

But here we are concerned only with the first and by far the most important of Moorcroft's journeys.<sup>1</sup> He has described it in a most excellent and conscientious way in an article, which was presented to the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal by H. T. Colebrooke.<sup>2</sup> The motive of this first journey was to open to Great Britain means of obtaining the materials of the finest woollen fabric, but the result was, as Colebrooke puts it, that Moorcroft and Captain HYDER HEARSAY brought back, with indefatigable perseverance and admirable intrepidity an interesting accession of knowledge of a country never before explored. By this journey one of the most important geographical and hydrographical problems of Tibet and India was, at any rate, solved in a preliminary way. With the knowledge Europe then possessed of these regions, Colebrooke could not appreciate the value of Moorcroft's journey to its full extent. This has only been possible during recent years. Therefore, in his introductory note, Colebrooke states that the two travellers ascertained the existence, and approximately determined the situation of the Mánasaróvara, verifying at the same time the fact that it gives origin neither to the Ganges, nor to any other of the rivers reputed to flow from it. And who would not excuse Colebrooke for a misunderstanding which was entirely founded upon the description given by Moorcroft. For now we know that the Satlej comes from the lake, although its channel happened to be dry in 1812. And Colebrooke carefully adds: »Mr. Moorcroft, as will be seen, found reason to believe that the lake has no outlet. His stay, however, was too short to allow of his making a complete circuit of it: and adverting to the difficulty of conceiving the evaporation of the lake's surface in so cold a climate to be equivalent to the influx of water in the season of thaw from the surrounding mountains, it may be conjectured, that, although no river run from it, nor any outlet appear at the level at which it was seen by Mr. Moorcroft, it may have some drain of its superfluous waters, when more swoln, and at its greatest elevation, and may then, perhaps, communicate with Ráwan lake, (in which the Satlej takes its source) conformably with the oral information received by our travellers.» Colebrooke never knew how true the theory was which he conjectured in these words.

In publishing Moorcroft's report, Colebrooke has made use of his liberty of selection from the original diaries and he has been more complete in those parts which were wholly novel. We may be sure that his selection has been carried out with the greatest care and that nothing of importance has been omitted.

On the journey, Hearsay carried the compass and brought up the rear, and Harkh Dev Pandit was directed to stride the whole of the road at paces equal to 4 feet each.

<sup>1</sup> »A Journey to Lake Mánasaróvara in U'n-dés, a Province of little Tibet.» By William Moorcroft, Esq. Asiatick Researches, Vol. XII. London 1818, p. 380 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> Colonel HUGH PEARSE has reprinted an extract from Moorcroft's diary which does not contain any new or interesting views of this important journey. »Moorcrofts and Hearsay's visit to Lake Mansarowar in 1812». Geogr. Journal, August 1905, p. 180 et seq.