

CHAPTER XL.

THE ROAD TO TAROK-TSO.

At Camp 414 my route leaves the Soma-tsangpo and proceeds W.S.W., first ascending the left side erosion terrace, which is here 8 m high and very steep; on its top there is undulating gravelly ground. Leaving the Men-ri to the right and crossing a little ramification only 4 856 m high, and an open plain where several small valleys meet, the road enters the Goa-lung which leads to Goa-la. The mountains all round look very irregular; no order prevails but it is one labyrinth of small naked rocks and hills in all directions; only to the S.E. is there a great valley that of the Soma-tsangpo. On the little threshold we find argillitic schist, and west of it, near Camp 415, quartzite, porphyrite, and diabas. To the north there is a mountain called Penlung, to the south Ri-mari. Camp 415 in the valley of Goa-lung is at a height of 5 022 m; there is a little brook from a spring and some grass; otherwise the country is very arid.

Between low mountains the road continues up the Goa-lung, to Goa-la, a flat, convenient pass covered with granitic gravel. To the S.S.E., S. and S.S.W. some parts of the Lapchung mountains are visible, but no high peaks. To the S.W., just below the pass, there is a small lake, Karong-tso, of very irregular form, and on all sides surrounded by mountains. The Goa-la, which is 5 298 m high, is probably situated in the same range as Dongchen-la and Satsot-la, and seems to become lower towards the W.N.W. North of this range is Teri-nam-tso, and south of it Karong-tso and Chunit-tso, and it is, as mentioned above, pierced by the Soma-tsangpo. West of the pass, the country is very broken, and two small thresholds have to be crossed. A valley from the north is called Karbuk; to the south are the mountains Dalang and Sumba-martsuk. Camp 416, at 5 035 m, is situated in a valley, Changsa-lungpa.

The road to Camp 417 runs straight westwards down through a broad valley with gravelly and sandy soil and some grass, and, at the foot of the southern mountains, some salt pools. Camp 417, Tamo-yakshung, is at only 4 725 m. To the N. 29° W. is a small peak not far away, and called Ra-kunsum; to the N 58° W. is Chokbe-la and N. 65° W. at some distance, a mountainous region called Lungnak. Near the camp is a pool, and the ground all round is full of shells.