

Dras or left branch. »It appears that from Leh to Rodack (Rudok), a place whence wool is brought to Cashmere for making shawls, the road is along this branch 25 days' journey for the merchants who bring the wool.»

It is not surprising that the rather extraordinary and complicated Indus system has bewildered Macartney. Elphinstone, however, says: »The source of this noble river (Indus) is not yet exactly ascertained», from which he seems to have regarded the whereabouts of the source as approximately known. But from the following passages it is seen how little he really knew, — and of course he *could* not know more at such an early date.

He regards the course of the Indus as traced with certainty only to the neighbourhood of Dras, which Macartney placed in long. $76^{\circ} 48'$, and lat. $35^{\circ} 55'$.¹ To this point the main river was said to come from the north or east, but higher up its course was unknown. The smaller branch, joining at Dras, he says had been traced from Rudok for 250 miles. This is the river they otherwise call the Ladak or Leh branch.

Regarding Macartney's information that the Shayok should come from the Sarikol lake, Elphinstone is not sure of its correctness, for he had been informed by an Uzbek of Fergana, that a stream issued from a glacier in Mus-tagh, on the road between Yarkand and Ladak, and that he followed it from the glacier to the neighbourhood of Ladak, without noticing the junction of any considerable stream from the westward. According to his account, therefore, the river should have its source in this glacier. He will not compare this information with that of Macartney but finds it necessary to call one's attention to the point on account of its obscurity. Only a few years later it was to be proved that Elphinstone had been right and Macartney wrong.

Elphinstone continues:

»It occasioned great regret to Mr. Macartney that he was not able to fix the sources of the Indus; but if we consider the desolate character of the country through which that river runs, before it enters Afghaunistaun, we shall find more reason to be surprised at the success with which he has traced the early part of its course, than at his failure in discovering its remotest spring.

His discovery regarding the course of the river of Ladauk is a point of great interest, and the coincidence between his information and the survey of the Ganges made by Lieut. Webbe (Webb) in 1808, serves to strengthen the authority of both.

It was formerly believed that the river of Ladauk was one of the principal streams of the Ganges, and that opinion was supported by the high authority of Major Rennell; but that eminent Geographer seems to have been led to this conclusion by the erroneous accounts of the Lamas, and of P. Tiefentaller. Captain Raper and Mr. Webbe were sent on purpose to ascertain the source of the Ganges, and found it to be in the SE side of Hemalleh; far to the south of what was formerly supposed. It was now proved that the river of Ladauk did not flow into the Ganges, but its real course remained unknown, till Mr. Macartney ascertained its junction with the Indus near Draus.»

¹ Op. cit. p. 109.