

Even with the help of Webber's rather rough map it is impossible to follow their wanderings over »ridge succeeding ridge» in the upper reaches of the Brahmaputra. But the geography becomes still more complicated: »On one occasion we crossed another very lofty divide, and found ourselves suddenly out on the northern slopes of another watershed, none other than that of the mighty Indus. Far beneath us, some miles away, lay the most brilliantly beautiful blue sea, the celebrated Manasarowar lake, as it proved, which we had promised not to approach.» For hundreds of miles to the west range after range could be seen and above them all was the snow-capped summit of the sacred Kailas.<sup>1</sup>

This change of the scenery is really somewhat sudden. We are at the streams going east to the Brahmaputra, and suddenly we cross the watershed of the Indus! It is quite useless to try and explain this situation. On his map he has »Sources of the Indus» between the lakes and Gurla. Thus the watershed of the Indus should be Gurla itself and a range going to the N.E. from Gurla, and then, for some distance following the north bank of the upper Brahmaputra, a range which, so far as its first part is concerned, does not exist. Or, one could think that it was on a separate excursion, perhaps on the way back, that they came to the watershed of the Indus. But this does not help us, as it is said: »Next day we marched a long way eastward along the northern slopes of the Gurla range, following the valley of the Brahmaputra.» If we call the Tamlung-la the watershed of the Indus or rather the Satlej, and the tributary Loang-gongo the upper Brahmaputra, we can go in a few minutes from the Indus system to the Brahmaputra system. But then we cannot see the Manasarovar. If you climb a mountain somewhere near, you can see the lake at 50 miles distance, but it is impossible to have the Manasarovar »some miles away» beneath you the one day and the next to follow the valley of the Brahmaputra.

At the end of his Chapter XI<sup>2</sup> he sums up his results and mentions amongst other things that he »had ascended very high up on the shoulder of one of the most remarkable mountains in the world, the little-known Gurla Mandhata. This conspicuous mountain might appropriately be called the peak of Asia, as from its glaciers the three great rivers, Indus, Ganges, and Brahmaputra, take their rise.»

In reality, as is well known, not one of these three rivers takes its rise from Gurla-mandata. We may agree to call the whole range to the S.E. from Gurla by the same name as the main peak. And we may even go so far as to reckon the Tage-tsangpo to the Indus, although it properly belongs to the Satlej. Finally we may call the Karnali, instead of the Alaknanda, the source branch of the Ganges. But when we come to the Brahmaputra, we cannot make any more allowances. Webber, however, does by no means call the whole range Gurla. For even on his map, Pl. XVII, the three rivers rise from the very Gurla-mandata itself, and not from its surroundings or continuations. On the S.E. slopes of Mount Gurla he has entered

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. p. 126.

<sup>2</sup> Op. cit. p. 133.