

CHAPTER XXXII.

EUROPEAN SPECULATION UP TO THE MIDDLE OF THE LAST CENTURY.

Now we come to the epoch of confusion introduced by Europeans into the clear and correct hydrography given by the orientals.

FRANCIS HAMILTON had not the slightest doubt about the Brahmaputra of Assam being the same river as the Tsangpo of Tibet. He does not even call the river Tsangpo, but uses the name Brahmaputra the whole way up. And he has heard that borax and salt are brought from a lake situated almost north of Katmandu, »about fifteen days journey beyond the Brahmaputra», by which lake the Tabie-tsaka may have been meant. But he is wise enough not to say anything about the source of the Brahmaputra.¹

In LLOYD's and GERARD's book the situation of the source is not given in any precise way, but in its general form it is correct: »The Brahmapootur is named Tamjoo Khampa, or Erechoomboo, and one of its streams takes its rise to the south-east of Mansarowar.»² Indeed two of its streams take their rise S.E. of the lake: Chema-yundung and Kubi-tsangpo.

At another place³ Gerard relates that the upper Brahmaputra is said to be greater than the Indus and is called Tamjoo, Damchoo,⁴ or Erechumboo. »One stream, which is reckoned the principal, rises S.E. of Mansurowur, and there are others from the eastward; this agrees very well with the accounts of the Lamas, who describe the Brahmapootra as issuing from the eastern side of Mont Kentaise...

¹ An account of the Kingdom of Nepal. Edinburgh 1819, p. 214. The only allusion he has to the source is when he speaks of the large kind of sheep, »which seem to be the common beasts of burthen in all the countries towards the sources of the Indus, Ganges, and Brahmaputra». So, at any rate, he must have suspected that the sources of the Brahmaputra were situated in the same country as those of the Indus and the Ganges. On his map he makes the river begin far to the east of the Manasarovar. Vide Pl. V.

² Narrative of a Journey etc. by Sir W. Lloyd and Capt. Alex. Gerard's account of an attempt etc. . . . London 1840. Vol. II, p. 186.

³ Account of Koonawur in the Himalaya etc. London 1841, p. 134.

⁴ Compare Dam-chu, »Trans-Himalaya», I, p. 417.