

be supposed however, that they all lie at anything like the same level; in fact their differences of elevation are generally obvious enough at a glance. In fig. 102, for instance, which represents four contiguous pools, *c* lies at least 1 m. higher than *a*, while *b* and *d* stand at intermediate levels. Yet the distance between *c* and *a* is only 5 m. These relations are especially noticeable in the spring-fed pools amongst the foothills. There they occur (see fig. 103) on successive steps, the water frequently dropping or running in a thin trickle from one miniature basin to the next below it.

On the 3rd September we started to return to the southern shore of the eastern lake, leaving the large pools on our right and keeping closer to the mountains, from which numerous small rivulets issue, while springs gush out in countless quantities. These northern slopes again are excessively soft and marshy: the horses sank in some 60 cm. as compared with 20 to 30 cm. elsewhere, and often enough had much ado to draw their feet out of the tough, tenacious clayey mire.



Fig. 104.

After fording a larger brook that issues from a glen, we approached a true river flowing due north. This we accordingly followed all the way to the lake, its gravelly bottom being hard enough to bear us. Its volume may have amounted to 10 to 15 cub.m., and strange to say the water was throughout perfectly clear, as though it were derived entirely from springs or had passed through a clearing-basin. Nevertheless there were plain indications, that rain-water also collects into it sometimes and that the river then swells very considerably. At this time however the flood was divided into several winding arms, bordered on the right by a distinctly eroded terrace, 3 m. high, which appeared to continue all the way down to the neighbourhood of the lake (fig. 104). On the left however there is no terraced bank, but the ground slopes gently down to the actual bed of the stream. Vegetation was scanty, mostly thin moss, grass occurring but seldom in the vicinity of the river. On both sides the ground consisted of coarse sand intermingled with gravel, resting on a base of yellowish-red argillaceous sand, heavily charged with water. It was very seldom that this ground was firm enough to bear us comfortably; it was generally marshy and difficult to ride over.

The country abounded in game. We saw six or seven herds of orongo antelopes, each numbering about 20 individuals. Kulans, either singly or in small troops, were in sight all day. Further, we observed one or two wild yaks, besides marmots, earth-rats, and signs of bears and wolves.

It snowed and hailed all day without intermission, to the accompaniment of thunder and lightning. But the ground was so warm that the snow and hail all melted as it fell. After a bright night, we had good weather, and a clear sky the following day, with a stiff wind from the north-north-west, which spoiled a lake