

we were now approaching. The march goes to the north, N. N. W. and west and the distance is 30 km. to *Camp VII*, where the height is 4,953 m., or a fall of 157 m. since *Camp VI*, a rate of 1:191. It should, however, be observed that the ground falls gradually all the way to the point where the direction is changed to the west, and where the altitude is probably only 4,900 m. From there, approaching *Camp VII* near the base of the western mountains, the ground again rises, imperceptibly to the eye, it is true, but still reaching 4,953 m.

From a climatic point of view the march was also extraordinary. There was no snow- or hail-storm, no wind, no clouds, the sun even burning hot, and, having left the little dying brook at *Camp VI*, we saw not a drop of water until we reached the spring at *Camp VII*. We, therefore, crossed a very arid and dry part of the plateau-land. The absence of running water indeed proves that this part of Tibet is always protected against precipitation. For even if snow- and hail-storms of the kind we had just experienced very often pass over the highlands, their precipitation vanishes, as we have seen, in the course of an hour, evaporating in the extremely dry air. At any rate the precipitation is not sufficient to form lasting brooks. Proceeding N. E. from *Chang-lung-yogma* we have seen how the running water became more and more scarce. The brook we had followed for three and a half days, and which goes down to the little lake, and perhaps is its principal feeder, carried, in spite of its coming from the *Kara-korum* water-parting, very little water. The brook from the low threshold vanished after a course of only 9 km. The farther we proceeded from the *Kara-korum* water-parting range the drier the ground became. This part of N. W. Tibet may certainly be regarded as the driest of the whole country, perhaps excepting the region around *Akato-tagh* in the far N. E. Those parts of the *Kwen-lun* System where the *Kara-kash* and *Yurung-kash* have their sources must, on the other hand, be rich in water. It is only the plateau-land between the two systems that may be regarded as an arid highland desert.

A short distance below *Camp VI* there was a little knoll of red weathered and rotten limestone, the only living rock within reach the whole day. Even gravel was very rare. The comminution of the debris had advanced as far as possible, and the whole ground consisted in fine, yellow dust, extremely soft and dry. In this soft ground there are millions of rabbits' holes. *Yapkak* grew all over the plain with a few interruptions. On some slopes fairly good grass appeared. The plain which now opens up to our right is nearly level, and without instruments, since the bed of the brook has vanished, it would have been impossible to tell in what direction it falls. To the east the plain is bounded by low, red, rounded hills. Our route follows along the foot of the western hills, which, at one place, had a nearly vertical slope. Turning N. N. W. we have a very extensive plain in front of us to the north, bounded by a range with some snow. The bed of a dry watercourse is directed