

mud, into which both horses and wayfarers on foot sink deeply. Going back, upstream from Jigdelik-aghil to Boghuluk, the stretch that we traversed without guides, the shepherds supplied me with the following names, which for the sake of completeness I will here write down — Kum-küjülma, Karaul-dung, Araltschi, Negetschagh-asghan, Takta-pere, Buka-tschapghan (left bank), Schor-sulak (left bank), Kumtschakma (right bank), Jussup-baj-satmasi (left bank), Schaptul-köli (right bank), and Toghrak-aghil. The lake of Schah Toktaning-köl, which is shown on Roborovskij's map, is situated south of Jigdelik-aghil. The oldest man amongst the shepherds, Molla Chodscha, who was also the chief of the community, told me, that his grandfather Tinakul Bek, used to live at Karaul-dung, but he had never heard that any part of the desert had been called after him. Roborovskij however calls the desert north of Keng-lajka by the name of Tinakul-bekning-kum.

Between Jigdelik-aghil and Tscharklik there is a route, 55 km. long, which can be traversed by camels in two days and by a man on horseback in one day. This, after passing Tüschkün, proceeds along the dry bed of the Sollak-darja. Halfway the road is crossed by the stream which, starting at Tatlik-bulak (between Jakub Baj-kuduk and Vasch-schahri), flows north-east; at the intersection it is known as the Atschik-tarim. Thus the Tatlik-bulak, or Fresh Spring, on reaching these lower levels, becomes known as a Salt River (Atschik-tarim), an indication that its water is contaminated by the saliferous soil it passes through. After rain in the mountainous districts, this stream sometimes joins with the Tscharklikning-su above Nadschi-bidschin, and from that point the united river proceeds towards the Kara-buran, though it seldom reaches it. It is only the northern half of the road I have just mentioned that crosses a belt of dunes; the southern half traverses barren *schor*. Tamarisks grow at Atschik-tarim only. The Atschik-tarim river is joined by several other streams from the mountains, e. g. the brook of Vasch-schahri. Occasionally the volume is so great (*sil-su*) that for a time it renders the road quite impassable. Other natives assured me, that neither the Atschik-tarim nor the Tscharklik-su ever gets now as far as the Kara-buran, but that both generally disappear in the ground before reaching it, or after a very heavy rainfall form marshes, or spread themselves out, inundating the country south of the Kara-buran; but none of the ephemeral lakes thus formed ever sends a connecting branch down to the Kara-buran. This seems to indicate that the bottom of the last named lake has in the course of time become so raised by the mud of the Tarim, that it actually lies at a higher level than the tract of country to the south of it. The zone of dunes south of the Tschertschen-darja thins out in the district of Nadschi-bidschin, and comes to an end. At Tüschkün a branch, one year old, goes off from the main river, and after describing a deep curve to the north, proceeds to Lop. From the beginning of the Keng-lajka the high water no longer flows in a definitive channel, but spreads out in deltaic fashion, the river breaking up into a number of radiating arms, a procedure which the natives further facilitate by digging canals with the object of watering as wide an area of their pasture-grounds as possible. At the present time there is no flowing water derived from the Tschertschen-darja. At Jigdelik-aghil it is always possible to ford the river. In contradistinction to the Tarim, in which the irregular supplies derived from several different feeders, situated a great distance away, gradually find their proper levels, there is in the Tschertschen-