

Under the title »*Súbah of Bengal*»¹ we read:

»Its rivers are countless and the first of them in this province is the Ganges: its source cannot be traced. The Hindu sages say that it flows down from the hair of Mahadeva's head. Rising in the mountains towards the north, it passes through the province of Delhi... In praise of this stream the Hindu sages have written volumes. From its source to its mouth it is considered sacred but some spots have peculiar sanctity.»

It is added that this sacred water is sweet, light, wholesome, and may be kept in a vessel for years without undergoing any change. The compiler of *Ain-i-Akbari* seems to have been very uncertain about the source of the Ganges, for, at another place,² dealing with the *Subáh of Dándés* he speaks of a holy place called Chikar Tírth, with an image of Mahádeo, and adds:

»Near it a spring rises which is held to be the Ganges. An ascetic by the power of the Almighty was in the habit of going to the Ganges daily from this spot. One night the river appeared to him in a dream and said: 'Undertake these fatigues no longer; I myself will rise up in thy cell'. Accordingly in the morning it began to well forth and is flowing at the present time.»

At last we meet with the Brahmaputra: »Another river (in Bengal) is the Brahmaputra. It flows from Khatá to Kúch and thence through the Sarkár of Bá-zohá and fertilizing the country, falls into the sea.»³ Just as the easternmost river of the Panjab, the easternmost river of Bengal has escaped the attention of the Mohammedan geographers for hundreds of years. Such was the case especially with the Brahmaputra which was situated far away from the centre of Mohammedan power in India.⁴

Kashmir was of course very well known in Emperor Akbar's days, — he himself, is said to have travelled the Pir Panjal-road thrice. Great Tibet is placed to the N.E., and Little Tibet to the N.W. of Kashmir. Lár is the district which is said to border on the mountains of Great Tibet. To the north of Lár there is a lofty mountain which dominates all the surrounding country, and the ascent of which is arduous.⁵

The old Sanscrit orography of the mountains north of India is related by *Ain-i-Akbari*, and again we meet Sumeru, Himáchala, Hemakúta, Nishada and the rest, without becoming the wiser as to their situation in relation to each other. Even Kailasa is mentioned, though there are many mountains with this name. Amongst the sacred places of pilgrimage of the Hindus, the Ganges is enumerated as No. 1, and the Satlej as No. 24.⁶

¹ Op. cit. p. 120.

² Op. cit. p. 224.

³ To which the translator has a note: »Its rise is supposed to be from the SE. base of the sacred Kailás hill, on the opposite side of the waterparting in which the Sutlej and the Indus also take their rise...», a view that is not in accordance with reality.

⁴ In his *Akbar Nama* Abul Fazl relates war operations on the banks of the Brahmaputra, »which is a large river, that flows from Khatá», Elliot's History. Vol. VI. 1875, p. 73.

⁵ Op. cit. p. 363.

⁶ Op. cit. Vol. III. Calcutta 1894, p. 30, 290 and 303.