

but we had hitherto seen not the very slightest trace of human visitors. Just south of the spring I have mentioned we observed a solitary old yak bull, grazing on the slopes of one of the usual ridges. Strange to say, he exhibited not the remotest signs of shyness: had he ever come into contact with Tibetan hunters, he would certainly have shown more prudence. Although our dogs made a fierce attack upon him, they were unable to make him take to flight; he simply put himself in an attitude of defence and waited. Thus the Cossacks were easily able to bring him down. I only mention this insignificant episode because, whilst the yak was busy with the dogs, I succeeded in getting close to him with my big camera and photographed him. He figures in the middle of Plate 80, which also gives an idea of what the ridges in that region are like.



Fig. 361. LOOKING N 67° E FROM CAMP XXXVII.

Only once or twice during this stage did we come across hard rock in the shape of a very close-grained variety; everywhere the soft material prevailed. Occasionally we caught glimpses of the great snowy range to the south; I foresaw that we were going to have tough work to get over it. To the south-east there was simply a host of mountains.

On the 13th July our great latitudinal valley resumed its normal appearance, stretching flat, broad, and open towards the S. 60° E., a direction that is not at all usual, and presumably only local, for on the whole the valley no doubt runs east