He was there in the end of August 1873; it was the beginning of November 1901 when I was there. Let us assume, that the configuration on Nain Singh's map of the lake really is correct, and possesses the same degree of reliability as most of the other information which he gives; then there are two ways in which the differences between his map and mine may be explained. We may accept the explanation that the lake has possibly shrunk to that great extent during the thirty years' interval. On the whole however the tendency of the climate of Tibet to grow drier and drier is one that is only appreciable over a long period of time. Within that period there may be oscillations of shorter intervals, that is to say of shorter duration, and cognate with the Brückner periods. If we adopt one of these shorter periods, then a space of 30 years is quite sufficient to give rise to the changes which, according to Nain Singh's map, have taken place in the big lake. Under these circumstances Nain Singh will in the year 1873 have found in the latitudinal valley one large continuous lake, a lake about which his text does

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