

at the present time two or three other streams flow out of the triplet lakes. We have only to suppose that the Ilek poured its Kontsche water into its terminal lake, precisely as the Tarim now pours its water into its terminal lake, the Karakoschun; so that from this point of view these triplet lakes may be regarded as bastard or deformed descendants of the old Lop-nor.

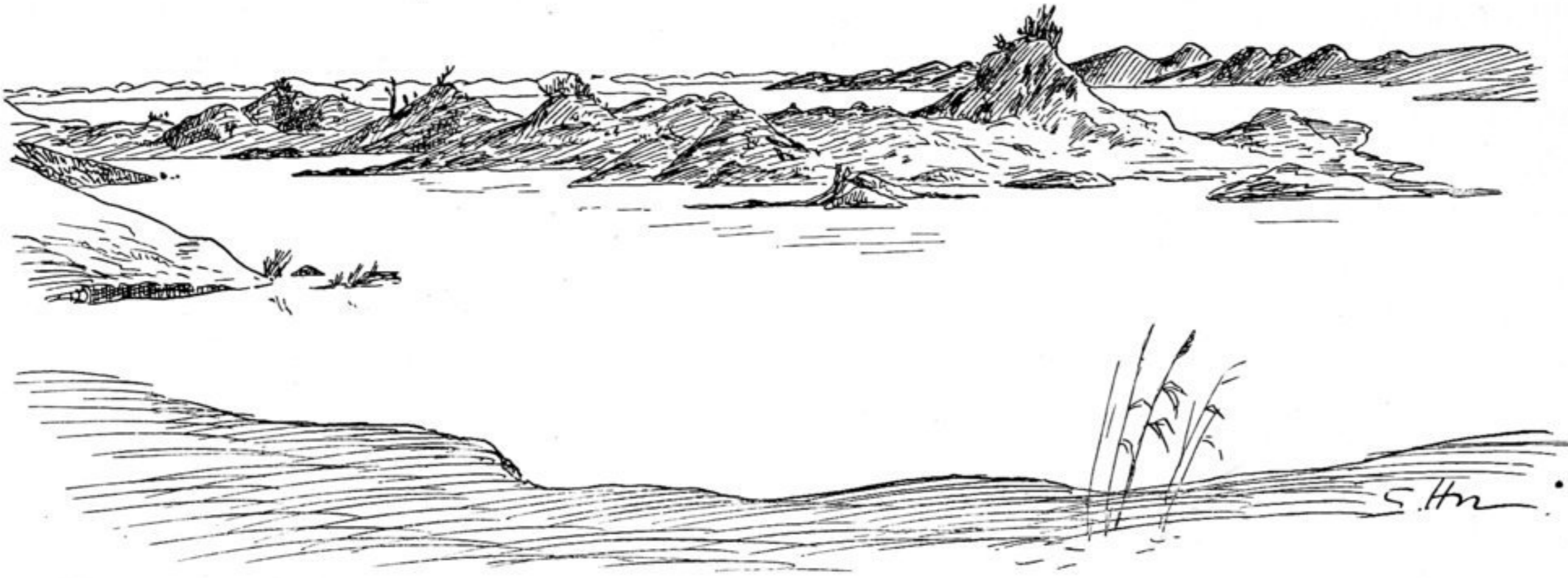


Fig. 170. NIAS-KÖL; A SPECIMEN OF AN OLD BAJIR-DEPRESSION FILLED WITH WATER.

All the same the exceptional limpidity of their waters is not alone sufficient to account for the tenacity with which these triplet lakes maintain their existence. In the same latitude, but farther to the west, there exist a number of other lakes — the Kara-köl, Tschivilik-köl, Suji-sarik-köl, together with others, and again the lakes around Markat. Certain of the upper lakes of these groups are entered by rather turbid streams. All the waters which unite definitively at Arghan come through these lakes, dropping all their sediment on the way, and if, notwithstanding this, the water at Arghan is not clear, the reason is that they pick up fresh sedimentary matter in the regions they traverse after issuing from the lakes just mentioned. These lakes therefore, the Tschivilik-köl and those of the upper Tarim, threaten to fill much sooner than the chain of lakes to the east, and the sedimentation proceeds, as we found in several places, from north to south. The same thing is true also

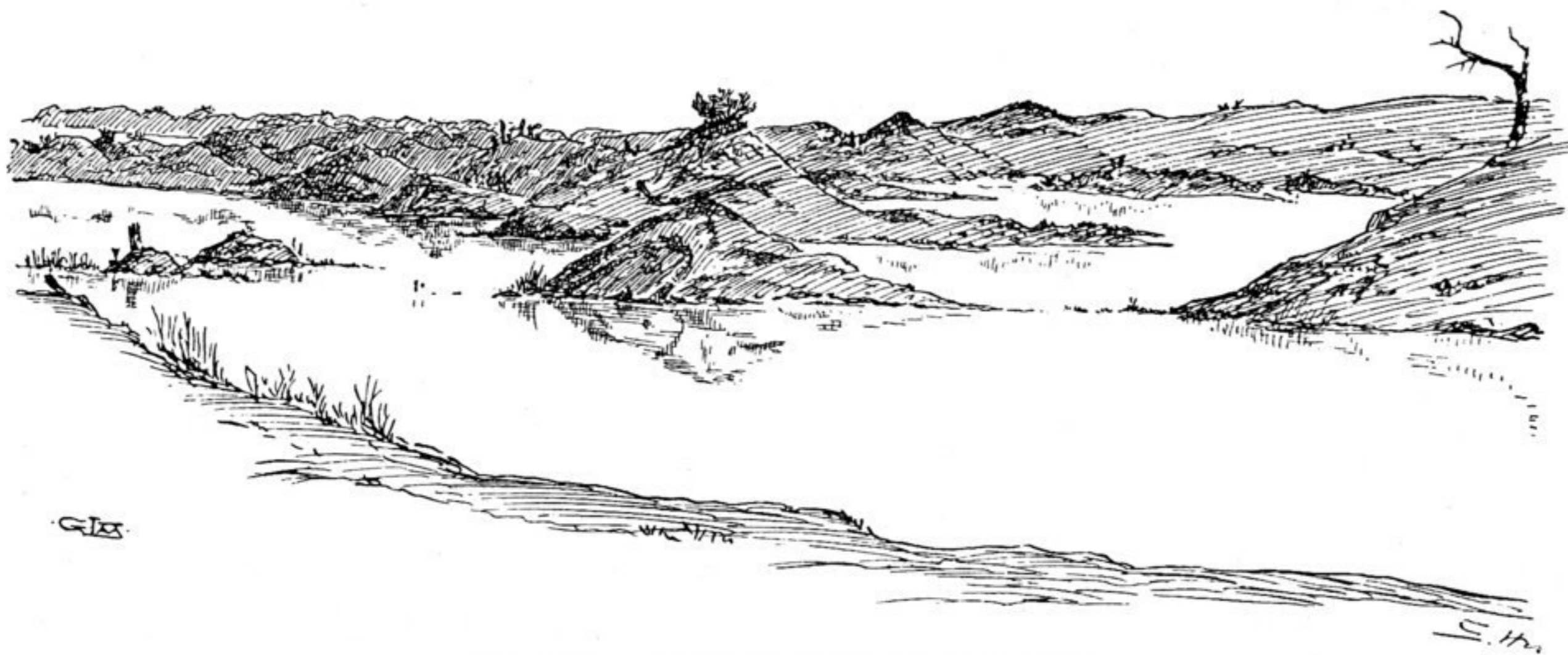


Fig. 171. ANOTHER VIEW OF THE SAME.