

able to reach the spot, where we obtained water in abundance, but not of very good quality.

Pike was now very unwell and weak. He had persevered in the march through sheer determination, and, when he regained the camping ground, sank utterly exhausted. A little rum, undiluted, proved an excellent restorative. The scarcity of water in this region seemed remarkable, for there was abundance of grass for miles around. The grass was mostly of the peelee sort, in which our transport animals luxuriated, and Ramzan petitioned for a day's rest on their account. This request was readily granted, but chiefly on account of Pike's illness. This day's rest provided the caravan men with an opportunity of renewing or repairing their apparel with the tent cloth, while I went out to reconnoitre. From a commanding hill-top, about seven miles distant, I could see grass in all directions, but the only water visible was at a spot far off and well to the west of south. It seemed to belong to a river, running in a wide valley whose direction, like that of most of the main valleys, lay east and west. But the river course, the further east it was followed by the eye, became fainter and fainter, as if a porous bed absorbed the water. We were unwilling to turn westwards, and settled that we should strike the channel several miles below the point where the water was seen. Water might be found by digging, but, lest this hope should fail us, the men were advised to drink copiously and to fill their bottles before starting. Pike, still weak, set out early, so as to get over as much ground as possible before the heat of the day. When I overtook him, he had reconsidered our plan, and was now strongly in favour of changing our direction. This we did, and, towards evening, camped (Camp 35) at the foot of some outlying hills on the north side of the broad valley I had seen the day before. No water could be found near the