

lowed up from the mouth. South of the row of villages supported by kariz the gently descending plain becomes saline and marshy. Finally, it merges into the shallow central lake, or playa of Böjanti (5), which is dry except in winter, when the water which reaches it freezes and will not readily evaporate. South of the lake, another lifeless gravel plain (6) rises high on the side of the slaty, rounded mountains of Chol Tagh (7). At the western end of the basin, numerous streams unite to form a centripetal river analogous to the much larger Tarim of the Lop basin. This succeeds in reaching the lake during the winter, though diverted for irrigation in summer. A group of centripetal streams from the northeast side of the basin might also reach the lake, if they were not lost in the Kum Tagh, or Sand Mountains, huge heaps of dark, heavy sand, which have been piled up by the fierce west and northwest winds of spring to a height of four, five, and even six hundred feet, with steep, unbroken slopes from top to bottom.

In general, the scenery of the Turfan basin is uninteresting. The lake is a mere mucky salt swamp; the plain, except where there are villages, is a monotonous expanse of reedy stubble and clay with a little camel-thorn: the gravel slopes are dreary wastes of barrenness: the Sand Mountains, though striking, are peculiarly sombre by reason of the dark gray and deep purple shades of the long slopes. They lack the delicate details so beautiful in sand deposits of lighter weight and color. The Desert Mountains (Chol Tagh) on the south are so flat-topped and subdued in general outline that one gladly turns from them: even the high Bogdo range on the north arouses enthusiasm only when