

visit. Strachey and other explorers who have visited the interesting place, are probably adherents of the theory of a regular and constant desiccation. If there was a strong channel in 1846, and a small one in 1848, there must have been a very considerable effluent in 1812. Therefore they try to explain Moorcroft's statement in their own way, and they forget the periodicity of the phenomenon. If they were right, Moorcroft, who always travelled with his eyes open, would have been extremely sleepy just on the most important occasion of his journey. And it is no use making his illness responsible for it, as it could not be very serious a day, when he was able to march 27 miles on foot. Reliable and scientific observations on the shores of the Manasarovar are so extremely rare, that the few in existence should not be spoilt by speculation. Moorcroft saw no channel in 1812, because there was none; that is all we need to know.

On the morning of August 7th Moorcroft sent for Harballabh, the old Pundit, and told him that the river the Pundit had crossed on a bridge 16 years earlier, or in 1796, did not proceed from the Manasarovar, but from some part of the Himálaya to the west, and, suddenly taking a western course, fell into Ráwanhrad, and led him into error on this point. Harballabh was, however, very positive on the subject, and said he could bring the evidence of all the inhabitants of the neighbourhood in support of the truth of his assertion, and that Moorcroft's scout had not gone as far as he had been ordered to do.

It was to settle this matter that Moorcroft again sent out his men in search of the mysterious channel, but always in vain. It is a pity he did not ask Harballabh to show him the bridge, which was situated quite close to Chiu-gompa as it is still. But in spite of Moorcroft's and Harballabh's experiences being diametrically opposite, both were right. In 1796 there was an effluent which had dried up in 1812. The same phenomenon was reiterated 35 years later on, when Strachey's strong current dried up. And it has again been reiterated, as I shall show hereafter. This periodicity, which may have been going on for thousands of years, and which has nothing to do with the general desiccation of postglacial time, depends simply on the monsoon.

Moorcroft gives another important contribution to the solution of the problem. He says that his own walk, on August 6th, ascertained the fact of the Mansarovar giving rise to no large river. The old Pundit remained much dissatisfied with this decision, and a traveller from Ladak asserted that eight years earlier, or 1804, the stream actually existed, which since that period had dried up, and the bed had filled. Moorcroft explains the change as a cause of an earthquake but the description he gives is in itself much more natural, without any such extraordinary theories.

He gives a very good and detailed description of the lake as he saw it between the Himálaya, »which pours its liquified snow into its basin», the eastern prolongation of the »Cailás ridge» and other mountains. The lake has the form of