

In this reservoir the water of the upper Satlej is kept in store. Occasionally, when the evaporation is stronger than the precipitation, the reservoir will not be in function. But, periodically, when it, on account of heavy precipitation, becomes filled to its brim, the superfluous water must needs overflow. Where does it flow to? To the Tirtapuri Satlej! Thus the lakes must be reckoned to the Satlej system. If not, they must either belong to some other river system, or be self-contained. The first alternative is absurd, the second has so far not arisen, as the lakes are fresh, and as underground water very likely filtrates from the western lake to the Tirtapuri Satlej above Dölchu. Thus the lakes must belong to the Satlej.

Some people may always say: The Darma-yankti-Chu-kar is the head-river and source of the system, but the Satlej comes from Rakas-tal. I should prefer to give up all discussion with them as a hopeless task.

Even during the very year of my visit to the so much debated region, and the year after, before I had published any account of my exploration, nobody really knew where the source of the Satlej was to be placed on the map. The *Gazetteer of India, 1907*, says: »The Sutlej rises on the southern slopes of the Kailas mountain, the Elysium, or Siva's paradise, of Sanskrit literature. It once issued from the sacred lake of Manasarowar, still the resort of nomadic Tibetan shepherds . . . Emerging from the Kailas foothills at a height of 15,200 feet above sea-level, the Sutlej first traverses a plain with a S.W. course . . .»<sup>1</sup>

In 1908 the same work has removed the source of the Satlej, saying: »Rising near the more westerly of the Manasarowar Lakes in Tibet in 30° 20' N. and 81° 25' E., at a height of 15,200 feet, the Sutlej flows in a new direction along the southern slopes of the Kailas mountains to the Chinese frontier outpost of Shipki.»<sup>2</sup> Even so late as 1908 it was impossible to decide the position of the source definitely. On some parts of a map in *The Gazetteer*, the hydrography of Tibet is still taken from d'Anville.<sup>3</sup>

In his standard work on Tibet Professor NIKOLAI KUEHNER gives an excellent and very conscientious description of the lakes and sources of the great rivers. The actual state of things he has chiefly got from Ryder, Rawling and Sherring. Of the Indus he says that it is formed by two branches, the northern coming from the N.E., the southern from the western »slopes of the massive Gangri, near the peak Kailas», where, in a skilful way, he eliminates the general mistake that the river should come from Kailas itself. Of the Satlej he says: »At present the source of the Satlej is to be found at the monastery Dalju, where a great spring exists, though the dry bed continues further to the lake Rakas-tal, and here and there in it water is to be found. The natives of the place unanimously assert, that along the whole

<sup>1</sup> The Imp. Gazetteer of India. Vol. I, New Edition, Oxford 1907, p. 3. The »birthplace» of the Brahmaputra is here, p. 27, given »near the eastern base of Kailas.»

<sup>2</sup> Op. cit. Vol. XXIII, p. 178.

<sup>3</sup> Op. cit. Vol. XXVI, Atlas N:o 4, 1909.