

will have shown, remarkably singular and peculiar. Instead of having a range with a denticulated crest, outstanding peaks, distinct spurs and ramifications, separating large and well marked glens one from the other, as in the Tschimen-tagh and the Astin-tagh, we have a gigantic lump of a mountain, suggestive of a continental loaf of rye-bread or an inverted spoon, composed of clay and grooved by countless miniature glens and deeply excavated narrow gorges. On the following day we were to reach a region in which these peculiar relief features were still more emphatically in evidence.



Fig. 213. THE VALLEY IN THE AKATO-TAGH, CAMP CII.

December 18th. For some distance after leaving our camp we travelled along the bottom of the level and easy glen, until we came to a spot where two glens unite, the main glen from the north-north-west and a side-glen from the north-north-east. As my scouts declared that it was the latter which led up to the principal pass, we accordingly followed it. It wound about in a disagreeable way, and was so narrow that the camels entirely filled it from side to side, so that we were unable to get past them. From the upper part of this glen a very short, steep acclivity leads up to the pass, and up it we had to make a zigzag path with spades and pick-axes. The view from the top of this little rounded pass (alt. 3466 m.) was very peculiar. We were in the midst of a chaos of hills, ridges, crests, and irregularities, all greyish yellow and desolate, forcibly suggesting a sandy desert with its dunes