

The storm has carried us too far away from our lake; let us therefore return to the Begelik-köl. I thought it however worth while to dwell a little upon this natural revolution which plays such a characteristic and important rôle in this part of Asia. But no description can give an adequate conception of the reality; it is absolutely imperative to have actual experience of such a storm to understand its power and its effects. It spreads itself like a pall over the earth, and is not without its awe-inspiring influence upon the mind. For my own part, I welcomed these storms, not only for the instruction they afforded me, but also for the coolness they brought, and not less for the day's relief they secured us from the clouds of gadflies, gnats, and mosquitoes, which at this season of the year make a visit in the Lop country a veritable purgatory.

Let us now look at the results obtained from the trip across the Begelik-köl which I have described above. As usually happened, I was forced by the storm to discontinue my soundings; consequently my data are not sufficient for this lake either, and the only claim I can make for the map I offer is that it is a reconnaissance, and is only sufficient to give an approximate idea of the topography and bathymetrical relations of the lake. Accepting the nomenclature of the natives, we find that the lake is divided into seven basins, all however intimately connected one with the other. If however we look at them in the light of the maximum depth, they shrink to five, all situated on a gently curved **S** extending from north to south. The largest lake is the Aghis-köl, or the »Mouth Lake«, situated farthest to the north; it was here that we were most unfortunate in our soundings. This lake is connected with the last expansion of the feeding-canal by a narrow watery passage, led between two piers, through which a gentle current was running into the lake. The Ku-tuttu = Where the Swan was Caught, is regarded by the natives as an independent lake, though connected with the Begelik-köl, and supplied by it with water. But as seen from our point of vantage on the dune it had rather the appearance of a bay or apophysis of the east shore of the Aghis-köl. Next comes the sound of Beglarni-boltasi, 1230 m. across, between two sandy peninsulas, and south of it lies the Tais-köl, or the Shallow Lake. The name is very appropriate, for this lake does appear to be a couple of meters less deep than the others. It too possesses two bays, probably both very shallow, but only the more northerly one is named. Between the Tais-köl and the Ghol-köl, or the Deep Lake, lies the peninsula already spoken of, an amorphous heap of sand at the end of a narrow stalk. Here is the sound of Asis Bakini-boltasi, 770 m. across, with a similar sandy peninsula on its eastern side. South of this contraction comes the Tuvadake-köl, or the Lake of the Hills, triangular in shape, and giving the greatest depth I sounded, not only in the Begelik-köl, but anywhere in these desert lakes, namely 11 m. When I add that this is one of the three maximum soundings I obtained in all the Lop country right away down to the Karakoschun — 14 m. was the absolutely deepest sounding — some idea may be formed not only of the general shallowness of these lakes, but also of the remarkable and persistent flatness of the country as a whole, and of the absence of even minor undulations. A region such as this can only originate under conditions which presuppose sedimentary deposits to have been first laid down in water, and now to be dropped from the atmosphere above. If its narrow sound were filled with