

Hence a drop of $1\frac{1}{2}$ meters in the level of the lake would unite the island with the mainland by means of an extremely flat tongue of land like that which the next day raised an easily surmountable obstacle in our path. It seemed to me, that generally throughout the whole of the southern part of the lake the depth nowhere reached 3 m.

Leaving the rocky island, we continued southwards to the tips of the »pier», sounding on the way depths of 2.61 and 2.30 m. After that our direction was S. 80° W., with insignificant deviations, until we reached our camp for the night. Immediately west of the pier the depth was 2 m., then 1.46 m. in the shallowest part of the sound, and finally 2.25, 2.10, 2.28, 2.15, 2.24, and 1.67 m. Here the

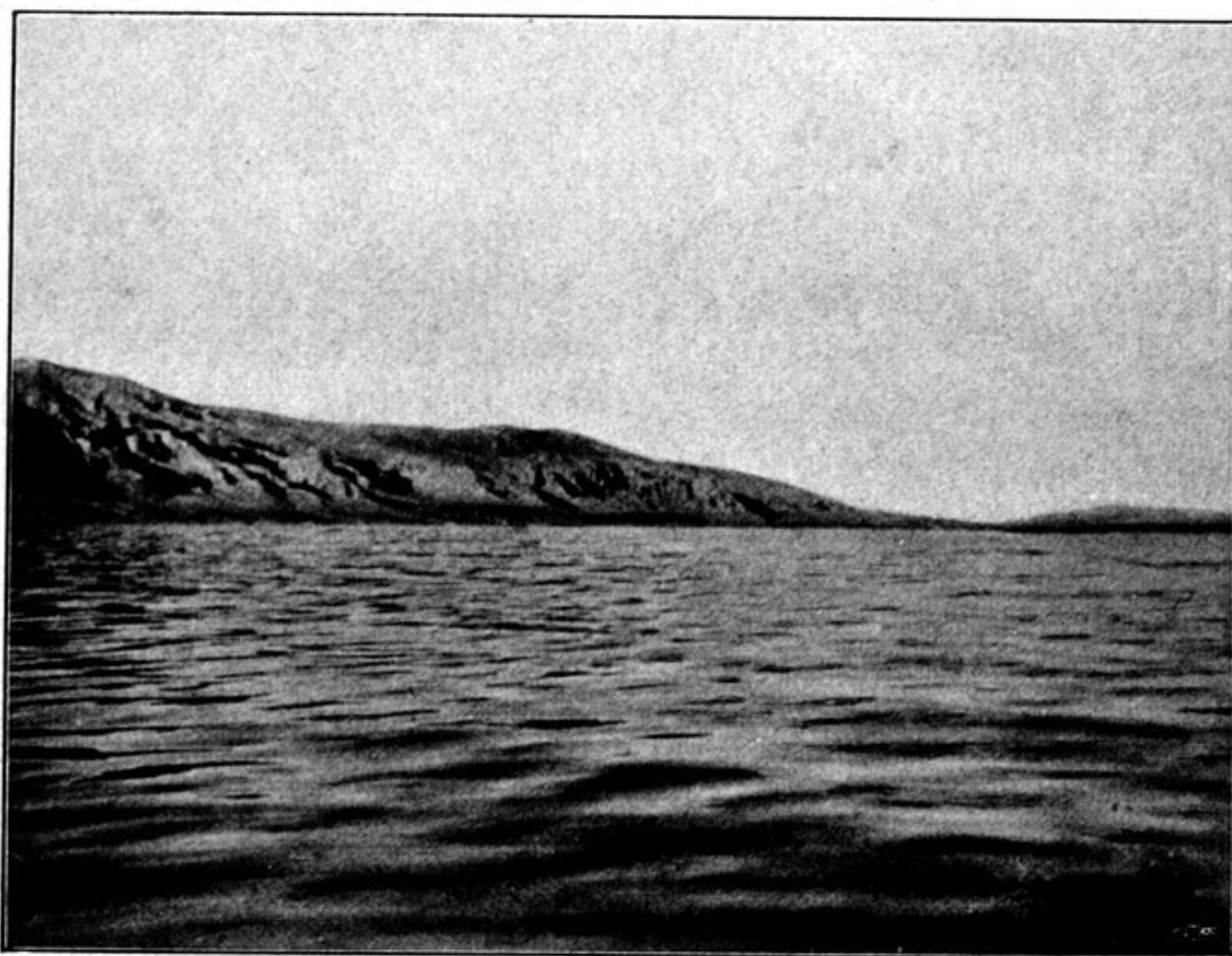


Fig. 35. SOUTHERN SHORE OF THE BIG ISLAND.

2-meter bathymetrical curve runs at no inconsiderable distance from the northern shore, a thing I did not expect, for the cliffs in that quarter present a perpendicular face towards the south. In fact, they rise like a cyclopean wall, built up of blocks of stone of immense size, with big black eroded fissures gaping in them at intervals. Generally there is a very narrow strip of shore, along which it is possible to advance; but in some places the cliffs plunge sheer down into the water. Nevertheless the lake is everywhere so shallow that you could easily get round them by wading. The bottom consisted of ooze, which came whirling up in black flocculent masses whenever the paddle touched it. The depth along our route amounted, as I have said, to rather more than 2 m., and this depth remained constant the whole way. To the south of our route it was scarcely any deeper, but rather shallower; for one would naturally expect the lowest part of the depression to lie directly under the precipitous mountain-wall and not next to the plain, apparently quite level, that stretches down to the southern shore.