

moderate sized fragments of granite, is further cut up by a great number of small dry ravines, which converge fan-like from every direction upon the sharp bend in the river. These ravines lie close together and are bordered by perpendicular erosion terraces. A long time appeared to have elapsed since they carried water, although one would suppose that the melting of the snows on the Ilve-tschimen would, at any rate in the summer, suffice to feed them. At this point the river was again visible for a short distance through a gap in the hills on its left bank.



Fig. 163. THE SAME SECTION OF THE BEND.



Fig. 164. THE SAME WHERE THE BED OPENS OUT.



Fig. 165. SWELLING OF THE BOTTOM OF THE VALLEY.

Once more we bore away from the river, it being hidden behind the low portions of hills cut off on its left bank. On that same side of it the great talus slopes gently up towards the foot of the Akato-tagh. Upon reaching a low saddle or pass we found a cairn of stones erected, showing that a road really does exist there, though it is seldom traceable, and is principally used by gold-miners on their way up from Tschertschen to Bokalik, as also by hunters. The top of this saddle afforded another extensive view of the river, and its regularly marked bed, the bottom strewn with gravel. By this the detached portions of the offshoots which it had formerly cut off on its left side were come to an end; but on the opposite or right side the cliffs frequently plunged vertically downwards as picturesque naked walls of rock. From the north come several large dry ravines, which have cut their way down through the soft gravel-and-shingle of the great talus slope. The banks of the river consist generally of sand and gravel of a bright grey colour, though in places they are edged with strips of grass. The bottom of the broad bed is formed of the same materials, though it was then only to a very small extent covered with water, which was sometimes collected into a single current, sometimes split up into several branches, as it wound on towards the east.

After following the left bank of the stream for a while, though at some distance, we lost sight of it entirely, travelling away from it at an acute angle. At first we ascended a flattened rise, which, strange to say, was not furrowed by a single ravine, though striped occasionally with yellow bands of clay, left by chance