

direction, and separating the various Pamir valleys, which were concealed from our view by the low hills in front.

Descending from the Neza Tash Pass a march of a few miles in a westerly direction, through heavy snow, brought us to our camp at Kogachak, which is about three miles above the junction of the stream from the pass, with the Ak-su River. On the following day (3rd from Táškurghán) crossing the spur between the two streams we descended into the valley of the Ak-sú, a little north of Ak-tash,\* at an elevation of 12,600 feet above the sea. We continued south for six miles up the valley, which was here about two miles broad, and deep in snow. In front of us was a fine range of snow covered peaks, running in a direction a little south of west, forming the southern boundary of the little Pámír, which is really the upper portion of the Akşu valley. The latter as we advanced, gradually turns round south-west by south which direction it retains up to and beyond the lake of little Pamir.

The Little Pámír is generally considered to commence near where we entered the Ak-su stream, and consists of a long, nearly level, grassy valley, varying from two to four miles in breadth and enclosed on either side by ranges of snow covered hills sloping down rather gently towards it. Its length from east to west is about 68 miles. The Great Pámír, and all other Pámírs are, as far as I could learn, of precisely similar character. The ground intervening between the Great and Little Pámírs is filled up with lofty mountains of tolerably uniform height and without any very conspicuous peaks, the hills to the west near the junction of the two main branches of the Panjah River being perhaps the highest. Our first halt in the Little Pámír was at Onkul, after a march of 25 miles for a great part of the way over snow, and with such a very bitter wind blowing in our faces, that it was almost impossible to hold an instrument in one's hand. After entering the long straight reach above the turning, near Ak-tash, several large open valleys are passed on the north, where the hills are comparatively low and undulating, those on the south side being generally much higher.

*Little Pamir*

Our second day's march (4th from Táškurghán) through this Pámír took us along an almost level road for 24 miles. As on the previous day, snow covered mountains lay on both sides as we advanced, and there was a great deal of snow in the valley itself which varied in breadth from 2 to 3½ miles. There was often a good deal of saline matter in the soil, and where this was the case the snow generally melted long before it did so elsewhere. Our camp was on the north edge of the Little Pámír Lake, which has been given by recent travellers the very different names of Barkut Yassin, Chalap, and Gez Kul or Goose Lake (Turki, Oi-kul). I made repeated enquiries as to its proper name, and found that the Wakhis generally call it the Kul-i-Pamir Khurd, or lake of Little Pamir, while the Sarikólis and Yárkandis give it the name of Oi-kul.

As some doubts had been expressed, as to the supposed double exit from this lake, I was naturally very anxious to determine the point, and in ascending the valley on this day's march I took at some twenty different points, observations with aneroid barometers to determine, if possible, the exact water-shed, which from previous accounts I had fully expected to find at the east end of the lake. The ground, however, was so level for several miles there being a rise of only 230 feet in the 24 miles between Onkul and the lake, that the aneroid was not sufficiently delicate for the purpose, and although I walked for a considerable distance on the frozen stream to enable me to satisfy myself on the subject, I arrived in camp on the banks of the lake *re-infectá*. The following morning I walked over the lake to its east end, which from a little distance off appeared entirely closed, but on walking round the head to make certain, I was soon undeceived by coming across a very narrow outlet, about nine paces across, and only a few inches deep, all ice of course. I then walked several miles down the stream (east) until I became fully convinced that its bed did slope to the east and drain into the Ak-su. This result being contrary to what I had anticipated, I then rode to the west end of the lake to see whether (as has always been supposed) a stream issued from that end also. I left my horse and started on foot to go round its head; the ice at this

\* Three miles distant from Kogachak.