

the great river from Lhasa to well-known parts of the world.»¹ And everybody will agree with Lord STRANGFORD in his appreciation of the sagacity and energy of Montgomerie in conceiving and carrying out such a brilliant scheme as the special education of natives for the purpose of visiting countries inaccessible to Europeans.²

Only a year was to pass before he sent out his next three Pundits. When surveying in Ladak, Montgomerie had himself suspected there was a large eastern branch of the Indus and he was confirmed in his opinion by the surveyors who had sketched the S. E. parts of Ladak.³ He found it desirable to settle the question about the existence or non-existence of this branch, and the clearing up of the question was entrusted to the second expedition of Pundits. It had also to contribute to our knowledge of the upper Satlej, and to survey the route between Gartok and Ladak and to visit the gold-fields east of Gartok. »The latter being with a view to gain some knowledge of the vast *terra incognita* lying between the desert of Gobi and Lhasa.»

On July 28th the Pundits crossed the Himalaya in the Mana pass (18,570 feet). On August 6th they were at Totling and give a short description of the place. By the Bogola pass (19,220 feet) they crossed the watershed between the Satlej and Indus. Crossing Gugti-la (19,500 feet), they found themselves, on August 14th, on a vast desolate plateau, the lowest points of which they ascertained to be 15,280 feet above the sea. It was called Chojothol (Antelope Plain). By the Pabha-la (17,650 feet), they crossed another range and then descended to the Giachuruff camp, on the banks of the Singh-gi-chu or Indus River (15,730 feet). The headman of the place feared they had introduced Europeans into the country.

On August 22nd, the first and third Pundit left Giachuruff, the third for carrying out a route-survey up the river Indus as far as he could get. The first crossed the Chomorang-la (18,760 feet) and reached Thok-jalung (16,330 feet). The chief was a man from Lhasa. The Pundit heard there was a whole string of gold-fields extending all the way from Lhasa to Rudok along the route which he supposed ran close to the northern watershed of the Brahmaputra, in the depression to the north of it. The gold-fields were said to be carefully watched by the Lhasa authorities, a gold commissioner, called *Sarpon*, superintended the whole of them, and each field had a separate master. He tells us about the gold commissioners' annual tour through the gold district, visiting all the fields and collecting the taxes.⁴ After this trip the first Pundit returned to Giachuruff.

In the meantime the third Pundit had gone up the N. E. Indus branch to Jiachan. On account of the presence of robbers he decided to retrace his steps. »He was very reluctant to do this, as, from all he could hear, 3 or 4 marches more at the

¹ Proceedings Royal Geogr. Society, Vol XII, 1867—68, p. 173.

² Ibidem, p. 166.

³ Report of the Trans-Himalayan Explorations during 1867. Journal Royal Geogr. Society, Vol. 39, 1869, p. 146 et seq.

⁴ This was also the case in 1907 and 1908, as I found.