

CHAPTER XV.

THE BATSA-SINGI AND THE DETSCHE-TSO.

On the 6th November we turned our faces due north, and made for the outlet of a transverse glen, which there gaped open towards us. In it we found a relatively plentiful supply of grass, on which our caravan animals had pulled themselves together a bit during the day's rest that we granted them on 5th November. The surface rose, at first slowly, but afterwards more noticeably. After crossing over a belt of lumpy, barren white gypsum, we came to hard saj, that is, thin gravel resting on a firm, consolidated substratum. Even before we entered the glen, we encountered a little grass and scrub. The higher we ascended, the more comprehensive grew the view that we obtained of the interesting latitudinal valley which we were now leaving behind us; its bottom was filled with an unbroken chain of small salt pools and gypsum depressions. In the west the basin of the Tsolla-ring-tso is bounded by a steep, very energetically defined escarpment, 15 to 20 m. high. We were able to follow it for a considerable distance along the foot of the northern mountains; it gradually grows lower and at length disappears, after shading off, as it appeared from the distance, into an ordinary river terrace. When we got high enough up to see over this impeding obstacle, we caught sight, to the west of the lake of Batsa-singi, of a lake-basin of precisely the same type as those which I have already described, only it seemed to be considerably longer, stretching to a great distance to the west. It is not very broad, rather narrower than the Tsolla-ring-tso. Its bottom consists almost entirely of a level deposit of gypsum, there being very little water at that season of the year. Such pools as the basin did contain were confined exclusively to the southern side, pretty close to the foot of the southern mountains, where they formed as it were a long canal, broken however in several places. In this respect therefore the Batsa-singi is distinguished from the Luma-ring-tso and the Tsolla-ring-tso; for in them the open water is near the north edge of the basin. The Batsa-singi also possesses undoubtedly a terrace or beach-line at its eastern end, developed at the least to an extent equal to those which we saw immediately west of Camp CXX, so that here again a transverse threshold separates the two lakes. The isthmus between them is however only about one kilometer across.