

part of the glen we commanded a magnificent and extensive view across the southern border-range of the great valley, the Piaslik being visible from end to end of its course in the south and south-east, though it was then covered with snow. From the great massive I a side-glen runs down northwards, like the one we were following and parallel to it; this debouches somewhere in the locality of Ghischa.

The glen by which we descended was short, but rapidly widened out, and we soon emerged upon the *kakir*, i. e. the hard gravelly scree with an exceedingly gentle downward slope. We pitched Camp IX in the bottom of the latitudinal valley, where an insignificant brook was meandering backwards and forwards along a broad, shallow eroded watercourse, with small patches of grass on its banks. On the left bank we found hard scrub growing, and it supplied us with fuel.

Apart from the red sandstone at the former camp, we nowhere saw hard rock; the ground consisted everywhere of soft materials, — earth, *débris*, and sand. There was a considerable quantity of snow round about the pass, forming continuous sheets a decimeter deep, but owing to its thawing the ground was soft, oozy, and slippery. But in the glen by which we came down from the pass there was no snow at all; and the little rivulets that trickled down from this glen soon ceased, disappearing amongst the *débris*. This mountainous country is much more winter-like in the end of May than it is in the end of October. During this latter month the Piaslik for instance is practically quite free from snow. The grazing too is a good deal worse in May than in October; it is what is left over from the autumn, but has been for the most part cropped close by the kulans. Camp IX was situated at an absolute altitude of 3800 m. At that elevation the frost at night was quite noticeable, namely — 6.5° , so that in the morning the ground was frozen hard.

The large eroded watercourse beside which we made Camp IX comes from the S. 66° W., and originates in Kosak-kakti, that is the pass in the western part of the Tschimen valley that forms the water-divide between the Tschimen-köl and the Tschertschen-darja. This pass, situated only 279 m. above Camp IX, that is to say above the bottom of the latitudinal valley, is invested with great orographical importance as the water-divide between the basin of the Tarim and the Tschimen valley. It occurs in the long imposing range the eastern end of which is known as the Akato-tagh, and which culminates in the Ilve-tschimen, while farther west it borders the glen of the Tschertschen-darja on the north.

By means of this journey across the northern border-ranges of Tibet I succeeded in gaining a tolerably clear general idea of the situation which the Tscharklik-su and neighbouring streams occupy amongst these mountains. The long south-west to north-east branch of the river, which is shown on the map of the Russian General Staff, and from it has been transferred to all other maps of this region, is purely imaginary: there is nothing in nature to correspond to it in even the remotest degree. There exists no stream at all running from south-west to north-east; but there do exist a vast number of glens running from south-east to north-west, and belonging to the Tscharklik-su, the Tatlik-bulak, and the river of Vasch-schahri, and between these again there are several small secondary glens. On the whole the main glen of the Tscharklik-su runs west-north-west, while its side-glens, all of which enter the main glen from the left, run north-west. We found a precisely similar arrangement at Dschahan-saj in the end of November of the year before.
