

as a stone we proceeded no farther with our well-digging. A few hundred meters higher up the same valley there appeared to have been a spring, which flowed as recently as only one or two years ago, though since then it has dried up; there was a little vegetation. To the north-north-west we perceived a portion of the higher range in the background.

On 23rd February we traversed a gently undulating region, furrowed by several dry brooks running towards the south-south-east. The ground was hard, and at intervals the *tschikende* scrub was growing on tiny mounds. The nearer broken range on the north still continued to run towards the west; and immediately to the south of it an entirely new range now made its appearance, and along its southern base we had to travel to reach Altmisch-bulak. So far as we were able to see for the dust-laden atmosphere, the space between the two ranges was occupied by a latitudinal valley of no great breadth, but level and open for as far as we could see to the west. From the eastern part of the new range several dry brooks proceeded to the south-east. In one of these we discovered a spring, which yielded water with a specific gravity of 1.015 and formed a pretty big ice-sheet; but there was no vegetation near it.

During the rest of the day's march to Camp No. CLIV we crossed over a series of flat spurs projecting from the range nearest to us on the north, with plainly marked torrents between them. In one of these there was a little oasis of tamarisks and kamisch. We made our camp at another similar oasis, which had also a supply of water, and was bisected by a strip of barren gravelly soil, with small hillocks of greenstone. Between this strip of gravel and the western half of the oasis there was a dry brook, 1½ m. broad and 1 m. deep, in which the saliferous character of the water was manifest (sp. gr., 1.012); the space was however too confined to permit of sheets of ice being formed. This then was the third salt spring of which we had been told the year before; and the statement that the salinity of the springs increased towards the east was therefore correct.

During the course of our march on 24th February the chain nearest to us on the north increased in altitude; but it was uneven, swelling up in places into a serrated crest, with deeper saddles and gaps between. We crossed over two torrents pretty deeply scooped in the ground; one ran towards the south, the other towards the south-east, though lower down they united to form one. Around them the surface was very uncomfortable to march over, consisting as it did of a labyrinth of hillocks, thresholds, and ridges, all of greenstone, and with a predominant dip of 69° S. 10° E. A little south of our route the hard rock came to an end, and the gravel-strewn *saj* sloped slowly down towards the clay desert, though the latter was no longer visible. On the other side of the two big watercourses the ground was seamed by thousands of tiny dry rivulets, and the gravel was exceptionally abundant. A miniature mountain-ridge, only a few hundred meters long, lies at the foot of the larger range. Except for one relatively high swelling, covered with drift-sand, sand is entirely absent from the range in question. After crossing over a last greenstone elevation, situated not very far from the southern foot of the range, we saw in front of us the oasis of Altmisch-bulak, considerably bigger than the other oasis, mentioned above, that lies to the east of it.