

triangular in shape and more sharply defined than usual. In its western part we formed Camp CXI at an altitude of 2910 m. In the course of the afternoon the snow came down faster and faster. Here we observed traces of kulans, both old and recent, though none of the wild camel.

December 29th. I will proceed to finish my detailed description before going on to give a general review of the Astin-tagh system as a whole. From Camp CXI I made a trip to the spring of Lap-chi-tschen, situated 6 km. to the north-north-east. First I bore to the north-north-west, making for quite an insignificant pass, or threshold (alt. 2915 m.), that borders our self-contained basin on the north. The pass was indeed very little higher than our camp. It consisted of a low flat



Fig. 251. CAMP CXI.

swelling, with slight elevations on both sides, and lying among soft earth on which the teresken bushes were growing plentifully. On the northern side the declivity is more pronounced and the descending glen gradually curves round towards the north-north-west, the north, and the north-north-east, without making any sharp bends. While from the pass on its south side only one insignificant torrent of a temporary character runs down towards the middle of the self-contained basin, the northern glen is traversed by a watercourse that deepens as it descends, picking up as it goes from both sides, but especially from the left or west, various side-glens, most of which start from the summit of that chain of the Astin-tagh in which the flat pass is situated. One of these side-glens is especially large, broad, and choked with gravel; this may be regarded as the principal glen of Lap-schi-tschen. The side-glens that come in from the right are however quite insignificant. A short distance below the outlet of the large side-glen, we came across a sheet of ice, in the middle of the main glen, here about 100 m. broad. Opposite to it yet another