

from the faces of the cliffs; but as yet we could not complain that it was oppressive. It was with a feeling of congratulation that we turned our backs upon the severe wintry climate of Tibet, and rejoiced that there were no longer any snowy passes for us to be anxious about. Every trace of snow and ice had by this completely disappeared, both in the glen and on the surrounding mountains: there was not a streak of snow on the mountain slopes, not a speck of ice in even the most sheltered nook by the side of the stream. The temperature was no longer below zero; not even during the night did it descend below that value. It was only when we glanced up a transverse glen that we caught now and again a distant glimpse of white patches dotting a higher crest in the background.



Fig. 349. A TRAVELLING PARTY.

When we started in the morning to make our way down the glen, the stream was insignificant, about one cub.m. in the second; and it seemed ridiculous advice to give us, when the Kirgis urged us to make an early start, otherwise we should have difficulties to encounter owing to the gathering of the waters in the stony bed of the stream. But we soon saw the reasonableness of their advice, for the farther we descended, the greater grew the volume of the brook. At each successive crossing we noticed a difference, and we crossed over it pretty often. But then there is an unusual number of side-glen, and every one of these brought down a brook, either big or little, and each contributed its quota to the flood in the principal stream. The water in most of these was just muddy and of the same reddish brown colour as the sediment in the principal stream; it was only seldom that we passed a spring-fed brook with perfectly clear water and fresh sappy moss on its banks. In this way the brook went on increasing all day, until at last we found it rather uncomfortable fording it. This was however due less to the volume, which amounted to