

Mogol said that one of the four causes which had brought him by land from Jerusalem to India was: »to see your famous River Ganges, which is the Captayne of all the Rivers of the World». ¹

Regarding the mountain wall to the north, PIETRO DELLA VALLE had the same opinion as his predecessors. He says of Shah Selim that he was king of the greater part of India »between Indus and Ganges, and whose Countries are extended Northwards as far as the cliffs of Mount Taurus or Imaus, where it divides India from Tartaria». ²

Nor did THOMAS HERBERT increase the store of geographical knowledge of his time, so far as India is concerned. He began his great journey in 1626, after Andrade had returned from his first visit to Tibet. What he says of the Ganges water is taken directly from Edward Terry. Concerning Cassimer and its Metropolis Shyrenaker he has nothing new to tell. Panch-ob is a Persian word meaning five waters, from the rivers Ravee, Behat, Ob-Chan, Wihi, and Synde. Some writers, he thinks, have given too great limits to the garden of Paradise in making both the Nile and the Ganges rise there. The Ganges rises from Imaus in Scythia. ³

It is always the same story that is told, and no new traveller dares to see anything that has not been noted by his predecessors. There are long descriptions of the marvels witnessed in India and long discussions upon historical events, of customs and manners of the natives, and even of animals and plants. But the geography is always the same. There are always the two great rivers with or without tributaries, there is the wall of mountains to the north, separating Hindostan from Tartaria or Scythia, nothing more than was known, and sometimes better known by classical antiquity. In every new narrative we recognise Ptolemy's geography. The grip of the great Alexandrine geographer is still so strong, that he overrules the common sense and the faculty of observation of travellers in so recent times. Ptolemy, and even earlier writers are often quoted. The northern mountains are called Imaus, Taurus or Caucasus. The Satlej was much better represented by Ptolemy than by anyone of the travellers mentioned above, who as a rule did not even know the existence of this river. The travellers do not seem to have had any confidence in themselves. And if they went beyond Ptolemy, they still had to refer to somebody else, for instance Terry or Roe, who were often simply copied.

So is also the case with JOHAN ALBRECHT VON MANDELSLO, who travelled in India in 1638—39. He firmly believes in the authority of Sir Thomas Roe, though in one important point he is independent, namely, regarding the source of the Indus. Speaking of the rivers of Penjab he says that the first, Bagal or Begal, has its source

¹ Ibidem p. 442.

² The Travels of Pietro della Valle in India. Edited by EDWARD GREY. London, Hakluyt Society, 1892, Vol. I, p. 48.

³ Some Years Travels into Africa & Asia the Great. Especially Describing the Famous Empires of Persia and Industant. As also Divers other Kingdoms in the Orientall Indies, and I'les Adjacent. By THO. HERBERT Esq. London 1638, p. 65 et seq., and 221. Pl. X is the map illustrating Herbert's journey.