

CHAPTER X.

TO THE LAKOR-TSO. ANCIENT BEACH-LINES.

October 13th. After granting ourselves a day's rest in this exceptionally pleasant and smiling locality, we resumed our journey north-west across a series of gullies carved in red and grey clay, which were extremely difficult and trying to our camels. None of them contained water, and gradually they converged upon the principal valley, that down which the stream of our camp flowed, but having united, they follow the common glen towards the N. 75° E., which finally enters the latitudinal valley up which the caravan had marched. The westward continuation of the latter is a gently ascending, narrow, flat latitudinal valley, its bottom consisting of soft material with grass. On the north it is bordered by low, rounded hills, and on the south by the somewhat loftier crest which is pierced by the glen in which stood our Camp CIII. The surface was undulating and we crossed over a series of flat spurs from the southern range. Across this latter, where it dips lower than usual, we caught occasional glimpses of the Scha-gandschum, in increasingly greater foreshortening. The western water-divide of the latitudinal valley is a very low, almost indistinguishable pass, with an altitude of 4,872 m. Hence the surface falls away exceedingly gently towards the west, through an increasingly broader valley, which eventually merges into a more open circular arena; in this we encamped beside a spring at an altitude of 4,860 m. The grazing was relatively good. It was impossible from Littledale's map to determine whether my route was coincident with his or not. Mollah Schah thought that we were still to the south of it.

This day the weather was favourable, for the wind was less violent than usual, and sometimes it even felt warm when the sun shone. The sky was clear, though a few tiny fleecy clouds showed themselves towards evening.

A yellow crystalline limestone predominated in this region; not far from Camp CIII it dipped 16° towards the S. 4° E.; higher up in the transverse glen it was quite vertical. From Camp CIV Scha-gandschum appeared perfectly foreshortened, being like a single round-topped peak bearing S. 27° E.

Although the grazing was better than usual, we saw no wild animals except hares.