

eastwards into one of the miniature lakes that lay between our line of march and the large lake. All these watercourses were veritable streams of liquid ooze or mud ditches, treacherous to a degree. In some of them we might easily have been swallowed up in the mire, had we neglected the precaution of testing them first before venturing to cross them. It was only very few of them that were dry enough to bear sufficiently. These streams have cut their beds 30 to 50 m. deep into the soft material, and the sides of the red hills through which they wind descend steeply into them. The country is as it were honeycombed or chequered by the effects of this unusual erosive energy. In the expansions of these beds it is no uncommon thing to see detached, truncated mounds of the same soft material, shaped and modelled by the action of the water. This conformation extends all the way to the foot of the northern range. All these streams appear however gradually to run together and to empty into three small lakes which we saw a pretty long way off in the east. The latitudinal valley still stretched away westwards between its bordering ranges, the crests of which were however rather unequal as regards altitude.

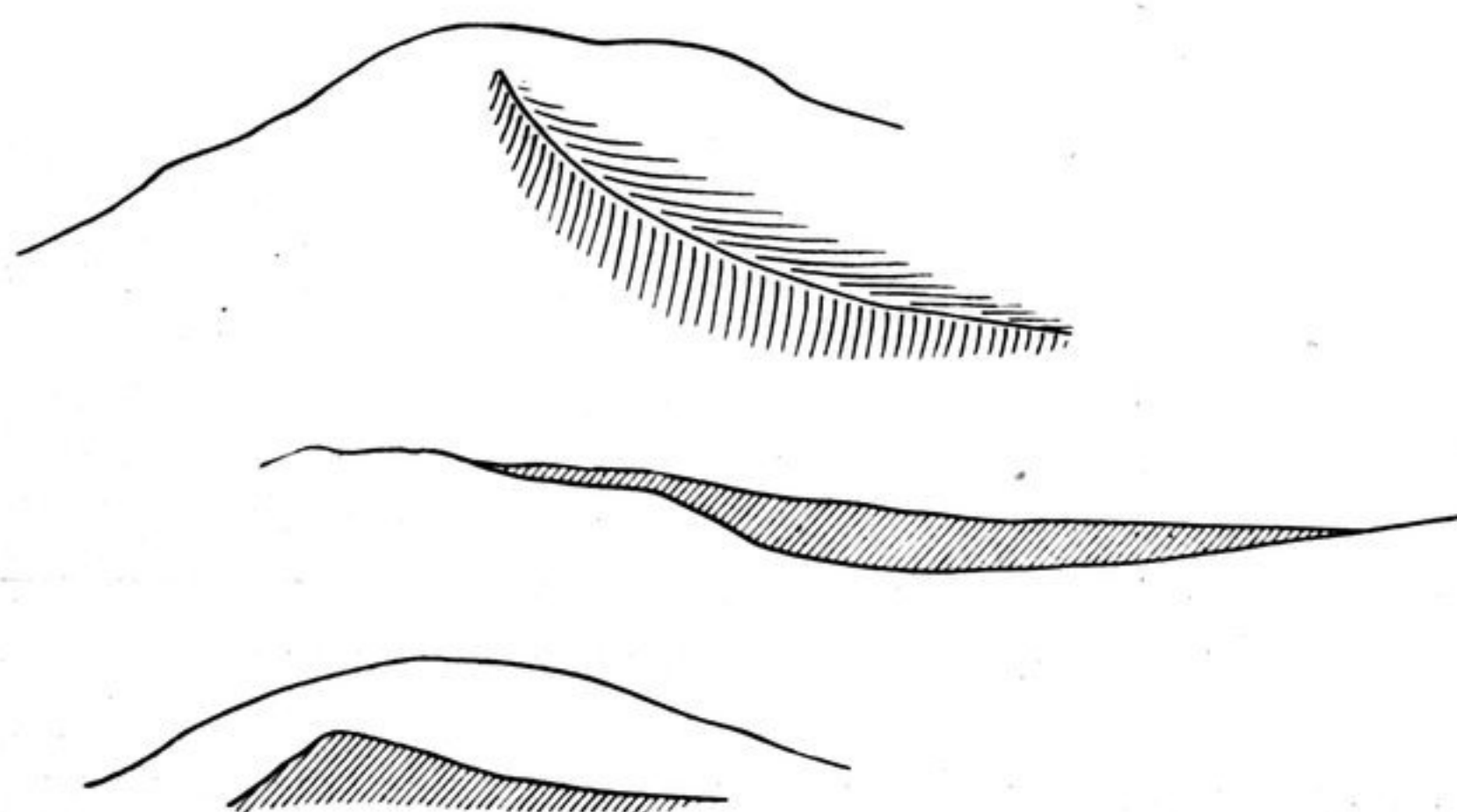


Fig. 123. THE DUNE NEAR CAMP LVII.

At length we entered the glen that leads up to the saddle-like gap in the crest of the northern range. On the whole the glen runs pretty straight from north-north-west to south-south-east, though not without describing a number of small windings. Its bottom is choked with chips of sandstone of a faint red colour, as well as with larger pieces of every conceivable size. A little brook runs down to the most northerly of the three lakes I have mentioned. The sides of the glen are very steep, and are dotted over with small patches of thin grass. The ascent gradually grew steeper, until at last we became very sensible of it. Higher up the fragments of sandstone were scattered over a miry marsh. The first section of the pass that we came to consisted of the same soft material. The second, which lies quite close to the first, has the same altitude, namely 5095 m. Between these two secondary passes, we thus have, on the very summit of the range, a flat self-contained basin, with a small pool in the middle of it, fed by two or three brooks. North of this little basin there is yet another, rather larger, and at a somewhat lower level. The central pool in the latter basin is also rather larger, and was even at that time entered by a couple of rivulets.