

and that the axe-marks were caused by Mongol hunters. The name of Korghaschun-kene, or Lead-mines, mentioned above is a clear indication of the existence of lead-ores.

On the same plateau there occur pieces of a hard variety of rock, forming flat laminae with a round hole in the middle, caused by the attritional force of the wind.

This oasis is evidently a favourite resort of the wild camel; indeed there were large troops there on both occasions when I visited it, on the present occasion, and again in the end of February 1901. There exists a superabundance of grazing, and the water of the spring is not too salt. At the end of February the ice-sheets were considerably bigger than they were in the end of March. We saw here both antelopes and foxes. The wild-duck rest at times beside these springs in the course of their migrations between the Kara-koschun and the regions to the north. Ticks, fleas, beetles, and spiders were already active in the end of March.



Fig. 68. WOUNDED WILD CAMEL AT ALTMISCH-BULAK.

The southernmost outliers of the little mountain-chain that lies to the north of Altmisch-bulak were visible from the spring to the N. 60° E., and due east we discerned in the far distance a yellow strip — the clay desert, where the former lake was situated. The desert appeared to be nearer on the east than on the south. Hence the old lake would appear to have bent round to the north-east, or perhaps there was a bay running in that direction. But with this topographical question I shall have an opportunity to deal lower down.

My guide from Singer computed, that from this spring to his native village was a journey of 6 short days or 4 long ones. In both cases every night can be spent beside a spring. The route goes *viâ* Olun-temen-tu, Teschik-bulak, Buru-tu, Bisch-bulak, Altschuk-bulak, Ojman-bulak, Nan-tschan (Nan-schan?), and Kara-koschun.