



Fig. 21. Small lakes and reeds in *mesa* landscape. View to the N. N. W., May 13th

DIVIDING THE PARTY

CHEN and I now made camp No. 80 our base camp, from which our advance to Lop-nor, the wandering lake, was to begin.

On May 11th we woke up to find a strong north-easterly wind blowing — 12.5 m a second. The day was lost. Lakes and creeks were covered with white, foaming waves. Our craft lay moored far inside the reeds, where the water was comparatively smooth. Clouds of flying sand were lashed against the tent, that threatened to break loose.

At 8 p. m. the strength of the wind had increased to 17.5 m a second, and the temperature was still 27.8° C. The light was blown out again and again by violent gusts. It was too hot to lie in our sleeping-bags, and we lay on them very comfortably. Everything in the tent was covered with a fine yellow dust.

The following morning it was still blowing hard — nearly 14 m a second. We had to arm ourselves with patience. We allotted to the men the different rôles they were to play in our forthcoming plans. APAQ, HAYIT and HASHIM were to go to BERGMAN's camp on May 13th with letters, and orders to send us the small car if it had returned from Tun-huang. If they met the herdsman we had sent for, HASHIM was to come back with him to show him the way to our camp No. 80. APAQ was to come back with the car, also to show the way. MUSA, TOKHTA, ISMAIL, and GAGARIN were instructed to remain at camp No. 80. The dog Tagil was left here too.