

CHAPTER XXVIII.

TO THE GREAT NAMELESS RANGE.

At Camp XXXIII I made an important alteration in the constitution of the caravan by weeding out all the tired horses and camels, and leaving them to follow slowly on in the wake of the principal caravan. For our condition was now such that our first concern was to save what could be saved, and to endeavour as quickly as possible to reach lower regions farther south, where the grazing would be better. Starting again on the 10th July with a much lighter caravan, we travelled south, crossing over a small latitudinal valley, with a little lake in it farther west, down to which all the waterless, though still moist, rain-channels made their way. The first range we came to was crossed at an altitude of 5083 m. Over on its southern side a similar miniature lake received several rather large watercourses, though these again contained no running water. The ground everywhere, lately so dry, had first to be saturated before the water could begin to flow along the surface. From this point we followed what appeared to be a much frequented wild-yak track up to the main pass, and over on the other side we saw any number of wild yaks. But there was scarce any grass, only wild garlic and moss. We crossed over the pass (alt. 5186 m.), without any particular difficulty. All the same it appeared to form a rather important orographical boundary: to the north of it is a labyrinth of small mountains, while to the south is a latitudinal valley of considerable size. This I resolved to follow for a few days, partly to avoid overtaxing the strength of the caravan, and partly to get away from Littledale's route.

On our way down from the pass we crossed a whole series of watercourses all running towards the south-west, until they at length enter a larger channel, which subsequently inclines to the south-east and east. After that we continued towards the south-east, the country undulating gently or hardly at all, while the ground, almost barren, was firm and good to travel on. When at length a running brook appeared in the main watercourse, we halted and made Camp XXXIV at an altitude of 4982 m., especially as the grazing was passable. This latitudinal valley also lies relatively low. Between it and the preceding great latitudinal valley, with the salt lake, which is situated at approximately the same altitude, there thus intervenes a fairly broad* swelling. To the south-west, south, and south-east we perceived a