

## CHAPTER III.

### THROUGH THE REGION OF AKSAI-CHIN.

On *September 5th* our route goes 19.7 km. a little north of N. E. About half way, there is a low pass threshold, dividing the self-contained basin of the nameless lake from the next basin to the north and N. E., which may be called *Aksai-chin*. From *Camp V* to the threshold, the distance is 11 km. and the height of the little pass is 5,367 m. or 161 m. higher than *Camp V*, meaning a rise of 1:68. From the pass to *Camp VI* the distance is 8.7 km. The height of the Camp is 5,110 m. or 257 m. less than the pass, thus having a rate of fall as 1:34, exactly twice as steep as the rise from *Camp V*.

Leaving the terrace on the left side of the brook we cross an extensive plain of yellow clay, the surface of which is somewhat deformed by wind and running water. Here and there it is crossed by winding watercourses directed to the brook, but now dry. This plain of clay has once been a part of the little lake as may be easily seen from a somewhat higher standpoint. As soon as the clay ceases, the ground becomes a little undulating, consisting of soft dust and some gravel and sparsely overgrown with the ordinary plants, which, however, vanish a little farther on. At one or two places we cross small, rounded terraces, about 2 m. high, obviously beach-lines of the lake from an earlier epoch. In the favourable weather now prevailing I got still more the impression that we were crossing a latitudinal valley of the first order, situated at the N. E. foot and tolerably parallel with the water-parting *Kara-korum* Range. The nameless lake belongs to this valley which, in the S. E., probably is separated by a comparatively low threshold from the S. E. continuation of the latitudinal valley. The lakes *Tsaggar*, *Arport-tso* and *Shemen-tso* may perhaps be regarded as belonging to the same depression, which here is more irregular and less parallel with the *Kara-korum*. But to these regions we shall have to return in due course. The *Chang-chenmo* valley is of quite a different kind as it crosses the *Kara-korum* diagonally. But the *Lanek-la* is, as we have seen, situated on the water-parting range.