

been working there recently; they put it at between 30 and 40. They declared that these men had set off for home about 20 days previously, or about the 20th September, when the autumn begins to feel chilly and the grazing in the vicinity, upon which they feed their asses, is very nearly all finished. The miners seldom stay there longer than a month. They carry flour with them on their asses, and there are generally one or two *pavans* («hunters») in the company, who provide the rest with kulan or antelope meat, and in that way earn their own living. In four different places in the glen we found small «villages» with mines all round them. The huts are built of gravel-and-shingle, that is to say walls are erected of this material, either

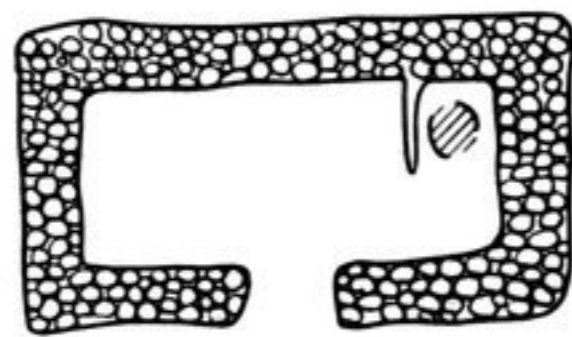


Fig. 147. GROUND-PLAN OF A HUT.

square or oblong in shape, but without any binding material between the separate blocks of stone. They make a roof out of a piece of linen which they bring with them, and if necessary they support it by a pole placed across from the one wall to the other. These huts are very small, the sides not more than 2 or 3 m. long. In one corner there is a fireplace for baking bread. In only two of the huts did we find utensils left behind, — rakes with which the stones are separated out, a barrow in which to carry away the rubbish after it has been examined, a trough for baking, or possibly for washing the auriferous sand in, and some spars for holding up the roofs of the tents. The huts form a mosaic of walls and heaps of rubbish, in and out amongst which run narrow foot-paths. They were like the ruins of a burnt-out homestead, of which nothing is left except the mere shells, forming a veritable labyrinth of stone. The respective claims are marked off by a couple of stones set up on end and leaning one against the other. *Nischans*, that is to say marks, consisting of the skin or skull of a kulan or antelope, are employed to indicate ownership of a mine or working, in which nobody may dig except the man who erected the *nischan*.

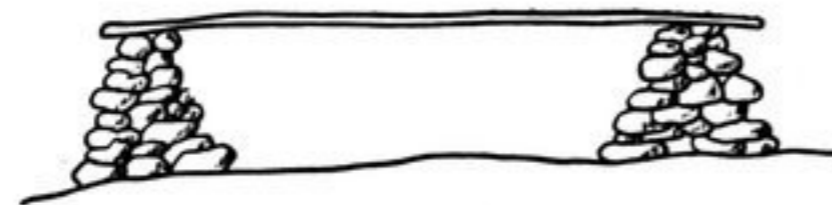


Fig. 148. VERTICAL SECTION OF A HUT.

A very short distance below the sharp bend in the glen, where the first huts stand, we observed, among the débris of the gravel-and-shingle on both sides of the brook, a number of workings or pits surrounded by long lines of heaped up stone and rubbish. And as we travelled down the glen we counted thousands of workings. In shape they are quite different from those which I had previously seen at Kapa. In the latter locality they form deep vertical holes; here on the contrary they form wide cavities, seldom more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ m. deep, most frequently less than that. By far the greater number of these workings were abandoned long ago, and only a few bear indications of having been recently excavated. The gold, which occurs as small round, flattened particles, is sought for in the deposits of sand, gravel, and small fragments of rock that have accumulated in the bottom of the glen. It is through these that the river has carved out its bed, so that it is here inclosed between sharply outlined scarped precipices. It is on the flat top of the escarpments sometimes also a little below them, beside the bed of the existing stream, that the «mines» (*kan*) are dug. Nearly all of them are however so situated that they are safe above the reach of the water, even when the torrent is in flood. Sometimes we