

as the air was warm and still, it swarmed with mosquitoes and gad-flies. The latter, called in that locality *ila*, are wont to fasten themselves in the nostrils of the horses, kulans, and other animals. The kulans however appear to be either less sensitive to the attacks of the tormenting insects or else they possess some means of protecting themselves against them; the natives at any rate declare that, when the kulans are attacked by the gad-flies, they put their noses to the ground and keep their nostrils hidden amongst the grass. The orongo antelopes (*jurge*) avoid the steppes during the day and take refuge amongst the dunes; in fact we observed four herds, consisting of 11, 13, 2, and 4 individuals respectively. And the wild yaks too protect themselves in a similar way, only they go farther in amongst the sand-dunes, so that we did not see them from our route; but their footprints were extraordinarily numerous, both going up into the sand and returning from it, and there were great quantities of yak-dung all along the foot of the sand. If the weather remains fine all day, the antelopes and yaks do not descend to their grazing-grounds until sunset or shortly after, when the gad-flies have disappeared. But now, the hail-shower and the rain having put the gad-flies to flight earlier than usual, the yaks showed themselves on the summit of the highest dunes; and as they stopped to survey the scene before descending, they made in truth a magnificent sight. There were also several yaks on the pasture-grounds at the east end of the lake and on both sides of the delta of the stream. In spite of the great weight of these animals, they appear able to cross treacherous boggy ground, into which a horse would sink and become irretrievably lost. The kulans however avoid ground of that description; and of this fact the wolves, which, I may remark, are especially numerous in the Tschimen and Kum-köl valleys, are said to avail themselves when they chase the kulans. As if acting upon a previously prepared plan, they drive their selected victim out into the marsh, where the ground gives way under him, though it will bear the weight of a wolf.

On the south shore of the lake, where we made Camp No. XVI (3882 m.) the grazing was all that could be desired. The shore itself was rather moist. The lake stretches towards the north-west; but from the point where we were encamped it was impossible to form any conception of its size owing to the extent of flat ground around it. Its northern shore can however be seen rising, at first slowly, but afterwards more steeply, up towards the foot of the Kalta-alaghan, which continued westwards for as far as we were able to see, thrusting out sharply-outlined, short, rugged spurs towards the middle of the valley. In the east we could see quite clearly and distinctly the imposing bluff F. My guides stated that there were passes over the range on both sides of the peak R. The track which comes over the range by the pass of Kalta-alaghan-davan is said to reach the latitudinal valley just north of our Camp No. XV. This would make four passes altogether in that locality; but I have no doubt that the Kalta-alaghan can be crossed in several other places without any special difficulty, at least I should judge so from the great number of deep notches in the crest, those towards the west being generally nearly clear from snow. The pass of Ambal-aschkan-davan, farther west, was the one used both by Carey and Dalgleish and by the Prince of Orleans and Bonvalot. On a later excursion I tried a new pass, as well as another that was used by Prschevalskij.