



Fig. 432. LOOKING N FROM CAMP XVIII.

which we were marching. Farther on we were separated from the lake by a small ridge. After that we passed to the south a little salt lake (No. VI), with two bays stretching a long way towards the east. Camp. XV was made beside a larger river, which arrived from the east and at that spot picked up a considerable tributary from the north. To the north-east appeared a confused tangle of mountains, offshoots and ramifying arms of the Arka-tagh. The mountains in the vicinity of Camp XV (alt. 4947 m.) were relatively low, and consisted of powdery disintegrated material. There was a little grass, and kulans were numerous. The river beside which we were encamped empties into a lagoon at the eastern end of lake No. V. This lake was intensely salt, and as a consequence of the violent westerly wind that was blowing the salt water had been driven into the lagoon and into the excessively flat mud delta of the river. At the eastern end of the lake there was a rampart of gravel, heaped up by the beat of the waves and possibly also by ice, and on the inside of the rampart were several elongated pools. We also easily made out marks according to which the water formerly reached a height of 2 m. This can hardly mean that the lake is actually shrinking, for the marks we observed may just as well have been caused by a relatively high level having been reached not long before. It is possible too that the level of these flat lakes varies with the season, that is to say, they rise in the summer, but subside again in the autumn, when the snows cease to melt on the surrounding mountains, and the precipitation comes down for the greater part in a non-liquid form.



Fig. 433. LOOKING NE FROM CAMP XVIII.

August 31st. The principal brook at Camp XV comes from the south-east and flows close past lake No. VII, which itself is entered by a limpid stream from