

Arrian tells us that he has preferred to note only such things as describe India as it really is. In Book V Chap. IV he also says: »The following are statements about the river Indus which are quite unquestionable, and therefore let me record them. The Indus is the largest of all the rivers in Asia and Europe, except the Ganges, which is also an Indian river. It takes its rise on this side mount Parapamisus, or Caucasus, and discharges its water into the Great Sea which lies near India in the direction of the south wind.»¹

It is always the same story about the source of the Indus: Fontes ejus ex Parapamiso vel Caucaso monte oriuntur! Or: »Is (Eratosthenes) a monte Tauro, ubi Indi fontes sunt, secus Indum amnem usque ad magnum oceanum et Indi ostia Indiæ latus stadia XIII M continere ait . . .» (Indica, Cap. III).

In Chapter III of his *Indica*, Arrian says: »In the whole of the rest of Asia there are not so many rivers as in India. The largest are the Ganges and the Indus, from the latter of which the country takes its name. Both of these are larger than the Egyptian Nile and the Scythian Ister, even if their waters came together into one.» And in Chapter IV: »Of the two largest rivers themselves, the Ganges and the Indus, Megasthenes has stated that the former excels much in size; and so say all other writers who mention it. He says that it rises great from its sources. . . .» — »nam et grandem jam inde ab ipsis fontibus oriri.»

Arrian reports Alexander to have said in one of his speeches: »But if anyone desires to hear what will be the end to our warfare itself, let him learn that the distance still remaining before we reach the river Ganges and the Eastern Sea is not great . . .» Book V. Chapt. XXVI. To judge from this the Macedonians must have believed that they were not far from the eastern end of the Asiatic continent.

But the most curious piece of hydrography is the following, which throws a bright light over Alexander as an explorer in great style:² »At first he thought he had discovered the origin of the Nile (Nili se caput reperisse arbitratur), when he saw crocodiles in the river Indus, which he had seen in no other river except the Nile, as well as beans³ growing near the banks of the Acesines of the same kind as those which the Egyptian land produces. This conjecture was confirmed when he heard that the Acesines falls into the Indus. He thought the Nile rises somewhere or other in India, and after flowing through an extensive tract of desert country loses the name of Indus there; but afterwards when it begins to flow again through the inhabited land, it is called Nile both by the Aethiopians of that district and by the Egyptians, and finally empties itself into the Inner Sea (the Mediterranean). In like manner Homer made the river Egypt give its name to the country of Egypt. Accordingly when he wrote to Olympias about the country of

¹ I am following the version of E. J. CHINNOCK in his *ARRIAN'S ANABASIS OF ALEXANDER AND INDICA*. London 1893.

² Book VI. Chapter I.

³ The fruit of the sacred Lotus of the Hindus, *Nelumbium speciosum*.