

On 22nd August we did a short stage up the eastern glen to Camp IX (alt. 5086 m.). Next day the glen narrowed at first. The channel down which its stream flows meanders backwards and forwards from one side to the other. But later on it again widens out to a trough-shaped arena, into which tributaries gather from all directions. Looking up through some of these glen-openings, we saw the main crest of Arka-tagh to the south. Having crossed over this relatively open arena, we continued up a large side-glen that took us to the south-east. The rock still consisted of schist of different kinds and in different positions. The glen soon contracted, and led up to a secondary pass at an altitude of 5544 m., one of the very highest that I have climbed over. Here my guides, who were Taghliks, led me astray, for we might have avoided the pass. We pitched Camp X in the glen that leads down on the north side of the pass, the altitude of which was 5362 m.

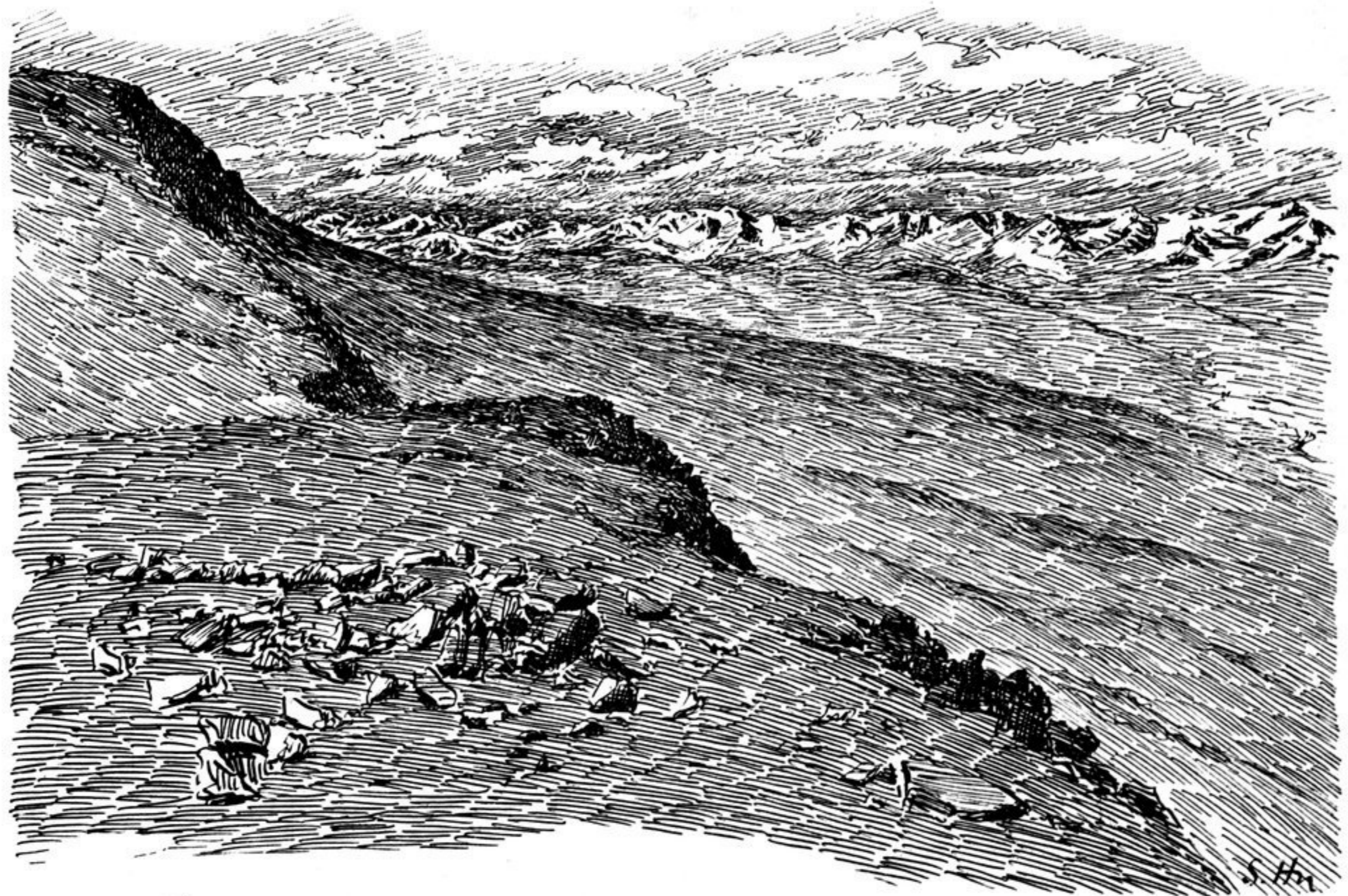


Fig. 423. LOOKING N 30° W FROM THE LITTLE TUFF MOUNTAIN AT CAMP XI.

At length on August 24th by following a little glen to the south-east we were able to get over the Arka-tagh. The pass by which we accomplished this was easy and very rounded, and reached an altitude of 5521 m. It was strewn with fine schistose gravel; but there were only a couple of very trifling thresholds of hard rock, dipping 27° towards the S. 30° E. The pass was free from snow, although most of the mountains in the neighbourhood were lightly capped with it. Both east and west of the actual pass the summits of the Arka-tagh rise but a trifling degree higher. The southward-going glen was at first steep, but it soon debouched upon the great latitudinal valley that runs along the southern foot of the Arka-tagh,