

CHAPTER XIX.

FROM LEMCHUNG-TSO TO SENES-YUNG-RIGMO.

After having crossed Deasy's route, which now had been left behind, we had in front of us one of the greatest unexplored and perfectly unknown regions of Tibet.

On *February 19th*, we marched 18 km. to the E. S. E. across a country which still, morphologically, could be regarded as belonging to the same enormous latitudinal valley as hitherto. The ground was now falling 248 m. as *Camp CCCXXXIV* had an absolute altitude of 4,933 m., the rate of the slope thus being as 1:73. The minimum temperature was -20.1° , the sky perfectly clear. Already at 7 o'clock a. m., the S. W. wind began with the force of half a storm. The dust was whirling about and rose here and there like clouds, but the landscape was only partly hidden. The ground was favourable to our march though again pierced by rabbits' holes. The soil consisted of dust, sand and fine gravel with some grass. It is, therefore, flat, soft ground without living rock within reach. Just to our right or south, is a broad shallow watercourse, and beyond it and E. S. E., some of the hills visible on the last panoramas. The amount of snow decreases as we proceed eastwards; to begin with, it is still to be found at the lee side of terraces and in small erosion beds as well on some slopes falling to the north. But farther east it ceases altogether. Only on the little hill south of *Camp CCCXXXIV*, there is a little patch left. It is exactly the same distribution of snow as we had found when approaching *Shemen-tso*, where the amount of snow decreased as the absolute height became lower. It is surprising that such an insignificant difference of height plays so important a part.

North of our course were low, irregular and detached hills, and in this direction it would obviously not have been difficult to proceed. On the plain south of our route we could count at least 300 antelopes. Towards the end of the march we saw a little lake to the S. E., obviously the *Lemchung-tso*. As the country might become barren in the direction of the lake, we made camp, *CCCXXXIV*, at the base of some low hills where snow could be had. To the S. E., beyond the lake,