

drifts; but no pass hove in sight, although our Ladakis declared that we were close to it.

First we bore north until we reached Tschibra proper, a stone hut at the outlet of a side-glen coming from the north-east. After that we proceeded west-north-west and north-west, still continuing to ascend by the same eroded glen; but at length the acclivity decreased to such an extent that the surface appeared to be almost perfectly level, apart, that is, from the hills which rise on both sides of the broad *thalweg*. Finally we left the main glen behind us on the south. In a side-glen close by the snow lay 3 m. deep, and it took us a good half-hour to get the caravan over the awkward place, for we literally had to dig out a path through the



Fig. 337. THE WAY UP TO THE SUGET-DAVAN.

accumulation of snow which the wind had driven together. The strength of both men and animals was tried to the uttermost; we advanced only a score of paces at a time and then we had to »take soundings» again. Some of the men went on first, then followed one or two of the horses, and then the rest of the caravan. In some places the horses failed to find bottom, that is to say, they did not touch the surface of the ground, and consequently kept falling incessantly, while we were as often flung out of the saddle, though for a good thing our fall was soft! Time and time again we had to readjust the burdens after they had slipped off.

The last portion of the ascent grew a trifle, but only a trifle, steeper. The summit of the pass, the goal of so many weary travellers, is crowned by a cairn of stones. Its absolute altitude is 5434 m., or only 224 m. lower than the pass of Kara-korum. The amount of snow on the Suget pass was very appreciably greater than on the Kara-korum, although the former lies nearer to the heart of Asia with its arid climate. It should however be observed, that most of the snow