

fringed with a belt of ice 10 to 20 m. broad. This evidently owed its origin to the fact that during the cold, bright nights a thin sheet of ice would cover the lake, and this next day would be broken up by the prevailing wind and driven east, where it banked itself up into a solid mass. The cause of the rest of the lake not being frozen must be its great depth, though possibly this result may also be in part due to its greater exposure to the wind, which sweeps with augmented intensity between the mountains that shut it in on either side. But there could be no doubt that it would not be long before this basin also would be frozen over. Hundreds of wild-duck were swimming about on the water.

Except for unimportant bays and capes the shore of the lake extends towards the north-north-west. The cliffs approach quite close to it, and at their foot the ground is covered with immense screes of stones and gravel, sloping more or less steeply to the water's edge. These rendered it difficult to march, especially for the camels. In one of these lake-side cliffs we discovered a grotto, which had recently been inhabited. Camp CXXXIX was made at Bal, the broad outlet of a glen upon which several subsidiary glens converge; this evidently had once been a northern bay of the lake. At its head we again perceived the recently mentioned dominating peak (T₄); to the left of it the route to Niagzu runs up through the mountains. At Bal a little brook with bright, unfrozen water entered the lake; it clearly issued from springs. Although its volume was not more than $\frac{1}{5}$ cub.m., its eroded water-course is of great size and excavated to I daresay the depth of 5 m. and shut in by steep, often vertically scarped banks. Close to our camp a second similar glen opened out into the first one, but contained no water. There was at that time no grass on the plain at Bal, nothing but dry japak as hard as wood.

Thus in the course of this day's march we had followed the river Tsanger-schar towards the north-west, tracing it down a big latitudinal valley and through five lakes, which might very well be described as expansions of the river. These several expansions or lake-basins may be regarded as lying at precisely the same level; anyway the velocity in the sounds or river-arms that link them together was altogether insignificant, so that the fall towards the west is infinitesimally small. The basin farthest east, which is incomparably greater than the others, may be looked upon as the true gathering-basin of the lake-system, which receives its supplies from over a very extensive area, the Tsanger-schar being its principal contributory. Out of this lake the water flows slowly towards the north-west, and finally enters the Panggong-tso, which lake possesses no outlet, and consequently is salt. In spring and summer, after the snows melt, and in the late summer, during the rainy season, vast quantities of water flow into the eastern basin, and this sets up a much livelier current in the sounds that connect the several basins. It is at this period therefore that the beach-lines are made, and it is in these little sounds that they are most developed. The fringe of ice along the shores appeared to indicate that the smaller lakes had dropped somewhat since the ice formed; for the ice sloped down from the outsides towards the middle. Nevertheless reports in the ice-sheets

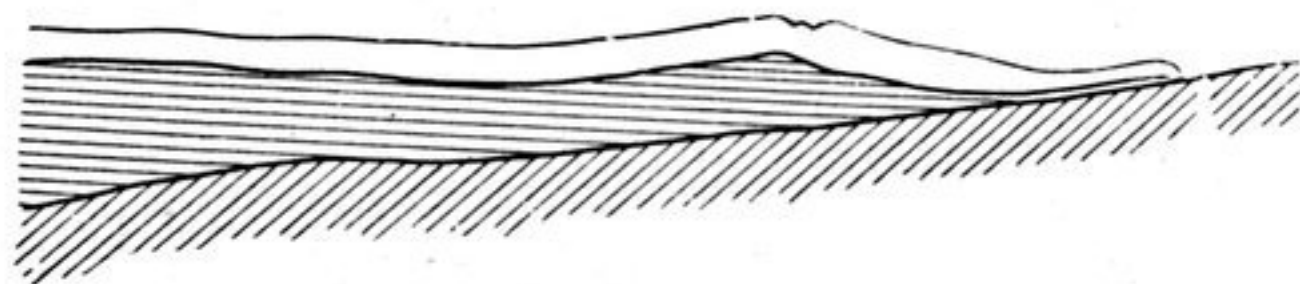


Fig. 175.