

spot as No. 3. Then they continued alongside the salt lakes, going this time west. From their seventh camp they turned off, as we subsequently discovered from their tracks and the dead horses we came across, towards the west-north-west, and so, without knowing it, passed quite close to our Camp No. XX of the year 1900. A storm compelled them to encamp in the middle of the sandy desert; but next day, after going about two kilometers farther, they came to some large and beautiful lakes, with perfectly fresh water and an abundance of kamisch. Here they encamped for the rest of the day, the tenth since they started. They took it for granted that these lakes were immediately connected with the newly formed desert lakes, although the water in the latter was so salt, and read in them confirmation of the idea, that all these lakes were proceeding from the Schirge-tschapghan. After that they travelled in two days to the Tokus-tarim, and on the third day reached Muhamedekoschuru, situated somewhere about the spot where the year before we first lighted upon the shepherds. Then, having rested a day with the shepherds, they crossed a stream one meter deep at a ford which the shepherds pointed out to them. On the fifteenth day they travelled to Ujne-aldi-köl, where they found an old house: the name of this lake means the Lake in front of the House. Thence they had two short days' journey to Jurt-tschapghan *viâ* the district of Jangi-ger; but at the former place they had to cross a double river-arm, quite recently formed, which issued, they were told, from the Sor-köl (not far from Tschigelik-uj) and, after emptying itself into the lake of Tschajatik-köl, lying immediately north of Jurt-tschapghan, divided and distributed itself between the lake of Örtäng-köl and other new lakes situated farther north.

For one who had himself seen the region in question it was not difficult to interpret this perfectly authentic information. In my men's report two points are of especial interest. The distance between the lakes formed from the Kara-koschun and those formed from the Tokus-tarim was barely half a day's journey, and that a very short one. The men's description showed that the latter extended at least as far to the north as the former. From the point where on 1st April we crossed over the arms with 8 cub.m. in the second to the northern end of the lakes, out of which their water issued, was therefore two stiff days' march. From this it is to be inferred, not only that the Tokus-tarim, and with it the whole of the Kara-köl system, must in the spring of 1901 have been incredibly swollen to have filled such immense depressions, but also that all the lakes situated north of the Kara-koschun and the lowest Tarim must lie in a continuous line; which again points to the existence of an elongated depression parallel to the lowermost Tarim and its terminal lake.

It is also interesting to learn of the existence of a third river-arm, issuing from the district of Tschigelik-uj. Thus not only the courses of the rivers, but the line of the lakes as well, run parallel to the prevailing wind.

On fig. 134 I have indicated the principal lakes, or rather subdivisions of the inter-connected marsh, with I, II, and

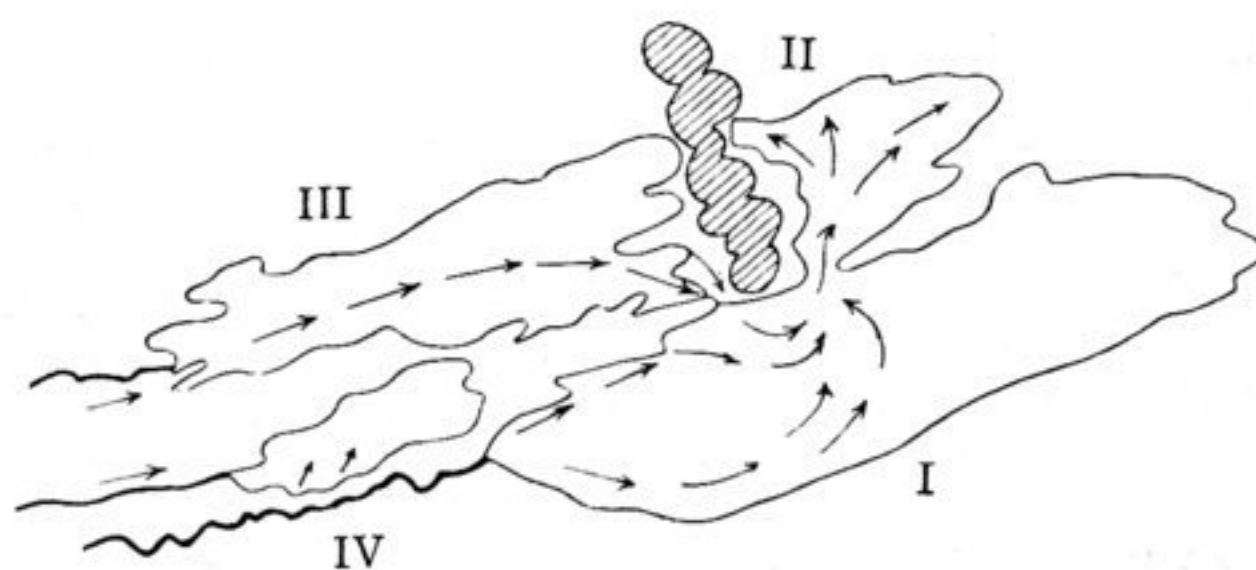


Fig. 134. BASINS OF THE KARA-KOSCHUN.