

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### THE DEPTH OF THE MANASAROVAR.

In the course of time the outlines of the Manasarovar, as well as those of the Rakas-tal, have, on various maps, been represented in very different ways, all from the famous Lama map of d'Anville and down to the maps of our days. The Manasarovar has a very regular outline, is almost round, or a little oblong, from north to south, whereas the Rakas-tal is more irregular in form. Ryder's map of the lakes is a very good piece of work, though he had no opportunity to visit the southern shores. So far as my own map is concerned the survey of the Rakas-tal, which I carried out by land, following all the irregularities of the shore-line, is better than that of the Manasarovar where the eastern, southern and western shores were mapped from the boat, and only the northern shore by land. A survey from a boat is of course more liable to errors on account of currents and winds.

Even the first sight of a map of the Manasarovar, and still more of the country itself would make you suspect that the greatest depths were to be found in the southern part of the lake. For here the enormous Gurla-mandata is much nearer than the comparatively lower mountains in the north. And as we have seen, the fans from Gurla slope steadily down to the very shore and dip into the lake, whereas a comparatively extensive plain is situated between the foot of the Pundi mountain and the northern shore.

My soundings proved that the Manasarovar is probably the deepest lake of Tibet; at any rate it leaves far behind all other lakes I have sounded during earlier expeditions. In 1900 I had found 48.67m. in a fresh-water lake in the eastern part of the Tibetan plateau-land, and in 1901 I had got 47.50m. in the Panggong-tso.<sup>1</sup> But the Manasarovar had a depth of no less than 81.8m. and the deepest part is in the southern half of the lake and nearer the western than the eastern shore. In vain I waited for an opportunity to sound the Langak-tso or Rakas-tal, but was prevented by continuous hard wind. If it be true, as the Tibetans assert,

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<sup>1</sup> Scientific Results etc. Vol. III, p. 130, and Vol. IV, p. 334. — Central Asia and Tibet. Vol. I, p. 554, and Vol. II p. 578.