

CHAPTER VII.

THE FIRST TIBETAN HUNTERS.

On *November 5th* our route goes 12.7 km. S. S. E. and S. E., rising from 5,046 m. to 5,158 m. and, before reaching *Camp LIV*, crossing a little threshold which looked as insignificant as many others, but later on proved to be the water-parting between two lake basins. The march may thus be divided into three sections: first, rising ground in and along the watercourse of a valley, then undulating ground at fairly nearly the same height and with a large number of dry watercourses going N. N. E., and finally, a short distance downhill in valleys.

At *Camp LIII* the rock was conglomerate, after which no solid rock was seen. The ascent of the little valley in which this camp was pitched was very gradual. It contains a ribbon of ice stretching at least for an hour up, but there is not a drop of water the whole day, and no snow. In this valley there was a Tibetan fireplace which seemed to be only one or two months old, as coal and ashes were still left. The visitors had obviously been hunters, as the skeletons of three yaks were found quite near. The paths of wild yaks were extremely common and now easy to recognize as they turn in quite unnecessary bends and windings around the sides of the hills. The landscape is rather accentuated; it is a labyrinth of flat, soft hills of red sand, with grass and yapkak, and with one or two, sometimes more, rabbits' holes on every square meter. Between these hills the shallow erosion furrows go down to the N. N. E.

In front of us to the S. S. E. and S. E., there is a black range of moderate size without any peaks, only cupola-shaped heights with a few patches of snow. From N. 30° W. over north and N. E. to S. 82° E., the country looked rather wild and mountainous, consisting of many ranges, ridges and peaks, the arrangements of which could not possibly be made out without penetrating this unknown country. Pan. 64, Tab. 10, gives an idea of it.¹ Above and beyond the rest to the N. 15° E., N. 17° E. and N. 38° E., comparatively high peaks with eternal snow are rising. They belong

¹ Camp 54 and 55 on this panorama is a misprint for 53 and 54.