

actual drift-sand desert. The country between Carey's route and the route which I followed is unknown; it is an immense region, fully one-half of the area of all Tsajdam. We may assume that this region consists of deserts of schor, drift-sand, and salt in alternate zones, and that it would be dangerous to cross it without carrying water.



Fig. 241. A SHORT HALT.

The more noteworthy features of a panorama which I sketched from Camp CVII, are as follows — from N. 80° E. to S. 53° E. stretches an open, flat country between the extreme outliers of the two mountain systems, the Astin-tagh and the Akato-tagh. In the latter direction the Akato-tagh is extremely low, appearing only as a barely noticeable elevation, which died away in ethereal shades. To the N. 54° E. appeared the entrance to a latitudinal valley running in between two of the parallel chains of the Astin-tagh, and it was in that direction we marched the whole of the following day. To the S. 18° E. we perceived a minor swelling of the Akato-tagh, melting away in the haze of the far off distance. From that point and farther west the Akato is like a continuous ridge, with noticeable swellings in the S. 25° W. and S. 40° W. In the S. 71° W. rose the culminating point of that part of the Akato-tagh which was then nearest to us. In the S. 84° W. we perceived the same part of the range which we had observed from Julghun-dung lying N. 22° W. Yet another ridge of the Akato-tagh was visible to the N. 85° W. All these contiguous crests of the Akato-tagh system appeared, from the point whence we observed them, to run very decidedly from the north-west to the south-east, as we indeed found to be the case with the main range and the minor range lying to the north-east of it. All the mountains that may be regarded as belonging to the Akato system terminate in the N. 78° W., and north of the most northerly offshoot there is an open latitudinal valley connected with the kakir of Usun-schor.