

the night of 15—16th August we had a rainfall of unparalleled heaviness, the darkness being absolutely impenetrable, for there was no longer any moon. On the encircling mountains the downfall assumed the form of snow, and in the morning the mountains themselves were all white.



Fig. 390. LAMA TALKING WITH THE CHIEF OF OUR ESCORT.

On the 16th August we kept rather to the east of our former route in order to avoid the numerous small passes; that is to say, we marched closer to the bed of the Gartschi-sängi. As this tract also proved unfavourable for travelling, we quitted the vicinity of the river and returned to the big valley in which we had made Camp XLVIII. Here we intersected our former route, leaving the camp just mentioned on the right at the distance of a couple of kilometers. At this time we were travelling almost west. On our right we passed a couple of smaller lakes; while close to our left we had a large stream, which gathers up the water of all that district and then flows towards the east, where it no doubt empties itself into some little self-contained lake. Finally we turned off towards the north-west, and crossed over several of the tributaries of this stream. They traversed broken ground, which sloped gradually upwards in the direction in which we were marching. Camp LX, on the left bank of a main stream, had an altitude of 5114 m. This stream, which is possibly identical with the one that I have just mentioned, is divided into several branches and surrounded by gently swelling hills, bearing scanty grass, but without any hard rock.

On 17th August we did not once touch our former route, but traversed a country of quite a different relief. All the same the distance between the two routes did not amount to many kilometers. We crossed over the same range as before by a somewhat lower pass, the ascent up to which was easy and regular; for we were able to follow towards the west-north-west the valley in which we had encamped. This was fairly broad and was traversed by a good-sized stream, the