

would be considerable, and its terminal lake, the Kara-koschun, would be much larger than it actually is now. Every year probably a greater quantity of water is lost in the inland delta which stretches from Arghan up to Jangi-köl than in the actual terminal lake itself. And not only is the water in that region dissipated through a vast number of arms, but these arms themselves are excessively unstable, and are incessantly shifting, so that it is only in respect of the broad features that Prschevalskij's first map is like my last. In consequence of these reiterated shiftings the arid surface imbibes enormous quantities of water.



Fig. 244. THE TURKOMAKTE-KOK-ALASI.

It is peculiarly characteristic of the lakes of this region that practically all the lakes are very elongated in shape. Round lakes are exceedingly rare, and what do occur are all small. Both the shape of the lakes and the orientation of their long axes are an expression of the relief of the ground, and this again is an expression of the effects of the wind. Throughout the whole of the Lop country there is not a single lake that stretches east and west. They either extend from north to south, and thus fill existing or former bajir-depressions, or else they extend from south-west to north-east, and thus occupy the gullies that have been directly hollowed out by the wind. The lakes which stretch from north-west to south-east have nothing whatever to do with the wind; they are overflows from the rivers held up between older fluvial ramparts.