

to be constructed to such a great degree upon guesswork that they might with justice be pronounced valueless, or at all events useless for scientific purposes. And it requires but a slight study of the available material, and observation of the many white patches that exist between the middle portions of Wellby's and Bower's routes, and also south of Nain Singh's route, to be convinced that so it indeed must be. For these reasons I was obliged to let drop my original purpose of attempting to trace the mountain-ranges right across the Tibetan highlands; that is, to prolong the ranges which I crossed over in the east in a westerly direction until they become lost in the world of mountains which have been traversed by Deasy, Rawling, and others. What prevents this from being done are the big gaps in the heart of the country, and anyway the difficulty of the task becomes apparent when the great



Fig. 355. THE MÖLDSCHA VALLEY; LOOKING N.

differences are borne in mind which obtain between the relief of eastern Tibet and the relief of western Tibet. If we may judge from the maps of the travellers last named, the impression is involuntarily borne in upon us that in the west the relief is less regular, the mountain-ranges more closely crowded together, and the parallelism far less pronounced than in the east. In the former quarter meridional ranges, or at any rate vast ramifying ranges, are not rare; but such ranges are practically absent in the northern and central parts of eastern Tibet. In respect of the more or less great regularity in the surface forms, the highlands of Tibet, notwithstanding the great diversity in materials and causes, may be compared with the lowlands of East Turkestan. In the latter we find that the dune-accumulations are extraordinarily regular in the east, while in the west that regularity practically ceases, and we have a chaos of dunes disposed in every direction. In the former precisely the same observation holds good of the mountain-ranges. Wellby's journey across Tibet from west to east affords a valuable proof of this. In proportion as he advanced towards the