

thing, the whole character of the place, the whole landscape, reminds me of Kara-koshun and its large swampy lakes in the Lop country.

Now we enter a yellow channel again. The water is very muddy, and seems as though it came direct from the silt-laden Hilmend.

On the last stretch to the eastern shore no reeds are growing, and here we cross a very extensive, quite open bay, like a large lake. The depth goes down only to 20 inches, and the water is exceedingly muddy and full of stems and fragments, because a herd of cattle has lately been here, tramping on their way to or from a lake pasturage. Before us, to the east, is seen a row of huts, towards which we steer. On either side of them are cattle, an immense crowd of black specks, a whole chaplet of animals. The land is so low that it is invisible until we are close to it, and therefore the cattle seem to be moving over the horizon of the lake.

When we neared the shore, and the depth was only 16 inches or less, the boatmen jumped off the tutins, and pushed them on to a point about 20 yards from the land. The huts, which lay about 30 yards from the shore, were just then being taken down by their owners. We saw the people packing their things, rolling up the matting, and taking down the poles. They feared a rise of the water, and were flitting to safer ground north-eastwards.

We set up our camp in the immediate neighbourhood of the moving village, and were there actually surrounded on all sides by water, for eastwards lay a very narrow, shallow water channel, like a claw surrounding the small space of dry ground where our tents stood, but it was thought that there was no danger of flooding before night. A number of snail shells of the same species as at Lop lay thrown on the shore.

The commander and crew of the flotilla were paid for their good work, and immediately disappeared over the lake westwards. We had found these tutins remarkably practical and trustworthy boats. In speed and facility of manœuvring they cannot compare with the canoes of the Lop-nor men, but on the other hand they can stand a