

After crossing over two other secondary passes, the higher of which reached an altitude of 5,122 m., we at length reached a broader, opener valley, the stream of which likewise flows towards the north-west, into the latitudinal valley out of which we had just climbed. Thus we had crossed these three passes unnecessarily; for had we gone immediately east of the glaciated mass after leaving Camp No. XXVII, we might easily have avoided them; but then the country there had in the distance appeared to be far more difficult. The acclivities of all three passes, especially those on the south, are pretty steep; those on the north are awkward, soft, and marshy. The ground is covered with gravel, with a thin sprinkling of moss at intervals.

East of our route rose side by side a dome-shaped and a flat-topped mountain, both visible also from Camp No. XXVIII. The top of the latter was as level as if it had been ruled with a ruler. The upper part of both mountains is black, and probably consists of the same porous tuff which lies scattered in enormous quantities over the face of the country. On the right the great outstanding feature was still the majestic glaciated mass, with its immense *firn* basin, and black craggy pinnacles towering above it or behind its snow-field.



Fig. 73.

We next followed a gently rising glen towards the south-west, having on the left, on the nearer side of the dome-shaped and flat-topped mountains, rounded red hills and on the right ramifications and offshoots of the great glaciated mass. Thence we attained without any difficulty the principal pass of the new parallel range, a flat and level col, with two small tarns on the top, from which brooks issue and flow away north and south. Following the latter, we travelled south-south-east. Along its margins there were occasional patches of grass; and orongo antelopes were by no means rare. On both sides we had brick-red hills; but the glen shortly contracted to a veritable ravine, in which there is red sandstone in an unblemished condition. At the point where this is pierced by the stream small cataracts are formed. The gorge is so narrow that we were forced to ride in the bed of the stream, which had then a volume of not more than $\frac{1}{5}$ cub.m. in the second; and for a short distance we were even obliged to make a detour over the hills on the right. Afterwards however the gorge widens out again a good deal, its bottom being full of red gravel. Finally it enters a larger glen, coming from the west-north-west and is traversed by a stream that is divided into several arms and carries a volume of about 10 cub.m., the water being extremely thick and muddy and of a reddish brown colour. It issued from a large glacier arm descending on that side of the mountain, and was heavily charged with glacial mud. After the two or three days of unusually bright, sunny weather, the volume of the stream was no doubt much larger than it usually is.

At the point where the two glens unite, we discovered on the right bank of the stream, at Camp No. XXVIII (alt. 5,024 m.), a certain amount of pasture. Strange to say however, we were not the first people to visit that wilderness; for here we stumbled upon a linen shirt and a couple of rope-ends, which my men recognized as being of Mohammedan make, as also a wooden pin such as the Mongols use to make loops round when loading up caravan animals. At first I was disposed to think that I had struck Wellby and Malcolm's route of 1896; but it is