

Eventually the glen inclines more and more to the south-east. The slope is nowhere steep, being evenly distributed throughout the full length of the glen; all the same in the rarefied atmosphere we felt it very sensibly. The last vegetation to survive up into these Alpine altitudes is moss, growing in small patches; but eventually it also comes to an end, and the ground, consisting entirely of schist débris which rattled and chinked against the horses' hoofs, was then absolutely barren. Hence we were forced to the conclusion, that the herds of antelopes which we saw every now and again were merely travelling from one grazing-ground to another. The precipice on the east side of the glen is here loftier and steeper than that on the opposite side. Finally the glen again assumes its south-south-east direction; the heights around grow relatively lower and assume more the character of flat, rounded knolls. It was evident already that the pass which we were approaching must be one of the first magnitude, and that the crest in which it is situated must be the culminating crest of the range. By this the brook had dwindled to a mere rivulet. In every direction there were patches of snow, though no connected snow-field. During the middle of the day these patches melt rapidly, so that the country everywhere echoed with the sound of bubbling, trickling water. In the last few yards the ascent grew just a shade steeper, and the pass formed a very broad and spacious swelling, covered with loose gravel. There was not a trace of perpetual snow in its vicinity, although it reached an altitude of 5130 m.; from which we may infer that the snow-line in this part of Tibet lies even higher still.

On the other hand we saw due south of us an exceptionally imposing mountain-complex, with fields of perpetual snow, *firn*-expanses, and glacier arms. Between that complex and the parallel range of the Arka-tagh, on the summit of which we then stood, there lies another big latitudinal valley, likewise traversed by a river. The descent from the pass was not very steep, and as usual the southern slope was a good deal shorter than the northern. Down it too a tinkling brook made its way amongst the barren gravel and granite blocks, though these last continue for a short stretch only. After emerging from between the last hills, and uniting with another more easterly brook, the united torrent splits up into a number of arms, which plough their way across an expanse of tough yellow clay and sand, materials that the brooks bring down with them, so that several of these deltaic arms look more like rivulets of thick porridge than water.

Westwards for as far as we were able to see the latitudinal valley was broad and open. The great glaciated mass passed over on the east into dome-shaped, snow-capped mountains. From its *firn* region it sends out three broad, blunted glacier-arms towards the north. These have built up at their extremities gigantic terminal moraines of black débris, forming several rings more or less concentric, and bearing witness to a recession on the part of the glaciers, a fact not to be wondered at, when we call to mind that all the lakes in Tibet are shrinking and drying up. The only solid rocks we perceived were a few solitary crags of a black and brown colour, which stuck up through the white snow as naked needles of ragged outline. The glacier arms glittered intensely white as though snow had recently fallen upon them. From them issued several glacier streams, which joined the principal river of the valley. The whole made a magnificent spectacle, peculiar effects being produced