

but it was then melting; several tiny rills trickled away from it towards the north-north-west, though they were all too insignificant to be able to reach down to the main glen. Their water was of course perfectly fresh, like that of the principal stream, although we did find beside it one or two lagoons of brackish water. The ground around the ice-sheet was water-logged and deceitfully marshy. Over a limited area the grass was growing short and fairly thick.



Fig. 332. CAMP XVI.

Gentle though the ascent was, nevertheless within the 25 km. between Camp XV and Camp XVI we had climbed fully 300 m.; the altitude of the latter camp was 4452 m. We were approaching nearer and nearer to the stupendous altitudes of the Arka-tagh and the immense plateau of Tibet that lies behind it. Westwards stretched the big, broad, open latitudinal valley, with the main stream flowing down it. The transverse glen in the mouth of which we encamped appeared to be short and narrow, to rise rapidly, and to be difficult of access; being in this respect very unlike the meridional transverse glen we were to make trial of on the day following.

Wild animals were especially plentiful in this region; we saw several troops of kulans each containing about 20 individuals. On the dry grassy slopes the marmots make their burrows, and their enemies, the bears, are consequently not far to seek. We shot one of the latter at this camp. Partridges also were seen.

The traces of human visitation which we discovered at this camp were as follows — half a mill-stone cut out of a rock very like the adjacent green schist,