

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CAPTAIN RAWLING. SOUTHERN TIBET.

In the summer of 1903 Captain Rawling undertook a journey in the country east-north-east of the Tso-ngombo, and thus came at several points into contact with the routes of the travellers last quoted. His map is excellent, and his paper in the *Geographical Journal* contains more geography than the books of several Tibetan explorers. I trust Rawling will give us a more detailed account of his journey in book form. I have entered his itinerary on my general map on the scale of 1:1,000,000, so that it will be possible to see what relation his journey bears to mine and those of other travellers in the same part of the world. I will now proceed to quote certain extracts from his paper which are so characteristic that without further comment they afford an excellent survey of the geography of that part of Tibet.

»This lake (Shemen Tso), which is over 100 square miles in extent, is bitterly salt, and in shape very irregular, with numerous rocky promontories running into it from east and west. At some former date it evidently occupied a much greater area. The shores slope gradually, and are covered with grass . . . About half a mile from the shores of the lake, at a spot where the camp was pitched, an area of about 5 acres in extent was covered with ice, over which lay a thick layer of loam, upon which grass grew luxuriantly.»

»Memar Chaka, the bitterly salt lake which we had now reached, has an area of about 50 square miles. The plain all around has a width of about 5 miles, the soil being rich and fruitful. Signs were plainly visible of the lake having been at some remote period about 80 feet higher than its present level. But few animals and birds were to be seen.»

»Beyond this undulating range of hills lay a lake entirely frozen over, and having an area of nearly 20 square miles . . . Round its shores, piled into great ridges, lay a snow-white mass of carbonate of soda and sulphate of magnesia. The outline of the lake was regular, and the shores flat, no vegetation growing within half a mile of the water.»

Of the country a few miles east of Jäschil-köl he says: »Borax was found in large quantities close to the tents. The surrounding country was impregnated with carbonate of soda and salt to such an extent that some of the streams were un-