

after it ceased snowing, the glaciers were enveloped in dense masses of black cloud, which seemed to sweep the ground. Three terminals of the eastern glacier stuck out however like the claws of a gigantic polar bear from underneath the lower hem of the clouds, but they too soon disappeared. The snow-line in this part of Tibet cannot run very much higher than the level of the pass. The pass itself was quite free from snow, a thing which only happens, I suppose, just at that season of the year, namely the end of July; though I suspect that even in winter the amount of snow is infinitesimal, not only because the precipitation is then insignificant, but also because the snow, being dry and powdery, is soon blown away, or else evaporates when the sky is clear. The snow however which fell on the 20th and 21st July melted the moment it came into contact with the ground, rendering it still more moist than it was before. Although the glaciers lie at such a steep pitch that one would expect them to descend rapidly, their arms do not reach down even as low as the pass (5462 m.); though one or two on the southern side of the range only stopped at elevations which fall short of the pass-altitude by ten or a dozen meters. The snow-line runs here at about 5600 m.

During the next day's march the weather was anything but favourable. Only a few minutes after we started a keen wind sprang up from the south-west and south-south-west, bringing with it a succession of hail-storms, often of great violence. After that it rained for the greater part of the day, but in the afternoon, when we began to draw near to our next camping-ground, it again turned to hail, and the shower was of such portentous violence that for a good hour we just had to stand still where we were; we were utterly unable to see where we were going to, for the moment we lifted up our heads, the hail-stones smote us in the face. Indeed it is impossible to make horses advance in the teeth of such a storm as that, they keep turning round and presenting their cruppers to the storm. At times it thundered and lightened, and the thunder was so violent that the ground almost seemed to shake under it, and we could not help fancying that we were at the very fountain-head and centre of the atmospherical disturbance. Yet neither here nor anywhere else in Tibet did I observe that the lightning actually struck the ground. The tempest did not however last very long, and we had a fine night.

The principal valley was now fairly open, and we continued to follow it downwards, sometimes along the foot of the hills on the left bank of the stream, sometimes in its gravelly bottom, along which flowed a brook of about 2 cub.m. in volume coming from the glaciers. It grew rapidly big as the day advanced and it was joined by an increasing number of tributaries, most of them from the left. The fall was regular and fairly gentle. The shape of the river-bed and the signs of erosion showed plainly, that it does at times carry considerable volumes of water. We continued to travel south until we reached the point where our stream joins a yet larger one coming from the west; the latter has its origin in the glacier-arms that lie west of the pass. After the confluence the united stream travels east, and then describes a curve towards the south-east, being apparently thrust out of its course by a range that bars its way. I assumed, that by following this stream downwards we should in due time readily reach a latitudinal valley containing a lake. It was in this expectation that we started to tramp down the valley or