

## CHAPTER VII.

### WILLIAM MOORCROFT'S JOURNEY TO THE MANASAROVAR.

We now come to one of the most brilliant chapters in the history of exploration round the lakes and the sources of the great rivers.

WILLIAM MOORCROFT was a native of Lancashire and educated at Liverpool for the profession of a surgeon. He settled in London as a practitioner of veterinary surgery, and there received an offer from the Court of Directors of the East India Company to go out to Bengal as superintendent of their military stud. Thus he left England in May 1808 for India. He was a man with very wide and broad views and his ambition was to open to British industry countries in most of which British manufactures were at that time wholly unknown. In a letter written in the mountains of Garhwal, Dec. 27th 1819, he says that he had heard from reliable sources in Calcutta, »that little extension of commerce in the direction he had taken was reasonably to be expected, because the intercourse of the Cis and Trans-Himalayans had never been active.« He observed that the trade from British India to Yarkand and Lhasa was wholly in the hands of Kashmir, and, after several years of hard work he was justified in saying: »If I fall, my country will set a due value on my motives, and at least allow me a claim to disinterested perseverance.«

Another ambition of his was to improve the breed of horses in Hindustan, and introduce English and Turkman stallions, instead of Arab. Therefore, on his second great journey he crossed the Himalayas and went to Balkh and Bokhara, to find the best Turkman horses. On this journey he was provided with a great stock of merchandise, with the revenue of which he intended to buy horses to be sold to the Government. In a double way he would serve his country, but the principal aim was to establish a commercial intercourse with the Trans-Himalayan districts, which would be highly advantageous to Great Britain.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Travels in the Himalayan Provinces of Hindustan and the Panjab; in Ladakh and Kashmir; in Peshawar, Kabul, Kunduz, and Bokhara; by Mr. William Moorcroft and Mr. George Trebeck, from 1819 to 1829. Published by H. H. WILSON, London 1841.