

Its banks were lined with belts of scrub and yellow grass, as hard as wood. The river-bed is generally stony and shallow, and the water was perfectly transparent, though the volume hardly amounted to 1 cub.-m. in the second. After turning the mountain buttress just mentioned, we travelled S. 60° W. and then passed a couple of tents. Upon reaching the next bend in the valley, where it bends almost due south, we halted (Camp XCIX at an alt. of 5094 m.) in a crevice of the mountains, where the grazing was good. Except for a cold south-westerly wind the weather was favourable.

On the 8th October we again did quite a short stage, as far as the lakes out of which the river Tschuring issues. The night before was keenly bright and stinging cold, and a gentle descending current of air was the only atmospheric movement we were able to detect. In the morning the river was everywhere frozen so hard, even in relatively swift parts of the current, that the ice bore. After crossing over it twice, we kept subsequently to the right bank. The valley is rather narrow, runs first south, then south-south-east and south-east, and then gradually widens out into the arena-like expansion that contains its gathering basin. There the grazing was good. In the south appeared, at a distance of about 10 km., a larger range, which, I suppose, is the true water-divide of the region; the water that flows down off its southern flanks makes its way to parts of Tibet which are only known from the accounts of Nain Singh. This range was in places covered with snow. The valley of the Tschuring is met by another valley coming directly from the south, though without a watercourse. In the angle formed by the two valleys there rises an almost free-standing butte, with a lake at its north-eastern foot barely half a kilometer long, through which the river flows. When we put up our tents at Camp C on its northern side at noon, it was still covered from end to end with a thin sheet of ice; but shortly afterwards, when the wind began to blow, the ice broke up. Both the shape of the valley floor and the changes of colour in the lake betrayed that the lake must be very shallow. It did not appear to contain any fish, at all events we saw none near the shore, though we did observe a few wild-duck. On the east side of the lake is a tiny pool, and beyond that yet another small round lake, likewise traversed by the Tschuring. East of this second lake comes a flat pass, the true water-divide of the Tschuring. The actual headwater stream issues however out of a transverse glen in the southern range and flows through the two lakes. At first therefore the river runs towards the west, then it swings round through the mountains until it assumes an easterly direction, piercing on the way the range which we crossed over by the obo pass. From the neighbourhood of these lakes we perceived a distinct path leading towards the south-east, and crossing by some easy pass to valleys farther south, in which the nomads will pretty certainly be more numerous than they were in the localities through which we were then travelling, for in the neighbourhood of our Camps XCIX and C we counted in all only four nomads' tents, with but a few inhabitants in them.

The small freshwater lakes would now certainly be frozen in the course of a few days. A rather well-marked strand-rampart runs now close to, now at a greater distance from the existing beach-line of the larger lake, pointing not only to the occurrence sometimes of a higher level, but also to the possibility of its having