

The southern descent from the pass is remarkably short and yet gentle, and when we at length got down into the broad latitudinal valley which runs along the southern foot of the Tschimen-tagh, parallel to the Tschimen valley, this latter range wore the appearance of a series of insignificant hills, and neither bare rock nor snow-capped peaks were any longer visible. It was only in the distant east-south-east that we saw a larger snowy mountain, forming the continuation of the Tschimen-tagh; it is said to overhang the district of Kum-bulak, inhabited by Mongols.

Down the middle of the latitudinal valley a broad, brown strip made itself very conspicuous: it was the shallow bed of the stream which flows to the west. On the south it is bordered by slightly undulating ground, tinted green, and there we saw in several places wild yaks, kulans, and antelopes.



Fig. 46. A SNOWY SUMMIT OF THE TSCHIMEN-TAGH AS SEEN FROM ITS SOUTHERN LATITUDINAL VALLEY TOWARDS THE N 47° W.

During the day's march soft formations predominated as far as Kartschugha, but there hard, grey granite again came to the surface. Shortly afterwards it was succeeded by black schists, which dipped 61° towards the S. 35° E. and had an easy slaty cleavage. Close to the first secondary pass there was a coarser schist dipping 30° towards the S. 30° E., seamed with white dykes and veins. Very often the schist crops out in the bottoms of the watercourses, though it is in part so far pulverised that it is like small coal. Near Camp No. XII the core of the mountains consisted of coarse-grained granite with a reddish tinge.