

and afterwards through Littledale; but we possessed no map of it. With our heavy and unwieldy camel caravan, it proved, however, impossible to penetrate through the transverse glen. A couple of my Cossacks, who went to reconnoitre it, reported that it was narrow and rugged, and was shut in by precipitous cliffs, forming a deep gorge, at the bottom of which the river churned its way along. This transverse glen is said to merge towards the west into the most southerly of the three latitudinal valleys; and in fact that valley appears to be far narrower, and to present far greater difficulties, than the other two to the north of it. It is said to be especially

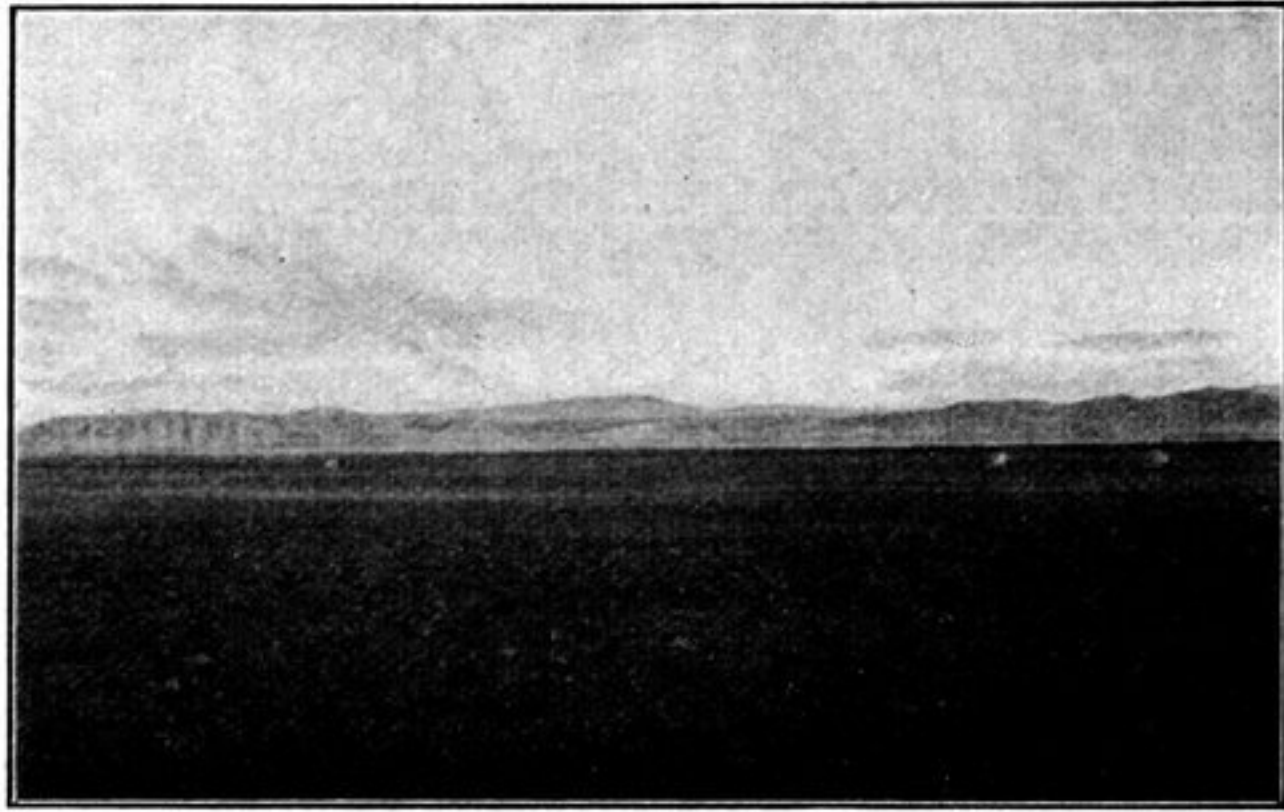


Fig. 56. NEAR CAMP XC.

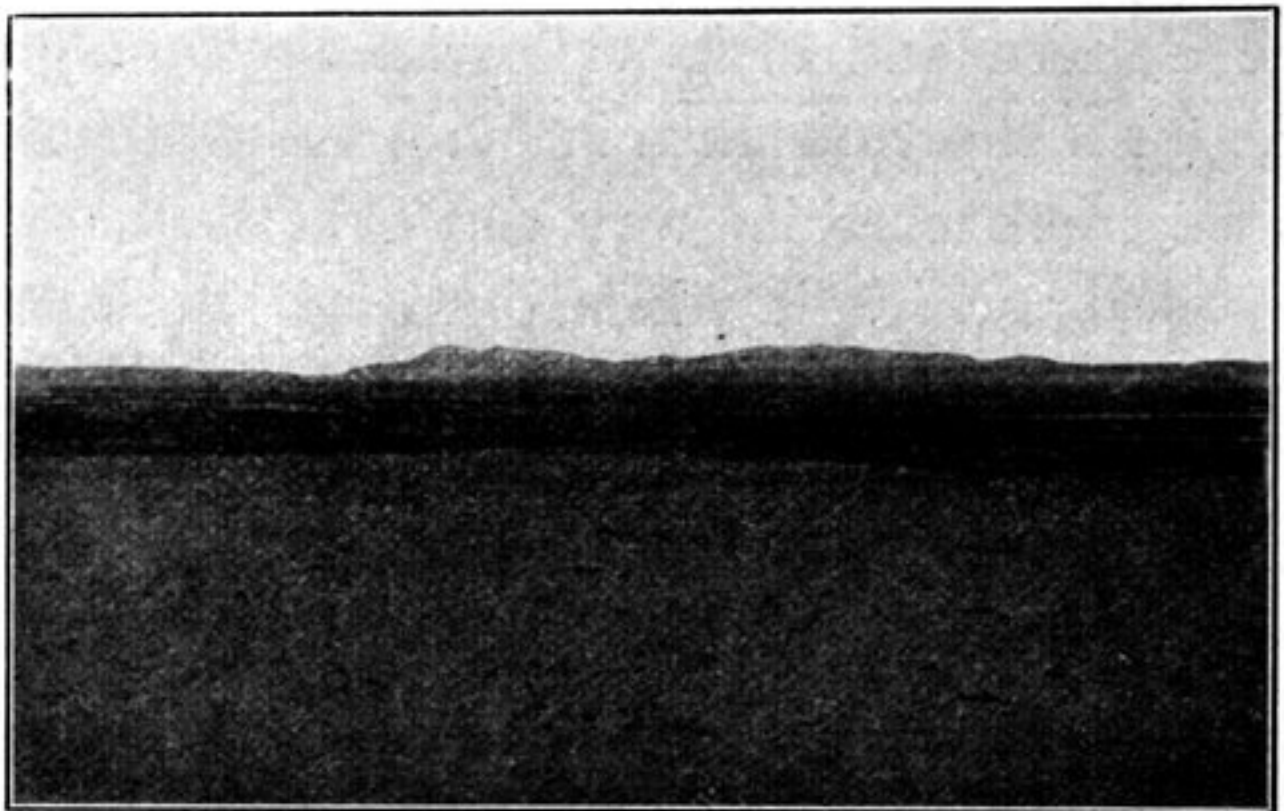


Fig. 57. S 35° E FROM CAMP XC.

precipitous on its northern side and in places to descend sheer into the river like a wall. Through the gap made by the transverse glen we perceived at some distance to the southwest a fresh mountain-range, of moderate elevation and capped with snow. At the point where we now forded the river, it was divided into four small arms and two bigger ones, the aggregate volume of the whole being about 6 to 7 cub.m. in the second. As the volume a little higher up was somewhat less, it is probable that the river is not joined by any tributary before piercing through the transverse glen. And as the volume at Camp XC can hardly have been more than 3 cub.m., it is quite conceivable that the river divides just above its embouchure into an even greater number of arms than those which I saw. From the same ford we observed to the north a small lake, forming a sort of continuation of the Dagtse-tso. The small lake south of Camp XC is fed through a big glen

that pierces the southern range, and in the outlet of which we perceived two nomad tents, the only ones we saw during the course of this day's march.

We left the river therefore on our left, behind the red mountain range, with a sharp crest, that borders its glen on the south. The middle latitudinal valley, up which we were marching, grew more and more broken, and we soon entered a distinct gorge, a deep-cut eroded watercourse inclosed between low, but steep, hills. These were composed almost entirely of soft disintegration material; but occasionally in the deeper incisions the hard rock cropped out, a red sandstone, very severely weathered, and dipping 25° to the S. 12° W. The gorge was very sinuous and the ascent not inconsiderable. In one or two of the deeper places in the bed of the watercourse there were small pools left after the last rain. From both sides