

side of the range have their origin in this and similar passes. At a greater distance towards the east there rose up on the contrary several great snow-capped peaks, probably the same which we had seen from Camp XVI. Immediately south of the pass was a minor spur of the range, which forced us to make a detour to the south-west. In this direction there was a little lake, then entirely frozen over; the mountains slope gently towards its southern shore. A considerable distance towards the south-west we observed a range, relatively not very big, which was wholly covered with snow; this was the principal crest of the Arka-tagh. Between it and the range on which we were then standing stretches a broad, open latitudinal valley, running



Fig. 335. DOWNWARDS FROM CAMP XVI.

east and west; and it is there that the little lake just mentioned is situated, forming a small self-contained basin, though it must of course possess an underground effluent, otherwise its water would not be fresh. We directed our march towards the eastern shore of the lake, descending at first by a very flat, shallow glen with a gentle fall; the dry brook that runs down it enters the lake at an absolute altitude of 4733 m. or only 46 m. lower than the pass, and it was there we formed Camp XVIII. There also the lake is joined by a rivulet from the east, probably fed by springs, for, notwithstanding the copious downfall of the day before, its bed was dry. The grazing was better than might be expected considering the great altitude. The surface consisted everywhere of soft material, extremely finely sifted;