

On the 11th January we once more resumed our north-north-east march across the level and monotonous, or rather rough, plain of Särtäng, with its steppes and wearisome frozen marshes; we had to strew earth on the ice-sheets before we durst venture to lead our camels across them. After once more fording the Holuin-gol and passing Højte-ovo (2816 m.) on the left, though at some distance away, we came to numerous dome-shaped ice-springs, and finally passed at 1½ to 2 km. distance the southern end of the Bulungir-nor, from which the Holuin-gol issues. Then we had the lake on our right (east) at the same distance; that is to say we were marching parallel to its western shore. It appeared to be of small size, though elongated, and along the shore lie numerous small pools and marshes and out in the lake flat islands. We pitched Camp CXX in a district called Eken-schirik, or the Grass of the Spring, where there was a little temporary obo, consisting of pieces of the schor ground stacked up one upon the other; while round about it were some broken slabs of stone with an inscription on them. The altitude was 2798 m.

Judging from its appearance and situation, the Bulungir-nor must be very shallow, or rather something between a lake and a marsh. It is fed, like the Baschkum-köl, by perennial springs, and here too the superfluous or overflow water makes its way by a small branch stream to a salt lake. This, the lowest depression in the basin, has the same value as the Ajagh-kum-köl, although it is incomparably smaller, and I dare say very shallow. As the volume of the Chalting-gol must vary a good deal at different seasons of the year, it is to be inferred that the area of the lake likewise varies. Here too there exists a geographical homology, seeing that this lake receives a direct affluent from the highest bordering mountains on the south, that is to say an affluent which does not touch the freshwater lake. Precisely the same thing obtains in the basin of Kum-köl. The Bulungir-nor and the Suchain-nor furnish yet another example of the association of a freshwater lake and a salt-water lake so common in High Asia. Other examples of the same thing are supplied by the Kurlik-nor and the Tosun-nor; and again by the Ajik-köl and the Ghas-köl on the boundary between Tsajdam and Tschimen.

Yet another remarkable geographical homology comes to light when we compare the four basins which stretch in a string along the north-eastern edge of the great basin of Tsajdam, namely Särtäng, Machaj, Tsädum, and Kurlik-nor. The first and the last of these have this in common, that they each form one of a linked pair of freshwater and salt-water lakes. But Tsädum and Machaj are clearly self-contained basins, each consisting of two lakes; but with respect to these I am unable to give any special information. Each of these four basins seems however to possess a main affluent as well as several smaller ones. The map of the Russian General Staff calls the two lakes of the Machaj basin Dsun-machaj-nor and Barun-machaj-nor, that is the Northern and Southern Lakes of Machaj respectively. Carey's name for the former is Tsaghan-tolghaj-nor or Lake of the White Head. Its affluent, which flows down from the Ritter Mountains, is called Itscheghan-gol, though I was told that its name is Itscheguin-gol or Narin-holosso. From the maps it would appear that the basin of Machaj is bordered by mountains only on the north and east, while on the south and west there is flat land. So far as I know Carey and Dagleish are the only travellers who have traversed this basin. But the word »Un-