

## CHAPTER XVI.

### AMONG THE DESICCATED LAKES OF WESTERN TIBET.

The change which in the meantime had come over the scene was in a word as follows: we had crossed over out of one latitudinal valley into another similar latitudinal valley lying north of the former; both valleys run parallel to one another, from north-west to south-east; the mountain-range which separates them is especially low and unimportant where it is pierced by the Ravur-tsangpo; the rock at that point is a hard dense yellowish red limestone, dipping  $55^{\circ}$  towards the N.  $60^{\circ}$  W.; otherwise the narrow transverse glen is fenced in by beds of gravel-and-shingle, rising in very broken, but not very high, hills. From a point near Camp CXXIV we saw to the N.  $10^{\circ}$  E. a red round-topped protuberance, to the N.  $14^{\circ}$  W. a snowy peak ( $W_3$ ), and to the S.  $76^{\circ}$  W. the peak  $V_3$ . The valley is broad and gives the impression of an open plain, with scanty grazing here and there. Kulans, which are in general fond of an open country, where they can see about them, were very common.

The names which were given to me by our Tibetan escort through this part of the country do not always agree with those which were given to Deasy; but it would be wrong to declare without more ado that they are incorrect, nor is it easy to say which are the more trustworthy, those given to me or those given to Deasy. From the latter's own account his guides were in a rather hostile mood, and that is indeed always the case in Tibet with a traveller who is *approaching* Lhasa. I on the contrary was marching away from Lhasa, and was on my way out of the country, and this would soften the inimical feelings of the Tibetans towards me, and for that reason they would have less hesitation in imparting to me the correct names of the geographical features than they would have in communicating them to a traveller of whose intentions they were intuitively suspicious. In those instances in which Deasy's names and my own are in agreement, we may be quite sure that they are correct, and this becomes even more certain when they are confirmed by Nain Singh or Bower. My Luma-ring-tso, for example, figures on Nain Singh's map as Luma-ring Chaka and on Deasy's as Lima Ringmo Chaka. *Tso* = »lake» and *tschaka* = »salt lake». This is consequently a name well known throughout western Tibet. And as for my escort, they were one of the last detachments that guided us to the frontier of Ladak, and were amongst the best guides that I ever