

The water which issues out of the Tar-aghis, and flows farther north for some 30 to 40 km. from the foot of the mountains, gives origin to the oasis of Mian and irrigates it. There a number of Lopliks, especially from the Abdal region, grow cereals, and vegetation is said to be abundant, and there is even forest. There can be no doubt that formerly a certain measure of importance attached to this point, for there are said to be ruins of houses, a *kona-schahr* in fact. As a rule the stream stops just below Mian, though in the months of April, May, and June it is said sometimes to get down as far as the marginal lakes between Abdal and Kumtschapghan. But before doing so it gives rise to extensive flat alluvial deposits, *kakir*. At Tar-aghis the water is said to be perfectly clear, but 6 or 7 km. above Mian it is *lajlik*, i. e. impregnated with mud and clay, for it there enters a *julghunlik-jer*, or country plentifully studded with tamarisks. Owing to the numerous springs which are reported to exist just below where we made Camp XCIII, the water is said to flow out of Tar-aghis all the winter, but it barely reaches half-way to Mian when its flow ceases and it spreads out, forming immense sheets of ice. Two or three of the natives asserted that the Ilve-tschimen is under all circumstances, even in summer, bigger than its three tributaries, and of these that the Paschalik exceeds considerably its two westerly neighbours. In the year that I visited these regions, namely in 1900, the great river from Tar-aghis reached as far down as Mian in the end of April, though previous to that it formed only an insignificant rivulet. From Mian it proceeded to the Abdal lakes, where it discharged for the space of a month, being very muddy and of a red colour. Subsequently its volume decreased at a pretty rapid rate. Mian is not inhabited during the winter; the antelope hunters, who visit the region at that season, are always able to get access to spring-water. But in the spring, when the water is expected from Tar-aghis, a man is sent up every day to see if it is coming, and when he reports that the water is coming, the agriculturists betake themselves there, with their *ketmen*, or »spades», for the purpose of sowing wheat and other cereals, which five months later are ripe for the harvest. They also cultivate vegetables and melons. I was told too, that for a good distance below Tar-aghis the bed of the river is full of stones and gravel, that is before it emerges upon the hard, gently sloping *saj*. At Mian there is a belt of *toghraks*, stretching 5 to 6 km. down-stream; these are followed by a belt of tamarisks growing on high mounds; and finally there come *kakir* desert and *schor*. Thin scrub accompanies the river all the way down, though only quite close to the river-bed.

With regard to the distances in the region in question, it is reckoned a day's journey from Camp XCIII to Davan-teve; from Davan-teve to the end of the Tughuluk is half a day, thence to Kum-taschlik half a day, and from there to Tar-aghis the distance is estimated at two days' journey. From Davan-teve *viâ* Avras to Tar-aghis is reckoned to be three days' journey, and from Tar-aghis to Mian is one day's journey.

It is probable that yet another side-glen could be found joining the main glen west of Kum-taschlik, though none such was indeed known to my guides. From the same mountain-mass that gives birth to the western feeder of the Tughuluk, and in which the Kum-taschlik has its beginning, the river Haschäklik also proceeds.