CHAPTER IV.

THE NAKTSONG-TSO, ITS SOUND, AND ITS WESTERN HALF.

Broadly speaking this country may be characterized in the following way. A number of mountain-ranges, stretching more or less faithfully east and west and running parallel to one another, rise from what is on the whole a flat region. These ranges are successively pierced by a natural waterway or sound, running from north-west to south-east, and consequently cutting them at right angles, or rather diagonally. From its beginning at the moraine projection to its termination in the north-west this sound is 8.3 km. long, and has a mean breadth of 0.8 km., the maximum being 1.1 km. and the minimum 0.5 km. The ranges on the west side of the sound form the immediate continuations of the ranges on the island; in other words, the sound cleaves its way through these ranges in a succession of gigantic rocky »gateways». At the first promontory on the left, where the hard rock descends directly into the water, the dip of the strata was 37° S., but generally the dip appeared to be towards the north. The rock in question was a close-grained, brittle species, resembling *hälleflinta;* for a detailed description, see the Geological section. So far as I was able to observe in such a hurried trip as this I am describing, the dip of the strata on both sides of the sound was precisely the same, and there was nothing to suggest that any subsidence of the earth's crust, or *Grabenversenkung*, has ever occurred there. A study of *The Great Ice Age*, which I had with me, convinced me, that this formation was almost in every detail identical with the »rock basins» of Scotland, which James Geikie describes in such a masterly way. I had already suspected that the pier-like projection which we encountered at the entrance to the sound is an old moraine; and the farther we advanced up the sound, the more forcibly was the idea borne in upon me, that this elongated trough must have been hollowed out by glacier ice, and that the peculiar, capricious, and fantastic scenery which stretched before us could only have been produced by the erosive action of an ice-stream. My trip was only a preliminary reconnaissance, a pioneer trip; consequently I am not in a position to give any exact arithmetical data, nor do I consider, that I am warranted in speaking with any degree of certainty on the matter. In a later chapter I propose to take a general survey of the lakes of