

Mandarlik-saj, as also on the right side of a smaller saj immediately west of the Külük-saj, the blocks of granite are of pretty considerable size and have fairly rounded contours; the largest probably reach a cubical capacity of 6 to 7 cub. m. In Mandarlik especially they are heaped up in fairly large quantities in a strip parallel to the saj. They are composed of striped granite or gneiss, and are unquestionably erratic blocks. At all events it would appear that they are so at Mandarlik, when we recollect the nature of the whole of the mountainous region above them. At the extreme upper end of the valley are the two above-mentioned vast swellings of the Schia-manglaj, and proceeding from them and coming down between them it is evident that there was formerly a glacier. The great mountain-mass is covered with perpetual snow, and possibly also with ice, if one may at least draw any inference from the numerous intensely glittering patches and bands we saw upon it. These snow-fields and ice-expanses are the last surviving remains of the former glacier, which discharged the recently mentioned erratic blocks. It is of course wind and weather which have subsequently polished and rounded them. It is however one of the characteristic features of this region, that erratic blocks are extraordinarily rare; indeed it is such an uncommon thing to find blocks or fragments of stone lying scattered over the ground at all that the horses actually shied at them when they saw them. But we discovered no traces of moraines below the Mandarlik-saj; probably it is such an immense time since the glacier disappeared, that any former moraines there may have been have had time to become destroyed.



Fig. 196. RIDGES IN THE USUN-SCHOR.

December 4th. We continued along the southern shore of the lake, travelling east-north-east, crossing over only two small offshoots of the mountains by very low passes, though we passed a host of similar spurs on our right. All the way the lake hugged closely the foot of the mountains; often there was barely room for the path, which ran across schor. This is said to become in summer soft and *pattik*, that is such as a man sinks into, and the path is then impracticable. At such times the hunters use another path higher up, though it is difficult owing to the fact that it crosses over a great number of low passes.

The Usun-schor lies at an altitude of 2940 m. It is excessively shallow and its bottom consists, right away to the shore-line, of a deposit of salt some centimeters thick; it was cracked into reticulated or polygonal patterns, and up through the cracks the underlying mud projected in the shape of thin ridges or flanges. The tops of these little ridges were on a level with the surface of the water or rather a little above it. Fifty meters out from the shore there were none of these formations, but the water was clear and pure. I dare say they are existent there, only the depth of water is greater. In some places the shore-line recedes, making room between it and the foot of the mountains for a strip of marshy ground, so heavily impregnated with salt that it had not frozen and consequently was not hard, but gave way treacherously under our footsteps. In this part of the lake proper