

of so recent a date that the skin still remained blown out over the ribs like inflated goat-skins; others were entirely free from skin; others were bleached by the sun; and yet others soft and rotten from the effects of wind and weather. In this locality we observed the tracks of wolves, and there were also ravens. In a little niche of the rocks at Dschadung or Dschaghdung we found a small stone hut. At the same place there was a sprinkling of grass; but the spot afforded no running water, only ice and snow. Its altitude above sea-level was 5023 m. The country thereabouts is very open, forming a flat plateau between the Kara-korum and the Kwen-lun range, in which the pass of Suget-davan is situated. The latter range was already visible in the distance. During the second portion of the day's march the country was as a fact so level, that it was scarcely possible to determine in which direction the surface sloped.

On the 25th April the snow-storm and gale still continued; clearly the climate here was continental, quite different from what it was on the south side of the Kara-korum pass. Of our surroundings however we were unable to see much, for at the distance of a couple of hundred meters everything was swallowed up in the blinding snow; it was only occasionally that we caught a glimpse of a hill or scarped erosion terrace. Apart from that there was nothing to be seen except the cold grey, inhospitable haze which surrounded us on every side. Of the sun there was not a sign, and mile after mile we tramped doggedly across that uniform, desolate, barren plateau, the surface of which is strewn with gravel or sand, and littered with countless bones and skulls of horses, so much so that they almost seem to form a characteristic feature of the landscape.

In the morning I sent on one of my own men and one of the Ladakis to Schahidullah, to warn the people of our approach and to beg the bek of the district to have in readiness for us 25 horses, yaks, or camels to convoy us down into East Turkestan. Our hired Ladaki horses had hitherto done us excellent service, but a few of them were now beginning to show signs of weariness.

We proceeded farther towards the north-north-east down the *saj*, or relatively broad and shallow glen, the fall being however imperceptible to the unaided eye. Had we not known that that particular watercourse drains into the Raskan-darja, we should hardly have been able to determine in which direction the ground sloped. The Kara-korum pass is as a water-divide of a very different rank from the lofty passes which we crossed over farther east in the interior of Tibet. The springs that feed the rivers which run down to the eastern part of East Turkestan are situated relatively close to the northern margin of the highlands, and on the south side of their water-dividing ranges spread the vast internal-drainage expanses of central Tibet, broken up into a great number of self-contained basins. It is not until you get a long way farther south, that you reach the regions which drain to the Indian Ocean, namely those in which rise the tributaries of the Brahmaputra or Tsangpo and those of the Indo-Chinese rivers in the east. The regions of internal drainage narrow so rapidly towards the west that at the Kara-korum pass they have entirely tapered away. From the southern side of that pass the thaw-water runs down to the sea; on the northern side it makes its way into East Turkestan, so that there is there no self-contained drainage-area, however narrow. And just as the river