

the south-east and we saw the Akato-tagh melting into the basin of Tsajdam; but the view to the north had on the contrary been hidden by the higher parts of the Akato-tagh. It was on this higher swelling of the Akato-tagh that we now stood; nor could there exist any doubt about this being a principal pass, because we now commanded an extensive view to the north and in other directions, enabling us to note clearly where we were. We could even see the summit of the Astin-tagh away to the north, extending east and west as far as we were able to see. The crest of the Akato-tagh, in so far as one may speak of such, appeared to stretch to the S.  $55^{\circ}$  E., decreasing however in altitude, until finally it ceased en-



Fig. 229. THE SECOND PASS (AKATO).

tirely in level-ground; while in the far off distance to the east-south-east and south-east we caught a glimpse of something that we were unable to identify exactly, — whether hills, clouds, haze, or simply a desert reflection. In the S.  $3^{\circ}$  E. we saw the extreme eastern end of the Ghas-köl, glittering intensely white. To the north-east, but nearer, was a very small ridge, running from north-west to south-east, and thus parallel with the Akato-tagh. Between them is a latitudinal valley, probably connected in the north-west directly with the *kakir* of the Usun-schor. Along the line by which we crossed over this great valley in the beginning of July we had noticed that it slopes towards the east; but neither what I saw from the pass nor the fresh diagonal crossing which thereupon ensued was sufficient to enable me to make out whether the slope continued without interruption all the way to the basin of Tsajdam or whether some minor self-contained basin does not intervene between my two routes. To the N.  $47^{\circ}$  E. there appeared a gaping transverse glen through the little ridge I have mentioned, forming an outlet for several of the temporary streams that drain the north-east face of the Akato-tagh. To the