

There were no insects of any kind on the island; the only sign of life we discovered was the leg-bone of a bird. Two gulls were seen flying towards the west, making pretty certainly for the large freshwater lake which exists in that direction. As for the water, its excessive salinity is enough to show that it is entirely destitute of life; neither plant nor animal could possibly live in it. Moreover the strip of shore itself is also absolutely barren as far as the waves reach up it, that is to say as far as the foot of the encircling hills. There was also a similar strip of mud round the island, with fragments of the same greyish yellow stone that I have already alluded to, curiously shaped like saucers and balls. The strip along the western side consisted entirely of gravel of that kind.

About 400 m. west of the southern cape of the island there are several small banks of gravel, rising barely one foot above the surface of the water, a miniature archipelago that extends for several hundred meters and forms a semicircle convex towards the west. Beyond this curving line, but below the surface, there are a great number of similar banks, a good deal smaller in size, but all consisting of gravel. I felt strongly tempted to identify them with the ridges of ancient moraines which are now for the most part embedded in the mud and salt, after filling and levelling up the deep depression that formerly existed here. The regular semicircular form makes it difficult to account for them in any other way. The island however bears no resemblance to a fragmentary moraine; it may possibly be the last remnant of a small belt of sand that originated at a later date. At the present time the nearest glaciated mass to the east or north-east lies a very long way off. We saw no similar formations in any other part of the lake.

The island afforded a magnificent view of this lofty plateau-land of Tibet, but unfortunately the summits of which I now took the compass-bearings were later on veiled in mist and cloud. The stupendous glaciated mountain-mass (V) still towered high above all its neighbours, and stood N. 54° W. In the N. 65° W. was a lofty snowy mass. To the west the new latitudinal valley was quite open and level, and nothing broke the line of the distant horizon. A ridge of rather low, rounded hills rose quite close to the southern shore of the lake, but nowhere did the bare rock crop out. In the S. 38° E. there was what appeared from the island to be a saddle or droop in their outline; it was in reality a gorge running through them. The mountains on the northern shore of the lake are overtopped in the north-north-east and north-east by several dominating peaks. The cape that projects farthest south was visible in the S. 86° E. The waters from springs and melting snows on the mountains both north and south are gathered up into a main stream, which probably enters the lake near its extreme eastern end.

Upon leaving the island we steered diagonally across the lake towards the S. 50° E., guiding our course by an upstanding, conspicuous hill. The distance to the shore amounted to 9450 m. Immediately round the island there was a circular belt in which the crust of salt was absent, its place being taken by gravel resting on blue plastic clay. But very soon the hard salt began again, and its whiter-gleaming corrugations and ribbings, which appear to be formed when the water drops so low as to expose the salt crust, were distinctly visible at a depth of $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. Thence the salt crust extended right away to the vicinity of the southern shore.