



Fig. 460. THE SAME LOOKING TOWARDS THE PLAINS.

mentioned, the border-range that is pierced by the Naidshin-gol and constitutes one of the parallel chains of the Arka-tagh system. The drainage stream of this glen has cut its bed 10 m. deep through the thick gravel-and-shingle beds. And even at the sides the ground is thickly strewn with sharp-edged disintegration products, gravel, and smaller pieces of stone; but eventually the gravel comes to an end and its place is taken by fine powdery dust. The rock was dark green schist, dipping 15° towards the N. Here too for a short distance sand-dunes of a fairly big size have formed on the right or west side of the glen. They climb too a good distance up the mountain-sides, their light yellow colour contrasting sharply against the dark background of the mountain. Our camp beside the Ike-tsohan-namen, close beside a freshwater pool, had an altitude of 4479 m.



Fig. 461. MONGOLIAN JURT, TSAJDAM.

October 4th. Above the camp the glen expands and is joined by several side-glenes from different directions. We followed the main glen up to the pass in the imposing range that now barred our path. The glen again contracts and its bottom is filled with gravel. It contained a tiny frozen brook squeezed in between perpendicular escarpments of gravel-and-shingle, which higher up grow lower and lower, and finally disappear altogether. The rock here was an arcose or feldspathic sandstone. On both sides of the glen the cliffs tower up in rugged, stupendous masses; the snow lay, but not heavily, on the northern slopes only. During the last stage of our climb our faces were set to the east. Of the passes of Ike-tsohan-davan the eastern one is the higher, namely 4942 m. It is broad and plateau-like, and makes a considerable gap, with lofty masses of rock towering above it on north and south. Here the snow formed a continuous sheet as much as 1 foot deep.

We descended by a glen running east, far steeper than the glen by which we ascended. The contours in this locality showed the powerful modelling of the peripheral regions; but then we were indeed on our way down from the Tibetan plateau to the lowlands of Tsajdam. The snow lay heaped up amongst the gravel,