

direction of the main range. Its peaks exceed in altitude the highest peaks of the Tschol-tagh that are visible from the road; the peak nearest to us was called by the natives Kisil-ighis-tagh. Throughout the whole of the way the mountains are perfectly lifeless; and the only satisfactory camping-ground the wayfarer finds is at the little spring of Atschik-bulak, with a brook of not more than 2 to 3 versts in length and situated on the northern flank of the range.»

»Having crossed over the Tschol-tagh, we travelled 15 versts in a southerly direction until we came to the spring of Arpischme. This is situated in the same saline valley of Kumuschin-tuse as the springs of Schor-bulak on the west and Usunbulak on the east. Here, owing to the presence of the fresh water, vegetation thrives capitally. This inviting little spot may be regarded as the second best station after Kisil-sinir, where the traveller may rest with his animals.»

»Upon leaving Arpischme we crossed over a lower part of the valley, where we met with salt deposits at intervals, and so reached a sandier tract, which gradually rose. Shortly after that the Turfan road ran into the Luktschin road.» From that point he proceeded along the road already described, until he came to the open valley of Kisil-sinir.

Kosloff was then anxious to explore the country to the south-east, using Kisil-sinir as a base. The first day took him down a dry torrent, bordered by mountain ridges of no great height. At a place called Kara-koschun the valley was enlivened by an abundance of vegetation and several freshwater springs.

»On the following day we crossed over the Kuruk-tagh by a transverse glen with a little brook flowing south», and forming cascades in a few places. In the summer it is no doubt incomparably bigger; its banks were buried in vegetation.

»Upon emerging from this transverse glen we found ourselves on an extensive valley, inclining gently towards the south. On its southern side the Kuruk-tagh appeared to be considerably higher than on the northern. To the east we perceived the summit of the Jumulak-tagh. On the south the valley in question is shut in by low detached crests and heights, and it is towards them that the dry torrent runs which forces its way through the Kuruk-tagh. Its water, which flows underground, comes to light again at a spring some 10 versts from the foot of the range in the district of Nan-schan. Beside this we encamped.»

»Thence we travelled south-east across a barren plain, situated 3,000 to 4,000 feet above the level of the sea and traversed in places by low detached ridges, stretching east and west. In the more inclosed places there are traces of an ancient road which crossed this plain from Kisil-sinir to Sa-tscheo, with cairns of stones (*obos*) at the sides.»*

On the fourth day of the excursion the traveller reached the district of Buru-tu and that which immediately follows it, namely Olun-temen-tu, where his route coincided with M. E. Grum-Grachimajlo's.

Shortly after that he struck the dry bed of the Kuruk-darja, which two days' journey to the west joins the old bed of the Kontsche-darja (i. e. the Kuruk-darja). On the way thither he encamped at Altmisch-bulak.**

* This is evidently the road which ran through Lâu-lan, the ruins of which are described in another chapter of this work.

** From this we see that the river-bed at Altmisch-bulak, mentioned above, in which the springs gush out, comes from a pretty considerable distance.