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The River of Golden Sand

William Gill (1843–1883) was an explorer and commissioned officer in the Royal Engineers. After inheriting a fortune from a distant relative in 1871, Gill decided to remain in Army and use his inheritance to finance explorations of remote countries, satisfying his love of travel and gathering intelligence for the British government. He was awarded a gold medal by the Royal Geographical Society in 1879 for his scientific observations on his expeditions. This two volume work, first published in 1880, is Gill's account of his expedition from Chengdu, China through Sichuan, along the eastern edge of Tibet via Litang, to Bhamo in Burma, a region little explored by westerners before him. Gill describes the cultures, societies, settlements and economic and political situation in the region in vivid detail. Volume 1 covers the area around Chengdu and includes an introductory chapter by the eminent orientalist Henry Yule (1820–1889).

The River of Golden Sand

The Narrative of a Journey through China and Eastern Tibet to Burmah

VOLUME 1

WILLIAM JOHN GILL

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

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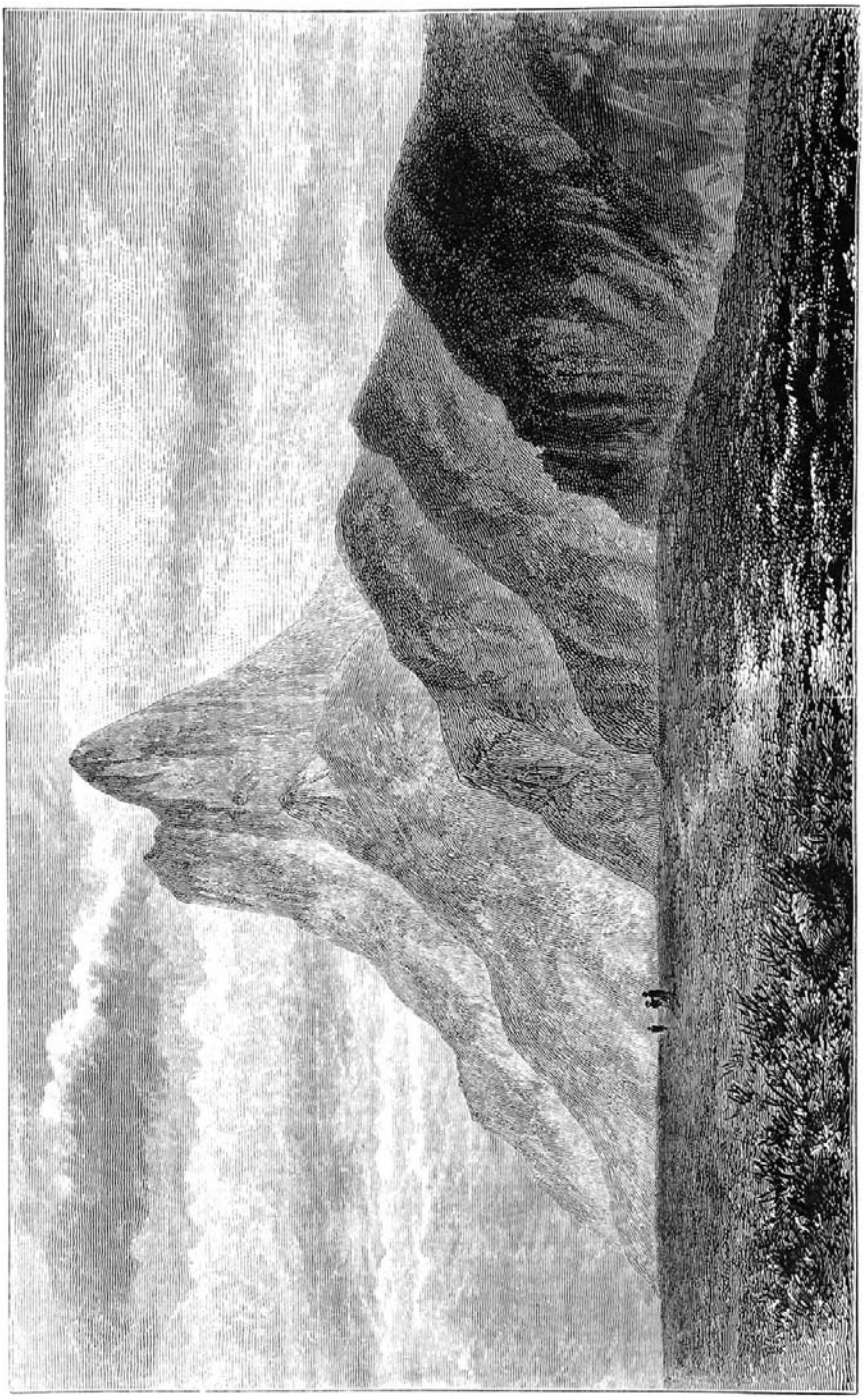
THE

RIVER OF GOLDEN SAND

FIRST VOLUME



MOUNT LIEH SHAN-LIANG IN MONGOLIA

THE

RIVER OF GOLDEN SAND

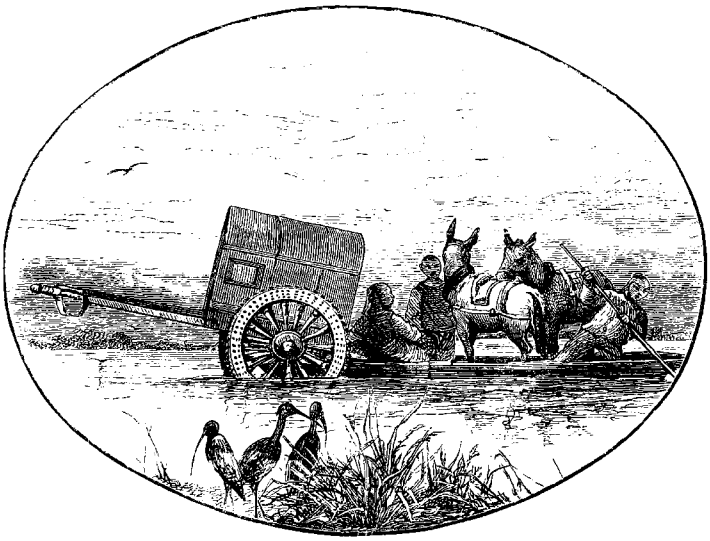
THE NARRATIVE OF A JOURNEY THROUGH CHINA AND EASTERN TIBET TO BURMAH

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS
AND TEN MAPS FROM ORIGINAL SURVEYS

By Capt. WILLIAM GILL, Royal Engineers

With an Introductory Essay

By Col. HENRY YULE, C.B., R.E.



THE FERRY

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. I.

LONDON
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1880

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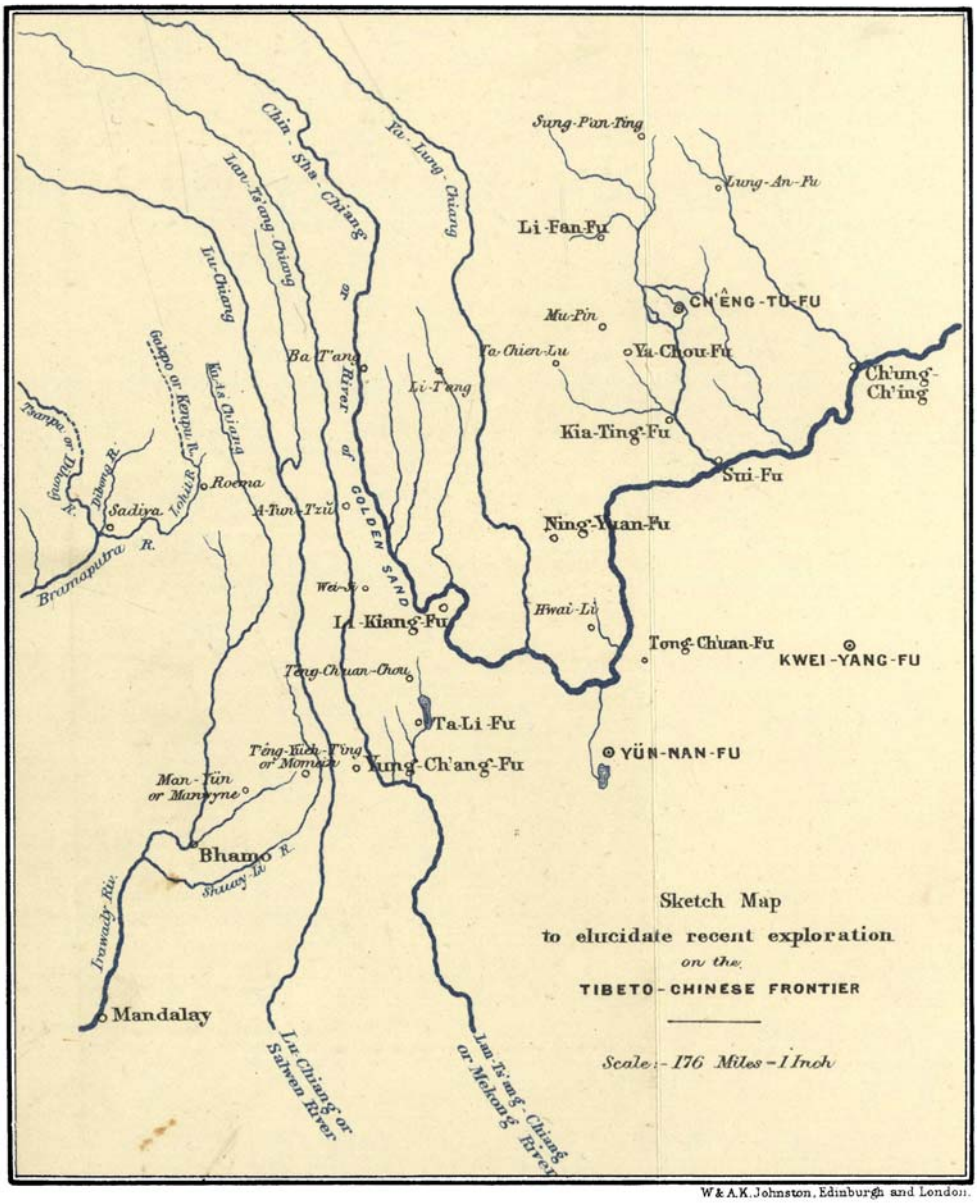

W & A.K. Johnston, Edinburgh and London.

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ILLUSTRATIONS and MAPS to VOL. I.

Errata in Vol. I.

Page 10 line 15 } *for* 'Yang-Tzŏ' *read* 'Yang-Tzŭ.'
„ 13 „ 12 }
„ 22 line 25, *for* 'was not a very good walker' *read* 'was a good walker.'
„ 24 note, *for* 'two mulecarts,' *read* 'two-mule carts.'
„ 46 „ 14, *for* 'was' *read* 'were.'
„ 50 „ 23, *for* 'plain hot water' *read* 'plain water almost boiling.'
„ 58 „ 3 *for* 'Tan-Ho' *read* 'San-Ho.'
„ 58 „ 3 from foot. The date '*September* 28' belongs to the preceding paragraph.
„ 67 „ 3 from foot, *for* 'Po-lo-Tai' *read* 'Po-Lo-Tai.'
„ 74 „ 9, *for* 'N.N.E.' *read* 'N.N.W.'
„ 74 „ 10, *for* 'N.W.' *read* 'N.E.'
„ 75 „ 11, *for* 'gevas' *read* 'jivas.'
„ 76 „ 18, *for* 'was it' *read* 'it was.'
„ 120 The cut belongs to the preceding page.
„ 127 line 2 from foot to page 129 line 8. This matter has been misplaced. It should be a note to page 263.
„ 149 note, *for* 'May 6' *read* 'page 306.'
„ 165 lines 12 and 15, *for* 'Bath'ang' *read* 'Bat'ang.'
„ 176 line 18, *for* 'Ch'ang-Ch'ing' *read* 'Ch'ung-Ch'ing.'
„ 178 „ 15. The semicolon should be after the word 'China,' not after the word 'Ssu-Ch'uan.'
„ 192 „ 4, *for* 'birds' *read* 'buds.'
„ 252 „ 7 from foot, *for* 'Wu-Shan' *read* 'Wu-Yang.'
„ 255 „ 5, *for* 'hole' *read* 'hold.'
„ 267 heading, *for* 'Bishop Provôt' *read* 'Monsieur Provôt.'
„ 316 „ 23, *for* 'Sieh T'ais' *read* 'Hsieh-T'ais.'
„ 351 „ 14, *for* 'Sieh-T'ai' *read* 'Hsieh-T'ai.'
„ 367 „ 9 from foot, *for* 'twinkling' *read* 'tinkling.'
„ 368 „ 2 from foot, the date, June 2, should be inserted here.
„ 381 „ 2 from foot, *for* 'Wing Cave Pass' *read* 'Wind Cave Pass.'
„ 385 line 27, *for* 'has' *read* 'had.'
„ 386 „ 21, *for* 'planted' *read* 'flaunted.'
„ 393 „ 16. The passage should read thus, 'Running between partly cultivated mountains, the peaks of which were about 2,000 feet high.'
„ 394 „ 7, *for* 'them' *read* 'it.'
„ 398 „ 6 from foot, *for* 'fostering' *read* 'festering.'
„ 410 „ 18. The sentence 'A little further we came to,' &c., should be 'A little further we came to a temple,' &c.

INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

§ 1. MY FRIENDS, the author and the publisher of this work, have called on me to write a preface to it. I confess to a strong interest in the book, which I have seen through the press from first to last, during Captain Gill's absence on duty in the Levant. That is, indeed, an office which nature does not easily permit to be done by deputy; and I am told that I have left some of his flowers only planted, when they ought to have flaunted, and his banners to flatter when they ought to flutter, whilst I have made his bells to twinkle when they only tinkled.

But my interest in the journey which the book relates began long before the book was even an embryo, and with the first hour of my acquaintance with its author. Three years and a half ago, he was indeed well known to me by name as a brother officer who had been an enterprising traveller on the Turkoman frontier of Persia, and a still more enterprising candidate for a metropolitan borough. But we had never met when, in the end of May 1876, Captain Gill visited me at the India Office, and announced that he was meditating an expedition, by way of Western China, into either Eastern Turkestan or Tibet.

Though I had during many years past travelled much in those regions, my journeys had been accomplished in the spirit only, not in the body—those of

the latter character never having extended into regions more remote than Ava in one direction, and Java in another; hence I was gratified by the motive of Captain Gill's visit, and did my best to justify it. This was not so much by any information that I could furnish, or suggestions that I could venture,—except, indeed, that of making Marco Polo his bosom friend, a hint that he has cherished and acted upon throughout his travels,—as by introducing him to two men who could advise him from singular practical experience, I mean Baron Ferdinand v. Richthofen, and the late Mr. T. T. Cooper.

§ 2. Of Baron Richthofen I will venture to quote words written on another occasion:

'It is true that the announcement of his presence at the evening meetings (of the Royal Geographical Society) would draw no crowds to the doors; no extra police would be required to keep the access; no great nobles would interest themselves about engaging St. James's Hall for his reception . . . but it is a fact that in his person are combined the great traveller, the great physical geographer, and the accomplished writer, in a degree unknown since Humboldt's best days. In the actual extent of his journeys in China, he has covered more ground than any other traveller of note, and he has mapped as he went. His faculty of applying his geological knowledge to the physical geography of the country he traverses is very remarkable, but not more so than his power of lucid and interesting exposition.'[1] Baron Richthofen's advice and information were communicated with a fulness and cordiality which Captain Gill has recorded near the beginning of his book.

[1] Letter to Sir Rutherford Alcock, then President of the Royal Geographical Society, of which an extract was read by him at the annual meeting, May 27, 1878.

Mr. Cooper, though far from any pretension to be classed as a traveller with the one just spoken of, has been justly characterised as one of the most adventurous explorers of modern times; and had himself made two bold attempts to force that Tibetan barrier, which remains yet unpierced, between India and China: once from the side of Ssŭ-ch'uan, and once again from the side of Assam. And it is a circumstance worthy to be noted here, that whilst Mr. Cooper (it was in my room in the India Office) was one of the last persons with whom Captain Gill took counsel regarding his journey before quitting England, it was the same Mr. Cooper who received the traveller with open arms and hearty hospitality at Bhamo, when he emerged from the wilds of the Chinese frontier in November 1877. A few months later (April 24, 1878), poor Cooper, in his solitary residence at Bhamò, was murdered by a soldier of his native guard.

§ 3. The 'general reader,' whose eye may be caught by the title of this work, will not, we trust, be misled by the familiar melody of Bishop Heber to suppose that the traveller will conduct him to 'Afric's sunny fountains.' The 'River of Golden Sand' is a translation of the name *Kin-sha-Kiang*, or (in the new orthography in which I find it hard to follow my author) *Chin-Sha-Chiang* (Gold-Sand-River), by which the Chinese, or at least Chinese geographers, style the great Tibetan branch of the Yang-tzŭ, down at least to its junction, at Sü-chau (or Swi-fu, as it is now called), with the Wen or Min River, descending from Ssŭ-ch'uan. Of other names we shall speak a little below.

It is proposed now to indicate some of the points of geographical interest in the little known region of which the River of Golden Sand is as it were the axis,—that region of Eastern Tibet which intervenes between

the two great historic continents of India and China,—and to sketch the history of explorations in this tract previous to that of Captain Gill. If in this task I sometimes use words that I have used before, on one or other of the somewhat frequent occasions that this dark region, from which the veil lifts but slowly, has attracted me,[2] let me be forgiven. And all the more one may overcome scruples at such repetition in seeing how persistent error is. Within the last few months I have read of 'an able argument' (I certainly did not read the argument itself) to prove the identity of the Tibetan Tsanpu and the Irawadi. Life seems too short for the study of able demonstrations that the moon is made of green cheese, but, if these are still to be proffered, there can be no harm in stating the facts again.

I do not forget the pungent words with which Abbe Huc concludes his sparkling *Souvenirs d'un Voyage*: 'Quoiqu'il soit arrivé au savant Orientaliste, J. Klaproth, de trouver *l'Archipel Potocki*, sans sortir de son cabinet, il est en général assez difficile de faire des découvertes dans un pays sans y avoir pénétré.'[3] But as regards a large part of the country of which I am going to speak we are all on a level, for no one has seen it, not even the clever Abbé himself and his companion; and of *geographical* information regarding the region in question, they can hardly be said to have brought anything back.

[2] E.g., in a review of Huc and Gabet in *Blackwood*, 1852; in connexion with the *Narrative of Major Phayre's Mission to Ava* (Calcutta 1856, London 1858); in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal for* 1861, p. 367; in the notes to *Marco Polo*; and in various papers in *Ocean Highways* and the *Geographical Magazine*, and discussions in the *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*.

[3] The name of Potocki Islands was given by Klaproth in honour of Count Potocki, under whom he had served on a Russian mission to Peking, to a group of eighteen islands in the Gulf of Corea. This sheet of the Jesuit map of China had been mislaid or omitted when D'Anville engraved it. Klaproth afterwards became owner of the missing tracing, and on it, *sans sortir de son cabinet*, found these islands, and claimed their discovery.

§ 4. Everyone who has looked at a map of Asia with his eyes open must have been struck by the remarkable aspect of the country between Assam and China, as represented, where a number of great rivers rush southward in parallel courses, within a very narrow span of longitude, their delineation on the map recalling the fascis of thunderbolts in the clutch of Jove, or (let us say, less poetically) the aggregation of parallel railway lines at Clapham Junction.

Reckoning these rivers from the westward, the first of importance (i.) is the Subanshiri, which breaks through the Himalya, and enters the valley of Assam in long. 94° 9′. This is a great river, and undoubtedly comes from Tibet, i.e. from Lhassa territory. Some good geographers have started the hypothesis that the Subanshiri, rather than the Dihong, is the outflow of the Tsanpu; but recent information shows this to be impossible.

§ 5. The next of these great rivers (ii.) is the Dihong, which enters Assam in long. 95° 17′, and joins the Lohit—or proper Brahmaputra—near Sadiya. Though the identity of this river with the great river of Central Tibet, the Yaru Tsanpu, has never yet been continuously traced as a fact of experience, every new piece of evidence brings us nearer to assurance of the identity, and one might be justified in saying that no reasonable person now doubts it. This was the belief of Rennell, who first recognised the magnitude of the Brahmaputra, long before we had any knowledge of the Dihong, or of the manner and volume of its emergence from the Mishmi Hills.[4] Many years,

[4] 'On tracing this river in 1765, I was no less surprised at finding it rather larger than the Ganges than at its course previous to its entering Bengal. This I found to be from the east; although all the former accounts represented it as from the north; and this unexpected discovery soon led to inquiries, which furnished me with an account of its general course to within 100 miles of the place where Du Halde left the Sanpoo. I could no longer doubt that the Burrampooter and Sanpoo were one and the same river, and to this was added the positive assurances of the Assamers "that *their* river came from the north-west, through

however, before Rennell's work was published, in fact twelve years before Rennell was born, P. Orazio della Penna, writing in Tibet (1730), had stated that the river was then believed to join the Ganges, explaining (from such maps as were available to him in those days) 'towards Rangamatti and Chittagong.' A conjecture to the same effect occurs in the memoir on the map of Tibet, by Pere Regis, at the end of du Halde. Giorgi, in his *Alphabetum Tibetanum* (Rome, 1762), says the like.[5] The same view is distinctly set forth in the geography of Tibet which is translated in the 14th volume of the great French collection of *Mémoires concernant les Chinois*, a document compiled by order of the Emperor K'ang-hi, and issued, with others of like character, in 1696. This represents the Yaru Tsanpu as rising to the west of Tsang (West Central Tibet), passing to the north-east of Jigar-Kungkar (south of Lhassa), flowing south-east some 400 miles, and then issuing at the south of Wei (or U, East Central Tibet) into the region of the *Lokh'aptra*, 'tattooed people' (*i.e.* Mishmis *et hoc genus omne*); then turning south-west it enters India, and discharges into the southern sea (pp. 177-178).

The Pundit Nain Singh, on the journey to Lhassa which first made him famous (1865), was told by Nepalese, Newars, and Kashmiris at that city, that the great river of Tibet was the Brahmaputra; whilst all the natives who were questioned also declared that, after flowing east for a considerable distance, it

the Bootan Mountains."'—*Mem. of a Map of Hindoostan*, 3rd edition, pp. 356–7, see also p. 259. Rennell's actual knowledge of the Brahmaputra extended only to long. 91°, a few miles above Goalpara, but his sketch of the probable entrance of the river from Tibet is very like the truth. On the other hand, it is curious how he was misled as to the source of the Ganges, which he identified with what are really the upper waters of the Indus and Sutlej. The importance of the Dihong was first pointed out by Lieutenant Wilcox in 1826 in the *Calcutta Gazette*. (See *As. Res.* xvii.)

[5] '*Sese tandem in Gangem exonerat.*' But Giorgi's information was derived from della Penna and the other Capuchins.

flowed down into India. The Pundit's information on his last great journey, when he crossed the river somewhat further to the eastward, before striking south into Assam, did not add much, but it was all in corroboration of the same view.[6] And this is still further confirmed by the latest report of exploration from the Chief of the Indian surveys. We have only a sketch of this exploration, and await the details with great interest. But we learn that the explorer (N—m—g) took up the examination of the Tsanpu at Chetang, where it was crossed by Nain Singh on his way from Lhassa to Assam (in about long. 91° 43′, lat. 29° 15′), and followed it a long way to the eastward. He found that the river, before turning south, flows much further east than had been supposed, and even north-east. It reaches its most northerly point in about long. 94°, and lat. 30°, some 12m. to the north-east of Chamkar. The river then turns due south-east, but the explorer was not able to follow it beyond a place, 15 miles from the great bend, called *Gya-la Sindong*. There, however, he saw that it flowed on for a great distance, passing through a considerable opening in the mountain ranges, to the west of a high peak called *Jung-la*. Chamkar appears in D'Anville's map as Tchamka, and in one of Klaproth's[7] as *Temple Djamga*, in a similar position with regard to the river. And Gya-la Sindong seems to be the *Temp. Sengdam* of the latter map, standing just at the head of the '*defilé Sing-ghian Khial*,' by which Klaproth carried off the waters of the Tsanpu into the Irawadi. If the position of Gya-la Sindong as determined by the explorer is correct, its direct distance from the highest

[6] See *Journal of Royal Geographical Society*, xlvii. p. 116. It is remarkable that the information collected by the Pundit on his first journey was most accurate as to the position where the river turns to the south, which he placed in about long. 94°. (See Montgomerie, in *J. R. G. S.*, xxxviii. p. 218, *note*.) His later conclusion was less accurate.

[7] In vol. iii. of his *Mémoires relatifs à l'Asie*.

point hitherto fixed on the Dihong river from the Assam side is only about 100 miles.[8]

§ 6. We have mentioned above that some have supposed the Subanshiri to be the real continuation of the Tsanpu. The idea seems to have been grounded in part on an exaggerated estimate of the volume of the Subanshiri, and partly on Nain Singh's indications (in 1874) of the course of the Tsanpu, which seemed to bring it in such close juxtaposition to the Subanshiri as to allow no room for the development of another river of such volume as was attributed to the latter. The last of these foundations for the theory has been removed by the new explorer (N—m—g)'s extended journey, carrying the south-eastern bend of the Tsanpu so much further to the East; and the first also was erroneous. Careful and detailed observations by Lieut. Harman in 1877-78 give the comparative volumes of the Assam rivers with which we have to do, at their mean low level, as follows :—

	Cubic feet per second.		Cubic feet per second.
Dihong . . .	55,400	Dihong and Dibong before union with Bramahputra ('Lohit') . .	82,652
Brahmaputra ('Lohit') above Sadiya . .	33,832	The combined (Brahmaputra) river at Dibrúgarh .	116,115
Ditto at the Brahma-Kund . .	25,000	The Subanshiri .	16,945
Dibong . . .	27,202		

We see here how the Dihong vastly surpasses in discharge not only the Subanshiri, but also the Lohit Brahmaputra and the Dibong, while both greatly exceed the Subanshiri.[9]

[8] This is just the space at which Rennell, 100 years ago, estimated the unknown gap. (See p. [19] above.)

[9] It is of some interest to compare these measurements with those made by Bedford and Wilcox in 1825–26. They were as follows (see *Asiatic Researches*, vol. xvii., but I take them from J.A.S.B. xxix. p. 182):—

	December 26, 1825.	March 29, 1826.
Dihong (after a correction) .	(*a*) 56,000 ft.	
Brahmaputra at Sadiya . .	(*b*) 19,058 ft.	(*a*) 33,965 ft.
Dibong	(*b*) 13,100 ft.	
Dihong and Dibong . .	69,664 ft.	(*a*) 86,211 ft.
Subanshiri, 'in dry season' .	(*a*) 16,000 ft.	

§ 7. Very eminent geographers have, however, not been content to accept the view of the identity of the Tsanpu and the Brahmaputra, and several have contended that the Irawadi of Burma was the true continuation of the great Tibetan River. D'Anville, I believe, was the first to start this idea.[1] It was repeated by our countryman Alexander Dalrymple, the compiler of the 'Oriental Repertory' and much else, the founder of the Hydrographic Department of the Admiralty, and a very able geographer, in a map on a small scale which he put together for the illustration of Symes's 'Mission to Ava' (1800). The idea was maintained at a later date with great force and insistence by that remarkable and erratic genius Julius Klaproth, who in demonstration played fast and loose on a great scale with latitudes and longitudes, and produced Chinese documents from the days of the T'ang dynasty to those of K'ang-hi in corroboration. His dissertation in its latest form[2] is, like almost everything that Klaproth wrote, of high interest. We need not, as some other things in his career suggest, doubt the genuineness of the Chinese documents. Some of them at least are to be found translated in independent works before his time. But everything is not necessarily true that is written in Chinese, any more than everything that is written in Persian —or even in Pushtu! Chinese writers find leisure to speculate on geographical questions as well as Europeans. And some of them, finding, on the one

The close approximation in those marked (*a*) to Lieutenant Harman's recent measurements is remarkable; whilst in (*b*) the discrepancy is great. All Lieut. Harman's measurements were taken in March. In some the rivers had risen, and the low level discharge was arrived at by calculation. But it is a pity that no notice is taken of the older measurements in the publication of the recent ones. The suggestion of the facts on the surface is that the recent observations do not represent the lowest level, or that the rivers in December 1825 were unusually low.

[1] *Éclaircissements Géographiques sur la Carte de l'Inde*, Paris, 1753, p. 146.

[2] *Mémoires relatifs à l'Asie*, vol. iii.

hand, the Tsanpu flowing through Tibet, and disappearing they knew not whither, and finding, on the other, the Irawadi coming down into Burma from the north, issuing they knew not whence, adopted a practice well known to geographers (to Ptolemy, be it said, *pace tanti viri*, not least) long before Dickens humorously attributed it to one of the characters in Pickwick,—they 'combined the information,' and concluded that the Tsanpu and the Irawadi were one. Klaproth's view that this was so, and that the actual influx took place near Bhamò, was adopted by many Continental geographers, and staggered even the judicious Ritter. Maps were published in accordance with the theory, some bringing the waters of Tibet into the Irawadi by the Bhamò River (down which Captain Gill floated in Mr. Cooper's boat on the last day's journey which he has recorded), and others through the Shwéli, which enters the Irawadi some eighty miles below Bhamò.

§ 8. It seems hardly worth while now to slay this hypothesis, which was moribund before, but must be quite dead since the report of N—m—g's exploration. Its existence was somewhat prolonged, especially in France, by the fact that some of the missionaries in Eastern Tibet, of whom we shall speak presently, had carried out with them elaborate maps, compiled under the influence of Klaproth's theory; and the ideas derived from these had so impregnated their minds that in communicating geographical information which they had collected on the scene of their labours it was confused and tinged by the errors of Klaproth.

The main bases for what we may style the orthodox theory of the Irawadi are found in the constant belief of natives above and below the Tibetan passes, and in the evidence of direction and volume. The lamented Col. T. G. Montgomerie, in his most able analysis of the Pundit Nain Singh's first journey,

deduced from the particulars recorded by the latter, and a careful oral catechisation, that the discharge of the Tsanpu, where crossed below Jigatze (or Jigarchi), could hardly be less than 35,000 feet per second. We see that the discharge of the Dihong, on its emergence from the hills of Assam into the plains of Assam is 55,400 feet. These are in reasonable ratio. Now the discharge of the Irawadi, so far down as the head of the Delta, is not more than 75,000 feet, and at Amarapura it cannot, on the best data available, be much more than the 35,000 feet attributed to the Tsanpu on the table-land of Tibet, at a point which would be at least 1,200 miles above Ava along the banks, if the theory of identity were true.[3]

§ 9. The third river (iii.) is the Dibong, which joins the Dihong before its confluence with the Brahmaputra. This has, on Mr. Saunders's map of Tibet accompanying Mr. Markham's book, been identified with the Ken-pu, one of the rivers of Tibet delineated on D'Anville's map. The Ken-pu, however, we shall see strong evidence for identifying with a different river, whilst there is positive reason to believe that the Dibong, in spite of its large discharge, does *not* come from Tibet. At a meeting of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1861, at which I read a paper connected with this subject, Major (now Major-General) Dalton stated that the people of Upper Assam admitted only two of their rivers to come from Tibet, viz. the Dihong and the (Lohita) Brahmaputra. An attempt was made in 1878 by Captain Woodthorpe, R.E., who has done much excellent work in the survey of the Eastern Frontier, to explore the sources of the Dibong. He was not successful in penetrating far up the river, but he

[3] See Appendix to *Narrative of Mission to the Court of Ava* (Major Phayre's), pp. 356 *seq.*; and a paper by Major-General A. Cunningham in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, vol. xxix., pp. 175 *seq.*

considered himself to have derived, from extensive views, and native information in connection with them, 'a fairly accurate knowledge of the sources of 'the Dibong, and the course of its main stream in the 'hills;'[4] and in the map representing this knowledge the river is indicated as having no source further north than about 28° 52′.

§ 10. We next come to the (iv.) true Brahmaputra, or Lohit, which enters Assam at the Brahmakund, or Sacred Pool of Brahma. This I believe to be identical with the Gak-bo of the Tibetan geographies, and the Ken-pu, or Kang-pu, of D'Anville and the Chinese.

Granted, as we may now assume, that the Tsanpu is the Dihong, the Ken-pu can hardly be other than either the Dibong or the Lohit. We have seen that the Dibong does not come from Tibet. But there is a very curious piece of evidence that the Ken-pu is the Lohit.

I have just alluded to a paper connected with our present subject which was read at Calcutta in 1861. This was a letter from Monseigneur Thomine des Mazures, 'Vicar Apostolic of Tibet,' and then actually residing in Eastern Tibet, to Bishop Bigandet of Rangoon (himself well known for his works on Burmese Buddhism, &c., and who had been very desirous to establish direct communication with his brethren in the north), and which contained some interesting geographical notices, though they were, as has been already indicated, impaired in value by the erroneous ideas as to the Tsanpu, gathered from Klaproth, with which French maps were then affected.[5] The paper was read with a comment by the present writer.[6]

[4] Letter of Captain Woodthorpe, dated Shillong, August 10, 1878, forwarded by the Government of India, in their letter of October 31, *id.*

[5] Particularly the map, on which Bishop Thomine relied, of *Andriveau Goujon*, Paris, 1841.

[6] See *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, vol. xxx. pp. 367 *seq.*

Now in this letter Bishop Thomine spoke of the series of rivers in question, beginning with the Lan-t'sang, or Mekong, and travelling westward. Next to the Lantsang was the Lu-ts' Kiang (Lu-Kiang or Salwen). Beyond that the Ku-ts' Kiang, of which we shall speak presently, and then the *Gak-bo Tsanpu*, 'called by the Chinese *Kan-pu-tsangbo*.' The Bishop, influenced by his Klaprothian map, stated this to join the Irawadi. And this would only have made confusion double but for a circumstance which he proceeded to mention. 'In that district,' he wrote, 'according to the Tibetans, is the village of Sâmé, where our two priests, MM. Krick and Boury, were murdered.' Here was a fact that no theories could affect. These two gentlemen were, in the autumn of 1854, endeavouring to make their way to Tibet from Upper Assam, by the route up the Lohit, attempted fourteen years later by Mr. T. T. Cooper, when they were attacked and murdered by a Mishmi chief called Kaiisa. On the receipt of this intelligence, and after a detailed account of the circumstances had been obtained from the servant of the priests, a party was despatched by the Assam authorities into the Mishmi country to capture the criminal chief. This was very dexterously and successfully effected by Lieutenant Eden, who was in command. In the beginning of March Kaiïsa and some of his party were taken, and were tried and convicted by Major Dalton. Dr. Carew, the Roman Catholic archbishop, interceded with the Governor-General for a mitigation. But Kaiïsa was hanged. It is an old story, but so creditable to several concerned that it has seemed well worth being briefly told here.

Now the place at which these two travellers were

The Bishop's letter as sent to the Society had been done into English, and not always lucid English. In my present quotations I have corrected this.