

without any boggy, water-logged marshes. To glance at, it was perfectly level, but in reality it slopes slowly down towards the north-east, and is scored by three shallow watercourses, then devoid of water, and all directed towards the principal river. One of them however entered a little pool in which some water still remained. The grazing was very poor; nevertheless we saw yaks and kulans, and even a solitary wolf. On the other hand marmots and hares, which were plentiful in the glen that we had just left behind us, were now absent. At length we reached a broad, flat glen in which were a couple of basins containing gloriously bright spring-water. The grazing was of moderate quality; but there was any quantity of yak-droppings. Camp XLV had an altitude of 5028 m. From this point the loftiest peaks visible in the great main range towered up in the N. 30° W. and N. 5° E.

July 28th. The surface rose imperceptibly, at least to the eye, towards the east-south-east, until it reached a flat saddle, though it was impossible to make out which was the real culminating point. In the southern part of the glen there was however a watercourse, which higher up contained some spring-water and pools in two or three places; and there were other pools, but disconnected, on the north side of the glen. We pitched Camp XLV near the point where the watercourse just mentioned turns to the north. Grass was very sparse; frequently indeed there was none, though there were garlic and rhubarb. Of human beings we saw not the slightest trace, while the wild animals in this locality were so little shy and so numerous that, I concluded, we were still a long way from the first of the nomads. Yaks and kulans were visible in several directions, as also one orongo antelope, a vast number of hares, an occasional marmot sitting beside its burrow, and ravens. The surface of the ground was literally chequered with their tracks leading in all directions. From the top of the flat pass, which was entirely a secondary water-divide, we perceived to the east a gigantic snowy mountain with a blue lake at its western foot, and stretching in the direction in which we were going, namely east-south-east. On the way we crossed over a series of dry watercourses, which come down from a rather low ridge on the south and enter the principal watercourse, that runs down from the pass towards the lake just alluded to. Upon drawing nearer to this last we perceived that the eastern arm of the minor range, which is built up of red sandstone, plunges vertically down into the lake without leaving so much as the narrowest pathway alongside the water. Consequently we were forced to make a detour to the south-west, and to cross over the range by a pass which, although it was only 100 m. above the level of the lake, was nevertheless rather toilsome. After that we followed the curve of the southern shore, the ground consisting of barren detritus. In places there were shore lagoons, one of them being of pretty fair size. The water was intensely salt, and, so far as we were able to see, without a sign of either animal or vegetable life. Along that same shore, which forms a curve so regular as almost to have been drawn with a pair of compasses, run three old strand-ramparts, quite close together and at a distance of 300 m. from the existing shoreline. The beach was flat, and the highest of the old circular marks was not, I dare say, more than 6 m. above the existing level of the lake. These old strand-ramparts also are regularly formed, running for the most part parallel with the shore; but in places they are broken, and at length they stop entirely at the narrow isthmus which