

The grass here was thick and fresh, though too short, and through it trickled from every direction a number of rivulets, which emptied into a larger pool. There was also a large quantity of yak-dung in this locality. Shortly after that we reached the culminating point of the hills, and thence beheld another self-contained basin, embracing a lake of no great size (fig. 87). The latitudinal valley in which this basin is situated is exceptionally narrow. The western border-ridge of the basin appeared to be not very far away, because the stream that we saw flowing down into the lake was not very deeply trenched. In the west too there were heights, and the dividing ridge in that direction seemed to be higher than usual. The slopes of the hills were green with grass, and here there were several large herds of yaks grazing. But both they and the country were soon blotted out for us by a hail-storm, which continued without intermission for three hours.

After fording the stream in the new valley, we struck along the west shore of the lake, and consequently gradually inclined to the south-east and east-south-east. The water in



Fig. 88.

the lake, although not perfectly clear, was practically fresh, the slightly brackish taste it had being quite evanescent. Here we found again the same small Crustaceans that we had observed in the freshwater lake of Kum-köl. All along the western shore, and in part also along the southern, was a rim or braiding of grey withered grass still attached to its roots. For Tibet the grazing was excellent all round the lake. On the south the lake is entered by a stream of very uncommon shape. It is more like an elongated bay, now narrow, now expanded, but we soon made out that its water was flowing, though excessively slowly, towards the lake. Its upper part made a broad basin, into which gather the tiny rivulets that issue from springs in the adjacent hills on the south. On the lake there were large numbers of wild-geese. The absolute altitude of this lake is 4790 m.

South-west of the lake rises a ridge or mountain-spur with rounded outlines; it is built up of soft materials and is continued eastwards by another similar ridge, not very high. Between the two flows the stream I have just alluded to; its upper part coincides with the deepest passage in the meridional glen that separates the two ridges one from the other, and affords an easy means of crossing the insignificant and defective parallel range from which they jut out. To the east the country is open. This latitudinal valley does not appear to be of the same rank as those we have hitherto encountered; it seems to be merely a secondary depression. The circumstance of its water being fresh renders it probable, that it cannot be regarded as the terminal basin in a self-contained drainage area. Still it possessed no visible outlet; but there is, I dare say, an underground emissary, and in that case it will carry off the surplus water into the large salt lake situated immediately to the north of it.

The ledge or threshold of the meridional glen is extremely flat and level, and dotted over with numbers of pools. Thence we saw to the south-west a glaciated mountain-mass and to the west-south-west a black jagged mountain with snow on its highest summits. We pitched Camp XXXIV (alt. 4805 m.) immediately north of a little brook that flowed to the east; the grass still continued to be good.