

itself into a large salt lake, along the southern shore of which they travelled. Off the snowy range to the south a great number of brooks run down into this lake. The surface adjacent to these was usually excessively soft and treacherous. At the eastern end of this lake Wellby intersected Bonvalot's and Henri d'Orléans's route of the 1st January 1890. The rainy season had already begun, and Wellby says, »Soon after dark rain began to fall; it rains, as the saying goes, cats and dogs, such as we had never seen it rain before.» East of the great salt lake came a region with excellent grazing, good water, and any number of antelopes. Wellby then speaks of »a kind of oasis on rising ground»; similar small patches of vegetation occur also in other parts of Tibet. Curiously enough, at one of their camps in this region eight mules died in one night, due, Wellby thought, to their having eaten some poisonous herb. After that he was left with only three caravan animals. There too the ground was soft and marshy. »Although we selected the nullah that afforded the best road, still at each step the poor mules sank into the mud above their fetlocks, and sometimes they sank down altogether, when the load had to be taken off, the animal dragged out, and reloaded.»

In the eastward prolongation of the latitudinal valley they passed numerous quite small salt lakes. The lakes which I passed in the more northerly latitudinal valley were in general large. »As the mist lifted the day became warm and the three mules sank deeper than ever in the sodden ground.» On the 15th August the travellers touched for the first time, and at an altitude of 4860 m., a river which has its sources somewhat farther west and which they then followed for several days eastwards. »The river had swollen considerably, and flowed strong and deep, as though on some errand of weighty importance. The water was stained to a dull reddish colour. Speaking of the same river lower down, Wellby says, »the river flowed thigh deep with a swift current, and was thirty yards broad.» When first they struck this stream, Wellby tells us that he took it for the Ma Chu. He followed it all the way down to its mouth in a large freshwater lake. »As we proceeded we discovered we had marched into a *cul de sac*. On our right hand our road was blocked by the river, now increased to double its size. In front of us stretched a fine freshwater lake, while on our left lay an arm of this lake, covering a distance of some miles to our rear. There was, under these circumstances, no alternative left. I should either have to cross this arm or march all the way round it. The first plan I attempted, but to no purpose, for the soil of the lake was too soft. . . . The grassy slopes with flowers and vegetation eventually rose into high hills, which again were backed by snow-capped peaks. On the south side of the lake a vast plain extended to distant mountains.»

Under almost precisely similar circumstances I too was compelled a month later to make a similar detour at a lake of nearly the same shape and size as Wellby's, and lying parallel to it, that is to say, stretching from west-north-west to east-south-east, but situated 60 or 70 km. north-north-east of the lake which Wellby encountered. My lake was also entered by a river coming from the west, although it was a smaller stream than Wellby's, and its course I followed down to its mouth, and afterwards had to make a circuit round its western arm. There exists however this essential difference between the two lakes: whereas my lake was a salt self-