

it was thus evident that the lake was partially supplied from warm springs. A few wild fowl were congregated near this end of the lake doubtless waiting for the rapidly approaching warm weather to melt the ice and enable them to proceed with their parental duties.

The lake runs nearly due east and west, is about ten miles long, and nowhere more than two miles in breadth.

The valley in which it lies is, opposite the lake, about four miles broad. The height of the hills to the north I estimated at 3,000 feet above the level of the lake, while those on the south were at least 2000 feet higher.

The only name by which the lake is *well known* to natives is "Kul-i-Pámír Kalan," *i.e.*, lake of the Great Pámír. I have once or twice heard it called "Airán Kul," or buttermilk lake. To avoid confusion, and to make as little possible change in existing nomenclature, I purpose calling it "Kul-i-Pámír Kalan," or "Victoria Lake," the last name being the one originally bestowed by its discoverer, Lieutenant Wood. Our camp, which was about two miles east of its head was called by the "Wákhis" Sar-i-kul (head of the lake), a camp in a corresponding position at the lower end being called "Bun-i-kul" (foot of the lake). This may account for the other name erroneously given to it by Lieutenant Wood (Sir-i-kól).

After reaching camp, a distance of $16\frac{1}{2}$ miles, I went to the head of the lake to investigate its drainage and determine its limits (for from a little distance off it was impossible to discriminate between the ice and snow on the lake, and the snow on shore). I was soon convinced that all the water from the hills at the east end drained *into* the lake, which therefore like its neighbour in the Little Pámír has but one outlet, although in the former case the water flows west, and in the latter east. To the East of the lake the valley opens out, and forms a large basin which extends ten or twelve miles from West to East, and six miles from North to South. At the lower portion of this basin, surrounding the head of the lake, is a great deal of marshy ground formed by the drainage which enters from numerous side valleys,* coming from the hills on the South. At the time of our visit this marsh was covered with snow and ice; but later on in the season, when the snow is melting on the surrounding hills, there is much water, and the place is said to become the favoured breeding place of thousands of geese.

Our march from Sir-i-kul lay along the Northern side of the valley, the whole of which was deep in snow, and was so level that I experienced considerable difficulty in determining the correct position of the water-shed, which was crossed at a distance of twelve miles from the east end of the lake and at a height of 14,320 feet. A frozen stream here comes down from the North, divided into two portions by a low ridge of gravel, one flowing eastward into the Aksu River, the other westward into the lake.

Eastward from the water-shed the Great Pámír valley contracts. We followed down a rivulet which, shortly before passing the camp at Shásh Túpa, joins a considerable stream coming down a broad valley from the North. The name of our camp was derived from the "Shásh Túpa" or "six hills" by which it is surrounded, and between each pair of which roads issue to different parts of the Pámír steppes.

Our road from Shásh Túpa lay for nearly eight miles due north on the right bank of the stream, and then continued down it for ten miles in a north-east direction to the camp "Dahn-i-Isligh."† On our left we passed three broad open ravines, containing streams coming from the west; one of them was nearly as large as the river we were following, and before joining

* Up one of these valleys is a road across the hills to Langar in the Great Pamir. One good day's march takes the traveller over the Warram Kotal (Pass), another half day to Langar, and another half day to Sarhadd (horse marches). This is the road by which a very short time ago Jehandar Shah, the Ex-Mir of Badakhshan, when attacked by the Cabul troops, fled, accompanied by several hundred followers, to Yassin. His shorter route from Panjah would doubtless have been up the Sarhadd valley, but anticipating that he would be intercepted on that line, he made the long detour above mentioned, passing through uninhabited country the whole way from Langar Kish, and striking the Little Pamir at a considerable distance above Sarhadd, instead of having to fight his way up to the latter place.

† "Mouth of the Isligh."