

lake-basin at one-third of its entire length from the south-west end is divided into two parts by a submerged ridge, covered by not more than 942 feet of water. Near the shore are considerable areas where the water has a depth of only 120 feet; the largest of these areas occur off the mouth of the Selengá, which brings down so much sediment as to form an immense alluvial cone, the Chivirkúlskaya Bay, the delta of the Upper Angará and the Little Sea; yet only 8 per cent. of the lake-floor is covered by less than 30 fathoms (180 feet) of water. Except off the deltas and the small Ushkanii Islands (near Svyatoi Nos Peninsula) the 100-fathoms line runs very near to the shore, especially along the north-western coast. Svyatoi Nos (Holy Cape) is a large peninsula protruding from the eastern shore of the lake opposite to the island of Olkhon, about midway between the northern and southern ends. The extreme northern end of the peninsula presents a high, wooded, almost vertical ridge with a craggy summit, from which flows a liquid called "Imushá" by the Tungús, natives of the district. According to Georgi,¹ it is a kind of mineral oil (*vitrolem unctuosum*): others believe it to be produced by the decomposition of the excreta of cormorants, herons, sea-gulls, and other birds, which come to the island in infinite numbers, mainly during their migration. Springs containing an oily liquid very much like naphtha have been discovered at the bottom of the Baikal opposite to the mouth of the River Túrka. Floating wax, or "bikerit," used by the inhabitants as a medicine for rheumatism and scurvy, is got on the surface at this part. It burns very quickly with a bright flame, and leaves much soot. This substance was subjected by Shamárin in Irkutsk to analysis by dry distillation, and volatilised at 140° C.; it contained 8.44 per cent. of liquid distillate (burning oil) and 61.17 per cent. of solids (paraffin of the best quality).

The numerous rocky fragments torn from the mainland found all round the lake, the islands lying in close proximity to the shore and retaining traces of their former identity with the surrounding mountains, and the great depth of water near the cliffs rising above its surface, all testify to the violent origin of the lake. Georgi² believes that the area occupied by it is the continuation of the valley of the Angará, and that the basin of the lake was formed by a sinking produced by a violent earthquake.

Kropotkin³ considers Lake Baikal a "twin lake," the north end of the southern basin being continued by the valley of the River Barguzin, and the south end of the northern basin lying behind the

¹ *Guide to Great Siberian Railway*, p. 330, St Petersburg, 1900.

² *Ibid.*, p. 331.

³ Cited by Suess, *Das Antlitz der Erde* (English translation, vol. iii. p. 53, Oxford, 1908).