

return to the Ghas-nor, or Tschimen-köli, or Ghas-köl in a later chapter, for on another excursion I touched its north-eastern shore. The lake is of course heavily impregnated with salt, especially its eastern part. In many places its shores are quite white, a circumstance that seems to point to fluctuations in its level.

During this day's march we nowhere observed hard rock. Our route ran pretty near the middle of the broad valley, but gradually approached the Tschimen-tagh. North of the lake the Akato-tagh presents the shape of a gigantic loaf, being a rounded elevation, scored by innumerable eroded glens, gullies, and ravines. Nobody knew of any pass over the range at that part, though on a later occasion I was fortunate enough to find one.

The district in which we approached nearest to the southern shore of the lake is called Bel. A spring there, situated immediately to the left of the track, is known as Boghan-ottok; the tract between it and the next spring, Kalmak-kajnasi, produces an abundance of *boghana* bushes growing on heaps of loose soil. Camp No. VIII was made at Tschigelik, a well situated at the foot of a couple of sandy ridges in a clump of quite luxuriant vegetation. Its water, which was 1.20 m. from the surface and itself 12 cm. deep, was nevertheless exposed to the sun. It was tolerably good and had a temperature of 10°.0 C.

July 13th. The sandy ridges, which are in part barren, in part slightly overgrown with vegetation, forced us to keep for a short distance to the south-east, after which we turned due south. The road to Tsajdam continues to the east-south-east and after three days is said to reach a district which the Lopliks call Eski-tschimen, or the Bad Pasture-Grounds. Here the vegetation comes to an end except for a little *tschutschun* scrub, and at the same time the rise in the gentle level slope began to be perceptible. The surface consisted partly of fine powdery dust, partly of gravel, partly of sand, this last often in the form of rudimentary dunes. In some places *teresken* grows on the edge of the temporary rainwater channels. At the point where we first approached the watercourse of the glen of Mandarlik the bottom was rather moist. Afterwards at the spot where we crossed it, it was distinctly trenched, and contained a brook with clear, fresh water. The gravel-and-shingle terraces through which it cuts its path are 8 m. high and the bed is full of gravel. The watercourse makes its way towards the eastern end of the Ghas Lake, but does not reach it, except possibly after heavy rain. At last we rode entirely between the eroded terraces, our direction being south-west and south, and soon we came to the broad and beautiful glen of Mandarlik. Near its issue this glen is joined from the right by a not inconsiderable side-glen. Alongside the brook vegetation is tolerably abundant and sometimes actually forms thickets. The name is derived from a species of climbing-plant, *mandar*, which runs over the *balghun* bushes. The Mongols call the place Balgunto. Other names that occur in the country to the south-east (which I did not visit) are Dschurcha, inhabited by Mongols, — the Mussulmans call the place Dschurek-tasch — Par, Kurmuto, Danganlunba, Dalung, Lofsa, Schara-gol (Turkish name Puj or Pschuj), Musluk, Kara-balik, Intschkä-saj, and Dung-saj. But from the descriptions given me it was impossible to form any idea of the relief. All that was clear was that most of the points named indicate glens between the secondary spurs of the mountains. Even the Tschimen-tagh itself has here an east-