

kind that the yak alone can eat, owing to the horny appendages of his tongue. Our caravan animals made no attempt to consume it: it was too short for them to bite. In the deep pools we found also, even at this stupendous altitude, the same species of small fish that I have already mentioned. Their presence seems to prove that at all events some portions of these streams do not freeze over entirely during the winter, but are kept open by springs. At that season they were keeping to the deep pools, in which there were the gentlest of eddies, indeed the water was almost motionless. It was only in the shallow parts that the water rippled.

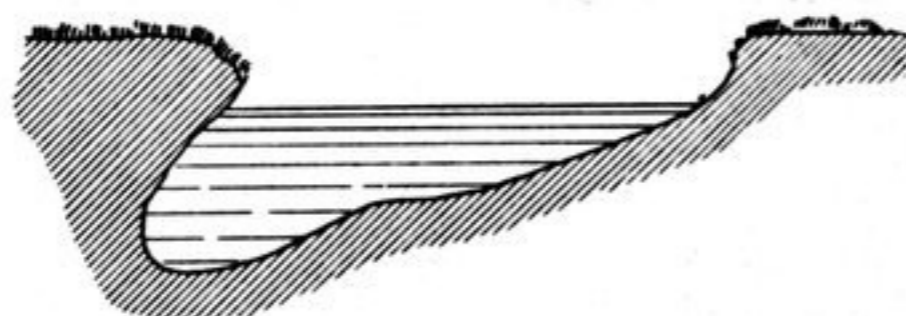


Fig. 372.

Above Camp XL the ground was actually so level, that had it not been for the flowing water, it would have been impossible to tell there was any fall at all. But very soon the ascent made itself both seen and felt. My fond hope, that we had already reached the top of the pass, was thus deceived, and upon the clouds thinning away a little,

we saw that we still had some distance to climb. In certain places our advance was made more difficult by the character of the ground, which put me in mind of a great swamp, in the wet clay and sand of which the animals' feet were constantly being sucked fast.

Soon we were enveloped on both east and west by stupendous mountain-masses, the craggy swellings of this immense range. Amongst them the two bosses crowned with perpetual snow stood out especially conspicuous; it was from them that all the streams originate which we had crossed over during the last few days, those namely that make their way down to the lake north-east of Camp XXXVII. From the great snowy mass on the west, that is quite close to us on the right hand, four glacier arms proceeded, each bursting as it were out of a rocky gateway. They are bigger than one would expect in a region where the perpetual snow is restricted to situations at such a vast altitude that the areas which reach up high enough are infinitesimally small. The most southerly of these glacier-arms is traversed by a great number of transverse crevasses, and has such a steep fall as almost to be like a staircase. In the arm which lies next it on the north, the crevasses are marginal only. Of the actual ice itself we saw nothing owing to the thick covering of snow, through which however portions of the moraines of no inconsiderable extent projected. So far as I was able to judge from the distance, these exposed portions of the moraines consist of fine material, that is to say gravel; but no fragments of rock were visible. The moraines become beyond doubt lost in the yawning lateral crevasses, for there are no front moraines worth speaking about. The material which is carried down from the mountains on the ice appears in general to be so fine that it is easily washed away by the glacier streams, and even by the rain. The larger fragments and rocks which fall into the crevasses are ground to pieces before they again make their appearance in front of the glacier. From each of the arms of the glacier issues a stream, flowing in a distinctly marked bed, generally over fine sand and clayey matter, though occasionally over gravel. The second glacier arm that we passed possessed two emissaries, one flowing north, the other south, from the pass. Above and beyond these glacier arms we saw distinctly the flat conchoidal