

too, there issues another arm to the adjacent lake of Ischtan-asti-köl, which is shallow and overgrown with reeds, as well as encircled by steppe and a narrow belt of continuous sand-dunes. On the left another arm goes off to the Tschanga-köl, a lake without any outflow; that is to say, it is a marginal lagoon, which rises and falls in sympathy with the river, and, when the inflow is stopped, shrinks through evaporation. After that comes yet another out-going arm on the same side, namely the Lämpa-akin, which was then taxing the mother river to the extent of about 1 cub.m. of water in the second. This joins the Kitschik-ögen near Kujuk-tam, whereupon the united stream again bifurcates. Of the two branches into which it divides the left-hand one first passes through the large lake of Ak-jasuk, then proceeds to Dschaj-dung, and, intersecting the road to Bughur, continues on to the large lakes of Chodschak-köl and Sädik-akin, both situated farther to the east. After that it again bifurcates, sending one branch through the forest tract of Bostan to the Tscha-jan and the other to the right-hand arm of the first bifurcation of the Kitschik-ögen, and the united stream then travels eastwards, past Dung-kotan, to Taraschi, where it, too, rejoins the Tscha-jan, or Intschkä-darja.

South of the beginning of the Lämpa-akin lies, on the right of the river, the lake of Jäkän-köl, which obtains its water partly from the Ischtan-asti-köl, and partly from the river direct, in that the kamisch expanse is here inundated by the summer overflow. To the south of these lakes runs the Kara-akin, here split into two branches; the left-hand branch enters the Jaghatschlik-köl, while the right-hand branch, after traversing the Karaune-tokkan-köl, joins itself to its sister branch. After that the reunited stream, still retaining the name of Kara-akin, picks up a feeder that issues from the Koral-dungning-köl, and empties itself into the Ak-kumning-jughan-köl. This lake, as its suffix *jughan* (i. e. »big») indicates, is of large size; and it is, moreover, surrounded by white drift-sand, and derives its water from the Jäkän-köl by a connection which traverses the forest-track of Jalghus-toghrak.

The boundary between the administrative districts of Kutschar and Lop (Dural) passes through Koral-dung, and it was there we first encountered the fishermen of the Loplik race. The top of the consolidated sand-dune of Koral-dung, about 10 m. high, commands an extensive view of that flat country, so plentifully watered by the capricious ramifications and overflowings of the Tarim. Koral-dung, I may remark, is equivalent to Karaul-dung, meaning the »watch-hill», because it is there that the boundary passes. The nearest feature in the view from its top is the bright, greenish-blue surface of the Koral-dungning-köl, its thin crust of ice half broken up by the gentle wind. The lake is set about by tamarisks, standing on mounds of kamisch, these being so tightly packed together as to be quite impenetrable; in fact, the tamarisks were like little islets and holms studding the oceanic expanse of reeds. As for the poplars, although there were very few in our immediate vicinity, they made quite dense woods in the neighbourhood of the Jäkän-köl, the Karaune-tokkan-köl and the Jaghatschlik-köl. The surface hereabouts was still moist from the last overflow of the high-water; indeed, when the waters are out in summer, it is possible to paddle a canoe through the reeds over parts of the shore which were then dry land. Of the other lakes mentioned above there was not a