a system of crests of uniform height, amongst which it is difficult to determine which
is the main crest. One characteristic feature of the system throughout is however
this, that it actually does consist of various parallel chains and nowhere constitutes
a single range, with spurs breaking obliquely away from it after the fashion shown
on the map of the Russian General Staff.

Fig. 365.   VALLEY NEAR CAMP XV, 1901.

When you look at a provisional general map on which all these seven routes
are plotted, and if on each such route you enter the altitude and situation of every
pass they respectively cross over, you would possibly be tempted at the first glance
to thread together on one line all the highest passes, and say that these are the
passes which are situated in the main range of the Arka-tagh. But that would be
an entirely erroneous assumption; the direction of the Arka-tagh would in that case
be incorrectly drawn, and *a priori* highly improbable, and all the more so because
we know that certain latitudinal valleys in that region run in directions which point
to entirely different conclusions. Although a certain pass on, say, route (4) is the
highest on that route and attains an altitude of 5203 m., while the highest pass on
route (6) has an altitude of 5450 m., it by no means follows that these two cul-
minating passes are situated in identically the same mountain-range, and the im-
probability is increased when the latter pass is situated almost half adegree to
the south of the former. By joining them together we should make the main
range of the Arka-tagh run in a direction that in no wise corresponds with the
direction of the adjacent latitudinal valleys, and it would be difficult to understand
the connections between the passes farther north belonging to the several dif-
ferent routes. For while we have ascertained, that in that section the Arka-tagh
does as a fact consist of several parallel ranges, it is abundantly clear that these
various ranges may vary in altitude in different localities. On the other hand two